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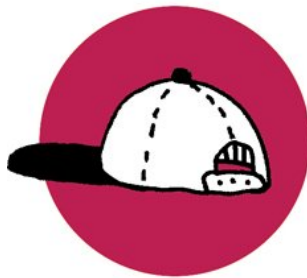
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Paint by numbers, latch hook and friendship bracelets have been around forever but what about some newer types of arts and crafts projects? If you're looking for a different activity for your children, you might want to try one of these cool ideas.

Souvenir Jars

Scrapbooking is great but consider letting your kids design memory jars, too. Buy a

few plain mason jars or save and clean old jars of mayonnaise, pickles, etcetera and encourage your kids to collect small items from vacations or special days. The base might be items like beach sand, pebbles or shells used to create whatever “scenes” they want inside with items such as tickets, figurines, twigs, dried flowers, coins or game tokens, small colorings, buttons, ride bracelets and so on. Help them label the jars with the date and place, and before long, they’ll have a shelf full of mementos neatly stored.

Diamond Painting

“What on earth?” I thought as I stumbled upon several listings for “diamond painting kits” on eBay. They were far too inexpensive to include actual diamonds. As it turns out, the craft doesn’t involve diamonds or paint. They’re printed canvases with packages of colored crystals that you stick onto the numbered spaces using an enclosed tool or tweezers, like a paint-by-numbers but with crystals. They come out looking more like shiny cross-stitch creations, and you can find all sorts of designs. Animals, flowers, and landscapes are the most popular picks. Some are full coverage meaning that the entire canvas will be covered in crystals, and others have some printed areas and some areas accented with crystals.

A typical “painting” takes about five to eight hours to complete and is best for tweens and teens who have steady hands and the patience to come back to a project for several days. You can frame and hang the pieces when they’re finished. Kits are available at Michaels as well as on eBay, Amazon, AliExpress and many others. You can watch a simple YouTube tutorial to learn the technique as most kits are made in China, and instructions may not be included.

Shaving Cream Marbling

You’ve seen the beautiful marbled paper on stationery and books, but did you know how easily you could make a version of your own even with young kids? All you need is a baking pan, shaving cream, card stock or watercolor paper, something with a straight edge and food coloring or paint.

First, fill the baking tray with a layer of foamy shaving cream. Then put several drops

of food coloring on top. You can use just one color, two or several. Then use a toothpick or stick to swirl the colors around as desired. Place your card stock on top and press lightly to transfer the paint onto it, then lift it off. Use your straight edge, which could be a piece of sturdy cardboard, a credit card, a squeegee or something similar, to wipe off the shaving foam and excess color. Don't worry; it won't smear the food coloring off the paper!

This is a very forgiving and inexpensive craft that you can do again and again. Just add a fresh layer of shaving foam and a few more drops of coloring if the colors get too mixed. Lay the card stock flat to dry.

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Jenna Glatzer (jennaglatzer.com) is the author or ghostwriter of more than 30 books, including Celine Dion's authorized biography and a Marilyn Monroe biography authorized by her estate.



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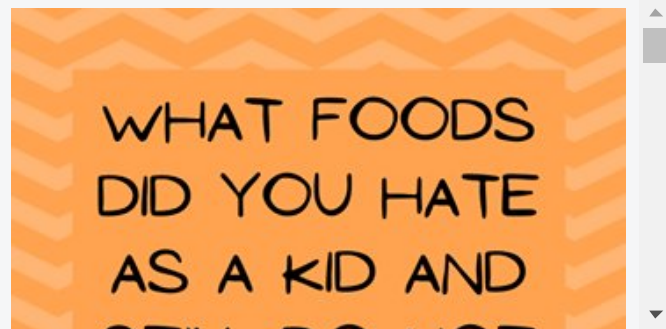
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