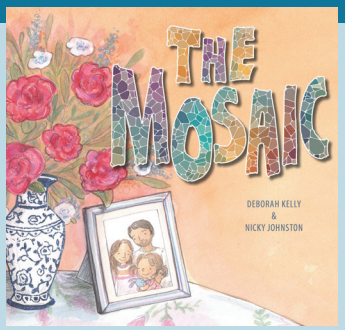
EK BOOKS
TEACHER NOTES & RESOURCES



Title: The Mosaic
Author: Deborah Kelly
Illustrator: Nicky Johnston
ISBN: 9781922539731 | **Publication date:** Oct 2024
Audience age: 4-8 years
Key Curriculum Areas: English, Mathematics, Science / STEAM, Health and Physical Education, Visual Arts

SYNOPSIS:

Frankie discovers that beautiful things can be made from broken pieces, in this sensitive and hopeful story about family separation.

One day, Mum's vase breaks, and everything changes. All of a sudden, Frankie's Dad doesn't live at home anymore, and Nana has come to stay for a while. Frankie's life has broken apart just like the vase, and she feels upset and lost. Then Nana has an idea...

Full of expressive, colourful illustrations, *The Mosaic* is an optimistic story about parental separation and the healing power of art. Little readers will delight in following Nana and Frankie as they go on an adventure and find an unexpected source of hope and inspiration. They will see that while some changes can feel sad and overwhelming at first, they can also lead to happiness if we know where to look. Children all over the world are impacted by parental divorce and separation. *The Mosaic* offers a fresh perspective, focussing on the good that can come from change and giving children comfort in a time of grief and uncertainty. Inspired by the author's conversations with her own children, it is a uniquely personal story that will help any children going through difficult changes to find hope, resilience and joy.

THEMES:

- Family – divorce and separation
- Change
- Emotions
- Art
- Resilience
- Comfort

SELLING POINTS:

- Directly addresses the topic of parental separation, which affects a huge proportion of families around the world.
- Takes a uniquely optimistic approach to discussing separation, helping children cope with change by accepting it and finding the positives that come about because of it, not in spite of it.
- Inspired by the award-winning author's conversations with her children about her own separation.

AUTHOR MOTIVATION:

The Mosaic offers a fresh perspective on parental separation for young children. While its themes do include grief, resilience and coping with change, the over riding message of the story is positive: when precious things break, beautiful new things can still be made from the pieces. There is another theme in the story, too: finding comfort and solace in the arts during times of turmoil- something many of us could relate to during the recent COVID pandemic. To help children navigate the disruption and grief that comes from parental separation. To offer them hope and a fresh perspective in this overwhelming time. To highlight the arts as a source of comfort and inspiration during times of difficulty.

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AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR BACKGROUND:

Deborah Kelly grew up in New Zealand but has also lived in Japan and Scotland. She has written picture books, junior fiction and middle grade fiction as well as poetry and material for the educational market. She is passionate about literacy and enjoys visiting schools, libraries and festival events to share her books with children.

Nicky Johnston Nicky is an educator, speaker, and an award-winning author/illustrator of over thirty children's books. She enjoys every aspect of creating books for kids, especially illustration. Nicky's illustration style is often described as whimsical, emotive, soft, and expressive. Her love of teaching sees her busy with school visits and presenting at workshops and conferences..

INTERVIEW

AUTHOR:

What is the inspiration for this story?

I wrote The Mosaic after my husband and I separated, and our children kept hearing the term 'broken home', which is widely used to describe separated families. I don't like this phrase due to the negative connotations of a family being irreparably 'damaged' and therefore 'less than' families who are not separated. I told my children that all of the important people in their lives were still there and still loved them, but that things just looked a bit different now than they did before. I used the analogy of a mosaic to describe this- sometimes beautiful things break- but we can still make different beautiful things from the pieces. I want all children to know that families come in different shapes and sizes, and what works for one family may not work for another. I set the story in a gallery because I have always turned to books, movies, and art galleries for solace in times of need. The healing power of art is undeniable.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

I have enjoyed watching Nicky's illustrations come together. She has illustrated the book with warmth and sensitivity- from the loveable characters to the colour palate's gentle hues. We have created a piece of art in itself, that will hopefully provide solace and hope to children going through family separation. Another special part of this project was my daughter, Sakura's involvement. She was the first person to read the manuscript and offer feedback.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

The most difficult part of The Mosaic was the experiences which led to me writing the story. Family separation is hard on everyone- parents, children, pets, extended family and friendship circles. But like any kind of adversity, it is also a wonderful opportunity for growth.

ILLUSTRATOR

What media do you use to create your illustrations? Briefly describe your process.

For this book I used a very large variety of mediums. For the most part the illustrations are created with water colour and pencil. But all the artwork within the book was created separately using, ink printing, collage, lino printing, and mosaic gluing. Once I had roughed out the whole book, I was able to work out all the artwork within the gallery, creating a large colourful mosaic piece using paintings of teapots and cups, cutting them up to create the sunshine and flowers scene. This was a huge project in itself! The blue and white vase used throughout the book was created by carving lino plate and printing it onto thin paper. I used many prints of the vase to hand cut the vase breaking and the final mosaic.

What was the most rewarding part of this project?

The most rewarding part of this project was being able to experiment with lino printing and to include the variety of printing and collages to create the artworks throughout the book.

What was the most challenging part of this project?

Experimenting and exploring new mediums is exciting and a lot of fun. But spending so much time and effort into something (the colourful mosaic art in the gallery) while having a looming deadline was a bit stressful. I wasn't sure until the very end if I would be happy with it. It was the most time-consuming part of the whole book. But the most rewarding because I loved the process and the end result.

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TEACHER ACTIVITIES/NOTES:

N.B. These questions and activities can be adapted to suit the experience and ability of students.

