Crafts for Senior Citizens

A Two Year Long, Ready to Use Program

By: Christine Anderson
About this book

This book is designed to provide a two year craft program that can be easily implemented at senior centers. Because a large amount of craft preparation needs to be done before the craft can be taken to a senior citizens home, the book is ideal for large groups. It is composed mainly of paper crafts, as they are relatively inexpensive and easy to make. All of the crafts have been taught successfully at senior citizen homes. Though it was written to be used with seniors, the crafts are great for people of any age.

About my project

Several years ago, I discovered that my local senior center had been forced to end its craft program due to budget cuts. Upon hearing this, a group of girls from my Girl Scout troop and I took action. Earning our Girl Scout Silver Award, we created crafts and taught them regularly at the senior center for over a year. When our award was finished we continued teaching crafts; but I realized that once we left high school the seniors would again lose their craft program. And so, for my Girl Scout Gold Award, I decided to create a sustainable craft program for my local senior center as well as write a craft program that could be implemented at other centers. I connected several youth volunteer groups with my local senior center who will continue to run the program. In addition, I created this craft book as a part of my Gold Award in the hopes that it will be used for many years to come.
**Working with the Senior Citizens**

For those of you who have never before worked with senior citizens, here are some tips to keep in mind.

Remember to:

- **Speak loudly and clearly**  
  --many of them are hard of hearing  
  --if they don’t respond to a question, chances are they couldn’t hear you, so ask again

- **Offer to assist them on each step, if need be, do the entire project for them**  
  --many of them have arthritis or limited mobility in their hands

- **Ask them for their name and about their day**  
  --most enjoy talking to young people 😊

- **Compliment them or their project**

- **Let them choose the colors they want to use on their project**
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Tissue Paper Flowers

*This craft can be done with different colors for different occasions

Materials

- Tissue Paper
- Scissors
- Pipe Cleaners

Instructions

1) Cut tissue paper into 5” × 5” squares

![Tissue Paper Squares]

2) Choose 5-8 sheets of tissue paper and stack them up

3) Fold one edge of the stack in ¾”-1”

4) Flip over and fold in the edge again (accordion style)

![Folded Tissue Paper]
5) Continue in the same fashion until ▼

6) Wrap a pipe cleaner around the middle

7) Twist pipe cleaner around itself to secure

8) Cut both sides of the tissue paper in desired shape
9) Gently pull one side of the top layer of tissue paper to the center

10) Pull up all layer, then do the same on the other side

Optional: Make several flowers and tie them together with a pipe cleaner for a bouquet
Tissue Paper Pressing

Note: Though the example is a heart, this craft can be done in many other shapes and colors for a variety of occasions.

Materials

- Cardstock/Construction Paper (ex. White, Red, Pink)
- Tissue Paper (ex. White, Red, Pink)
- Liquid Glue
- Pencils
- Scissors
- Choose from templates 1-5 depending upon the occasion

Instructions

1) Trace the chosen template (ex. Template 4) onto a piece of cardstock and cut it out (To make the heart hang, staple a piece of ribbon to the back in a loop)

2) Cut the tissue paper into approximately 1 inch squares
3) Apply a thin layer of glue in the center of the heart

4) Place the eraser end of a pencil in the middle of a piece of tissue paper

5) Twist the tissue paper around the eraser
6) Place the tissue paper on the glue in the center of the heart

7) Pull the pencil out of the tissue paper (if the eraser sticks to the tissue paper, it may be necessary to gently hold the tissue paper while sliding the pencil out)

8) Repeat steps 5-8 until the glue is covered up

9) Apply glue to another patch and repeat steps 5-10 until the entire heart is covered
Decoupage with Tissue Paper (Door Hanger)

Note: Though the example is an egg, this technique can be used for a variety of different shapes for different occasions

Materials

✓ White cardstock or a manila folder
   (This craft also works well on a wooden picture frame)
✓ 1½” x 1½” tissue paper squares
✓ Modge Podge or glue
✓ Ribbon
✓ Hole punch
✓ Foam paint brush
✓ Scissors
✓ Choose from templates 1-5 depending on the occasion

