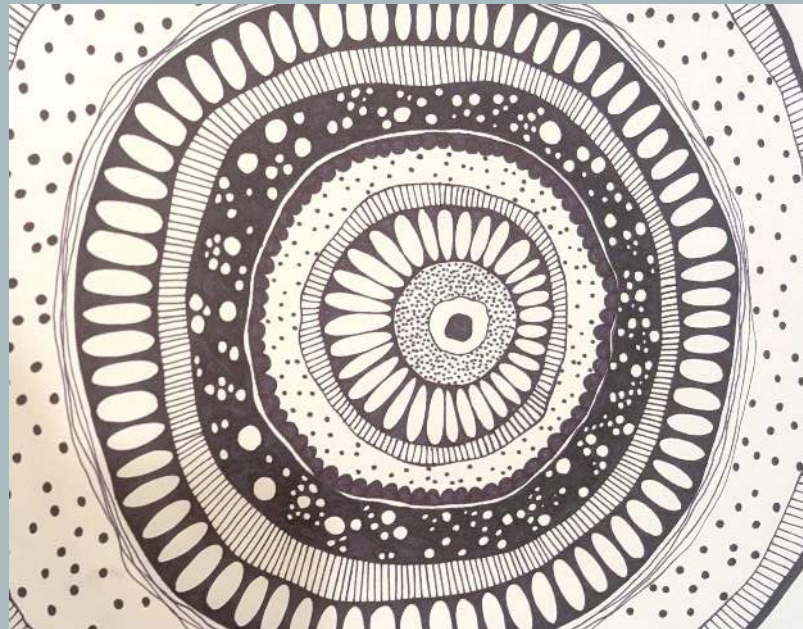


Therapeutic Arts for the Elementary Classroom

Jamie Dobbbs



How do you feel?

Place your hand on your heart or belly, close your eyes and take 3 deep breathes in through your nose and out through pursed lips.

Therapeutic arts



Therapeutic arts use creative **processes** —such as painting, drawing, clay modeling, and music—to improve mental, emotional, and physical well-being. Effective therapeutic arts for elementary classrooms focus on **process over product** to manage emotions, reduce stress, and build self-regulation.

The brains science -

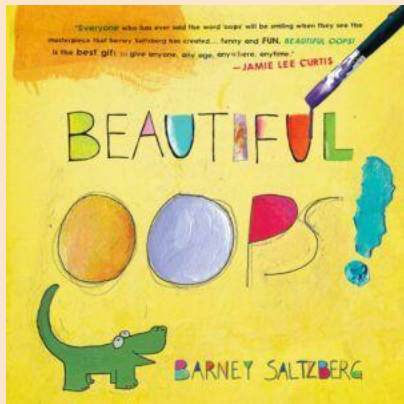
Working with your hands activates your left and right brain. Creativity lives in the right brain which is connected to the parasympathetic nervous system (calming & healing).

Anxiety shuts down creativity = creativity shuts down anxiety.

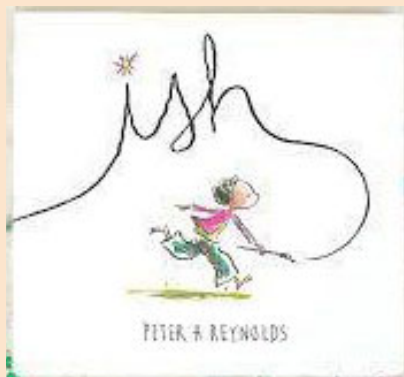
Creative routines that utilize sensory modalities and tie into the curriculum can be used in the classroom.

Books

Books that encourage thinking creatively and letting go of perfection.



Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg is a growth mindset book focused on anti-perfectionism. This book is especially good for encouraging creativity and flexible thinking in children who tend to give up as soon as they have made a mistake. Those kids who love drawing, for example, but rip up their artwork if any little thing goes wrong. Visually, the book has the feel of a messy art table – no neat and perfect illustrations here – and encourages the idea that sometimes the most beautiful results come from mistakes and accidents.



Ish by Peter H. Reynolds is a story about Ramone who is put off drawing by a rude comment from his brother. His little sister teaches him the value of creativity over perfection by thinking 'ishly.'

TACTILE ART STATIONS

Sensory play!

Clay/plasticine - Pushing, squeezing, blending, rolling, shaping, etc.

Paper, magazines - Tearing, ripping, crumpling.

Sand - Dragging, poking, shifting, raking, smoothing, etc.

