



Tapleytown

Spring 2026





Artists in Neighborhoods Spring 2026

Through Artists in Neighbourhoods 2026, Arts for All is giving youth the opportunity to explore their ways of language, expression, and experiences through engaging in diverse arts activities!

During this program, all participating children have been presented the opportunity to experience new materials and activities that helped them critically think, problem solve, and learn how to make their mark as their own individual artists!

The 100 languages poem by Loris Malaguzzi helps us educators guide children to the realization that their possibilities of discovery are endless, and their potential has no limit.

Over nine weeks of arts programming with the children, they proved to me that creativity is always present in more ways than one! No way. The Hundred is there!



9 Weeks of Creativity at Tapleytown

Final Pedagogical Documentation:
**Tapleytown After School: Todays
Family**

390 Mud St. E., Stoney Creek,
Ontario

Artist Educator: Abby Bothen

Dates: Feb 18- May 06 2026

WEEK ONE: Creating art
book covers!

WEEK TWO: Shadow artwork

WEEK THREE: Salad spinner
art

WEEK FOUR: Textures and
designs: Mixed media

WEEK FIVE: Introducing
printmaking!

WEEK SIX: Tin foil relief art

WEEK SEVEN: Introducing
weaving

WEEK EIGHT: Tie dye style
mandala art!

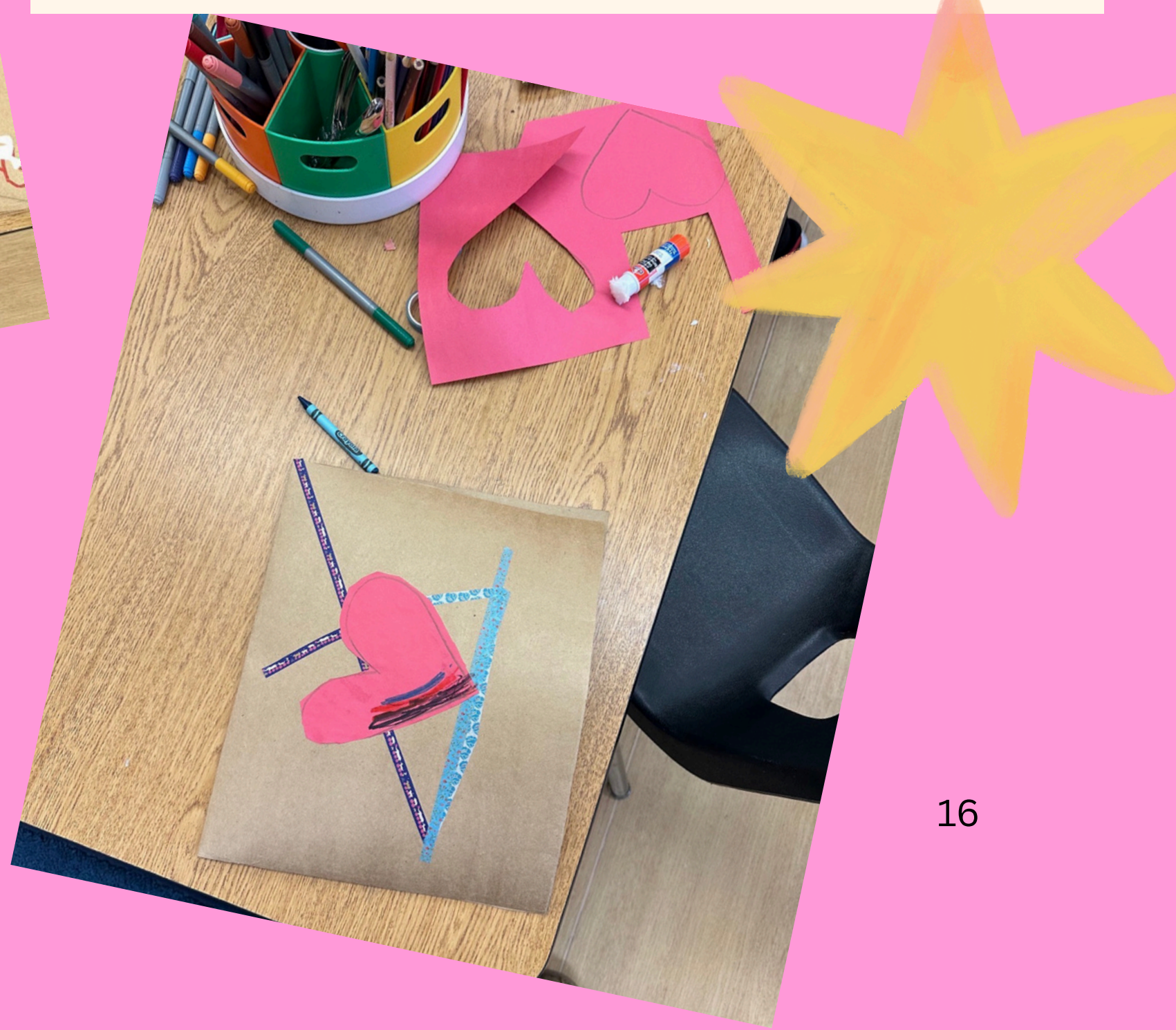
WEEK NINE: Gather around
for a story... finsihing up
our books and
experimenting with one last
activity!

