

# Tin Art

Background: Tin art began in Haiti over 50 years ago when a blacksmith made crosses to put on graves. Today the varied designs have become a popular art form seen around the world. Tin art is hard work though, because it is made from metal oil drums. The drums must be prepared by burning the paint and oil off them and flattened completely before the design can be drawn on the metal. Beating the metal flat and using a chisel and hammer to cut it into a shape takes many hours and lots of strength. The hard work is worth it when the artists see the beauty in his work.



**MATERIALS:** aluminum foil, cardboard (the pieces that come inside of Dad's new dress shirts work nicely), ball point pens, tape, older children—fine-tip Sharpies (varied colors), younger children—permanent markers (varied colors, any size tip)

**Note:** Younger children (2nd grade & under) will not use the patterns; they'll draw their own pattern free-hand. Older children (3rd grade & up) will use the patterns from Haiti. This activity was created to simulate some of the steps it takes to make tin art.

## Directions:

1. Share the above information about tin art and the pictures with the students explaining that this is a job that an adult may have in Haiti particularly in the Port-au-Prince area. Talk about what they see in nature (animals, plants, sun, etc.) Tin art is inspired by the nature in Haiti.
2. Smooth out a piece of aluminum foil large enough to completely cover your cardboard with about 2" to wrap around to the back of it. Turn the shiny side of the foil down and wrap it around the cardboard. Taping the back will secure it.
3. Younger Children—draw your own design of a butterfly, bird, tree, or flower using the permanent markers. It is recommended that tables are covered and let the children know to be careful with the markers. Color your tin art using bright colors like they do in Haiti. Hang it up in your room and remember the Haitian people in your prayers.
4. Older Children—Choose a design from one of the templates drawn by Haitian children. Place it over your aluminum foil, hold it or tape it down so it won't move. Trace over all of the lines and dots with a ball point pen pressing down to crease but not put a hole in the pattern. Use the fine-tip Sharpies to decorate your design by outlining and/or coloring in the parts of your tin art design. Hang it up in your room and remember the Haitian people in your prayers.



Drawing out the design,  
cutting, and tapping  
out the design using a  
chisel and hammer.





Painting the final  
product (right)



Brushing with a steel  
brush to clean up the  
product (left)

Finished product  
(right)







