



Connecting the Dots: Health as Art

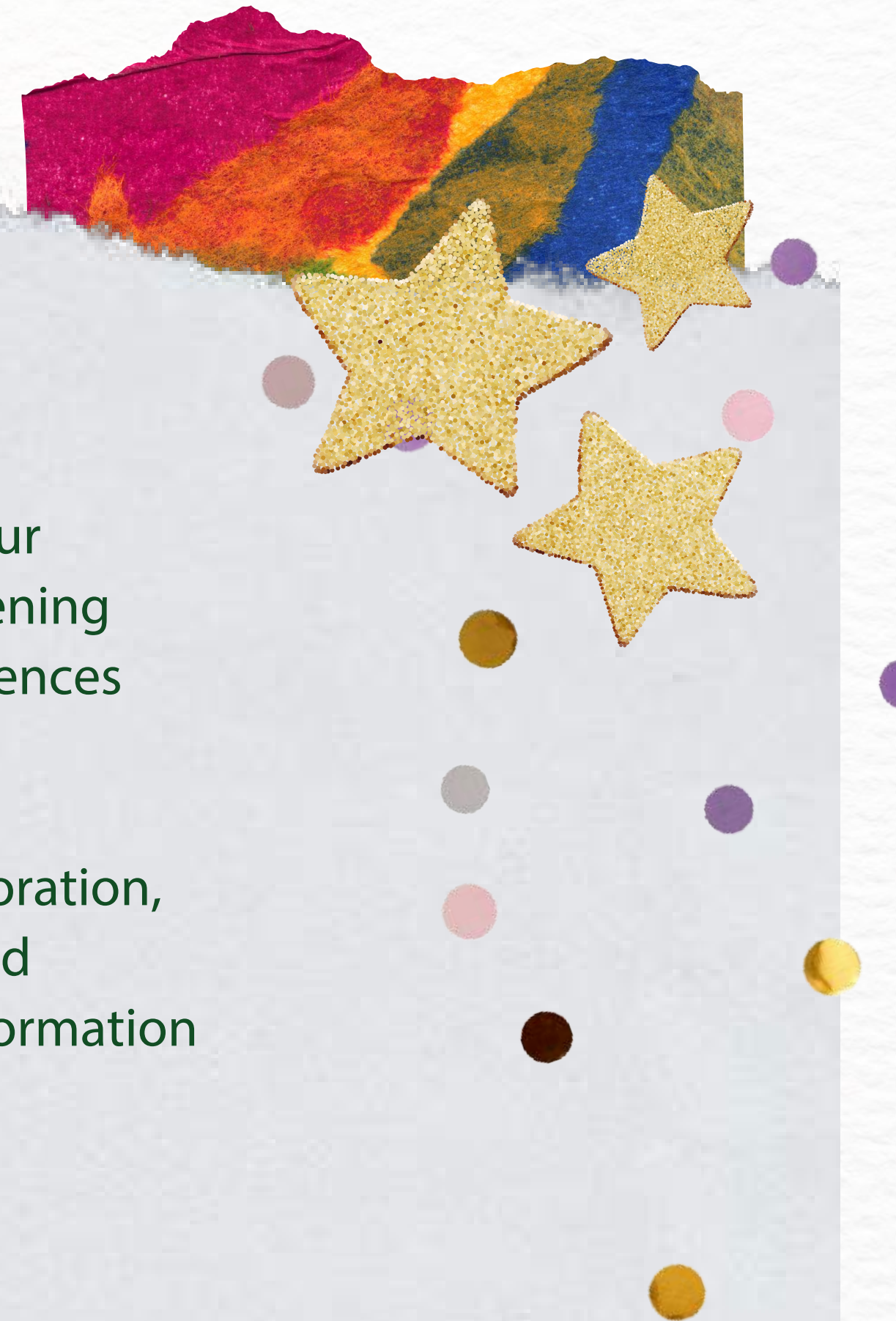
Creative Collages

An art-based social-emotional health activity for
mindfulness and sensory-based learning

What is mindfulness/sensory-based learning?

Mindfulness-based learning helps us to teach our brain ways to bring our attention to the present moment. It helps us to reflect on what is happening within our own bodies, in the environment that surrounds us, and influences how we connect with others.