Instructions

1) Cover work area with newspaper
2) Trace chosen template (ex. template 5) onto cardstock and cut out
3) Determine where you will place your first square and cover the entire area with Modge Podge using the brush (If you use glue, thin it down with water first)

4) Place a square of tissue paper on the wet area

5) Thoroughly cover the paper with modge podge

6) Repeat steps 3-5 until the entire paper is covered

7) When it dries, cut off the edges

8) Punch a hole in the top and thread a ribbon (8” long) through it
Decoupage With Fabric

Materials:
- Scissors
- Modge Podge (white glue can be used)
- Sponge Brush
- Fabric
- Something made of wood or cardboard to decoupage (i.e. birdhouse, picture frame)

Instructions
1) Cut out approximately 40 1 inch squares from the fabrics

2) Coat an area of the birdhouse with Modge Podge

3) Lay a piece of fabric on the area and cover with Modge Podge

4) Repeat steps 2-3 until the birdhouse is covered
Beaded Bracelet*

Materials:
- Plastic beads with large holes (pony beads)
- Stretch cord
- Scissors
- Tape

Instructions:
1) Cut an 11” piece of stretch cord
2) Fold a piece of tape around one end of the cord (this will keep the beads from falling off)
3) String beads onto the bracelet until the desired length is reached
4) Tie off with a square knot

*this is a popular craft with the seniors
Seasonal Triangular Box

**Materials**

- Cardstock
- Ribbon
- Hole Punch
- Colored Paper
- Colored Markers
- Scissors
- Pens

**Instructions**

1) Cut a piece of cardstock to 3” × 5 ½” and fold in half

2) Make small creases to mark the middles of the top and bottom

3) Make a fold from the crease to the right of the middle
4) Do the same on the other side

5) Turn the paper 180° and repeat steps 3-4

6) Fold the box and punch a hole where two flaps overlap, then do the same on the other side
7) Decorate one of the large triangles

Option 1: Draw a scarf, a carrot nose, eyes, and a mouth on the triangle

Option 2: Cut out a scarf shaped piece of paper and a small orange triangle and glue on, then draw eyes and mouth (example)

Scarf can also be made from 3 strips of paper as shown below.

Larger strip can be trimmed to fit the angle of the box.

Option 1: Draw on Jack-o-lantern face (example)

Option 2: Cut out Jack-o-lantern face and glue on

Cut star out of yellow paper and glue on top, then hole punch red paper and glue on in various places

Option 1: Use heart shaped paper punch to punch out a pink heart and glue on

Option 2: Cut out heart by hand and glue on (example)

Option 3: Draw heart on with gel pen
8) Fold the box, thread 8"-10" of ribbon through all four holes, and tie in a bow
Pull Out Card

Materials:

- Cardstock in various colors
- Pen
- Templates 13, 17, 18, 19 (suggestions for decoration)
- Scissors
- Ribbon
- Glue stick
- Hole Punch

Instructions:

1) Cut a piece of cardstock in half lengthwise and fold in half

2) Punch a hole in the top
3) Cut a 9” x ½” strip of cardstock in another color and glue it around the first

4) Cut a piece of paper 4”x 5” and write your message on it

5) Cut a 15” piece of ribbon and wrap it around the message paper

6) Put the ribbon wrapped paper into the original folded paper
7) Thread the ribbon through the holes and tie it in a bow

8) Decorate the front of the card with desired templates
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Paper Bookmark

Materials:

✓ Scissors
✓ Colored Cardstock/Construction paper
✓ Ribbon
✓ Templates 17, 18, 19 (suggestions for decoration)
✓ Glue stick
✓ Hole Punch

Instructions:
1) Cut a piece of cardstock to 1.5” x 6”

2) Punch a hole in the top
3) Cut a 5” piece of ribbon and tie it in a slip knot through the hole

4) Decorate the front of the bookmark with chosen templates (17 shown)
Picture Frame Card

Materials:
- A 12” x 12” paper
- Colored paper
- Templates (12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23) (suggestions for decorating
- Scissors
- Glue

Instructions:
1) Cut 4” inches off of a 12” x 12” piece of paper and fold the remaining part in half (this is the card)