WEEK ONE: Designing our art book covers!



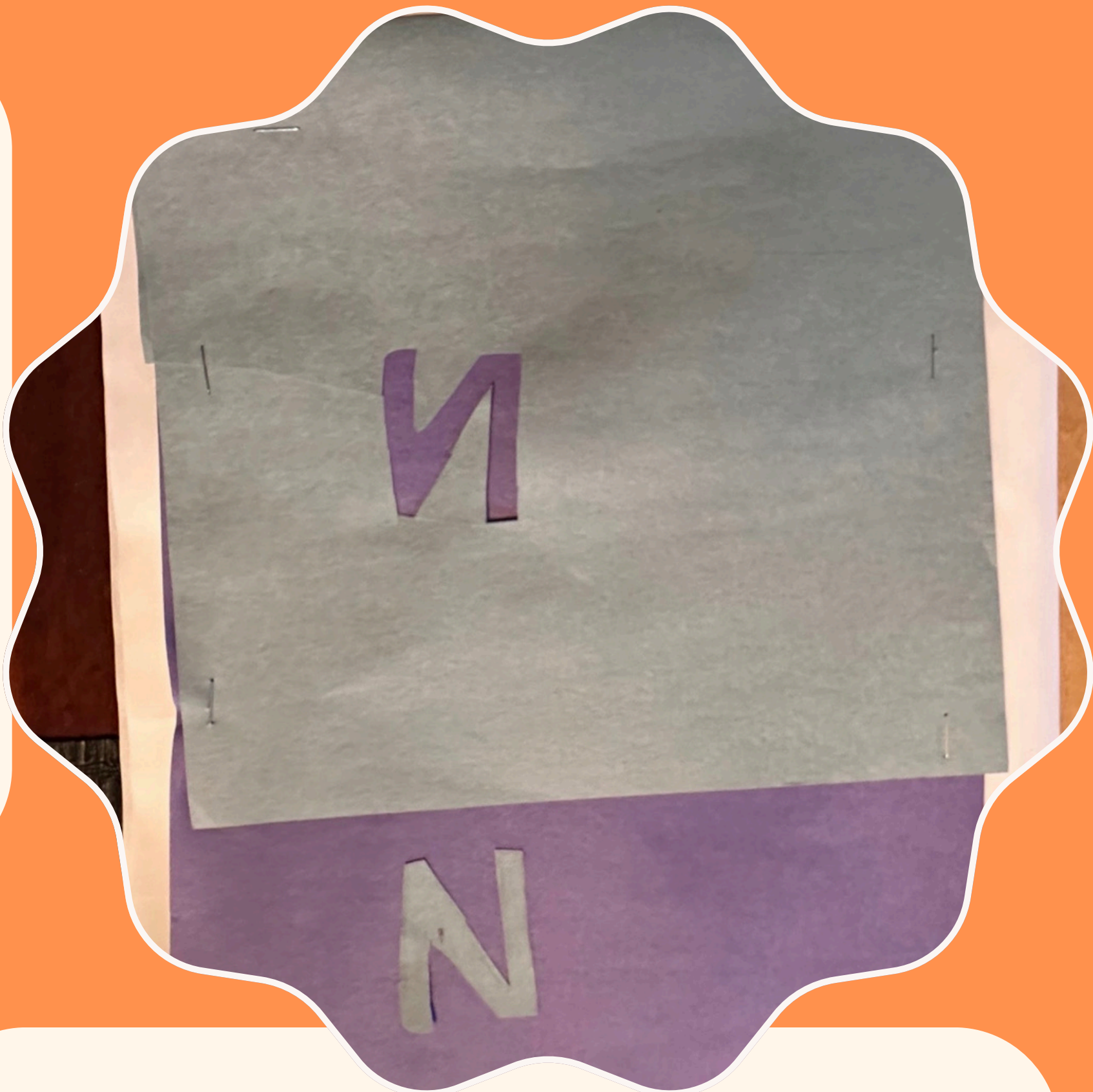
Week one at Tapleytown School was full of creativity and getting to know the aftercare children! I was able to work with both the older school-age children and the kindergarten children, and they all got to customize their own art book covers. I explained to the children that this art book would be used for the whole term and that all of our weekly activities would be stapled inside so they could take it home at the end of programming! This got the children super excited and motivated them to customize their book covers to their interests, favourite colours, and design preferences.