Sensory-based learning encourages us to learn through creativity, exploration, and imagination using one or more of our five senses. It helps us to build connections between the brain and body and helps us to learn new information in a way that is most helpful to us.



Creative Collages

Collages are a form of art that is made by combining different materials to make a picture. What types of materials are used in collages... ?

- Photographs, ticket stubs, etc.
- Magazine or newspaper cutouts
- Stickers, stamps buttons, feathers, or pom poms
- Things from nature (sticks, leaves, flowers, bark, etc.)
- Things from the kitchen (rice, beans, pasta, etc.)

... anything really! No matter what materials you pick, they are used to. make a picture on a piece of paper, cardboard, or another form of backing.



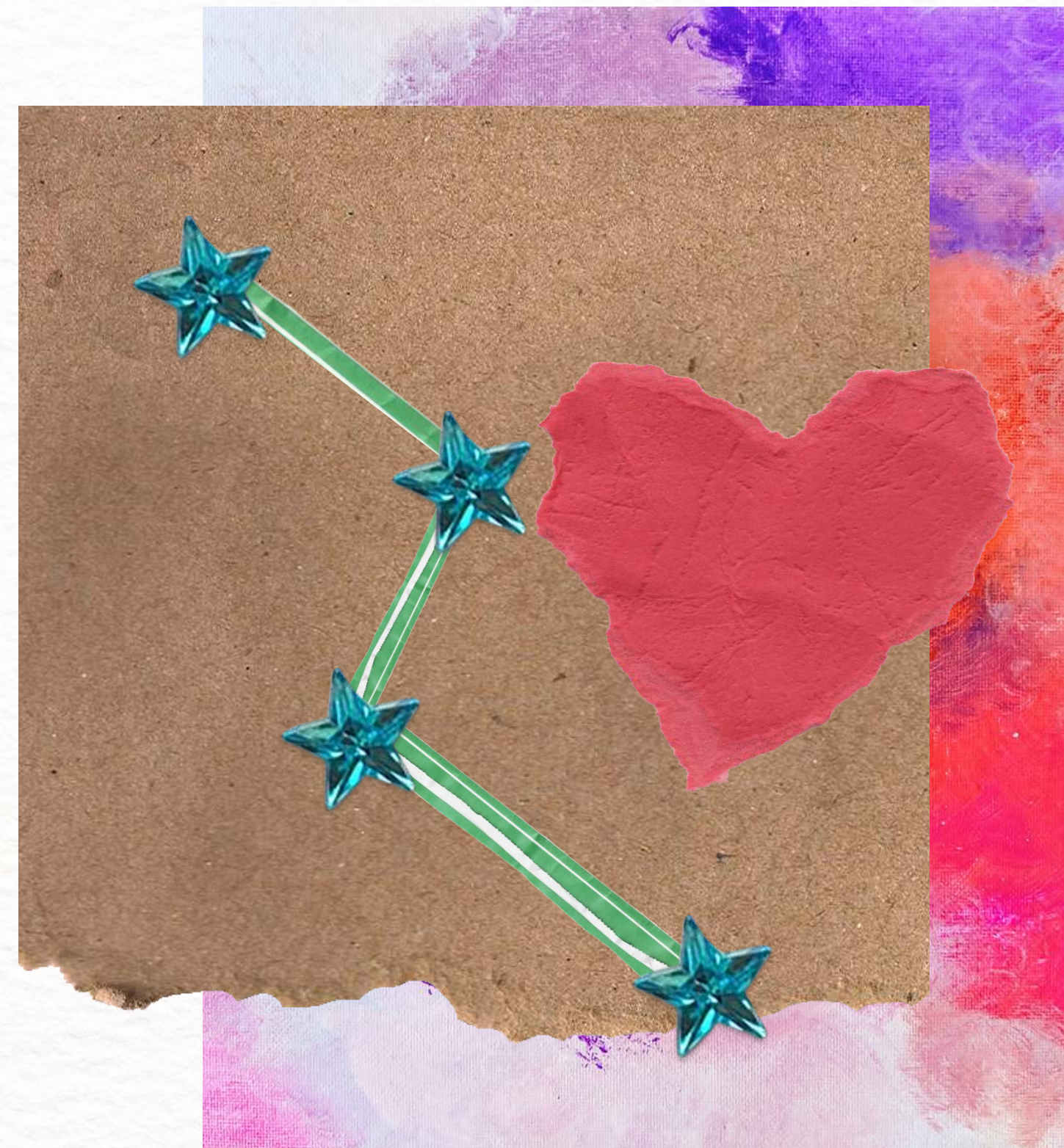
Connecting the Dots

Collages can help us tell a story.

