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Activities at Home

Cut Paper Mosaic

Alma Thomas is the first African-American female to have a painting displayed in the White House. Thomas painted stunning, colorful abstracts inspired by nature. Visit the Smithsonian American Art Museum's [website](#) to learn about Thomas' life and art. You can see her painting, *Resurrection*, which was added to the White House collection in 2015 [here](#).

Thomas is known for her bold, bright colors and strong, geometric shapes. Follow the instructions below to create a cut paper mosaic inspired by Thomas' work.

To make the mosaic, you will need:

- White sheet of paper
- Several sheets of construction paper in colors of your choice
- Scissors
- School glue



First, choose inspiration for your artwork. Alma Thomas was inspired by nature. Do you have a favorite place in nature? What colors are at that place? Are there patterns in the leaves, on the bark of trees, or in the way flowers bloom?

Once you think of your favorite place in nature, cut the colorful pieces of construction paper into small geometric shapes, like rectangles or squares. The shapes do not need to be identical, but it does help if they are similar in size and shape.



Next, lay out the colorful shapes on your white piece of paper in a way that represents your favorite nature location. Once you are satisfied with your design, glue the shapes to your white paper. When it comes to glue, just a dot will do. The mosaic below is inspired by a field of green grass dotted with yellow and purple flowers.



Once your work is dry, share it with your friends and family. Ask them how the colors of your artwork make them feel. Share how the colors make you feel. Is there rhythm or a pattern to your design? If so, ask your friends and family if they can identify the pattern.

For more information about Alma Thomas, and to learn about several other African-American artists, visit [We Are Teachers](#). Be sure to ask a grown-up for permission to visit the website.