Duct Tape Backpack
by Shonica Hartless
Madison Jefferson County Public Library
tweens@mjcpl.org

Materials needed:
duct tape (the good stuff, don't waste your time with the generic. It's hard to work with and it smells bad)
scissors (and not your mom's good scissors because they're going to get sticky and that's going to honk her off)
a smooth table that won't be ruined if you stick duct tape on it (that honks parents off too) counter top works well

All duct tape projects start with a sheet of duct tape. I start by putting a strip of duct tape, sticky side down on a smooth table. For the back pack I use a large book to decide the size and make it a few inches wider than the book.

Continue placing strips of duct tape overlapping each other by about a half inch ...

...until it is as long as you want the back pack to be.
This next bit can be tricky but with practice it gets easier.

Pull the sheet up starting from the corner of the bottom piece of duct tape.

Do not pull it from the top piece of duct tape, it doesn't work.

Flip it over so that the sticky part is up. This can be tricky because duct tape is VERY sticky.

(Shocking, I know)

If it all gets stuck together, try to keep the cursing to a minimum. You *might* be able to salvage it, or you might have to start over. Sorry.

Place a strip of duct tape perpendicular to the sticky side down sheet. I suggest that you cut the tape first. Trying to handle scissors and a roll of tape w/ all the stickiness can be disastrous. I also recommend that this strip overlap instead of being the exact length of the sticky side up sheet. Taping it to the table will give you a sturdier work area.
If a piece of tape is not where you want it, you are much better off just laying it where it falls than trying to pull it off.

Continue overlapping strips of duct tape about a half an inch until the entire sticky side is covered. Then you will have a sheet of duct tape. HURRAY! If you can do this, you can make anything out of duct tape. Well, mostly...

Now trim the edges so that it is nice and pretty. Sure, you can just fold the duct tape over, but it doesn't look as nice.

Ta-da! It's a sheet of duct tape. Prepare yourself for the overwhelming sense of accomplishment. But wait, it gets better....
Now make another sheet of duct tape, the same width as the first but longer. The longer will be the back side of your back pack and make the flap.

Put the 2 sheets together and tape 3 sides together. It should look like a big envelope.

Fold the longer bit over to make the flap. If you are an overachiever you can get velcro to hold the flap down. I didn't because I am clearly an underachiever.

To make the straps, cut a piece of duct tape that is about a yard long. I fold it into thirds. You can fold it in half or even use two long pieces put together. Mine always look messy and I can't tell you the number of times I have to redo this step. Oy!

Here's hoping your fine motor skills are better than mine. You'll need to do this twice.
Tape the 2 straps side by side at the top of the back of your big envelope. Make sure the ends of the straps are covered. Then tape the other ends of the straps to the bottom of the back. Adjust the straps as needed.

And it's a backpack. Everyone will be impressed with your skills and want one so they can be as cool as you.

The two books of duct tape crafts that I'm most familiar with are Got Tape by Ellie Schiedermayer and Ductigami by Joe Wilson. Both have fun ideas. I prefer Got Tape because the instructions seem to be simpler. And I need simple.

You can Google 'duct tape crafts' and find a lot of projects on the web. One website you don't want to miss is www.ducktapeclub.com This is the official website of Duck Brand duct tape. Be sure to look at the Stuck at Prom galleries. The dresses and tuxes that people have made for prom are AMAZING and they seem to get better every year.

Also check out 'duck-tivities'. There you will find instructions for projects and galleries of cool things people have made with duct tape.

Duck tape comes in a bazillion different colors including 2 different camo patterns and tie dyed. Yep, tie dyed. Too cool! Different colors have different textures and therefore some are easier to work with than others. I suggest you make your first projects out of boring ol' gray/silver and then embellish with colors.
Note to librarians: When I do duct tape programs I have the kids bring their own duct tape to keep costs down. I always tell them to get the good stuff. It is a good idea to have some on hand in case someone forgets to bring their own.

We have duct taped EVERYTHING
  wallets
  purses
  book marks
  sculptures (oh how I wish I had a picture of my bonsai tree, 'cause it's awesome)
  bags of all shapes and sizes
  flip flops
  a couch

It is one of the most popular programs I do. When I think that we've done enough and surely they are sick of it, they ask for more. For Halloween this year we are having a Duct Tape Halloween and making a giant pumpkin from duct tape. It should be interesting.
  Happy Duct Taping!