DISCUSSION: BEFORE READING

- Show students two vases (or pictures of vases), one is intact and the other is in pieces. Ask, what are they? Which one has more value? (ie. Which is worth more money? Which is more functional? Which is better for the environment or our health, etc?)
- Discuss ways that the broken pieces could be used. Will these ideas give it more value?
- Ask students if they have heard of the term, 'mosaic'. What is it and how is it created? Are there examples of mosaics in the school or around the community that you can see?
- Look at the cover of 'The Mosaic'. What do you notice in the illustration? What do you notice in the title? Who do you think the people in the frame might be? Why do you think the front cover includes a vase, a family and mosaic patterns? What do you think this story is about, and what does it make you wonder?
- How does the cover make you feel?
- Do you think this book will be helpful? Why?

DISCUSSION: DURING READING

- What can you tell is happening in this family? How might the little girl be affected by her parents' actions?
- How might the broken vase relate to Frankie's family?
- What might Nana want to show Frankie?
- Where did they go? What might you find there?
- Can you see what Frankie sees in the ceramicist's artwork?
- What does it mean, 'the pieces of her world would probably never fit together exactly how they used to...'? What has Frankie accepted about her family?
- What do you think will happen next or after the story finishes?

DISCUSSION: AFTER READING

- What did you like / dislike about this story? How did it make you feel? What was your reaction to the ending?
- What did you learn about Frankie and her family? What emotional and physical journey did she go on? What aspects were the same and what were different in the end?
- What does the vase represent? What kinds of things did Frankie learn about the broken vase and about mosaics?
- Why was the vase special to Mum? What events was the vase used for? How might you feel if a special present broke? How do you think Mum and Dad feel about it?
- What did you learn about the role of different people in families? Does every family look the same?
- What did you, and Frankie, learn about making changes? Have you had a similar experience with family changes?
- How does the author describe Frankie's 'new arrangement'? How do you think Frankie feels about it? How do you know?
- What other strategies can you think of for helping Frankie, and other children in her situation, with coping with big changes in the family?
- What else does this story make you wonder about? What would you like to know?
- What do you like about the illustrations? How do the colour choices, patterns, perspectives and vignettes help to show the emotions and actions in this story? How do the facial expressions and body language show how Frankie (and her family) is feeling in different parts of the story?
- How can you relate to this story? Have you had changes in your family, been to an art gallery, or made a mosaic?
- Why is it important to see things from another perspective, especially in difficult situations?

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ACTIVITIES:

ENGLISH

Vocabulary: Nouns, Verbs, Adjectives

(AC9EFLA08) (AC9E1LA07) (AC9E2LA07) (AC9EFLY13)

- Locate in the book the nouns, verbs and adjectives relating to Frankie's feelings and experiences, and the attributes of her new family arrangement and the mosaic picture. Students could use **BLM 1** to sort the words into the columns.

Nouns: *Mum, Dad, Nana, Frankie, Mother's Day (proper nouns), vase, present, birthday, anniversary, flowers, kitchen floor, pieces, fields, sheep, riverbank, playground, bridge, city, gallery, painting, masks, picture, ceramicist, plates, bowls, earthquake, mosaic,* etc.

Verbs: *broke, changed, held, born, curled, squeezed, jostling, wandered, tiptoed, smell, taste, sparkled, arranged, rode,* etc.

Adjectives: *big, broken, special, curious, little, blue, winding, cool, quiet, tall, wide, fragrant, salty, curved, flat, chipped, new, important, beautiful,* etc.

- Students could add to these lists and create sentences including some of these terms. Illustrate sentences with pictures of Frankie and her trip to the gallery or the mosaic picture, or themselves during a time they had to experience a family change.

Vocabulary: Spelling - Mosaic

(AC9EFLY10) (AC9EFLY12) (AC9EFLY13) (AC9EFLY14) (AC9E1LY11) (AC9E1LY13) (AC9E1LY14) (AC9E2LY09) (AC9E2LY10) (AC9E2LY11)

The word 'mosaic' comes from the Latin word "musa", which means 'a muse'. It is a picture or pattern created by the arrangement of lots of small materials.

- Ideas to learn the word 'mosaic':
  - Say the word aloud.
  - Clap the syllables.
  - Write the word broken into syllables: m/o/s/ai/c.
  - Create the word using small materials, like square paper tiles, stones, broken shells / safe glass, etc.
  - Colour in the word with a mosaic pattern (see **BLM 2**).
  - Arrange letter tiles in order to spell 'm-o-s-a-i-c'
  - Go on a scavenger hunt to find 'mosaics' in this book, other texts or in the environment.
  - These ideas can be used with other words from the book, including, *'vase', 'broken', 'pieces', 'gallery', 'ceramicist',* etc.

Vocabulary: Literary Device – Rhyme and Near Rhyme

(AC9EFLA08) (AC9EFLE04) (AC9E1LE04) (AC9E2LE04) (AC9EFLY09) (AC9EFLY13) (AC9E1LY09) (AC9E1LY10) (AC9E1LY11) (AC9E1LY13) (AC9E2LY09) (AC9E2LY10) (AC9E2LY11)

'The Mosaic' includes some rhyme and near rhyme to help make the story engaging and memorable.

- Make a list of the words with rhyme and near rhyme found in the text, and add more of your own to each pair. Rhyming words include: '*away/stay*', '*true/new*'.
- Discuss the near rhyme words and how they sound similar but not identical. Some examples include, '*born/floor*', '*quiet/light*'.
- Students might like to write their pairings in a picture frame template (See **BLM 3**) or in puzzle pieces (see **BLM 5**).

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Comprehension: Cloze

(AC9E2LE02) (AC9EFLE05) (AC9E1LE05) (AC9E2LE05) (AC9EFLY05) (AC9E1LY05) (AC9E2LY05)

- Students can put the 'broken' sentences back together again to make sense.

