

Reverse Murals

Materials for Activity

- Large roll or large sheets of plain paper
- Crayons, markers and/or (optional) a textured medium such as oil pastel
- Scissors

Preparation for Activity

- Decide how many murals to create, what size paper sheet to use and how many people will participate. If you are using a roll of paper, cut or tear off the total amount of paper you will use. If you are using individual large sheets, set aside the number you will need. Crease each large sheet to make fold lines that divide the paper into the number of panels you chose-each family member will work on one panel.
- On the back of the large sheet, label each panel so you can tape the murals back together after family members finish their individual panel drawings.
- Set out crayons or markers to share.

Description of Activity

This activity is a freestyle way to experience making a shared project through individual efforts.

While the paper is still whole, ask each family member to make one large broad, sweeping line, curve or other mark that touches most or all sections of the paper. Once everyone has had a turn, ask someone in the family to cut the paper along the fold lines.

Give each family member a panel. You may allow them to choose, but assure them they need not feel disappointed if the one they want is taken, since they each will change the piece anyway.

Invite everyone to decorate or complete the drawing on their panel in any way they wish. Tell them how much time they have and that, when they are done, you will put the panels back together.

After everyone is done, ask the family members to look on the back of their sheets. Together, lay the panels on the floor or work table - artwork side down - and tape the panels together.

Allow the family to react to their collective creation.

Discuss how the mural looks. Is it funny? Interesting? Very often a family's mural will hang together very well. Is anyone surprised that the beginning, random marks could inspire somewhat coordinated ideas for the panels? Ask what this experience might suggest about how our individual life and work fit into a community's efforts.