Sometimes it may be hard to figure out how we are feeling. It might be because we have a lot of big emotions mixing with one another, or it might be a feeling we haven't experienced before and don't know what to call it. Even without a plan, collages can be an outlet to spill our feelings onto paper and reflect on them visually.

Sometimes we want to express ourselves. Collages are a fun way to highlight our favorite things or share with others a little more about who we are and what makes us - us.

Sometimes we want to dream. Collages can be a great tool for making a vision board. Vision boards use pictures and words to paint a picture of our goals, dreams, and wishes. It's a great way to remind ourselves of the things we are working towards and help us reach our goals.



Getting to Know Our Colors

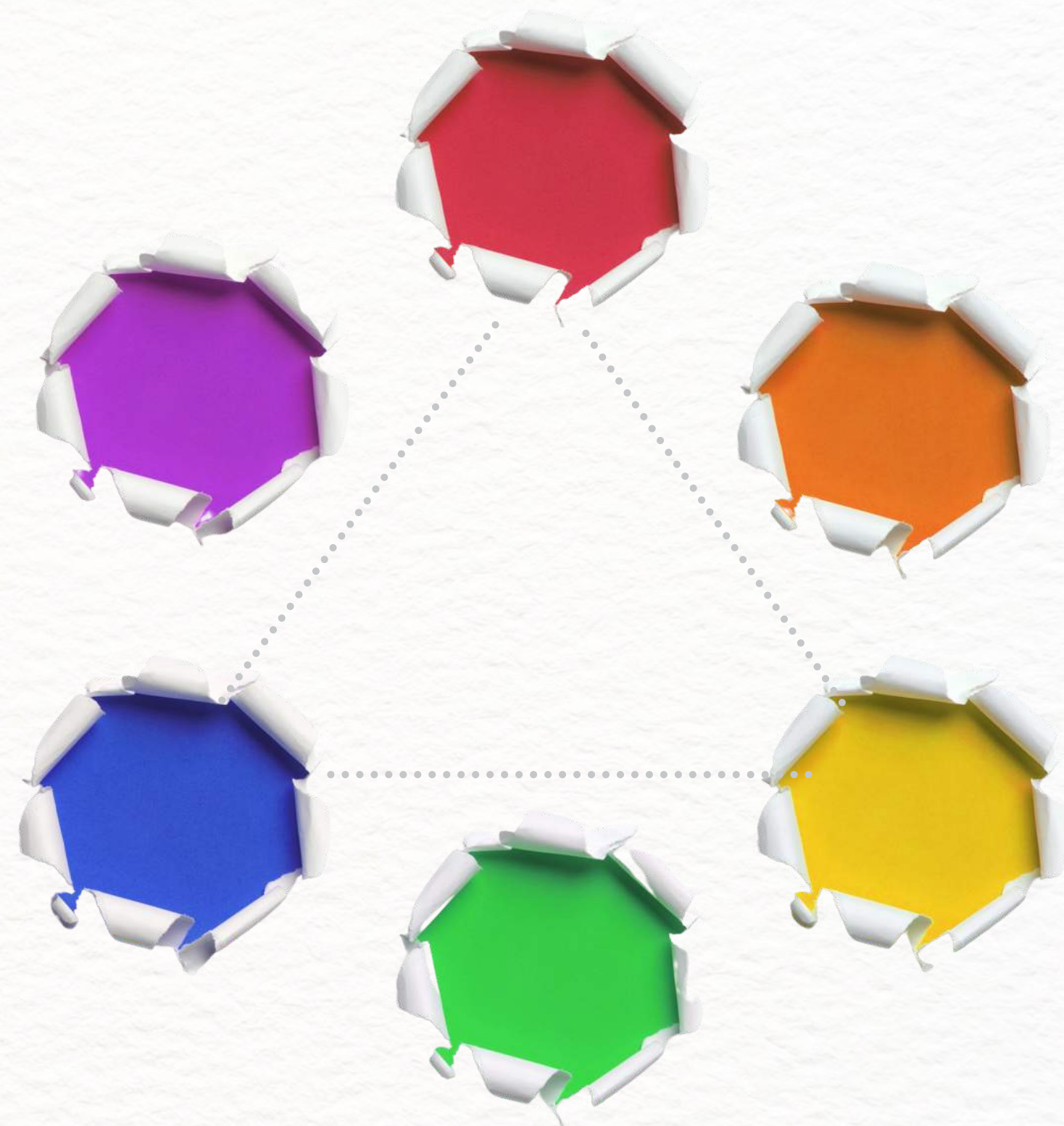
Can you name the three primary colors?

