Outreach Activity Planning Tool

Title:
Anglo-Saxon Christmas Decorations

Overview:
Creating Christmas tree decorations based on the designs of Anglo-Saxon composite disc brooches.

Objectives/Skills:
- Craft - Design - Motor skills - Creativity

Subjects:
Art, history, design

Age Level:
Age 7 and up as some parts might be quite fiddly.

Materials:
- Metallic card (gold) - Coloured paper - Ribbon - Glue - Scissors - Stick-on jewels (optional but a nice addition) - Gold or silver pens for drawing on extra decoration, or glitter pens for the extra festive touch (optional) - Hole punch - Blank paper for sketching out designs - Images of real disc brooches as inspiration - Anglo-Saxon resource sheet

Time Required:
Half an hour to an hour

Background:
Anglo-Saxon composite disc brooches are highly decorative objects made by skilled craftsmen. They are lovely to look at and it can be fun to have a go at replicating the designs. The red and gold colouring lends itself well to the festive season so is a good hook for getting participants interested.

Vocabulary:
Anglo-Saxon, disc brooch, composite, filigree, garnet

Preparation:
1. Cut out circles of gold card – you should be able to get 6 brooch shapes per A4 sheet.
2. Punch a hole near the top of each gold circle to thread the ribbon through.
3. Cut lengths of ribbon – need to be long enough to create a decent loop so it can be hung on a Christmas tree. 20-30cm is good.
4. Depending on the age of the participants, you may want to pre-cut some decorative shapes e.g. circles etc.

Procedure:
1. Take one of the gold card circles and place it in front of you with the punched hole at the top.
2. Using the brooch pictures for inspiration, work out your design. You may want to sketch it out on a blank piece of paper first.
3. Using the coloured paper, cut out the pieces to make up your design. You might want to lay them all out before you stick them down.
4. Now it's time to glue your pieces to your gold brooch.
5. You can add rhinestones or sequins for extra embellishment. A blunt pencil is good for details like filigree, or you could use a gold marker pen or a glitter pen.
Once you are happy with your design, take a length of ribbon and thread it through the punched hole. Tie the ends together in a knot to form a loop. Your decoration is now ready to hang on the Christmas tree!

Extensions:
There is scope to discuss many aspects of Anglo-Saxon life with this activity, including:
- Culture and beliefs (what do the decorative motifs mean, why were people buried with the brooches etc.)
- Status (who wore these brooches and why)
- Technology and craft skills (who made the brooches, how)
- Design (geometry of the brooches)
Materials (what materials were available, where did they come from, trade)
This activity can also be repeated at other times of year – just omit the punched hole and ribbon. You could instead attach a safety pin to the back so it can be worn as a brooch, for example.
There are a number of colouring sheets in the Outreach Toolkit that could be used alongside this activity.

Instructions

For this activity you will need:

- Scissors and glue
- A hole punch
- Gold card
- Ribbon or string
- Colouring pens or pencils

Step 1: Cut out a circle of gold card to your desired size. A 9cm diameter makes a good sized ornament, but you can go as big or small as you like.

Step 2: Complete your brooch-inspired design! You can colour in one of our templates or, if you are feeling very artistic, you can have a go at drawing your own design.
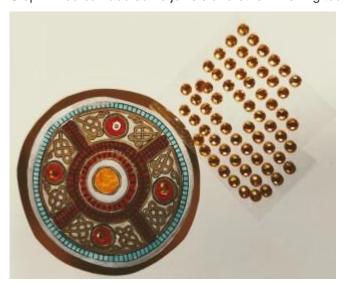

Step 3: Once you have finished your design, use the glue to stick it onto the front of your gold card circle.

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Step 4: You can add some jewels and other finishing touches to really make it sparkle!

Step 5: Once you are happy with your design, use the hole punch to make a hole at the top of your decoration. Thread some brightly coloured ribbon through the hole and tie at the top.
Your Anglo-Saxon inspired Christmas decoration is now ready to hang on your tree. Beautiful!

Don't forget to share your creations with us! Tag @findsorguk on Twitter or Instagram.

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