This activity also allowed me to get to know the children much better, as their artwork this week created conversations about their favourite things, their favourite animals, their favourite subjects at school, etc.



WEEK TWO: Shadow art!

Week two's activity was challenging in the best ways possible! This week, we introduced shadow art using coloured construction paper, drawing materials, scissors, and glue sticks. Initially, the children were confused as to how this would work; however, with practice and patience, we achieved fantastic work across the board! The children at Tapleystown were extremely curious and creative throughout this activity, showing strong interest in the process of how we could create a shadow on paper.



The children had complete creative freedom with their drawings and what they wanted to create their shadow of. They took this opportunity and ran! I observed so many different ideas being drawn on pages, including a person in a bed, a pot of flowers, and letters of names. I even had one child take one piece of paper and draw a line in the middle, then create a drawing on one side and mirror that same drawing on the other side.

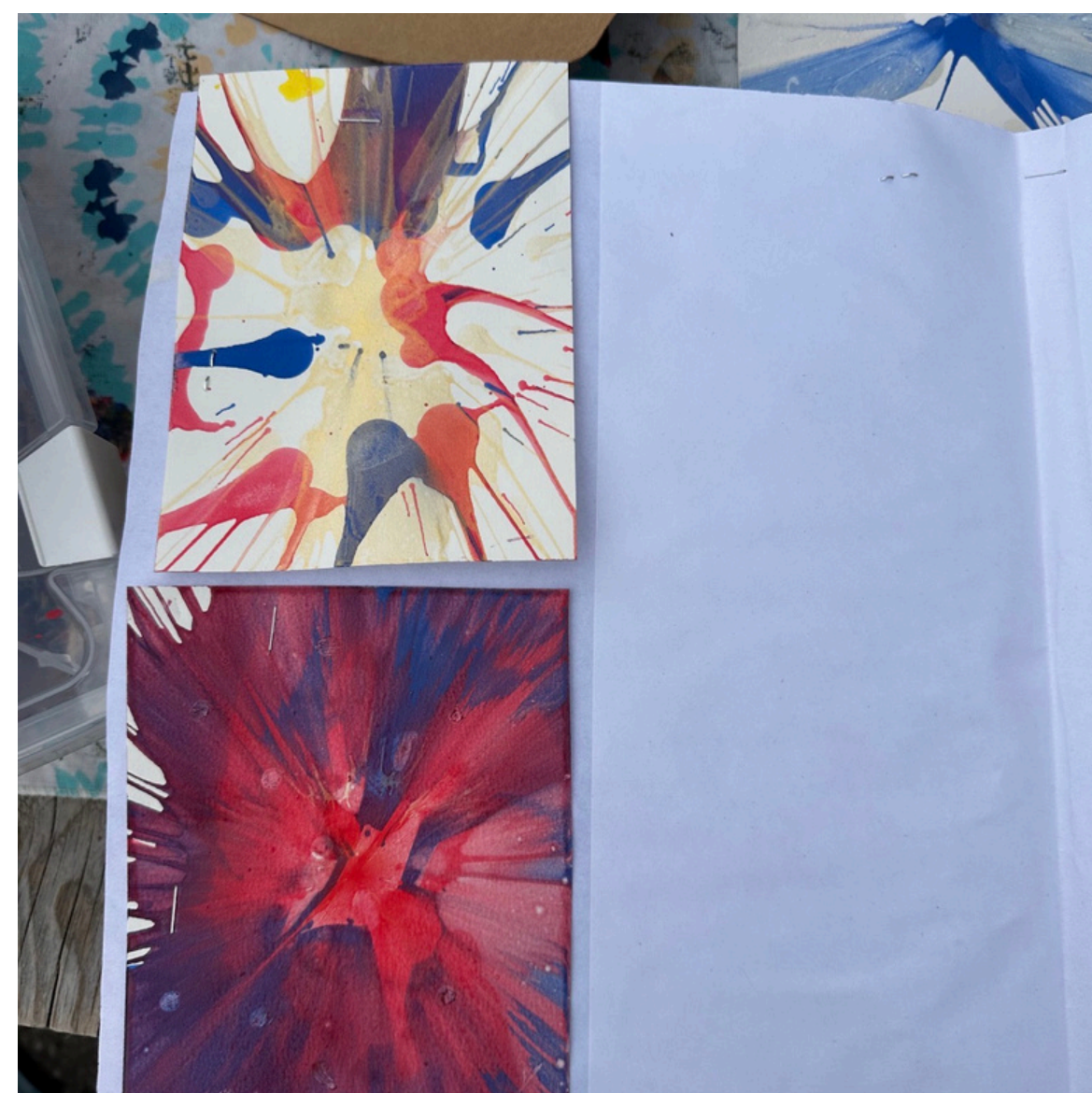
I observed so many different interpretations of the shadow activity! I made sure to give the children the idea that they could have complete creative freedom with all activities.

