

Arts & Crafts Guide

MJK Educators | Hands-on learning for Kenyan homes, for every curriculum

Creative expression is not an “extra”. It is a core part of how children process, explore and communicate. This guide offers low-cost projects using everyday materials, designed for ages 3–18 and adaptable across the Kenyan Competency Based Curriculum (CBC), IGCSE / Cambridge, the IB (PYP, MYP and DP) and other programmes. Most materials can be found at home, in a local duka or outdoors.

What's inside: 15 projects across four categories: Drawing & Painting, Sculpture & Construction, Textiles & Fibre, and Cultural & Faith-Based Crafts.

Age Bands

- **Early (ages 4 to 7):** roughly CBC Pre-Primary and Lower Primary, IB PYP early years
- **Middle (ages 8 to 12):** roughly CBC Upper Primary, IB PYP, Cambridge Primary
- **Older (ages 13 to 18):** roughly CBC Junior and Senior School, IB MYP and DP, Cambridge Lower Secondary and IGCSE

Curriculum Links

Each project has a short note showing where it fits. These are guides, not official alignments. Check your syllabus or scheme of work for exact outcomes.

- **CBC:** competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, digital literacy, self-efficacy, citizenship and learning to learn
- **IGCSE / Cambridge:** assessment objectives such as knowledge, application, analysis and practical skills
- **IB:** approaches to learning (thinking, research, communication, social, self-management) and inquiry cycles

Safety: Always supervise. Keep sharp tools, hot water, fire and chemicals away from young children. Use non-toxic paints and glues, and keep beads and other small items away from children under 3. Never taste craft materials.

Record it: Take photos, keep work samples and note what your child learned. These make useful portfolio entries (see our Record Keeping Template).

How to Use This Guide

	For CBC families	For IGCSE / IB families	For faith-based families
Why use it	Links to Creative Arts and core competencies	Portfolio evidence for Art & Design coursework	Opportunities for reflection, worship and cultural expression
Focus	Record process and product	Develop skills in observation, technique and critique	Connect to values and community

Learning Goals

- Express ideas and feelings through different media
- Learn the elements of art: line, shape, colour, texture, form, space and pattern
- Appreciate Kenyan and African art, as well as world art
- Practise planning, reflecting, and giving and receiving feedback

Kenyan and African Arts Inspirations

- **Kitenge and kanga designs:** patterns, repeat designs and the Kiswahili proverbs often printed on kanga
- **Maasai beadwork:** colour symbolism, pattern and counting
- **Kisii soapstone carving:** form, texture and tools (use soft materials like clay or soap at home)
- **Basketry (kiondo and sisal weaving):** weaving, geometry, local materials
- **Batik and tie-dye:** colour mixing and resist techniques
- **Akamba wood carving, and Makonde-style forms from the wider region:** shape and negative space
- **Contemporary Kenyan artists, illustrators and designers:** visit galleries, museums or online exhibitions where you can

Always describe cultures respectfully and, where possible, learn from local artisans or visit a cultural centre.

Category A: Drawing & Painting

Project 1: Nature Sketching

Ages: Early to Older (5–18) | **Time:** 20–45 minutes | **Materials:** Paper, pencil, optional watercolours

THE ACTIVITY

Sketch a natural object: a leaf, a flower, a stone, an insect. Focus on observation, not perfection.

ADAPTATIONS

- **Early (4–7):** Big shapes and colours
- **Middle (8–12):** Add detail and labels
- **Older (13–18):** Focus on light, shadow and texture

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts (drawing), Science (observation)
- IGCSE: Art & Design (observation, mark-making)
- IB: Visual arts (process)
- Charlotte Mason: Nature study

Project 2: Colour Mixing Explorations

Ages: Early (3–8) | **Time:** 20–30 minutes | **Materials:** Paint (red, yellow, blue), paper, brushes

THE ACTIVITY

Discover what happens when colours mix. Make a colour wheel or a “mixing map”.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts (colour)
- IGCSE: Art & Design (colour theory)

