



Crafts Around the World Series

Europe: Italian Laurel Wreath Crown

Enjoy learning how to make simple crafts from six of the seven continents: **Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America, and South America.**

Purpose:

Introduce youth to some simple cultural traditional crafts from around the world. Journey around the continents, learning how to make simple crafts and having fun creating.

Objectives:

- ◇ Learn the cultural history and origins of the craft.
- ◇ Inspire global exploration.
- ◇ Develop fine motor skills in cutting and coloring.
- ◇ Increase cultural awareness and creativity.

Education Standards:

- ◇ Understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
- ◇ Apply geometric methods to solve design problems.

Experiential Learning:

- ◇ Create designs by cutting, coloring, and gluing.

Encourage thought and discussion with these questions:

What happened? What's important? So what? Now what?

Audience: Grades K-12



Photo courtesy of Maya Kavikondala, 2021

CONTINENT: EUROPE

Home to 44 countries, Europe is the sixth largest of the world's continents. Some areas of the world combine Asia and Europe into one continent called Eurasia.

COUNTRY: ITALY

Italy is a country located in southern Europe made up of the boot-shaped Italian peninsula and several islands including Sicily and Sardinia.

The Italy 3-P Central (Clubs 3P) organization was part of the Italian Federation of 3-P Clubs, founded in 1957. At that time, members were 16 to 30 years old. There were 48,000 members and 2,500 clubs. The symbol was a green four-leaf clover with a white "P" in three leaves (top and lower left) and a "3" in the lower right leaf, symbolizing *provare* (to try), *produrre* (to produce), and *progredire* (to make progress) (National 4-H Club Foundation of America, 1970).

LESSON: Corona di Alloro Italiana: Italian Laurel Wreath Crown

In Italy, the laurel wreath crown (*la corona di alloro*) is traditionally given to students after graduating college to celebrate academic accomplishments. The students wear the wreath after graduation ceremonies for the rest of the day. Created at the University of Padua two centuries ago, the tradition has spread to the rest of Italy. The wreath is made from the bay laurel shrub. In Greek mythology, the god Apollo immortalized the laurel shrub after his beloved Daphne was changed into the shrub while he was chasing her. He declared the branches as sacred symbols to honor her, creating the tradition of receiving the sacred laurel wreath for military triumphs, athletic competitions, and accomplishments in music and poetry (Encyclopaedia Britannica, n.d.)

TIME:

30-45 minutes or multiple days depending upon the interest to learn more.

MATERIALS:

- ◇ Leaves templates (*sagome delle foglie*) (1 of each template per participant, or create your own leaves to color and cut out)
- ◇ Markers or colored pencils (*pennarelli o matite colorate*)
- ◇ Stickers (*adesivi*) (optional)
- ◇ Scissors (*forbici*)
- ◇ 1 paper plate per participant (not plastic) (*piatto di carta*)
- ◇ Glue or stapler with staples (*Colla o spillatrice con graffette*)
- ◇ Red ribbon (*fiocco rosso*)

PROCEDURE: How to make an Italian laurel wreath crown

Before starting, print out one “Leaves Template 1” and one “Leaves Template 2” per participant.

1. (*Uno*) Color (*colorare*) the leaves on each template with a green marker or colored pencil. You can add other colors or decorations as desired such as adding stickers to the leaves.
2. (*Due*) After coloring all the leaves on the sheet, cut out (*tagliare*) the leaves and set them aside.
3. (*Tre*) Cut (*tagliare*) out the center of the paper plate. Start at one point of the plate and cut about one inch into the center and then go around the middle. Make sure to keep about an inch between where you are cutting and the outside rim of the paper plate. If cut out correctly, it should fit on a person’s head like a wreath crown.
4. (*Quattro*) Put (*mettere*) a small dab of glue (*colla*) onto the back of the leaves and place them onto the back of the paper plate. Alternatively, you can staple them. Make sure to overlap leaves slightly so you cannot see the plate underneath.
5. (*Cinque*) After placing all the leaves on the plate, make a bow from the red ribbon and place it in the middle of the crown to finish (*finire*) it.

INSTRUCTIONAL VIDEO LINK:

View this instructional video to guide you in creating your Italian laurel wreath crown:

https://mediaspace.msu.edu/media/t/1_32m0334g

Art and Science – Experiment with different types of paper or mediums. Try different painting techniques, designs, and paints. Collect real leaves to use; learn about a variety of leaves. Ask questions and make discoveries!

Folklore – Research Italian folklore and other customs, traditions, and folk tales. Think about your own culture: what are common traditions or customs in your family heritage?

Reflection Questions: What surprised you and why? When were you the most creative, and why do you think that is? What made you curious today? What can you do with what you learned today?

REFERENCES:

Encyclopaedia Britannica (Eds.). (n.d.). Daphne. *Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Daphne-Greek-mythology>

National 4-H Club Foundation of America. (1970). *World atlas of 4-H and similar youth educational programs* (3rd ed.).

RESOURCES & PARTNERS:

MSU Italian Club, Dante Alighieri Society of Michigan, MSU Community Language School

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