1. ***'The day / everything changed. / Mum's vase broke'***
2. ***'on the kitchen floor. / Now it was / a big, broken mess***
3. ***'ever fit / How would they / together again?'***
4. ***'was as tall as the ceiling / and as wide as the room. / The picture'***
5. ***'They had just / to create something new. / been arranged differently***
6. ***'as a mosaic. / Maybe they could find a new way / as beautiful / that was every bit***

- Students can illustrate a sentence of their choice. See **BLM 4**.

Comprehension

(AC9EFLE01) (AC9EFLE02) (AC9E1LE02) (AC9E2LE02) (AC9EFLE05) (AC9E1LE05) (AC9E2LE05) (AC9EFLY05) (AC9E1LY05) (AC9E2LY05)

- Through writing and discussion, answer comprehension questions relating to the story, such as:

Knowledge: Who was in the story? What happened to Frankie's family in the story? What was the main idea / focus? Where do the events take place? How does the book show what can be done with broken vases, etc? What can you see on the last page?

Comprehension: Retell the story in your own words. What were the main messages? What is the family change that occurred in the story? What emotions have been portrayed? How do families look after one another? How did Nana help this family?

Application: What did Frankie realise to help her cope with the disruption and grief in her home? Why is family important? Why does the author want readers to see things from another perspective? How does the author help us understand the value of creating and the arts?

Analysis: What are some of the features of a family, or the features of a vase or mosaic picture? Draw a labelled diagram of one of the above. Create a slideshow showing the sequence of family changes/ events in your own life. Compare how your feelings about a particular event (eg. separating parents, a grandparent moving in, a new pet, etc) has changed over time.

Synthesis: "The pieces of her world would probably never fit together exactly how they used to, either. But all of them were important, and all of them were still there." Discuss this phrase. What are some of the positive things about the pieces never fitting together the same? What kinds of things about family will never change? Why is it important to have and continue relationships with your family members? What ideas can you think of for designing a plan, or a way for families to remain connected? Make your own mosaic design for a big picture.

Evaluation: Do you agree that change can be a good thing? Why or why not? What are the positive and the difficult emotions portrayed in the story? Do you think any of these should be different? What is the most important thing the story is teaching us? How has this book given you a different perspective on family changes? What is your view on mosaic pictures and/or creating them?

Recount / Reflective Writing

(AC9EFLE02) (AC9E1LE02) (AC9E1LY01) (AC9E2LY01) (AC9EFLY06) (AC9E1LY06) (AC9E2LY06)

- Encourage students to think about a time when their family changed, or if they broke something important, and how they felt. Students should include what happened, how each person felt, how they managed the situation, the challenges and outcomes.

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Creative Writing: Descriptive Language with Similes and Metaphors

(AC9EFLE01) (AC9EFLE05) (AC9E1LE05) (AC9E2LE05) (AC9EFLY06) (AC9E1LY06) (AC9E2LY06)

'The Mosaic' story includes the metaphor of the broken vase representing a 'broken' family, with the mosaic representing a new, beautiful family arrangement. It also includes the simile, ***'as beautiful as a mosaic'***.

- Students can brainstorm their own similes to describe a mosaic.
  For example, '***as intricate as a mosaic***', '***as fitting as a mosaic***'.
- Using their chosen simile, students can write a short story or poem with descriptive language about how mosaic art is like a family fitting together. Be sure to include interesting or emotive words or phrases and 'SHOW not TELL' strategies.

Creative Writing: Descriptive Language and Emotions – Innovation on Text

(AC9EFLE01) (AC9EFLE05) (AC9E1LE05) (AC9E2LE05) (AC9EFLY06) (AC9E1LY06) (AC9E2LY06)

- Students can complete the sentence about their families with their own descriptions, or they might like to use their chosen simile from the previous task.

'My family changed when _____.' or

'I felt _____ when _____' or

'My family is as _____ as a mosaic because _____.'

- Students can be guided to include some descriptive phrases and emotive verbs or adjectives.
- They can illustrate their sentences and then collate them all to make a class book titled, 'My Family is a Mosaic'.

Narrative Writing

(AC9EFLE01) (AC9EFLE02) (AC9E1LE02) (AC9E2LE02) (AC9E1LY01) (AC9E2LY01) (AC9EFLY06) (AC9E1LY06) (AC9E2LY06)

- Students can write a narrative story based around a newly arranged family, or a visit to the art gallery, or being a part of a mosaic. This could be real or imagined, heartfelt or funny.
- Ask students to think about who (or what) their characters are, and what might be the conflict or problem to solve. What events or situations might be experienced (real or imagined)? What is the tone of the story? What personal emotional or physical challenges might need to be overcome? How will they be resolved?
- Begin your narrative with a sizzling start, such as dialogue, onomatopoeia, action or scene setting. Think about using interesting figurative and emotive language.
- Set it out with a beginning, middle and end.

Procedural Texts

(AC9E1LA03) (AC9E2LA03) (AC9E1LA09) (AC9E1LE02) (AC9EFLY01) (AC9E1LY01) (AC9E2LY01) (AC9EFLY03) (AC9E1LY03) (AC9E2LY03) (AC9EFLY07) (AC9E1LY06) (AC9E1LY07) (AC9E2LY06) (AC9E2LY07)

- Students write and present a procedural text on how to create a piece of mosaic art.
  For example, the steps to making an easy paper mosaic include:
  - Choose the colour paper for your background.
  - Draw your design lightly on the background paper.
  - Cut out or collect your paper tiles and shapes from different coloured paper.
  - Glue each coloured paper in position on the design.
  - Trim any pieces over the edges.
  - Frame or hang up for display.

Further instructions can be found at: https://tengemsdiy.com/easy-diy-paper-mosaics-for-kids/

Students need to include an opening statement about the theme or topic, organised step-by-step paragraphs about what to do, and a summarised conclusion or a handy tip.

