



Rose beadwork by Velvet Johnson

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

MÉTIS DOT ART WORKSHOP

Métis Nation
of Ontario 

OBJECTIVE:

To become familiar with a contemporary art form that is inspired by traditional Métis beadwork. When we focus on a 'new' or 'modern' art form, we also create a space where we can discuss how the Métis Nation is vibrant, resilient and is honouring Métis women and our ancestors in new and innovative ways. Moreover, the flowers, animals and activities featured in the dot art templates are all images that represent our connection to the land and our great respect for all life.

NOTE: *As with traditional beadwork, dot art is an activity that should be facilitated and attended with respect. It is recommended that you open this workshop with some cultural grounding in traditional beadwork and explain how this new form of artwork is a contemporary expression of our honour and respect for our culture.*

MÉTIS DOT ART

Métis dot art is a contemporary art form that is inspired by the traditional beadwork of the Métis people. This form of art creates images using dots in a sequence to represent beads. In this way, each dot represents a single bead and together, all the dots, create a dimensional piece of art. Flowers and nature scenes are traditional choices in both beadwork and dot art, as they represent our connection to the land and our great respect for all life.

The images in the Métis Dot Art workshop appendix are all symbols or images you can find in our Métis communities.



SUPPLIES NEEDED PER PERSON:

- MNO Métis Dot Art templates (see appendix)
- Tempura or acrylic paint
- Chopsticks, cotton-swabs or toothpicks
- Small containers to hold paint (eg. egg cartons)
- Markers (may be used instead of paint)

SET UP:

Métis Dot Art is a hands-on activity that embraces our culture and expresses it in a new and innovative way.

Step 1: Paint is the best medium for this activity as it creates dimension on the page and multiple layers can be added on top of one another. Markers can be used instead of paint although the effect is not as impressive.



Step 2: Lay down newspaper or a washable/wipeable table cloth on all tables. A smock or old shirt is also recommended. Keep the templates on another table to offer choice. If outside, place a small rock on the piles of paper so they don't blow away.

Step 3: Pour paint into small containers and place one or two cotton swabs with each colour.



Step 4: Before participants are asked to pick their template and begin the activity, provide samples of Métis beadwork and discuss the traditions behind them. Then discuss Métis dot art as a new art form that is inspired by the beadwork of Métis women and our ancestors. Discuss how we can honour and respect our culture in new and innovative ways.

Step 5: When templates are chosen, ask the student to begin their dot art by creating small dots all in a row, similar to how beads would be stitched in a row. This activity requires concentration and is great exercise for even the busiest hands as it requires focus and mindfulness. Encourage participants to cover their entire images with dots so that it looks like a piece of beadwork.

Participants should be encouraged to write their name on their artwork.



Step 6: When the image is complete, ask participants to add dimension and layers to their dot art. Ask about the background: "Where is the fish? Is it in a pond? Is it in a river? Is it on a hook?"

Step 7: Finished artwork can be displayed on a wall to dry with double-sided tape, tack or push pins.

