



Artist in Your Residence Family Art Kit

Pillow Box Totems

A paper collage project with DiAE Teaching Artist Yolanda Chetwynd



Overview

You will create a personal *totem* using a box that when folded on the lines creates a pillow shape to represent you and hold your feelings inside.

DO YOU KNOW...

- Many cultures and societies create objects that have significance and are adopted as a symbol of that person or society.
- Totems are sacred, meaning blessed, and are believed to protect the person, family, or clan.
- Totem poles are tall wooden towers with images of birds, animals, and other symbols to represent a family living in a tribe.
- Totem poles are most commonly associated with Native American tribes of the Pacific Northwest of the United States and Canada, but they can also be found in the countries of Australia, Nigeria, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Supplies included:

1 pillow shaped box
Colored paper
Glue Stick
Pencil

Things to think about:

- If I could be an animal or have animal characteristics which animal would I choose? For example, I like tigers because they are strong and have beautiful stripes on their bodies and tails.
- How am I feeling today? What color represents my feelings now? What other colors have I been feeling lately?



Directions:

1. Fill out these sentences with words or a drawing:
 - a. I am feeling anxious about...? (write on **purple** square of paper.)
 - b. I am feeling happy about...? (write on **yellow** square of paper.)
 - c. I am feeling sad about...? (write on **blue** square of paper.)
 - d. I am feeling mad about...? (write on **red** square of paper.)
 - e. I am feeling disgusted about...? (write on **green** square of paper.)
2. Create your pillow box totem with colored paper. You can tear or use scissors to create the eyes, nose, and mouth. Do you have a long nose or trunk like an elephant? Does your totem have fierce teeth like a tiger? Does your totem have wings like a bird? **Watch Yolanda show you how to create the features for your totem on the video on the link or scan below.**
3. Try placing your eyes, nose, and mouth onto the box various ways on the box before gluing.
 - a. Are your eyes symmetrical? Are they the same on each side of your face?
 - b. Is your mouth bigger, smaller, or the same size in proportion to the other features on your totem?
 - c. What other features would you like to add to your totem?
 - d. Are your features centered on your face, so that one side is a mirror image of the other? Are the sides of your face different from one another?
4. Once you have decided how you want it, glue it down. Press firmly and let dry a few minutes.
5. Carefully fold the curved lines on the bottom of the box and press the sides so it opens.
6. Put all your colored feeling squares inside the box. (This is your secret place!) Fold top of box so it closes.



Scan here for a video of DiAE Teaching Artist Yolanda Chetwynd demonstrating the project, along with links to additional resources or please visit our website:

<https://diae.org/resources/diae-artist-in-your-residence/>.

We'd love to see your totem. Please share a photo of your work and tag us!



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