

God's eyes

Art and crafts

45 minutes

You will need:

2-3 sticks per person, such as kebab skewers, craft sticks or even twigs from the garden

Yarn of various colours, textures and materials (scraps or leftovers, or bought specifically for the purpose)

Scissors

A tapestry or large-eyed needle to tuck ends away

One-to-one



Gentle
Creative
Cultural

Inspired by a traditional craft from South America, the process of making these woven 'God's eyes' ('Ojo de Dios' in Spanish) is very simple once the sticks are secure. They can also be joined together to create wall hangings.

To begin:

The first thing you will need to do is secure the sticks – this can be done in advance if you prefer.

Take two sticks, or three for more complexity, and lay them across each other to form a cross. Using a piece of yarn, tie a knot around the centre of two of the sticks. Then proceed to wrap yarn tightly around the first in one direction over the point where the sticks meet – between 5 and 10 wraps is usually enough – then wrap the yarn the same number of times in the other direction across the cross.

Tie the yarn securely. Then use a tapestry needle to hide the end in the wraps and snip any tail. Once this is done, the sticks should be fairly rigid depending on what type of stick is used. If this is too complex or time consuming, a glue gun could be used to secure the sticks together instead.

Next:

Invite people to choose a new piece of yarn to work with. Participants can choose any colours they like. The yarn will need to be secured to one of the sticks using a tight knot.

Move to the next stick and wrap the yarn around it. The yarn should be fairly tight between points and should be wrapped in the same direction at all times. It needs to be wrapped as close to the centre as possible to create a spiral. Keep wrapping around each stick in turn – when you return to the knot, you have completed a single round. Keep going to build up a nice wide stripe. A good number of rounds for a stripe is six, but this is up to the individual.

When the yarn is finished or the participant wants to change colours, tie a knot to one of the sticks and start a new colour in the same way that you started the first.

Tails of yarn can be hidden by using a tapestry needle and sewing through the wraps on the stick.

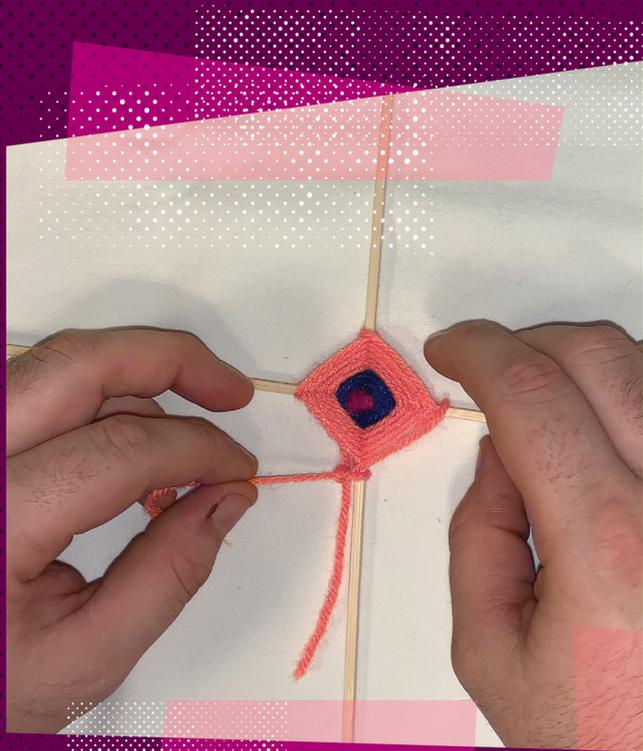
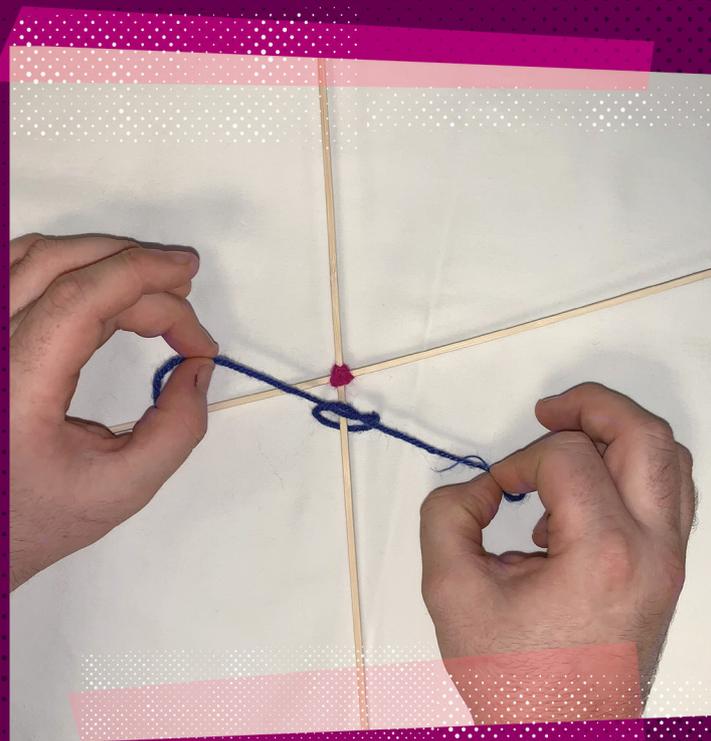
To finish:

To give a more finished look, wrap yarn around the individual sticks numerous times on the final trip around the Gods' Eye.



Credit:

Avondale Care Home.





You could also:

The basic method outlined above will create a flat God's Eye. More texture can be added by changing the direction of wraps on different sticks. More sticks can be added to create more complexity. When using more sticks, you can skip sticks to create different patterns.

Pictures of elaborate God's Eyes can be found online, as well as more information about the history and uses of the activity. This could form part of an introduction or a separate activity in its own right.

If you need to purchase yarns for this project, reasonably priced colour packs are available in small balls, but there is a certain amount of fun to be had in collecting odd bits and bobs of yarn from family and friends and staff members.

If you need sticks, a walk around the garden or a local park to collect suitable twigs and sticks could also be incorporated into the activity or could be a separate activity altogether. Make sure the sticks are dry and free of moss and dirt and don't have too many off-shoots.