It was so nice to see how differently the kinders interpreted the activity compared to the older school-age children, as our end goal was never the same, but individual to each child!



WEEK THREE: Salad spinner art

During week three, the after-school children at Tapleytown got to experiment with salad spinner artwork, and they were ecstatic! Some children mentioned that they had done this activity before or that they had a salad spinner at home, and even the ECEs showed interest and said, “I want to buy one just for this!” Most of the children wanted to guess how the spinner worked and how we could create art with it. We had lots of conversations about how we could create art with typical household items—all it takes is patience and creative thought! Once the activity was explained, the children could not wait to see the results.



As we added paint to our paper and used the salad spinner, the children noticed that the spinner created a splatter effect with the paint, mentioning that some artworks looked like birds, butterflies, and sunsets. As we noticed that the colours mixed when placed on top of one another, the children started using more and more paint to completely fill the page, which worked great! We had so many rainbow splatter artworks, colour-mixing pieces, and paintings with shapes that we could easily identify. We decided that this activity reminded us of looking at clouds in the sky and saying, “Wow! This one really looks like this!”

WEEK FOUR: Mixed media collages



This week, the children at Tapleytown School got to create custom collages with natural materials such as dried leaves and pressed flowers, as well as typical classroom art materials including patterned paper, markers, glue sticks, and bingo dabbers. When I introduced the activity to the children, only a few knew what a collage was, so for most of the group this activity was a learning opportunity! Together we created beautiful collages and learned to trust the process with our artwork.

When I introduced the pressed flowers, the children were extremely excited! We learned that we had to work with them very carefully, as they were extremely delicate, and this was a great way for the children to practice respect for the materials, which they have always been fantastic at! One child was looking at the packaging for the pressed flowers and noticed little characters on the pack. The child had the idea to cut them out and stick them on their collage like stickers, and then went on to create a small scene on their collage based on the characters they chose to include!



WEEK FIVE: Introducing printmaking!

For week five of programming, we worked with two different forms of printmaking in a simple and introductory way. At one station, we used pre-made cardboard printmaking plates and acrylic paint, where the children would roll paint onto their plates and press them onto a fresh sheet of paper. At the next station, we mixed food colouring into shaving foam and pressed clean sheets of paper on top, which ultimately created a marbled effect on the page! Both versions of printmaking were very successful; however, the children gravitated more towards the shaving foam, as they could create marbled rainbow colours!

I had one child this week who came over to do the activity with me, and it was their first time participating! With help from the supervisor, Cheryl, we made this child comfortable and confident enough to try the activity, and it was fantastic to get another child involved in programming. This child ended up enjoying the activity very much, and they created multiple printmaking artworks! I also got to know this child more, which was super special, as this proved to me that art really can bring us all together!



