



Peaceful Hearts Too

Educator Notes and Preparation Ideas

World Labyrinth Day in Educational Settings 2024

These are your refer-to pages for explanations, background and anything else you may need in order to run an activity: a one-stop shop, so to speak! (Be not daunted ...we're covering all bases here!)

The Activities

These have strong connections with social and emotional learning (SEL) and Executive Function (EF) skills. We are aware of the many, many SEL programs in use and so we recommend that you use appropriate language and modify or adapt the wording of our activities to suit the program/s you use. We would also recommend that you adapt the activities for your particular context, whether that be:

- Public/State School
- Special learning School
- Religious-based School
- Montessori or Rudolf Steiner School
- Home School
- School Online
- Early Learning Centre
- College
- University



Photo credit: Suzie Bates



Resources to Support the Activities

(Why not consider one or more of these Resources listed below for whole staff or sub-school PD?)

Introducing Students to Labyrinths

Use the PowerPoint slides *A Short Introduction to Labyrinths* on the World Labyrinth Day in Educational Settings [Resources page](#)

Drawing classical labyrinths: these links will take you to *The Labyrinth Society* resources page, 'types of labyrinths'

How to draw/make a [3 circuit classical labyrinth](#) (recommended for younger children)

How to make/draw a [7 circuit classical labyrinth](#)

How to draw/make an [11 circuit classical labyrinth](#)

And here is a [video](#) with Lars Howlett from [Discover Labyrinths](#) demonstrating the drawing of 3, 5, 7 and 11 classical labyrinths for *The Labyrinth Society*. Students could easily follow this.

Finger Labyrinths

Follow the directions in the links above to create your own – a very FUN thing to do, or download a readymade template from *The Labyrinth Society* download documents page

[Template for 7 circuit classical labyrinth](#)

[Template for Chartres labyrinth](#)

Heart Labyrinths

Heart Labyrinth on Wikimedia Commons (NB. on this one you walk along the lines, not between or you come to dead ends!)

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Heart_Labyrinth.png

Image of labyrinth <https://harmonyabyrinths.com/design/cretan-heart/>

Image of labyrinth <https://blogmymaze.wordpress.com/2008/03/13/heartlabyrinth/>



The Labyrinth of Energy (or Mars labyrinth) from the [Celestial Labyrinths](https://www.celestial-labyrinths.org/theory/labyrinth-of-energy/) collection can easily be adapted to heart shaping <https://www.celestial-labyrinths.org/theory/labyrinth-of-energy/>

Making a Labyrinth

From *The Labyrinth Society* download documents page

[“Step by Step” to Lay out a Three=Circuit Classical Labyrinth](#)

If you do not have access to a walking labyrinth, we would strongly encourage you to consider making a temporary one somewhere in the school grounds or in a gymnasium or multi-purpose room, and enjoy the experience of working together to plan it, measure it out, and mark it with whatever materials you choose. And FINALLY, to walk it!

Some people use modified tape dispensers to act like applicators. These work well on firm, smooth surfaces. The tape dispenser can be attached to a handle which makes things easy on the back. Some illustrations, courtesy of Geoff and Lorraine Rodda, can be found at the end of these notes.

Calming Breaths

Before starting a walk it is important to give the body time to slow down. Some calming breaths can help.

Use a method that your students are already familiar with.

OR

- When using a finger labyrinth, place your finger at the entrance to the labyrinth. Take a long, slow breath in and move your finger around the outside edge in a clockwise direction to about 10 or 11 on the “clock-face.” Let the breath out slowly as you continue tracing back to the entrance. Repeat 3-5 times.
- On a walking labyrinth, walkers can be seated or stand somewhere on the perimeter as they breathe in slowly and calmly, and release their breath slowly. Repeat 3-5 times.



Heartfulness Practices incorporate calming breaths. See these in the [Peaceful Hearts Too Guide](#) including

Two Steps to Heart Brain Coherence

Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/yYHZUKK6t1s> and summarized with permission from Legacy Labyrinth Project whose Big Connection labyrinth research work has its foundation in HeartMath® Institute research.