2) Cut a 6” x 8” rectangle from another piece of colored paper and cut a 3.5” x 5.5” rectangle out of the middle (this is the frame)
3) Glue three sides of the frame to the front of the card, leaving one side unglued
4) Decorate the frame with various templates (ex. 18 and 21)

5) When you want to put a picture in the frame, merely slide it in the unglued side
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Candy Spider

Materials
- Colored cardstock/construction paper (Purple, green, orange, black)
- Paper Cutter or scissors
- Glue
- Googley eyes
- Template 12 (substitute template 21)
- Flat round candies (Reese’s, peppermint patties, lollipops…)
- Ruler
- Tape
- Template 17

Instructions
1) Cut two template 12s out of black paper

2) Cut four 1¾” squares out of colored cardstock (orange, green, or purple)
3) Draw the pattern below on each using the pencil and ruler

4) Cut along the lines on each square

5) Affix two large right angles to a black circle as shown

6) Affix two small angles on the same circle

7) Repeat steps 5-6 on the other circle

8) Optional: Flip over one circle and affix two template 17s to one of the spiders
9) On top of the template 17s, glue on the eyes

10) Tape the spider front to the candy

11) Tape the back of the spider on the back of the candy
Paper Jack-o-lantern

Materials:

- Orange, green, and black cardstock/construction paper
- Tape (preferably double-stick)
- Scissors
- Template 16

Instructions:

1) Cut four 1"x 11" pieces of orange paper

2) Arrange them so that the centers overlap

3) Tape the ends of the bottom strip together, forming a circle
4) Repeat with the remaining strips from the bottom up, taping the circles together if need be.

5) Cut a ½” x 1 ½” piece of green cardstock.

6) Fold the end and tape it to the jack-o-lantern.

7) Cut out eyes (template 16) and a desired mouth shape and tape them to the front of the jack-o-lantern.
Fall Greeting Card

Materials:

- Brown, yellow, green, and orange cardstock/construction paper
- Templates 21, 22
- Scissors
- Markers
- Glue

Instructions:

1) Cut the brown paper in half at 5.5” and fold in half

2) Cut two template 22s and one template 21 out of orange paper

3) Cut 9 rectangles (1”x 3/4”) out of orange and yellow paper
4) Cut three small rectangles (¼” x ½”) out of green paper

5) Glue the three circles to the bottom of the card, with the largest in the middle

6) Glue one green rectangle to the top of each circle

7) Glue a row of 5 rectangles to the top of the card, and a row of four underneath

8) Write “HAPPY FALL” on the rectangles

9) Decorate the circles to look like pumpkins
Turkey Treat Holder

Materials

- Glue Stick
- Tape (optional, but good for holding the box together)
- Assorted Colors of Cardstock or Construction paper
- Hole Punch
- Pens
- Scissors
- Template 9, 10, 11

Instructions

1) Trace template 10 onto a piece of brown cardstock or construction paper (four can be cut out of one piece of 8½” × 11”, nine can be cut out of an 11”× 17”)

2) Cut and fold along the lines as shown on the template
3)  a) Hole punch two circles out of white cardstock  
   b) Draw a black circle on each white circle  
   c) Cut a small triangle out of orange cardstock  
   d) Attach them as shown in the picture

4)  Cut out five template 11s from various colors of cardstock.

5)  Attach them to the back of the turkey’s head.

6)  Glue or tape the side flaps of the box together.
7) Close up the bottom of the box.

8) Attach a Happy Thanksgiving sign to the front.