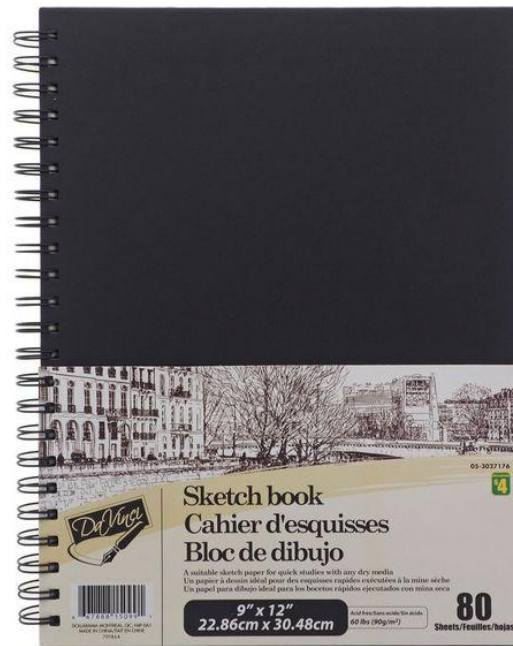
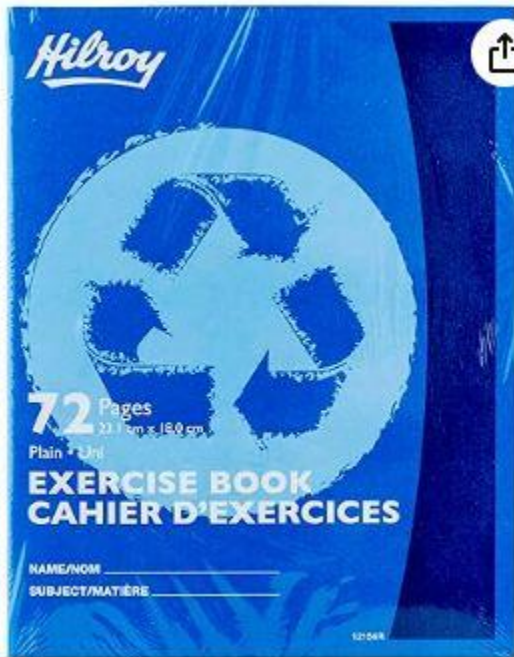
“Play Sand” from Home Depot for \$12 for a BIG bag

Yarn/Felt - braiding, felting, needling, weaving, knotting.

Drawing - Zentangles, whimsical circle doodles, neurographic art, bilateral drawing, doodling.



Sketchbooks



Process over time, growth
Collection of ideas, experiments
Used intentionally

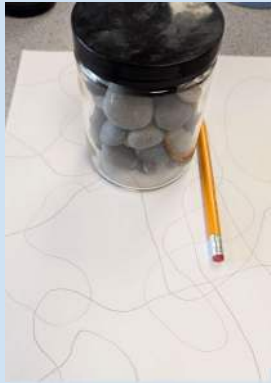
When?



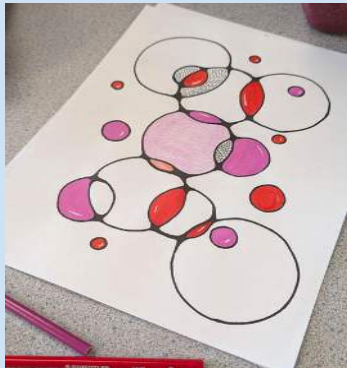
- 01 Quiet morning routine (stations)
- 02 During read-aloud (sketchbooks)
- 03 After lunch & big transitions (stations)
- 04 Individuals needing a reset

Incorporating curriculum into neurographic art, circle doodles and Zentangle art...

ARTS CURRICULUM



Rocks



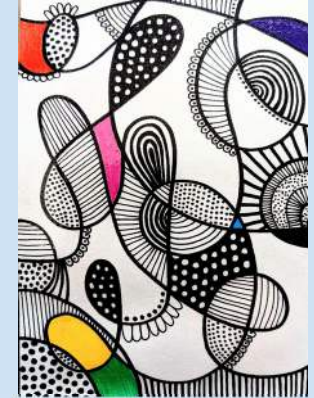
Elements of art: Shape, colour, line, space, value



