Artistic Crafts

Skill Builders

1. Choose your medium. You will probably want to experiment with several types of crafts before you find one that you really enjoy. Choose from among the following crafts: leather work, macramé, crocheting, quilting, decoupage, candle making, metal work, stained glass design, pottery, ceramics, printmaking, wood carving, woodworking, jewelry making, floral design, basket weaving, or clothing design. When you have made a choice, do the following steps:
   - Become familiar with the craft. Be able to explain the process and describe the tools needed and where you would find them.
   - Make a scrapbook with pictures, articles, and samples of this craft.
   - Develop at least three different designs; complete one of them.

2. Clay is a medium that offers many possibilities for expression. From bead making to pottery, you will find a variety of possibilities for using clay creatively. Traditionally, clay work has involved firing (baking) in a kiln. Today, there are many types of clay that can be baked in a regular oven or air-dried. Learn about hand-building, or learn to throw clay on a potter's wheel. Make one finished piece.

3. Make your own woodcarving. Or try out hand building something with wood—for example, a birdbath.

4. Find out some of the places available in your community for craft instruction: for example, community centers or craft stores. Compare the cost of each course and find out if anyone would be willing to teach your troop or group.

Technology

1. Choose three of the following crafts and find out about three tools used in each:
   - Candle making
   - Stained glass
   - Wood carving
   - Leather working
   - Pottery making

Consult art magazines, craft catalogs, and salesmen to determine the benefits and drawbacks of working with these crafts. Some factors to consider are the cost and availability of materials, and the size of the world space and special equipment you would need. Prepare a demonstration of what you learn and share it with your troop or group.

2. The Internet has sites for crafts organizations, companies and individuals from all over the world. It is also a place where many crafters exchange ideas and offer suggestions. Develop your own site or visit a group site to exchange information about crafts with other crafters.

3. Stenciling is popular in many countries. In America, it was used in colonial times to decorate walls, floors, furniture, and everyday objects. Find out the ways in which modern technology has changed how stencils are made and used. Experiment with stencilling on paper or cloth and then try a more advanced project, such as stencilling the back of a chair.

4. Visit a woodworker's shop. Ask for a demonstration of such tools as a jigsaw, a plane, a router, and a finishing sander. Find out what safety precautions must be taken when using these tools.

Career Exploration

1. Interview someone in your community who earns part or all of her living through her craft. Find out how she got started, what she has learned, what the skills necessary to work, and what advice she would offer someone just starting out. Or visit a crafts show, exhibit, or sale, and do the following:
   - Find out how many different media are represented in the show or fair.
   - After looking at the objects on display, decide which ones you like best and why. Be able to explain the reasons for your preference to your troop or group.

2. Teach a simple craft to younger girls, making sure that they know the basics of what to do. Then have them do it on their own.

3. Work with your Girl Scout troop or group to develop your own craft project. Give copies to your council, local library, or community center.

4. When planning to sell your crafts, it is important to know your market. Interview a crafts store owner or show manager to find out the trends in crafts and craft design in the past 10 years. What does she predict for the next decade? What are the consequences of knowing the trends in the crafts market? How can a craftsperson keep up with these trends?

5. Occupational therapists help people with illnesses or disabilities improve their coordination and fine motor skills. They also design devices to help improve daily living skills. Ask an occupational therapist to explain or demonstrate how craft activities might be used in her job.

And Beyond

IF YOU'VE HAD RUN CREATING WITH ARTISTIC Crafts, try these related interest projects:
- Visual Arts
- Fashion Design
- Home Improvement
- Graphic Communications
- Paper Works
- Textile Arts
- Photography
- Why in the World?
- Exploring the Net
- Dolls and Sense
- Public Relations
- Your Own Business