9) Cut out template 9 on a colored paper

10) Apply glue to the bottom of the box and attach it to the middle of the circle

11) Fill with candy!
Paper Snowflakes

Materials:

✓ 8.5” x 11” Paper
✓ Scissors

Instructions:

1) Cut 2.5” off of the short side of a piece of paper to create a square

2) Fold the square in half diagonally

3) Fold in half again
4) Fold the resulting triangle in thirds as shown

5) Flip over and cut off the bottom to leave a triangle

6) Cut shapes in the sides, being sure not to cut the entire side off

7) Unfold
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Summer Fan

Materials:

✓ Double Stick Tape
✓ Cardstock/Construction Paper
✓ Popsicle sticks
✓ Scissors
✓ Templates 13, 17, 18, 19 (suggestions for decorating)

Instructions:

1) Cut a piece of construction paper/cardstock in half

2) Take one side of the paper and, using scissors, round the corners (I rounded the top corners more than the bottom ones)

3) Double stick tape a popsicle stick to both sides of the paper
4) Decorate both sides of the fan with chosen templates (ex. 13, 17, 18, 19)
Paper Lollipop Flowers

Materials
- Dum-dum suckers
- Colored construction paper (for petals)
- Green construction paper
- Yellow construction paper
- Tape
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- Templates 14, 15, 17

Instructions
1) Cut out 4 red template 14s
2) Cut out one yellow template 17
3) Cut out 2 green template 16s
4) Punch holes in the bottom of hearts & leaves and in the center of the circle as shown.
5) fold circle in half, unfold
6) fold circle in half the other way, unfold
7) Squeeze the unfolded sides into the middle, crease and unfold

8) Fold hearts in half and unfold

9) Slide parts onto sucker stick in the order shown

10) Tape underneath to hold in place.
Spring Flower Wreath

Materials

- Paper plate
- Assorted colors of paper (cardstock/construction)-including green and yellow
- Scissors
- Glue (stick)
- Templates 6, 7, 13, 17, 19, 20

Instructions

1) Cut the middle out of a paper plate.

2)

3) Cut out eight large flowers (4 template 6s, 4 template 7s)

4) Cut out eight small flowers (or use paper punch) (4 template 13s, 4 template 19s)
5) Cut eight circles out of yellow paper (template 17)

6) Cut four template 20s out of green paper

7) Glue a small flower in the middle of a large flower.

8) Glue a circle in the middle of the small flower.

9) Repeat steps 6-7 for each large flower.
10) Glue the leaves onto the paper plate as shown, pressing firmly to be sure that they stick.

11) Glue two finished flowers onto the paper plate as shown.

12) Glue on two more flowers as shown

13) Glue on the remaining four flowers as shown
Spring Flower Pot Wall Hanging

Materials
✓ Brown Cardstock
✓ Yellow Paper
✓ Green Cardstock
✓ White Paper
✓ Various Other Colors of Paper
✓ Templates 13 and 19
✓ Hole Punch
✓ Ribbon
✓ Glue
✓ Tape (preferably double stick)
✓ Paper Cutter or Scissors

Instructions
1) Cut the brown cardstock in to the shape of a pot (or use template)
   3 \(\frac{1}{2}\)"
2 ¼”

2) Cut 3 pieces of green cardstock, 3-4” by ¼” and glue them to the back of the pot.

3) Cut out two template 19s and one template 13 out of colored paper.

4) Punch out 3 yellow circles with the hole punch.

5) Glue yellow circles to the centers of the flowers.

6) Glue flowers (or hearts) to the green paper stems.
7) Cut out a 2” by 1” rectangle on white paper and write a greeting on it

8) Glue the white paper in the center of the pot

9) Tape ribbon to the back of the pot
Owl Greeting Card

Materials:

- Colored cardstock/construction paper in 2 or 3 shades of one color
- Black and white cardstock/construction paper
- Scissors
- Templates 11, 17, 22
- Tape (preferably double stick)/ glue stick

Instructions:

1) Cut a 2”x 4” piece of cardstock
2) Cut a shallow triangle shape out of the top

3) Cut out 21 template 17s from the other color of cardstock (if you have 2 alternate colors, cut out 9 of one and 12 of the other)

4) Tape a row of 3 circles to the bottom of the paper, then a row of 4 above, overlapping slightly

5) Continue alternating rows of 3 and 4 until all 21 circles are used
6) Cut 2 template 22s out of white paper, 2 template 17s out of black paper, and 2 template 11s and a small triangle out of the original colored paper

7) Tape the black circles to the white circles and then tape them to the top of the owl, then tape the small triangle underneath them

8) Tape the two ovals to the sides of the owl
Valentine’s Day Card

Materials:

- Red cardstock/construction paper
- Two shades of pink cardstock/construction paper
- Scissors
- Template 14
- Glue

Instructions:

1) Cut the piece of red paper in half at 5.5” and fold one piece in half

. Cut out 2 light pink and 2 dark pink rectangles (2” x 2.5”)


3) Glue the four rectangles on to the front of the card.

