



ARTS PLUS

The Sunny Pages

At home art activities to brighten your day

“Mark Rothko Inspired Cardboard Paintings”

This activity is appropriate for ages 8 - 12

Time from start to finish = 45 minutes – 1 hour

You will need the following materials:

- Cardboard
- Acrylic Paint
- Paintbrushes
- Scissors
- Hot glue gun (or liquid glue or glue dots)



“Art to me is an anecdote of the spirit.” –Mark Rothko

Brief project description:

Create an abstract work of art inspired by the abstract expressionist painter, Mark Rothko. His color relationships in his abstract work represented a spectrum of human emotions.

Steps

- **#1:** Gather your cardboard. You can use any kind of cardboard, in a variety of thicknesses. Cut your different pieces of cardboard into squares, rectangles, and strips of different sizes. Save some slightly larger rectangular pieces of cardboard; these will serve as the “base” for your paintings later in the project.

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- **#2:** Paint all your different cardboard pieces (including the bases) using lots of different colors. There is no right or wrong way to go here, you just want a wide variety and a full color palette. Don't worry about making neat, precise brushstrokes, instead, let uneven brushstrokes show through. Try not cleaning your brush out when switching from color to color. Above all else, be experimental and don't over think this; just let yourself be free and paint away! After you have covered all your cardboard, set it aside to dry.
- **#3:** While your cardboard is drying, do some research and look at some of Mark Rothko's paintings online. Here is a brief YouTube video that will explain a little about Mark Rothko's life and art: <https://youtu.be/1v1mBepDIOW>
- **#4:** Once your painted cardboard is dry, create your finished works of art by placing different strips, squares, and small rectangles over the larger rectangular bases. Consider which color combinations you like best. What color pairings speak to you? Think about emotions and consider which color combinations generate different feelings. What kinds of feelings would you like your abstract paintings to evoke?
- **#5:** Once you have chosen a few pieces, glue your cardboard strips down to the cardboard bases using a hot glue gun or glue dots. If you are working with a hot glue gun, make sure it is under parental supervision. Finally, hang your work in your home and make your own Rothko inspired art gallery!



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