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Thinking Tools / Graphic Organisers

(AC9EFLE01) (AC9EFLE02) (AC9E1LE02)

- **Puzzle Organiser:** Use the puzzle diagram to flesh out ideas on a chosen topic, such as 'Different Art Forms'. The sub-headings would include the different art forms, like painting, sculpture, photography, music, writing, drama, film, and what they mean. See **BLM 5**.
- **Timeline:** Complete a timeline to show the changes in your family from the time you were born to now. Think about including dates and pictures for each event. See **BLM 6**.
- **De Bono's Six Thinking Hats:** Think about how you felt/would feel if your family changed, or what your family looks like now. Use the six hats to consider your feelings and the information available. **Red** (fears, feelings, intuition), **White** (information, facts), **Yellow** (Benefits, positive thinking), **Blue** (big picture, focus, learnings), **Green** (creative thinking, alternatives), **Black** (risks, problems, obstacles). See **BLM 7**.

SCIENCE / STEAM

Density Column: Separating Mixtures

Science links: Chemical sciences - (AC9SFU03) (AC9S2U03) (AC9SFH01) (AC9S1H01) (AC9S2H01) (AC9SFI01) (AC9S1I01) (AC9S2I01) (AC9SFI02) (AC9S1I02) (AC9SFI03) (AC9S1I04) (AC9S2I04) (AC9SFI04) (AC9S1I05) (AC9S2I05) (AC9SFI05) (AC9S1I06) (AC9S2I06)

This experiment is designed to represent the notion of different and separate parts coming together to create something beautiful. Be sure that students write their predictions, observations and evaluations throughout the experiment.

Materials needed: Glass jar, vegetable or sunflower oil, water, food colouring, dish soap, honey, golden syrup, a few small objects like lego, coin, plastic toy, button, paper clip, etc.

Directions:
Jar 1 - Pour some water into the jar, then pour the same amount of oil on top. Drop two objects in and observe what happens. Record.
Jar 2 - To create more layers, you need liquids of different densities. Add, in the following order: honey, golden syrup, dish soap, water and food colouring, and oil. Add an object to float on each layer.

Science involved: 'Each of the liquids has a different mass of molecules or different numbers of parts squashed into the same volume of liquid; this makes them have different densities. Therefore, one can sit on top of the other – the more dense a liquid is the heavier it is.'

- Discuss and evaluate which objects sink and which float, and why.

Further instructions can be found at:
Density Explained - Easy Density Experiments and Tricks for Kids (science-sparks.com)

MATHEMATICS

Number: Vase Fractions

Number Year 2: (AC9M2N03)

- Students create vase puzzles by cutting out the parts of the vase (see **BLM 8**). They can use fraction language when piecing it back together, including 'whole', 'half' or 'halves', 'quarter' or 'quarters', and 'three-quarters'.
- **Extension - Smaller fractions:** Students can draw and cut smaller fractions to create more 'broken pieces', using language 'eighths', 'sixteenths'. The parts all need to be of equal size.

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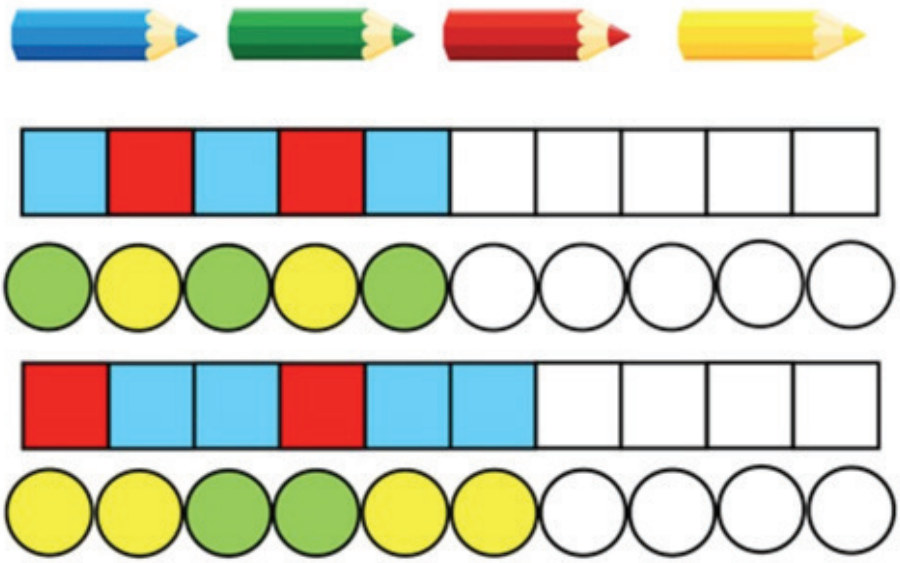
Repeating Patterns

Algebra: (AC9MFA01) (AC9M1A01) (AC9M1A02) (AC9M2A01)

- Students can use concrete materials or recognise or draw repeating shapes, symbols or numbers and continue the pattern (like a mosaic). For example,



HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Healthy Mind / Healthy Body Ideas:

(AC9HPFP01) (AC9HP2P01) (AC9HPFP02) (AC9HPFP03) (AC9HPFP04) (AC9HP2P02) (AC9HP2P03) (AC9HP2P04) (AC9HPFP05) (AC9HP2P05) (AC9HPFM01) (AC9HPFM02) (AC9HP2M01) (AC9HP2M02) (AC9HPFM03) (AC9HP2M03) (AC9HPFM04) (AC9HP2M04) (AC9HP2M05)

Mindfulness and physical activity are ideal for mental and physical health, as well as building relationships with family and friends.