- **Red**
- **Yellow**
- **Blue**

Primary colors are used to create all of the colors we see in our world. When two primary colors are mixed they create what we call secondary colors.

- **Red + Yellow = Orange**
- **Yellow + Blue = Green**
- **Blue + Red = Purple**

Different combinations can make different shades and hues within the same color family.



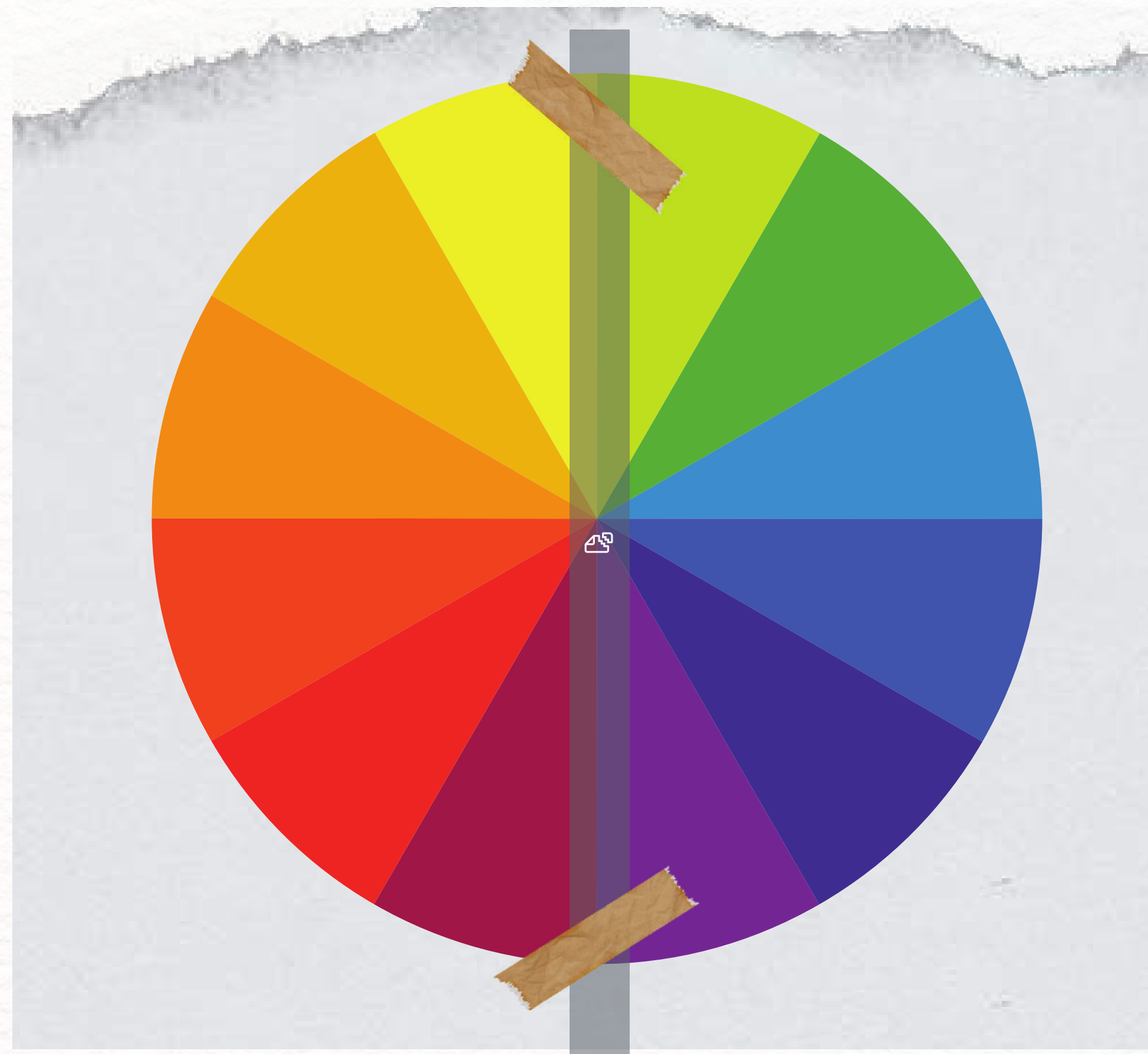
The Magic of Color

Colors can help us express our feelings and there is a whole field of psychology that studies how colors make us feel. To understand colors and how they impact emotions, we use a color wheel.

The color wheel is divided into two halves: on one side we see warm colors - believed to be energizing and on the other side we see cool colors - believed to be calming.

If you had to describe how you were feeling in a color - what color do you feel and why? Don't see it on the wheel? That's okay - share or describe it!

There are about 10 million colors visible to the human eye. Woah!





Get Started

1

GATHER MATERIALS

Gather the materials you would like to use for your collage. In addition to arts and crafts supplies, look for things you can upcycle like old magazines, newspapers, etc.

2

LET LOOSE AND CREATE

Start creating! Play some music or set a timer and head off on a creative retreat. Invite your feelings to come through, and don't be afraid to be messy. The beauty of collages lives in their messiness.

3

REFLECT ON FEELINGS

Once you finish, sit back and reflect. What do you see in your collage? What do you feel and why? Take some time to sit with these thoughts to talk with a friend, classmate, or family member. See what similarities and differences you have with others.

Looking for ideas?

Not sure where to start or looking for ideas? Check out the three collages on the next few pages or use the list below as a guide!

- What makes you - you
- What you are feeling
- A dream, goal, or wish
- Your favorite things
- The perfect day
- A word such as happy, friendship, joy



Painted Paper Collage

ACTION FOR
HEALTHY
KIDS 

Painted paper collages are a fun way to explore abstract thinking.

- Gather a few pieces of paper and begin painting.
- Reflect on warm and cool colors, how you are feeling, heavy or light brushes, etc.
- Once you've painted each paper, let them dry.