STEP 1 Breathe through your heart

- Shift your focus into the area of your heart
- Begin to slow down your breath and imagine it coming through your heart
- Feel your heart rate begin to slow down

STEP 2 Activate a positive feeling

- Create the positive feeling to the best of your ability, like calmness, happiness, love for someone
- Keep that feeling and bring it into your body as you continue your heart breath as if carrying it to your brain (pause)
- Keep the connection between your heart and your brain; sustaining the feeling of inner calm

Walking for the First Time: the Basics

Invite participants to approach a labyrinth walk as follows:

For a walking labyrinth path:

- gather around the labyrinth, seated or standing
- orient, and invite responses to observations of the design (lines, shapes, path, etc)
- focus on calming breaths
- one by one and allowing 1.5-2m between walkers, start the walk into the centre
- encourage walkers to pause for a short time when they reach the centre
- then slowly walk out
- gather around the labyrinth again & encourage them to pause quietly for a few moments



For a finger labyrinth path:

- focus on calming breaths
- encourage use of a finger of their non-dominant hand to do the “walking” along the path
- encourage them to pause for a short time when they reach the centre
- then slowly “walk” out using the same finger and hand
- encourage them to pause quietly for a few moments

Encourage voluntary responses from your learners and remind them that it's theirs to walk any time they feel the need: sad times, happy times, puzzling times, confusing times ...

For Things to Run Smoothly on the Labyrinth

- remove shoes if using a canvas labyrinth
- walk with “soft eyes”, be respectful of others on the path
- walkers walk at different speeds; when necessary, pass others with care
- in the quiet space of the labyrinth, awarenesses can arise; be mindful of and respectful of any responses – in yourself and others

Some Peace Quotes

The practice of deep listening is the practice of open inquiry without assumption or judgement – Sharon Weil

One hour of compassionate deep listening can bring about transformation and healing – Thich Nhat Hanh

Deep listening is the kind of listening that can help relieve the suffering of another person. You listen with only one purpose: to help him or her empty their heart. - Thich Nhat Hanh

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. ~ Margaret Mead

The very first step in nonviolence is that we cultivate in our daily life, as between ourselves, truthfulness, humility, tolerance, loving kindness. ~ Gandhi



Ultimately, we have just one moral duty: to reclaim large areas of peace in ourselves, more and more peace, and to reflect it towards others. And the more peace there is in us, the more peace there will also be in our troubled world.~ Etty Hillesum

How wonderful it is that nobody need waste a single moment before starting to improve the world. Anne Frank

The heart that breaks open can contain the whole universe.~ Joanna Macy

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal. ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

Imagine all the people living life in peace. You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us, and the world will be as one - John Lennon

Reflection Process – an explanation

As educators we are practically hard-wired to thinking in terms of “outcomes” - those things that we can see students do/explain/write/show/etc. We set our intentions for lessons or units, and we are very explicit about what we are looking for students to demonstrate so that we can see that they “got it”.

Working with labyrinths is a little different. This is body work, letting our minds have a rest for a while, and for a lot of us, “reading” our bodies is something we’ve not had much experience with. The same goes for young people. And so we need to allow space for this to happen. When we still our minds we allow awareness to arise. The reflections within and at the end of the labyrinth activities are intended as prompts, something for students to ponder and think about. Give them time to sit with the questions. It is not intended that students should be required to share responses, but if they wish to, that’s fine. And don’t be surprised by what students might share – at the time or later – because their innermost self is being allowed to express itself. They might choose to journal or draw or write or create something.



Photo credit: Suzie Bates

Some Music

Music for a Labyrinth Walk by Australian composer Corrina Bonshek.

<http://bonmusic.com.au/lab/>

It was especially composed for a walking meditation at Centennial Park Labyrinth, Sydney. Run time is 6min 30sec. A longer version is also available.

May Peace Prevail on Earth International

[This site](#) has a host of practical and interactive ideas and resources for inspiring and developing peace consciousness. They could be incorporated into World Labyrinth Day in Educational Settings activities and extend beyond.