- Help to plant some flowers in pots for your garden.
- Share some comforting food or activity with a family member to help you both feel better on down days.
- Talk to a family member about your feelings. Write a journal or draw pictures.
- Use your favourite vase on special occasions, or on ‘just because’ days.
- Take a road trip to somewhere special. Notice all the landmarks, shops and people along the way.
- Visit an Art Gallery! What interesting artefacts, sculptures and paintings can you discover?
- Find a mosaic piece of art in your local area. Notice all the patterns on the pieces and the type of materials used. Guess what the pieces came from!
- Find out more about what a ‘ceramicist’ does.
- Read books, brochures and other texts about art.
- Bake and cook your favourite treats!
- Take photos with different family members. Frame and hang them up.
- Go for a bike ride with your parent!
- Create a beautiful mosaic sculpture or picture that represents your family.

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VISUAL ARTS

Family Portrait Art

(AC9AVA2E01) (AC9AVAFD01) (AC9AVA2D01) (AC9AVAFC01) (AC9AVA2C01) (AC9AVAFP01) (AC9AVA2P01)

The illustrations in 'The Mosaic' have been created with soft pastels and warm tones for a sense of comfort.

- Using a medium, such as chalk, pencils or pastels, with a fine liner for the lines, students can draw a family portrait to place in a frame. The frame could be drawn or made with small materials like a mosaic.
- Students can share what their family means to them, or how it has changed. See **BLM 3** for a template.

Make Your Mosaic Sculpture or Picture

(AC9AVA2E01) (AC9AVAFD01) (AC9AVA2D01) (AC9AVAFC01) (AC9AVA2C01) (AC9AVAFP01) (AC9AVA2P01)

- Students can make their own mosaic art as a sculpture or a picture, using materials of their choice. These could include safe glass or ceramics, plastic mosaic tiles, paper tiles, bottle lids, buttons, coloured pasta, shells, etc. The art could be attached to paper, or by using grout, plaster or clay for a sculpture.
- Students share what their mosaic art represents.

Various mosaic ideas can be found at: krokotak | Mosaic

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Word Sort

NAME _____ DATE _____

Use the table to sort groups of words. Place your own headings in the boxes.

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MOSAIC

NAME _____ DATE _____

mosaic

mosaic

mosaic

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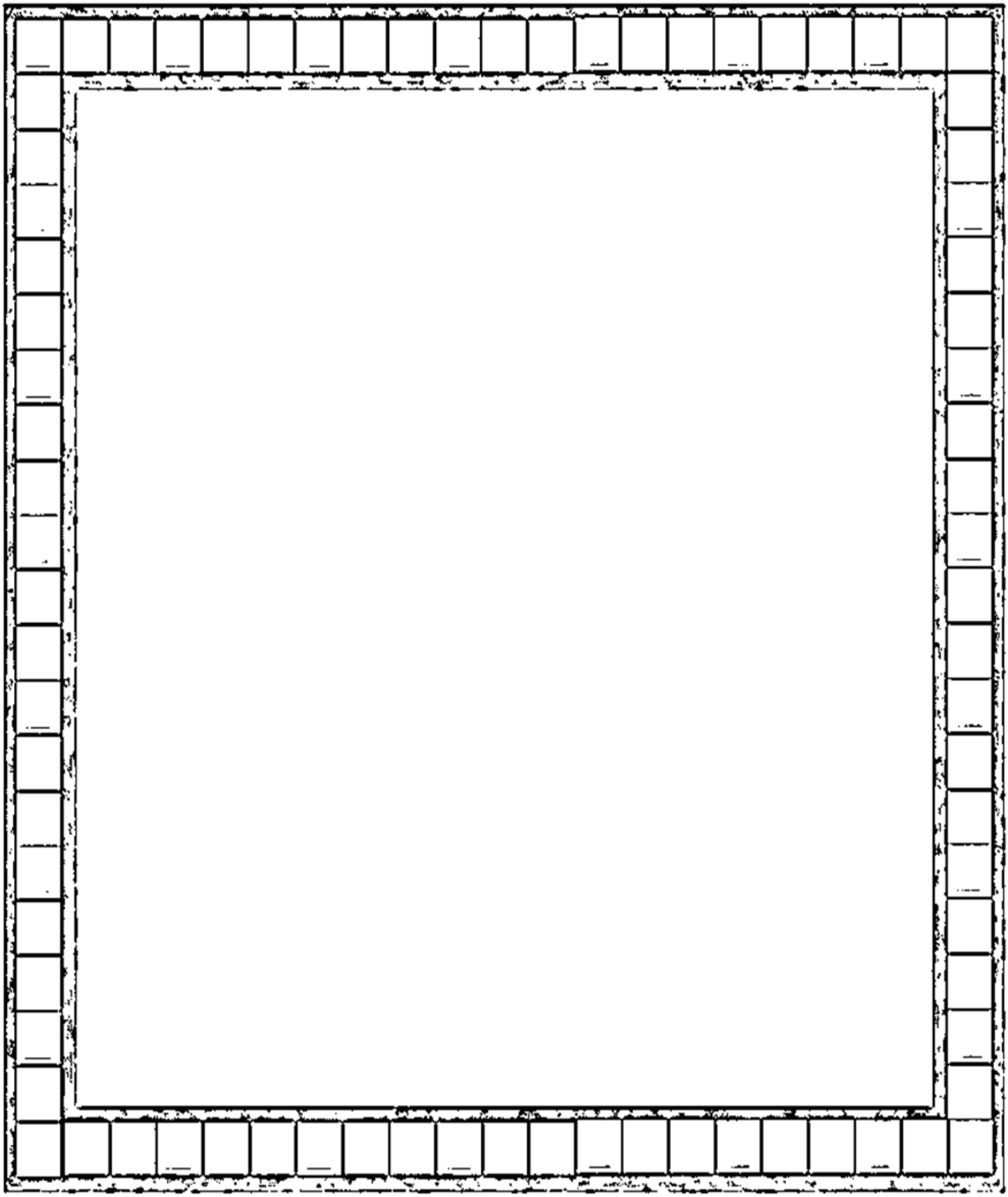
Photo Frame

NAME _____ DATE _____



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The Mosaic

NAME _____ DATE _____

Cut and paste the sentences in the correct order to put them back together.

