Pumpkin Pinch Pots
Create your own pinch pot inspired by artist Yayoi Kusama.

As a young girl growing up around her family’s plant nursery, Yayoi Kusama fell in love with the round, playful and lumpy shape of the pumpkin. She began creating art at a young age, despite her mother’s disapproval. For most of her life, she has experienced hallucinations involving dot-covered surfaces, and her work in recreating these mental images has been a form of therapy for her. Dot-covered pumpkins are a common theme in her work. *Pumpkin* by Yayoi Kusama (2016) is an eight-foot tall sculpture covered in repeating patterns of different sized dots.

LOOK CLOSELY
What do you see? Describe the colors and shapes. Do you notice any patterns? Talk together about the pumpkin. Does it look real? Why, or why not?

*Pumpkin* by Yayoi Kusama, 2016.
MAKE IT!
This project requires a day between sculpting and painting in order to give the pinch pot time to dry.

1. **Gather materials.** You’ll need clay or play dough, sculpting tools (pencil, toothpick), paint, and painting tools (brush, toothpick, dry spaghetti).

2. **Pinch the dough.** Roll the clay into a ball, then use your thumb to pinch a hole in the center.

3. **Shape your pot.** You can make a pumpkin or any other shape you like! Use a sculpting tool (a pencil or toothpick will work fine!) to add details.

4. **Paint your pot.** Once the clay dries, add a few coats of color to your pinch pot.
5. **Add pattern.** Use another paint color to add a repeating pattern, like the dots Yayoi Kusama loves so much. Dry spaghetti and toothpicks are great tools for adding dots!

6. **Give it life.** Plant a seedling or add a flower to your pinch pot.

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