4) Cut out 2 light pink template 14s and 2 dark pink template 14s

5) Glue each heart onto a rectangle of the opposite color
### Two Year Plan

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Preparations for Large Groups

**Tissue paper flowers for a Group** (page 4)
(For a group of 20, 3 flowers each)
- Cut out 200-300 tissue paper squares
- Bring 20 pairs of scissors
- Bring 60 pipe cleaners

**Tissue Paper Press Hearts for a Group** (page 7)
(To make 20)
- Cut out 20 of your chosen template out of cardstock/manila folders (1-7)
- Cut several different colors paper into 1 inch squares (approximately 80-100 per project)
  - The number of tissue papers needed varies depends on the project. To be safe, cut out 500 and bring tissue paper and scissors to the senior center to cut out more if needed
- Bring 20 pencils
- Bring 8 bottles of glue
- Bring 20 paper plates to pour the glue onto
- Bring newspapers to protect the tables

**Decoupage with Tissue Paper for a Group** (page 10)
(To make 20)
- Cut 20 of chosen template out of cardstock/or manila folders (1-7)
  - Punch holes in the top
  - This craft is on the fast side so it you should make a few extras
- Cut tissue paper into 1”-2” squares (approximately 25-35 per project)
- Bring 20 foam paintbrushes
- Bring 20 small paper plates for glue
- Bring Modge Podge or 8 bottles of glue
- Cut ribbon into twenty 8” inch pieces
- Bring extra tissue paper and scissors in case you run out of squares
• Bring newspaper to protect the tables from glue
• Bring about 15 pairs of scissors

Decoupage with Fabric for a group (page 12)
(To make 20)
• Bring 20 wooden or cardboard items (frames, birdhouses, etc...)
• Bring Modge Podge or wet glue
• Bring 20 paper plates for the glue
• Bring 20 foam brushes
• Bring newspaper to protect the tables
• Cut out approximately 800 1” fabric squares

Beaded Bracelet for a Group (page 13)
(For a group of 20, 2 bracelets each)
• Cut 40 11” pieces of stretch cord
  o Put tape on the bottoms
• Bring assorted pony beads or other beads with large holes

Seasonal Triangular Box for a Group (page 14)
(Christmas Trees and Snowmen)
(To make 20 of each)
• Cut out rectangles from paper (5½” x 3”)
  o 20 green
  o 20 white
  o Score and hole punch as shown
• Cut ribbon/yarn
  o 40 (12”)
  Snowmen
• Cut out scarves (One long piece [½”x2”], two short pieces [½”x1”])
  o 20 of each in assorted colors
• Cut out small triangles (carrot noses)
  o 20 orange
  Christmas Trees
• Hole punch circles for ornaments
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- Roughly 100 of assorted colors
- Trace star template
  - Cut out 20 yellow

**Pull Out Card for a Group** (page 18)

(To make 20)

- Cut 10 pieces of cardstock in half at 4 1/4”
- Cut 20 9” x 1/2” pieces of cardstock
- Cut 20 4” x 5” pieces of cardstock
- Cut 20 15” ribbons
- Cut out a multitude of various templates for decorating
- Bring 20 glue sticks
- Bring hole punches
- Bring pens

**Paper Bookmark for a Group** (page 21)

(To make 20)

- Cut out 20 bookmark shapes
- Punch holes in the tops
- Cut out 100-150 various templates for decoration
- Bring 20 glue sticks
- Cut 20 5” ribbons

**Picture Frame Card for a Group** (page 23)

(To make 20)

- Cut 20 8” x 12” pieces of paper
- Cut 20 frame shapes (as directed in instructions)
- Cut at least 100 various templates for decoration
- Bring 20 glue sticks

**Candy Spider for a Group** (page 25)

(To make 20)