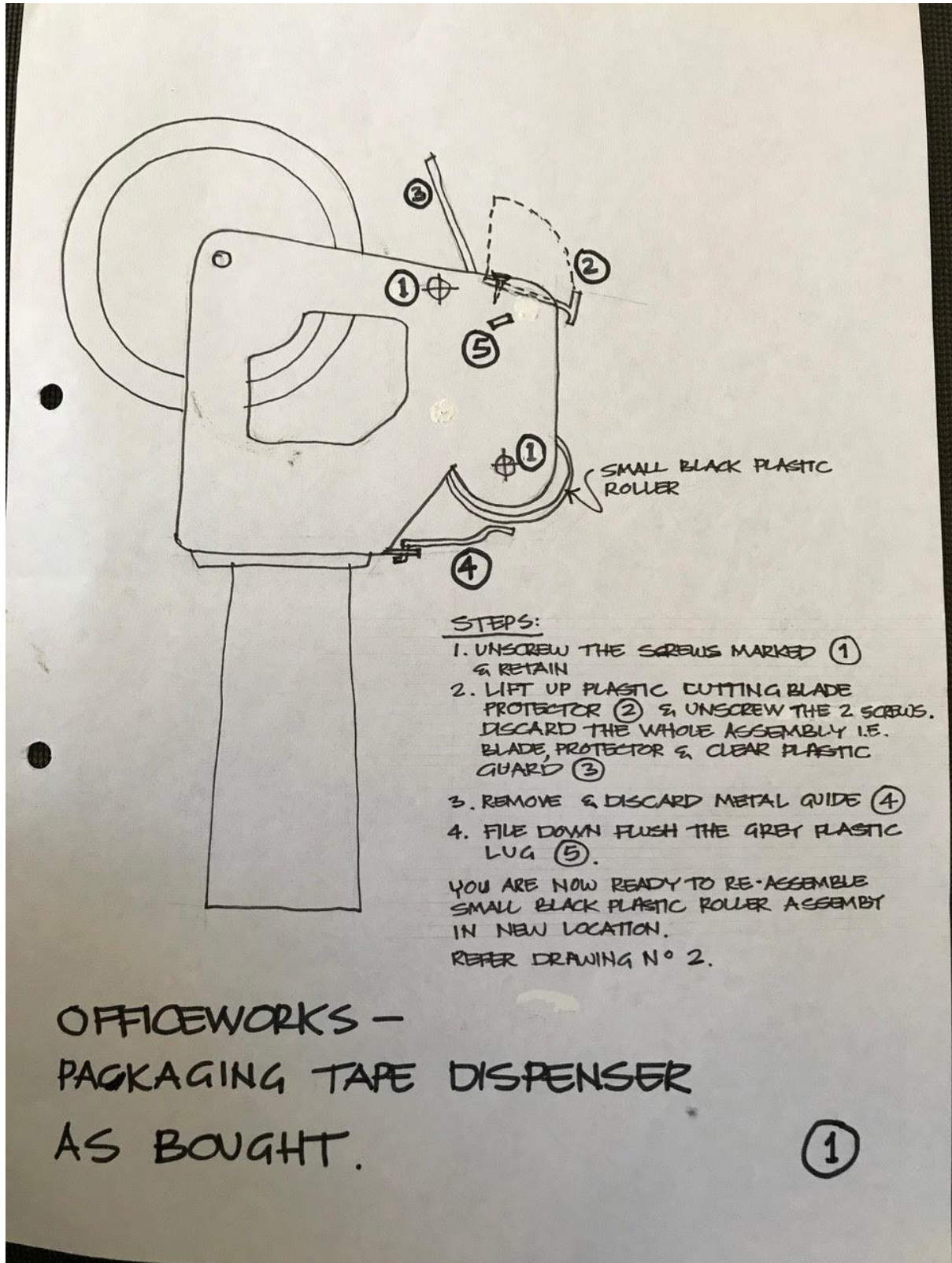


Photo credit: Geoff Rodda

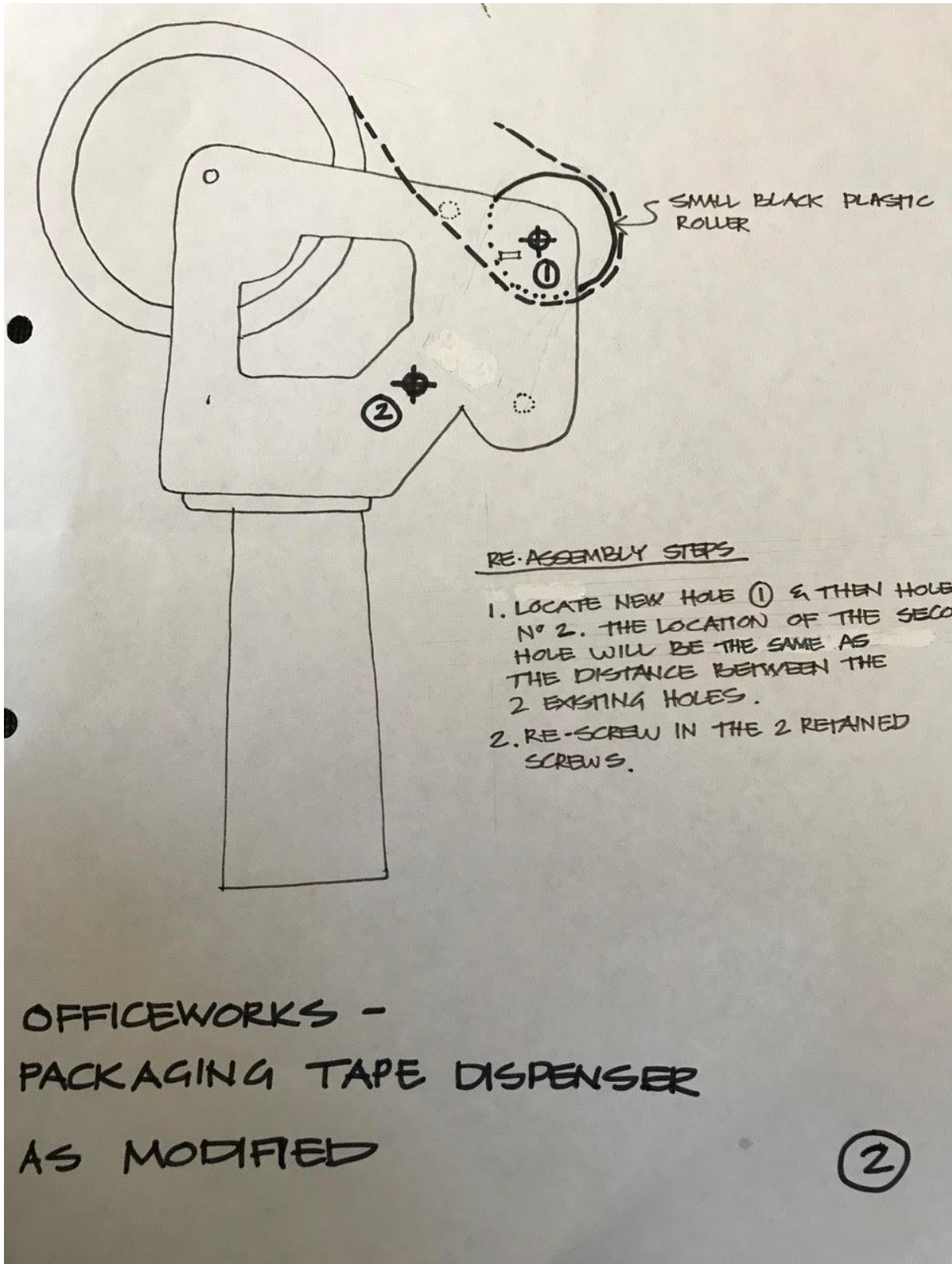


Photo credit: Geoff Rodda



Making a Masking Tape Labyrinth in 5 Minutes - Left side entrance is illustrated

Step 1

The tape machine is pushed out in front of you with the sticky side of the tape facing upwards. Starting with a short straight line - this later will link to the entrance - start making a spiral with the centre about 1400 mm.



Step 2. Continue with the spiral until you have 7 rings on the left hand side and 8 rings on the right.



Step 3. As you finish the eighth ring turning with a straight line join tape to the starting point.



Step 4. As above - to form the turns on the left, starting from the outside, tape a straight line across the rings 1 2 3 then repeat on rings 5 6 7

Step 5.

Repeating the same procedure tape across the right hand side lines. These will be directly opposite as shown in the diagram below.



Step 6. Removing the tape to show the turns



Step 7.

The final tape removal now begins to reveal the entrances



There were only three people helping Robert remove the tape resulting in a fabulous labyrinth to walk. The masking tape is available at hardware stores. 2 x 55 mm rolls @ \$6.40 ea

Stepping out of the labyrinth five minutes after commencing - well done applause all round.



Camera's clicking and much excitement we had the Inaugural Labyrinth Walk.



The Tape Making Machine Working Group rejoiced in their efforts



. . . although taking "slightly" longer than Robert did making the labyrinth.