WEEK SIX: Tin foil relief art



During week six at Tapleytown School, I introduced a more complex activity to the after-school children: tin foil relief art! I asked the children to create customized drawings on a piece of cardboard, then I traced these lines with hot glue, and once they dried, they were asked to place tin foil on top to reveal the elevated drawing. Once they finished this step, one child wanted to use acrylic markers to add colour, and all the children caught on to this!

The children were extremely patient during this activity and were completely engaged, which was fantastic to see! At first, the children created complex drawings on their cardboard, and when they put the tin foil on top after I traced the lines with glue, their original drawings transformed into something completely new. This idea of process art is something the children have experienced a lot with Arts for All programming in previous weeks, so it was inspiring to see how they could confidently trust their instincts and design choices!



One child was super interested in the activity and created about four or five of these artworks! As the child made more and more pieces, I noticed that their designs became more and more abstract. At first, the artworks depicted easily recognizable things; however, after the child realized that simpler designs worked better for this activity, they began to create designs with prominent lines and diverse shapes, and with this came super interesting, custom abstract designs. ²¹

WEEK SEVEN: Introducing weaving

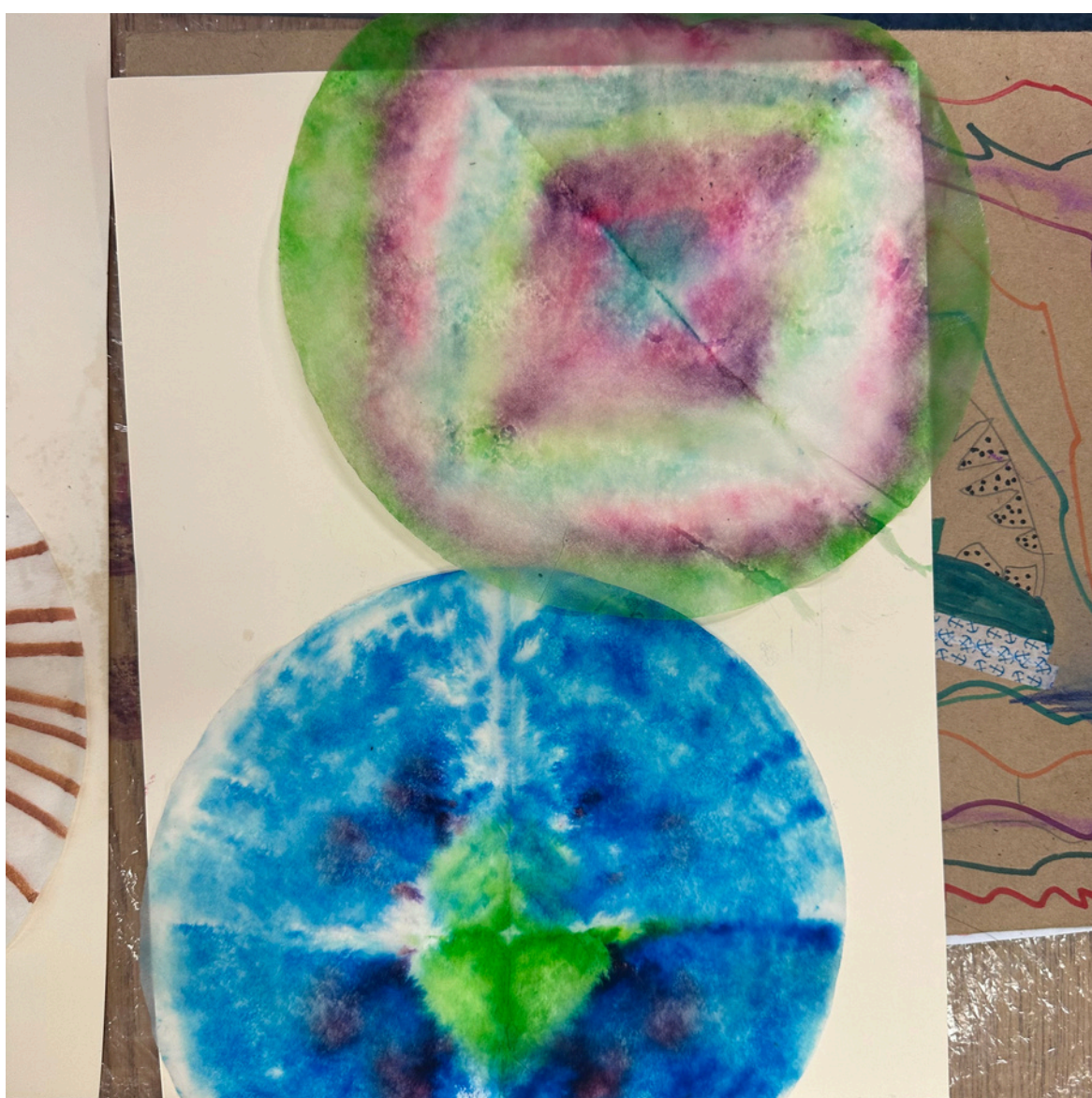
For week seven, I introduced weaving to the Tapleytown children. The children were given weaving looms made of popsicle sticks and string, along with a variety of materials to weave with, including felt pieces, ribbon, pipe cleaners, and colourful paper. I was so impressed with the children's ability to navigate the weaving process, and I had so many children try weaving in their own ways! I witnessed the children bouncing ideas off one another and mark-making on top of their finished weaving pieces to further customize them.

