



Trashmagination Podcast #22 – Crayons and Markers

Welcome to Trashmagination, a podcast about reimagining trash. I'm Carla Brown.

In North America, people are heading back to school and buying school supplies. We can reuse some school supplies year after year, like binders. But some items come home half used, and the kids want new ones each school year. I'm thinking particularly of crayons & markers. So I researched ways we can use up crayon nubs and dried-up markers.

Crayons

- Melt crayons in various shapes – solid colors or marble – Lego person (<http://www.instructables.com/id/Lego-Crayons/>), hearts for Valentines (<https://princesspinkygirl.com/valentines-day-class-gift-ideas>), rainbow crayons (<http://www.thriftyfun.com/Making-Rainbow-Crayons-from-Broken-Pieces.html>)
- Make a firestarter for camping, combined with egg cartons and dryer lint – <http://rethinkgreen.com/2016/05/12/diy-fire-starters-dryer-lint-crayons/>
- Glue crayons to a backing in various designs – for example, the shape of a letter – you cut the crayons with an exacto knife to get the right shape - <https://www.cleverlysimple.com/framed-crayon-letter-diy-gift-idea/>
- Feed crayons into a glue gun to make drips of wax - could teach about pointillism
- Seal a letter with drips of wax - make a personalized stamper by using a wood burner on a wood dowel.
- White crayons on white paper - write secret messages only revealed by painting over with watercolor paint
- Put melted crayons in expired glue stick tube - <http://www.infarrantlycreative.net/wanna-be-silkies-holder/>
- Playdough from crayons - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N591amBSe8o>
- Candles - <http://adventures-in-making.com/diy-crayon-candles/>
- Batik - <http://elementaryartfun.blogspot.com/2012/08/awesome-crayon-batik.html>
- Embroidery - <https://blueberrybackroads.com/blogs/blueberry-backroads/29107265-color-crayons-fabric>
- Lipstick & lip gloss from crayons – combined with coconut oil
- Mosaic - <http://amanda0480.blogspot.com/2011/08/discards-free-crayon-mosaic-art.html> - Starry night

National Crayon Recycling Program - http://www.crazycrayons.com/recycle_program.html - make into shaped crayons and firestarters – but it is better to use the items locally to reduce the environmental impact of shipping.

When you buy new crayons, consider soy crayons or beeswax crayons. You can also make your own beeswax crayons - <https://weefolkart.com/beeswax-crayons/>.

Dried-Out Markers

You might be able to extend the life of a marker by adding some water and putting some plastic wrap, then adding the lid - <http://preschoolinspirations.com/how-to-save-a-dried-out-marker/>

For markers that are truly dried out, I have some ideas for both the marker part and the plastic caps.

Let's start with the caps. I made a bracelet from marker plastic caps by drilling them at the closed end and then sewing them using ladder stitch, used by artists who make beadwork. This involves putting darning needles at both ends of a long string and then going back and forth between each cap. To make the bracelet easy to put on, I wanted to use a string that was stretchy but strong so I cut a strip from an old t-shirt. I saw a picture of a purse someone had made with a lot more caps. I would need to collect marker caps to make such a bag.

Other ideas for what to make with the marker caps are:

- Mosaics
- Jump rope - <https://www.icanteachmychild.com/show-and-share-saturday-link-up-39/>
- Finger puppets - <http://childcentralstation.com/2010/08/a-few-ideas-with-marker-caps-as-promised.html>
- Rainbow necklace - <https://www.etsy.com/listing/196115814/cap-tivating-upcycled-marker-cap-rainbow>

Here are ideas for what to do with the marker other than the cap:

- If you take the caps off and put them marker-side down in a glass jar, you can make watercolor paint - <http://picklebums.com/easy-art-for-kids-marker-paints/>
- You can dye white flowers by putting those flowers in marker water.

Crayola has a program to recycle markers but you have to register as a school – so you could coordinate with a local school - <http://www.crayola.com/colorcycle.aspx>. This is in the contiguous US and some areas of Canada.

There are refillable markers products available such as Eco-Smart markers and Bottle 2 Pen by Pilot.

Artists I Admire Who Creatively Reuse Crayons and Markers

- Frederico Uribe - <http://federicouribe.com/> - Columbian artist who lives in Miami - works with many types of materials – crayons, bullets, sneakers, baby bottles, records – He says, “Objects are like words, you can use them any way you want to use them.” He is teaching about how to think of objects as materials that can be used in new ways. He says we are overwhelmed by objects.
- Herb Williams - <http://www.herbwilliamsart.com> – American artist primarily crayons – sometime melted, sometimes solid - Ring of Fire – like a flame – also made animals in an exhibit called Call of the Wild
- Hoang Tran - <http://hqtran.tumblr.com/> - carves crayons mostly into cartoon characters – He lives in Pittsburgh - Etsy store is <https://www.etsy.com/shop/CarvedCrayons>
- Diem Chau - <http://tinyhaus.blogspot.com/> - Carves crayons into flowers & custom portraits
- The Pen Guy - <http://penguyart.com/> - Costas Schuyler – born in Greece now live in California – collects pens for art projects – covered a Mercedes Benz and called it the Mercedes Pens – in Art Car shows

If you make items from crayons or markers, I would love to hear about your projects at trashmagination@gmail.com. Also, leave a review of this podcast so more creative reuse enthusiasts can find it! Until next time – may you see trash as just another source of art in your life.

Additional Resources for this Podcast

- Trashmagination Pinterest Board for Crayons, Markers and Pencils project ideas - <https://www.pinterest.com/Trashmagination/crayons-pencils-markers/>