- Cut out 40 scalloped black circles (template 12)
- Cut out 80 1 3/4” squares and cut along lines described in instructions
- Cut out 40 1/2” circles (template 17)
- Bring 20 flat round candies (Reese’s, peppermint patties, lollipops...)
• Bring 40 googly eyes
• Bring 20 glue sticks
• Bring several rolls of tape (double-stick is best)

**Paper Jack-o-lantern for a Group (page 28)**
(To make 20)
• Cut 80 1”x 11” orange strips
• Cut 40 black triangular eyes (template 16)
• Cut 20 black mouths
• Cut 20 1/2”x 1 1/2” rectangular stems
• Bring several rolls of tape (preferably double stick)

**Fall Greeting Card for a Group (page 30)**
(To make 20)
• Cut ten sheets of brown cardstock in half at 5.5”
• Cut out 20 large orange circles (template 21)
• Cut out 40 small orange circles (template 22)
• Cut out 180 1”x 1/2” rectangles
• Bring markers
• Bring 20 glue sticks

**Turkey Treat Holder Prep for a Group (page 32)**
(To make 30)
• Cut out 30 boxes (template 10) out of brown paper
  o Fold and cut according to instructions
• Cut out 30 large circles (template 9) out of yellow paper
• Cut 150 ovals (template 11) out of assorted colors of paper
• Cut out 30 2”x 1.5” rectangles out of light colored paper
• Hole punch 65 circles out of white paper
• Cut 30 small triangles out of orange paper (for the beaks)
• Bring 20 glue sticks
• Bring several rolls of tape (preferably double stick)
• Bring candy to put in the boxes (optional)
• Bring markers
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Paper snowflakes for a Group (page 35)
(For 20 people, 3 snowflakes per person)
- Cut 2.5” off of 60 white printer papers
- Bring 20 pairs of scissors

Summer Fan for a Group (page 37)
(To make 20)
- Cut ten pieces of construction paper/cardstock in half and round the corners
- Cut out several hundred various shapes from the templates
- Bring 40 popsicle sticks
- Bring 20 glue sticks

Paper Lollipop Flowers for a Group (page 39)
(To make 20)
- Cut out 80 red hearts and hole punch as directed (template 14)
- Cut out 40 green leaves and hole punch as directed (template 15)
- Cut out 20 yellow circles and hole punch as directed (template 17)
- Bring 20 lollipops
- Bring several rolls of tape

Spring Flower Wreath for a Group (page 41)
(To make 30)
- Cut out 240 large flowers (8 per project)
- Cut out 240 small flowers (8 per project)
- Cut out 120 leaves (4 per project)
- Cut out 240 circles (8 per project)
- Cut the centers out of 30 paper plates
- Bring approximately 20 glue sticks when you go to the senior center

Note:
- This project is best prepped by a large group
- With the template, it takes approximately 4 minutes to cut out 1 large flower
  - 15 flowers per hour
- With the template, it takes approximately 1 minute to cut out 1 leaf
  - 60 leaves per hour
Spring Flower Pot Wall Hanging for a Group (page 44)
(To make 20)
• Cut out 20 template 8s out of brown paper
• Cut out 60 3-4”x 1/4” strips of green paper
• Cut out 60 various small flowers from templates
• Hole punch 60 yellow circles
• Cut out 20 2”x 1” white rectangles
• Cut 20 15” ribbons
• Bring markers
• Bring 20 glue sticks
• Bring several rolls of tape

Owl Greeting Card for a Group (page 47)
(To make 20)
• Cut out 20 owl shapes as directed in instructions
• Cut out 420 small circles (template 17)
• Cut out 40 ovals (template 11)
• Cut out 20 small triangles (for beak)
• Cut out 40 medium sized white circles (template 22)
• Cut out 40 small black circles (template 17)
• Bring 20 glue sticks

Valentine’s Day Card for a Group (page 50)
(To make 20)
• Cut 10 pieces of red cardstock in half at 5.5”
• Cut 20 hearts (template 14) in one color and 20 in another
• Cut 20 2”x 2.5” rectangles in one color and 20 in another
• Bring markers
• Bring 20 glue sticks
Cut along the dotted lines, fold along the solid lines.