- Once dry, carefully begin cutting into small pieces and shapes. There are no wrong answers!
- After you have a collection of painted pieces of all shapes and sizes, take a clean piece of paper and use it as your backing.
- Piece together into a new picture - an object, something that represents you or how you are feeling, an abstract self-portrait, or a pattern.
- Get creative and glue each piece to make a layered mosaic collage.



Scavenger Hunt Collage

ACTION FOR
HEALTHY
KIDS 

Scavenger hunt collages are a temporary, no-mess collage that pairs with a game of I-spy.

- Make a list of colors, textures, and shapes.
- Once you have your list, head out on a scavenger hunt - around the house, around the classroom, or even outside.
- Begin gathering items that match the colors, textures, and shapes on your list. Be mindful of what you are gathering and check with an adult if you are unsure.
- Collect your items in a basket, bag, or box and bring them back to a clean workspace.
- Get to work on those creative collages! Arrange your items on your workspace to form shapes, a self-portrait, a feeling, you name it!
- Discuss what you see and see what others might see similarly or differently.
- Once you're all done, carefully return the items back to where you collected them until next time.



Suncatcher collages can be used to reflect and unwind.

- Gather a few different colors of tissue paper. You can also use paper towels and food coloring.*
- Tear the tissue paper into different shapes and sizes.
- Grab a plain white piece of paper for your backing.
- Use a glue stick to begin laying your tissue paper to form a shape or pattern.
- Once dry, you can cut a few different ways:
 - Cut out as a circle or oval
 - Cut out as a diamond
 - Make a spiral: Cut a circle and begin on the edge, cutting around the circle over and over until you reach the middle
- Hang in front of the window and watch the colors brighten and change as the sun shines through.
- Use to reflect or unwind from big feelings.



Reflective Wrap-Up

- What did you enjoy most about making your collage?
- What story does your collage tell (e.g., a feeling, a dream, a little about you, etc.)?
- What feelings came up for you?
- Did you feel differently at the end than you did when you began?
- What is one thing you want your collage to tell others?