Literacy:
Words
Journaling on back
Writing prompts



Principles of Design: Pattern, emphasis, unity, balance, contrast



Different **mediums:**

- Sharpie
- Felt
- Pencil crayons
- Watercolour

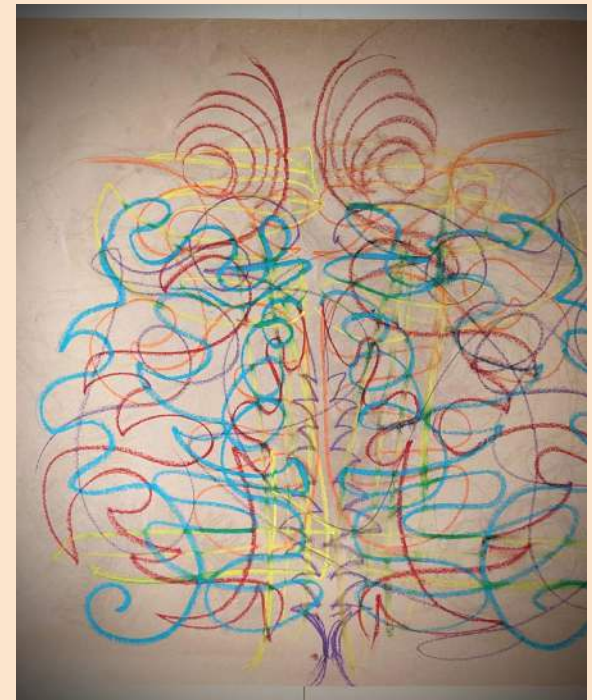
NEUROGRAPHIC ART



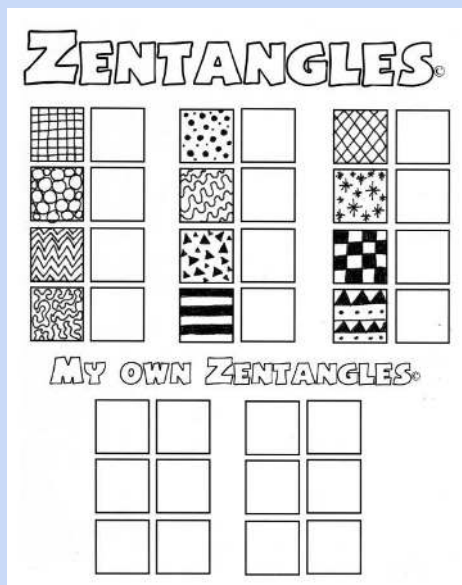
Neurographic art, also known as Neurographica, is a creative and meditative art technique developed by Russian Psychologist Pavel Piskarev in 2014. It combines elements of psychology, art therapy, and mindfulness to help individuals process emotions, reduce stress, and achieve personal goals. The process involves drawing freeform lines and shapes, which are then transformed into intricate, interconnected designs. By engaging the brain's neural pathways through the act of drawing and refining these patterns, participants can stimulate creativity, enhance problem-solving skills, and gain a deeper understanding of their inner world. The technique often incorporates intentional focus or reflection.

Bilateral drawing

Both hands at the same time. Big & small. Cross body. Bulletin board paper on the wall.



