

HANDCRAFTED: MAKE YOUR OWN TRADITIONAL OBJECT

SUGGESTED GRADE RANGE: K-12TH

Learn about two of the handcrafted holiday traditions featured in *University of Michigan Health–West Christmas & Holiday Traditions*, then draw or make a traditional object of your own.

MATERIALS

- Pencil and paper
- Various craft materials (optional)

VOCABULARY

Embossed: to decorate a surface with a raised pattern or design.

DIRECTIONS

Watch & Reflect

The film *joy* highlights traditions celebrated in West Michigan and featured in *University of Michigan Health–West Christmas & Holiday Traditions* at Meijer Gardens. For this lesson, [watch part of the film, which talks about springerle](#). (Watch from 0:00-1:45 minutes.)

Springerle are traditional German cookies that originated hundreds of years ago. They are flavored with anise and embossed with designs, using a mold or rolling pin. While the tradition of hanging springerle on the German tree at Meijer Gardens started with Fred and Lena Meijer in 1995, most springerle are made to be eaten!

Reflect or discuss with a friend or a small group:

What does your family like to eat on special occasions?

Do you have any traditional recipes in your family? Where did they come from? When do you make them?

Special food is one thing that gathers people together during celebrations. What is another thing people in your family do together on special occasions? Circle one of the activities below or add your own.

Eating Food	Listening to Music	
Decorating		
Playing Games		



Watch & Reflect

Diwali is a holiday celebrated in India and other parts of the world. It is known as the festival of lights. Learn more about how people celebrate Diwali in India, [by watching this video](#).

During *University of Michigan Health–West Christmas & Holiday Traditions* at Meijer Gardens, you can see a beautiful *rangoli* design made by hand using colored sand.

In India, *rangoli* are made on doorsteps during Diwali, as a symbol of welcome to friends and family that visit during the holiday. Sometimes, families make *rangoli* together.



Reflect or discuss with a friend or a small group:

How does your family decorate for special occasions?

Do you make any decorations?

How do you show welcome to people who come to your home?

Make Something:

Draw or make something that shows welcome or gathers people together. It could be a decoration, food or utensil—anything that could be part of a family gathering. Share what you've made or drawn with a friend or family member! Explain what it is and how it is used.

Use the questions below to help brainstorm ideas for your creation.

Something that shows welcome ...

- What signs or decorations have you seen that welcome people to a place?
- If you made a sign to welcome someone to your home, what would it say?
What colors or images would you include?
- When someone comes to your house, what is the first thing you like to show them?

Something that gathers people together ...

- What does your family like to do together—eat meals, play games, watch movies, tell stories?
What are some things in your house that you use for these together activities?
- Are there decorations or special objects you get out only during holidays or special occasions?
How are these things part of how your family celebrates together?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Make a Traditional Recipe (Social Studies, Science, K-12)

With the help of an adult, make a recipe that is traditional in your family or in another culture. If this recipe is from your family, ask your family members about where the recipe came from and who has made it in the past. If this is a new recipe to you, do some research: Where does this recipe come from? Who makes it? What makes it special?

Make a Rangoli (Social Studies, Art, K-12)

Use colored rice flour, sand or other natural materials to make a *rangoli* design on the ground outside your door. Use repetition, pattern and symmetry to create your own circular design. If you are working on pavement, you can use chalk to create an outline of your design to fill in with colorful materials.

Traditional Object Show and Tell (Social Studies, K-12)

Choose an object of significance in your home to share with a friend or a small group. Describe the object, its significance, and its history with your family. Ask other friends to share objects from their families too! How are they the same or different?

Definition from Learner's Dictionary: <https://learnersdictionary.com/definition/ritual>



FREDERIK MEIJER Gardens & Sculpture Park promotes the enjoyment, understanding, and appreciation of gardens, sculpture, the natural environment, and the arts.