The day	everything changed.	Mum's vase broke,

on the kitchen floor.	Now it was	a big, broken mess

ever fit	How would they	together again?

was as tall as the ceiling	and as wide as the room.	The picture

They had just	to create something new.	been arranged differently

as a mosaic.	Maybe they could find a new way
as beautiful	that was every bit

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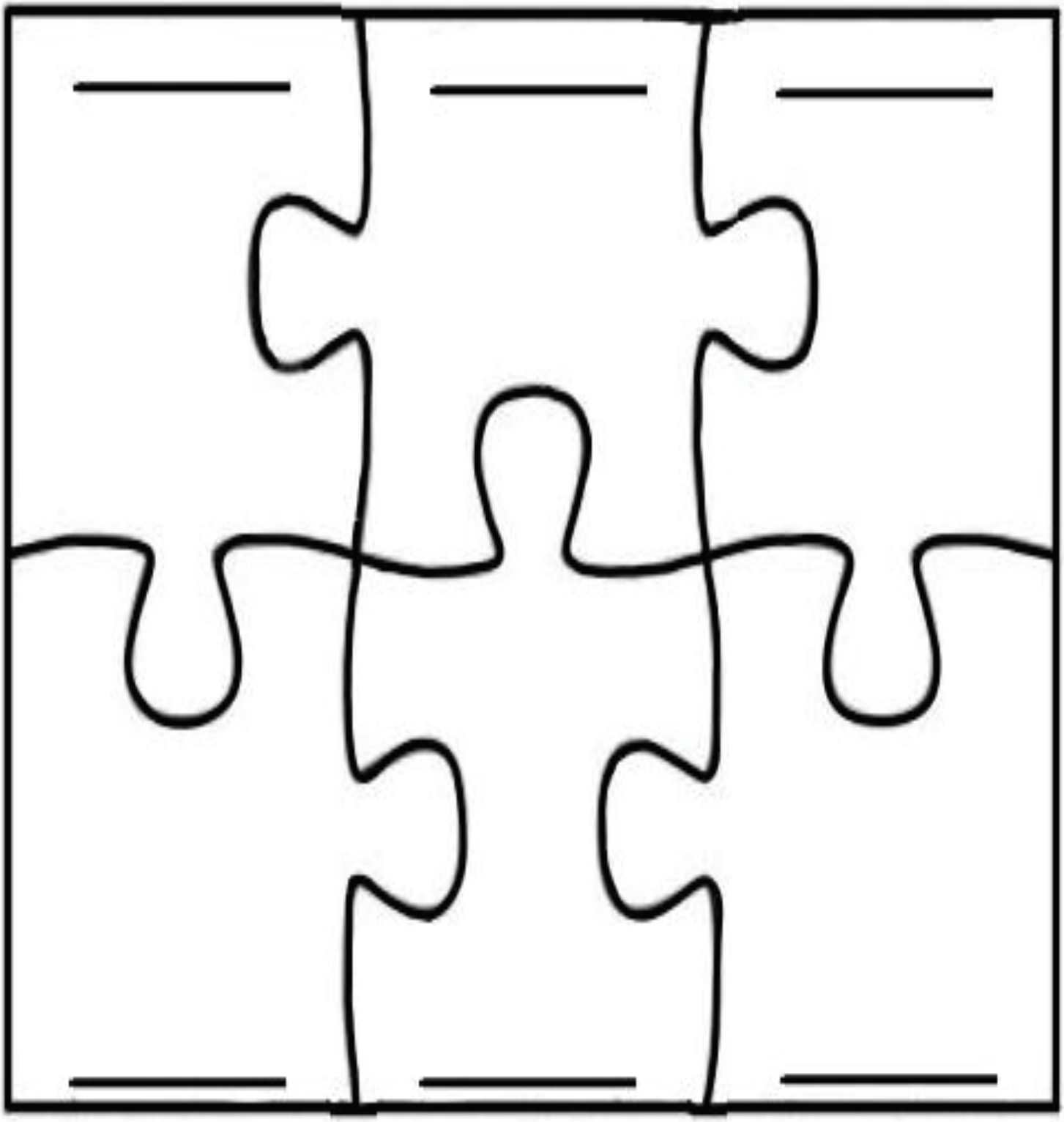
Puzzle Pieces