Project 3: Self-Portraits Through Time

Ages: Middle to Older (7–18) | **Time:** 30–60 minutes | **Materials:** Paper, pencil, mirror, optional paint

THE ACTIVITY

Draw a self-portrait. Repeat each term and compare. It makes a powerful record of growth.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Personal Development
- IGCSE: Art & Design (portraiture)
- IB: Visual arts (identity)

Project 4: Story Illustrations

Ages: Early to Middle (6–12) | **Time:** 30–45 minutes | **Materials:** Paper, pencils, colours

THE ACTIVITY

Read a story or a Bible passage. Illustrate a key scene.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Literacy
- Faith-based: Bible storytelling

Category B: Sculpture & Construction

Project 5: Recycled Material Sculpture

Ages: Early to Older (5–18) | **Time:** 45–60 minutes | **Materials:** Clean waste (boxes, bottles, lids), glue, tape

THE ACTIVITY

Create a sculpture from recycled materials. Theme ideas: animals, vehicles, abstract forms. Wash containers first and avoid sharp edges.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Science (materials)
- IGCSE: Art & Design (3D work)
- IB: Visual arts (found objects)

Project 6: Clay Play

Ages: Early (3–10) | **Time:** 30–60 minutes | **Materials:** Clay or salt dough (flour, salt, water)

THE ACTIVITY

Model animals, pots or imaginary creatures. Let dry and paint.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts (modelling)
- IGCSE: Art & Design (ceramics)

Salt dough recipe: 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water. Mix, knead and shape. Air dry for 2–3 days, or bake at a low heat (about 120°C) for 2–3 hours depending on thickness. Salt dough is not edible.

Project 7: Cardboard City

Ages: Early to Middle (6–12) | **Time:** 60+ minutes | **Materials:** Boxes, tape, markers

THE ACTIVITY

Build a model town or city. Add roads, buildings and parks.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Social Studies (community)
- IGCSE: Design & Technology

Project 8: Papier-Mâché Creations

Ages: Middle (8–14) | **Time:** Multi-day | **Materials:** Newspaper, flour paste, balloon or wire frame, paint

THE ACTIVITY

Create a bowl, mask or animal using papier-mâché. Allow each layer to dry before adding the next.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts
- IGCSE: Art & Design

Homemade paste: Mix 1 part flour with 2 parts water and cook gently until thick. Cool before use. An adult should handle the cooking.

Category C: Textiles & Fibre

Project 9: Simple Weaving

Ages: Early to Middle (6–12) | **Time:** 30–60 minutes | **Materials:** Cardboard loom, yarn, wool or strips of fabric

THE ACTIVITY

Weave a small mat or bookmark.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts
- IGCSE: Art & Design (textiles)
- Cultural: Traditional Kenyan weaving (kiondo, sisal)

Project 10: Sewing Basics

Ages: Middle to Older (8–18) | **Time:** 30–60 minutes | **Materials:** Fabric, needle, thread, scissors

THE ACTIVITY

Learn running stitch and backstitch, then sew a simple item (bag, cushion or repair). Supervise needle use closely.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Life Skills
- IGCSE: Design & Technology

Project 11: Beadwork

Ages: Early to Middle (6–14) | **Time:** 30–45 minutes | **Materials:** Beads, string, elastic

THE ACTIVITY

Make jewellery or decorative items. Explore traditional Kenyan beadwork patterns.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Social Studies (culture)
- Cultural: Maasai, Samburu and other Kenyan beadwork traditions
- Maths link: Counting, pattern, symmetry

Category D: Cultural & Faith-Based Crafts

Project 12: Kenyan Cultural Art

Ages: Middle to Older (7–18) | **Time:** 45–60 minutes | **Materials:** Paper, paint, references

THE ACTIVITY

Explore artistic traditions found in Kenya: tingatinga-style painting (which began in Tanzania and is widely sold in Kenya), kanga patterns and soapstone carving motifs. Create your own piece inspired by these.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Social Studies
- IGCSE: Art & Design (cultural context)
- IB: Visual arts (cultural expression)

