
This work is valuable for librarians and other staff experienced in working with younger teenagers or adults with special needs. The projects are suitable not only for libraries but also for holiday camp programmes and institutional care settings. At first glance one of the many other craft books illustrated attractively in colour many seem a better option. However, this rather drab ALA publication is outstanding for its clear, practical instructions, realistic time-management advice and templates. The 12 projects need energetic, well-organised, dexterous, committed leaders to succeed. The authors indicate how to match the project with the target group and give tips on modifications for time and ability constraints. Participants should have interesting products to take away: a picture frame, decorative stationery, a funky patch for clothing, an organiser, scrap accessories, a mobile, a decorated container, a memory board, jewellery, a box made from a book, a clay creature or a game. Mobile phone and computer games do not give young people that feeling for materials – wood, metal, textiles, glass, clay – that enrich life experience. Pressed into service to try the Make Your Own Game activity, some boys found playing with the chess set they had made (having constructed the pieces from nuts, bolts, washers and other hardware) rewarding and fun. The suggested materials and preparations worked well.

The appendices provide templates; list supplies, tools and materials; explain and illustrate techniques and tools; and recommend books and online sources of further information. Recycled and free or very cheap scrap materials are well used in most activities. The authors encourage readers to implement the projects but do not underestimate the level of difficulty or the staff required for different group sizes. The clear black-and-white photographs show what the finished products could look like. This book needs promotion to be noticed, for example at staff workshops where leaders demonstrate techniques and participants try some of the projects for themselves. It is recommended for libraries where craft books are frequently borrowed and craft activities are included in in-house or extension programmes.

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