NAME _____ DATE _____



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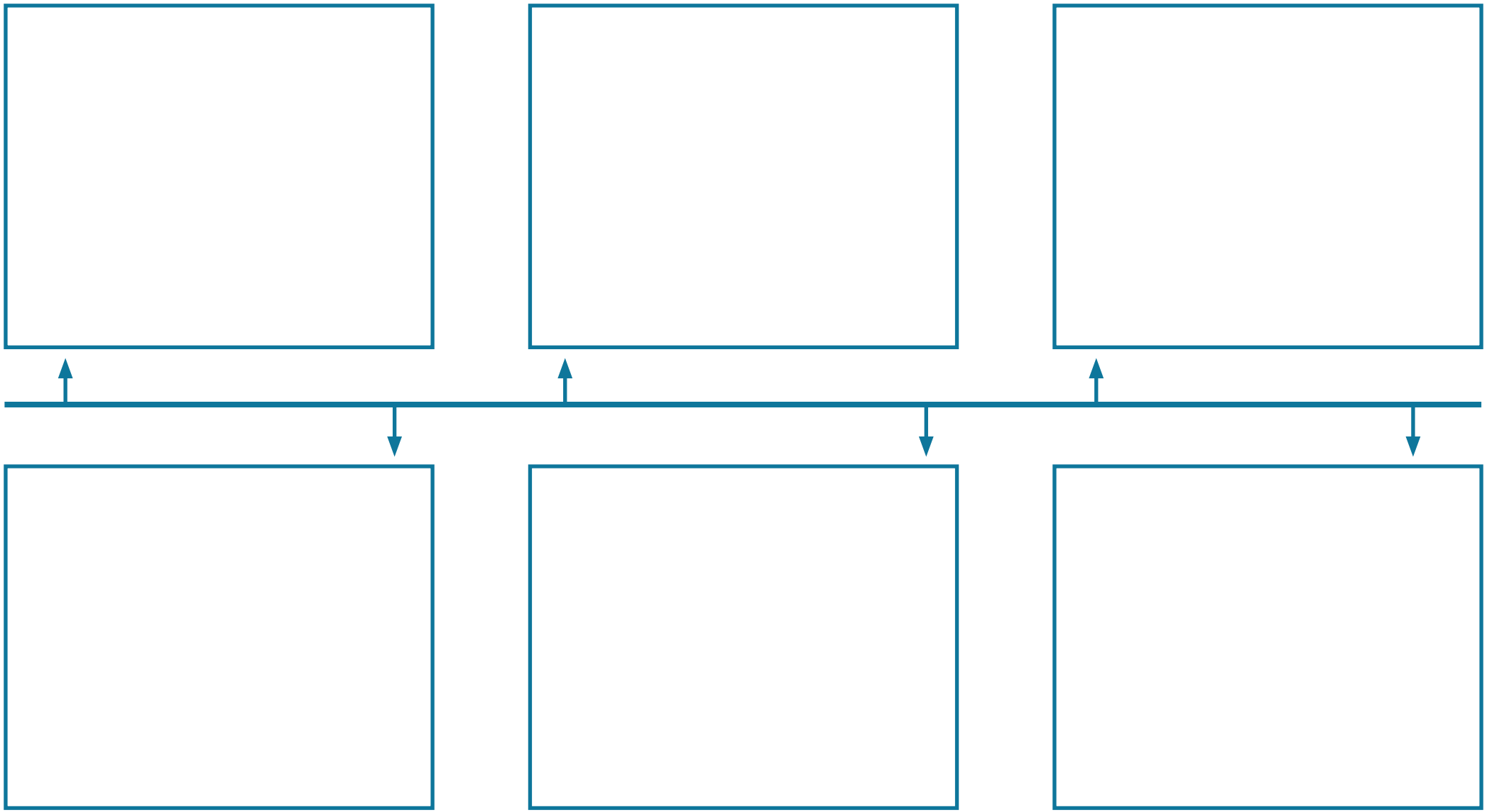
Timeline

NAME _____

DATE _____



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Six Thinking Hats

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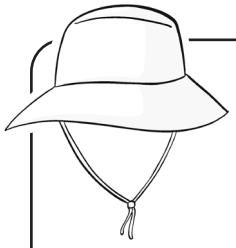
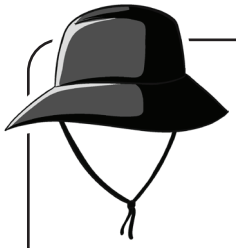
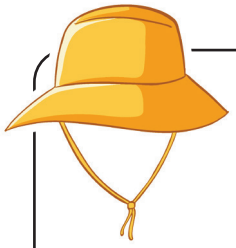