Project 13: Bible Story Diorama

Ages: Early to Middle (5–12) | **Time:** 60+ minutes | **Materials:** Shoebox, craft materials, figures

THE ACTIVITY

Create a diorama of a Bible story.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- Faith-based: Bible study
- CBC: Creative Arts

Project 14: Prayer or Reflection Journal

Ages: Middle to Older (8–18) | **Time:** Ongoing | **Materials:** Notebook, art supplies

THE ACTIVITY

Create a decorated journal for prayers, reflections or gratitude.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- Faith-based: Spiritual formation
- CBC: Creative Arts, Personal Development

Project 15: Seasonal & Festival Crafts

Ages: Early to Middle (3–12) | **Time:** Varies | **Materials:** Varies

THE ACTIVITY

Create crafts connected to Kenyan and faith-based festivals: Christmas, Easter, Eid, Diwali, Madaraka Day, Mashujaa Day, harvest celebrations.

CURRICULUM LINKS

- CBC: Creative Arts, Social Studies (culture)
- Faith-based: Festival observance

Art Assessment Rubric (Sample)

Criteria	Beginning	Developing	Secure	Excelling
Ideas and creativity	Copies an example	Some original ideas	Clear, personal ideas	Inventive, confident ideas
Use of materials and technique	Needs help to use materials	Uses materials with some control	Controlled, appropriate technique	Skilled, experimental technique
Planning and process	Starts without a plan	Makes a basic plan	Plans and adjusts as needed	Plans, tests and refines
Reflection	Says if they like it	Names one thing that worked	Explains choices and challenges	Evaluates and sets next steps
Cultural or subject understanding	Little awareness	Names the tradition or subject	Explains where it comes from	Connects it to their own work

Arts & Crafts Portfolio Evidence Checklist

- Photos of finished work
- Process photos (showing stages)
- Artist statements (what I made, why, what I learned)
- Sketches and drafts
- Reflections on what worked and what to try next

Teaching Art, Step by Step

1. **Inspire:** show a real object, an artwork or a photograph.
2. **Explore:** let the child experiment with materials first.
3. **Plan:** make quick sketches.
4. **Create:** give time without rushing.
5. **Reflect:** ask what they like, what was hard and what they would change.
6. **Display:** make a home gallery or take photos for a portfolio.

Feedback Prompts

- What did you want to show?
- Which colours or lines did you choose, and why?
- What was your biggest challenge?

- What would you try next time?

Bringing It All Together

Cross-Curricular Project Examples

1. Our Compound Ecosystem (4 weeks)

A nature study (science), a measured map (maths), a field journal (English), an art piece based on your findings (art) and a presentation to family.

2. Clean Water Challenge (3 weeks)

Build a filter (STEM), research water sources in your county (geography), design a poster (art) and write a letter to a local leader (civics, English).

3. Mini Duka Enterprise (4 weeks)

Design a product (design), cost and price it (maths), make packaging (art), sell at a community event and reflect on profit (business and financial literacy).

Mapping Activities to Different Curricula

If you follow	Use these activities for	Evidence to keep
CBC	Competency development and community service learning	Learner portfolio, observation notes, projects
IGCSE / Cambridge	Practical skills, coursework preparation, fieldwork and investigations	Lab reports, sketchbooks, data tables
IB (PYP, MYP, DP)	Inquiry units, service, design cycle, internal assessment practice	Process journals, reflections, project logs
Other or blended	Skills practice and enrichment	Work samples and reflections

Tips for Parents

- Start small: one challenge, craft or outdoor trip a week is enough.
- Let children choose some projects. Ownership increases motivation.
- Ask open questions: what do you notice, what do you think will happen, why?
- Celebrate mistakes as part of the learning process.
- Mix ages: older children can mentor younger ones.
- Link activities to goals in your learning plan so they count as real learning, not just fun.
- Join other homeschool families for group projects, which also builds social skills.

MJK Educators provides these ideas for general educational use. Always supervise children, assess risks before each activity, and adapt to your child's age, ability and needs. Curriculum links are guides, not official alignments: check your syllabus or scheme of work for exact outcomes.