ZENTANGLE ART

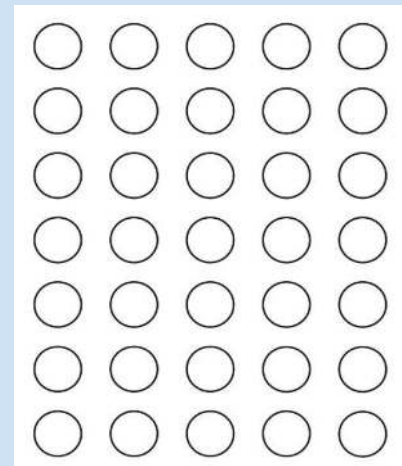
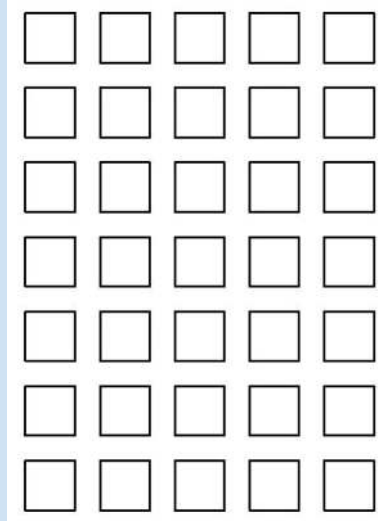
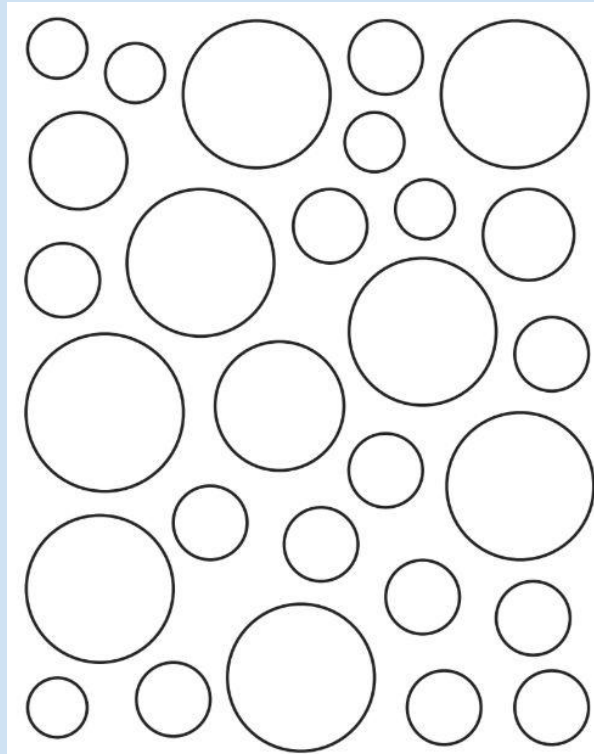
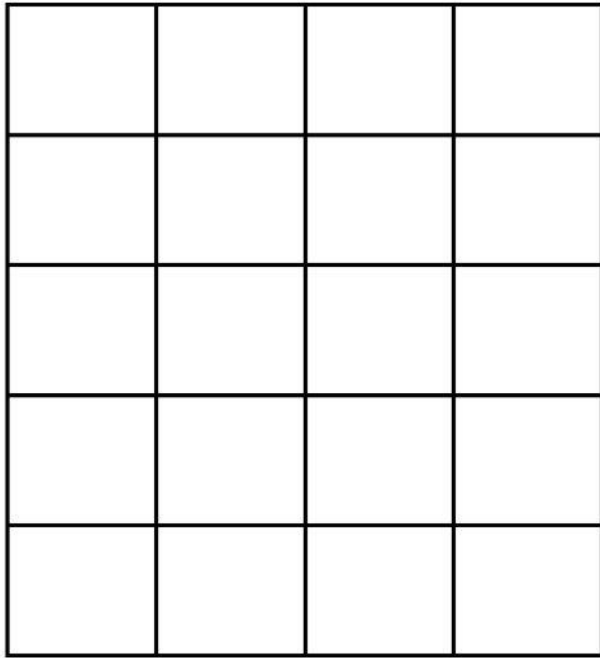


The trademarked The Zentangle Method was created by Rick Roberts and Maria Thomas. They follow specific steps and use specific language.

But anyone can create art using repetitive shapes and patterns! The nervous system loves predictable repetition. Great for fine motor control.

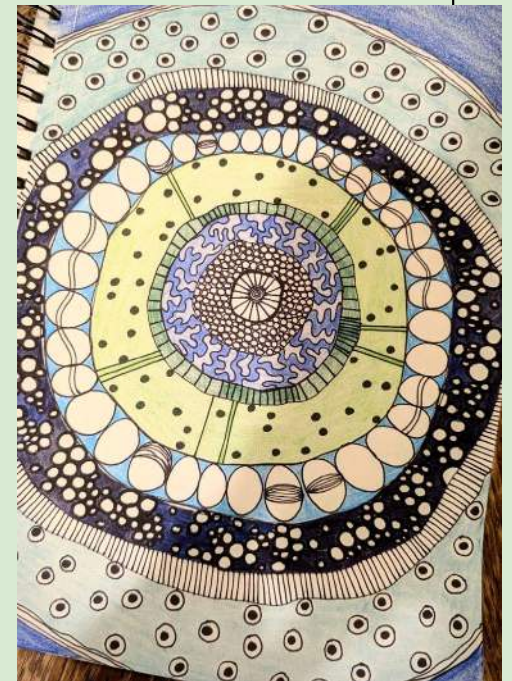
Blank practice sheets

PRACTICE YOUR ZENTANGLES



Whimsical Circle Doodles

- Use your non-dominant hand to draw concentric circles of varying widths.
- Imperfect is great!
- Fill the circles with patterns, shapes, symbols, words.
- Colour with different mediums.



Plasticine / Play-Doh

Develops hand & finger muscles, fine motor control. Good for those with written output difficulties.

PROMPTS:

- Challenges
- Story telling
- Imagination
- Building
- Creating shapes
- Forming letters/numbers
- Actions/verbs - roll, bend, stack, pull, etc.
- Play-Doh prompts (reading and following directions)
- Play-Doh setting background mats (create your own with photos from around your local area/school).



15 min STATIONS:

1. 3 sand trays & tools
2. Plasticine & placemats/prompts
3. Whimsical circle doodles (non-dominant hand 1st)

How do you FEEL?