I had one child who created a flower out of pipe cleaners and decided to attach it to their finished weaving loom! This child experimented with different ways of attaching the flower to their work and ended up making something that could slide back and forth between the paper materials. Once this child showed their friends, the younger kindergarten children got super inspired and decided to make their own versions of this! Initially, I was concerned that this activity would be too complex for the children; however, this group always proves me wrong and shows me that they are capable of so much more! The fact that the children wanted to experiment further with the materials and add their own custom ideas was super inspiring and revealed their creativity!



WEEK EIGHT: Tie Dye style mandala art

Week eight was full of colour and fun! The children got to experiment with tie-dye/watercolour artwork using coffee filters, water, and different drawing materials, including Crayola markers, acrylic markers, and watercolour pencils. Together, we discovered which materials worked best for our tie-dye: Crayola markers! The watercolour pencils worked as well; however, the children decided that the acrylic markers were better for designs on top of the watercolour, as the acrylic didn't bleed through the coffee filters properly.



This week, I noticed one child in particular who was experimenting with the materials and created about four artworks! This child started by using the acrylic markers and spraying water on top; however, this wasn't the most successful approach. The child then moved on to using Crayola markers and discovered that this worked best, and even tried writing words on the coffee filter and spraying water on top. When the marker bled into the coffee filter, the child had the idea to use a piece of watercolour paper underneath to catch the colour and hopefully transfer the words onto the paper! This child was extremely inquisitive and invested in the activity, and the experimentation they did inspired other children to try similar things with the materials.

WEEK NINE: Wrapping up with one last activity!

Reflecting on the term

For the final week of Arts for All programming at Tapleystown, the intention is to add the finishing touches to our term-long art books and to create tissue paper lanterns for the children to take home! The entire nine weeks of the program has intended to introduce new and diverse materials to the children at the Tapleystown after-school program with Today's Family, and we absolutely achieved this!

It goes without saying that the staff and students at Tapleystown are wonderful and extremely welcoming of my programming, new ideas, and new material suggestions. The children showed continual interest, curiosity, exploration, and tons of creativity during every activity over the nine weeks! Over this time, we were able to explore new art styles like collage, tin foil relief art, and salad spinner art, which were all beneficial to the children's access to the arts and to diverse materials they do not use every day. Together, we created a safe, creative space free of judgment and artistic rules, and over the program I certainly noticed the children becoming more confident in their artistic decisions and thinking!

It was so rewarding to have conversations with the children and to get to know them through these arts activities. It was fantastic to see how creativity could connect all of us and generate conversations about bigger ideas, such as the children's interests and hobbies.

And finally, the biggest thing I noticed over the program was how the materials did the talking. For almost all of our activities, we were not aiming for a specific finished product, but rather the children were given diverse materials and guided on how they could use them. With these activities came new creative ideas and extreme variety in the end results. This, from the beginning of programming, was essential for me to deliver to the children, and they certainly proved to me that they had plenty of emerging ideas and ways of expressing themselves! It truly was a pleasure to work at Tapleystown School with the wonderful staff and students.

