

Title : Group Project – Design Your Own Village

ETC Level  
K/S, P/A, C/Sy, Cr

MDV Level  
HC, S, F or R

### Materials

Various art media - paint, markers, crayons, pastels, colored pencils, etc.  
Construction paper, plain white paper, butcher paper, glue guns, glue sticks  
Model magic for making 3D objects, pipe cleaners, glitter, sticks, string, etc.  
All sorts of recyclable materials – cereal boxes, paper towel rolls, lids from containers,  
Styrofoam cups, plates, corrugated cardboard, ANYTHING you think can be used to  
build a village with the help of your imagination

### Procedures

This is a group project meant to take as long as interest holds out and desire sustains. All ideas are welcome as the group works together to create a village of their own design. Decisions are made as a group, imagination is encouraged, all members of the group input. Anything goes...

After the various buildings, etc. are made and assembled on a large piece of cardboard (which can be covered with paper and painted and designed), a large box is made to hold the whole village up. This large box is covered with butcher paper. The forearms and open hands of each member of the group are traced all along the bottom of the box. In this way, the arms look like trees holding up and supporting the village. Individual drawings from each member are also added on this large box. These can have a particular theme, like a city garden. Ours included drawings of birds, butterflies, flowers, turtles, and other animals. There was a wonderful unified feeling to the whole village.

### Rationale

In a group setting, this can serve as a means in which children (or adults) can learn to work together. Encourages creativity, individuality, and cooperation. Group members learn to be supportive, realizing that every idea is of worth and should be acknowledged. An excellent opportunity for self-expression and decision making while seeing the dynamics that operate when a group works together. Excellent tool representing the importance of community support and how we each “hold each other up.”

### Adaptations

Can be extended by journaling or photo essays. The group can also write and illustrate a story about the village after it is finished.

### Reflections

This is a wonderful group project that was used with developmentally delayed adults. Their imagination was endless and their enthusiasm grew as the village went up. We began with an apple tree, added buildings everyone painting, made a playground and duck pond, and made individual stepping stones that traced pathways within the village. Everyone justifiably was VERY proud of the village when we were done. One of our books mentions the success of using a version of this with elderly patients.

Susan L. Smith