facts and details

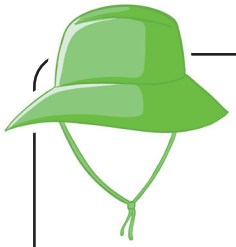


examines the negative

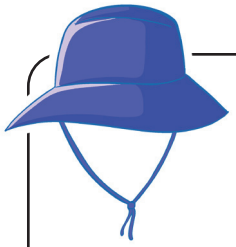


focuses on the positive

emotions & feelings



requires imagination



focuses on reflection

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Vase

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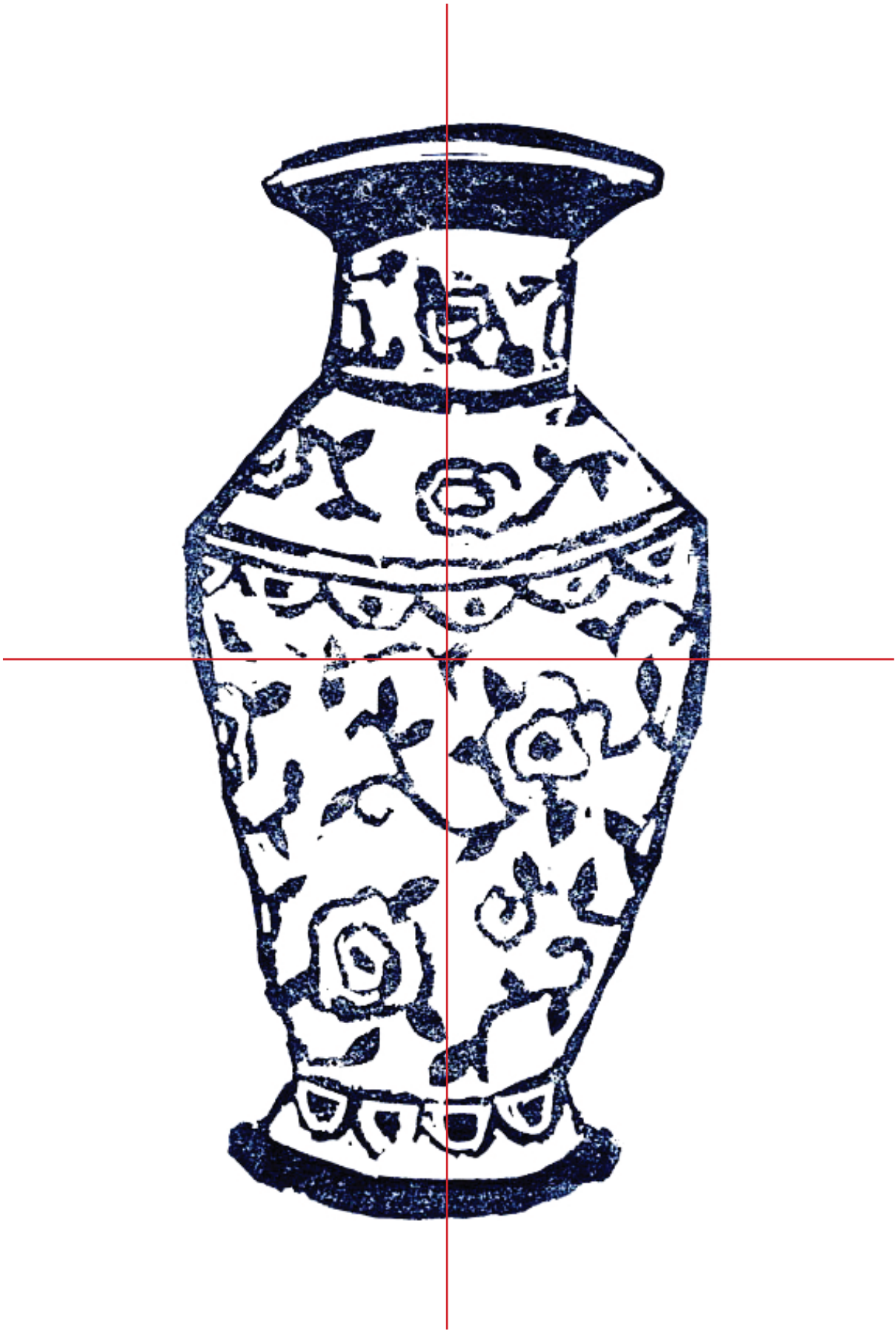

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THE MOSAIC

Deborah Kelly and Nicky Johnston

Make your own vase, but cutting these two peices, folding and glue together.

Colour in and cut out flowers, attach them to pipe cleaners. Fill the vase with flowers.

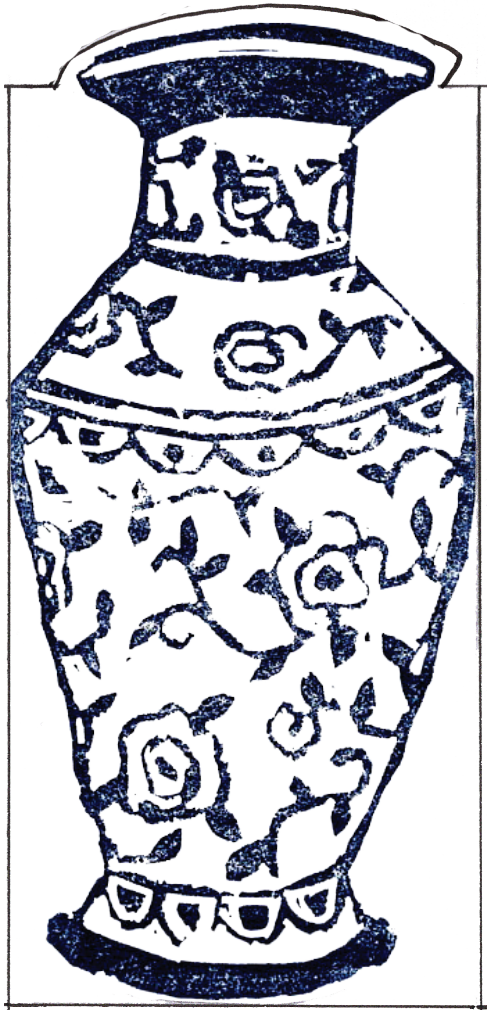
Fold

Fold

Glue Here

Glue Here

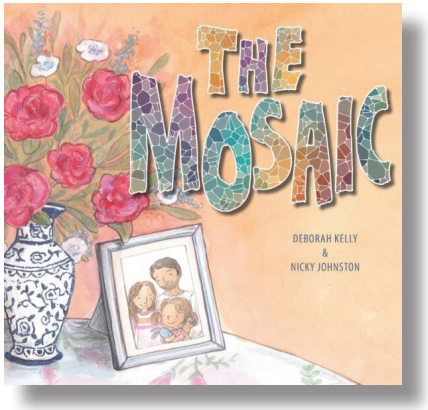
Cut Out



Fold

Glue Here

CLICK HERE FOR VIDEO



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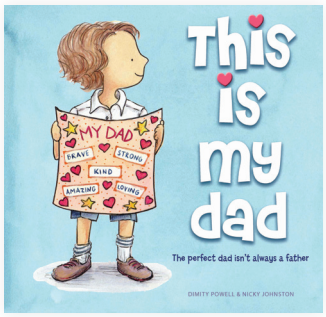

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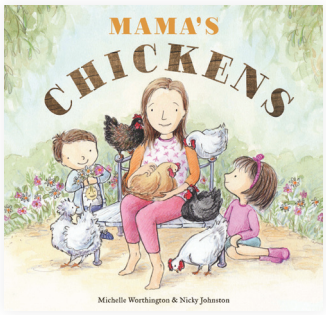

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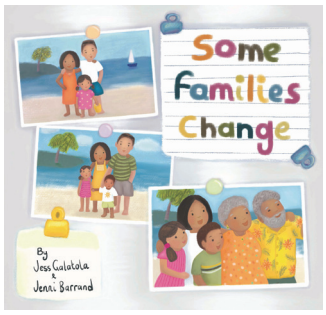

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