

# Candle Making

## Social Studies/Art

Make you own candles for wonderful gifts and holiday decorations.

### What You Need

- paraffin wax or beeswax (in any form)
- wick
- electric frying pan or saucepan for stovetop heating
- tin can, such as a coffee can
- plastic cups (any size, depending on how big you want the candle to be)
- large spoons (used only for crafts)
- crayons or natural colorant
- craft sticks, dowels, or pencils
- masking tape
- cheese grater
- water
- oven mitt

### What to Do

1. Fill the frying pan or pot halfway with water and place the tin can inside the pot. Pour the desired amount of wax into the tin.
2. Turn on the stove or the frying pan and allow the water to come to a full boil. The wax will slowly melt to a liquid form. The tin can will rattle around, but it won't tip over. When boiling, hot water could spit out a bit, so make sure the students stand clear during the melting process.
3. Take a plastic cup and cut a piece of wick a little longer than the length of the cup.
4. Either tape or wrap one end of the wick around the center of the craft stick. Rest the stick across the top of the cup, so the wick is standing vertically in the center of the cup, touching the bottom.
5. If you are using crayons as your colorant, have students grate different colored crayons into separate piles. You can also use natural, powder colorants to dye the candles. Stir in the grated crayons or colorant once the wax is fully liquefied.
6. After turning off the heat, pour the desired amount of wax into the cups. The tin can will be very hot, so use an oven mitt to protect your hands.
7. Allow the candles to cool overnight. The next day the candles should slide easily out of the plastic cups. If there is resistance, carefully roll the side of each cup against a hard surface and the wax should free itself from the

plastic. You can also cut the cup if you are not planning on reusing it.

**Important Note:** The age of the children doing this activity should determine how involved they are during the melting and pouring of the wax. An adult should supervise all ages.

### **Teaching Options**

- If the students want to make striped candles, pour in as much of the first color as desired and then allow the candle to cool completely. Repeat the wax melting/coloring process with another color. The candle must be firm before you pour the second color on top of the first. You can use as many different colors as you like, following these steps.
- If the students want to add scent to their candle, pour in a small amount of scented oil right before you pour the wax into the cups. You don't want to pour the oil in earlier because the heat will boil off the scent.