The background is a complex abstract collage. It features a grid of thin, light-colored lines. The spaces between these lines are filled with various colors and textures, including shades of blue, green, red, purple, and grey. There are also some darker, more textured areas that look like they might be made of fabric or paper. The overall effect is a rich, multi-layered composition.

Dots,  
Lines,  
& Curves

Better Together

by Dawn McGrath  
Collages by Maggie Doben



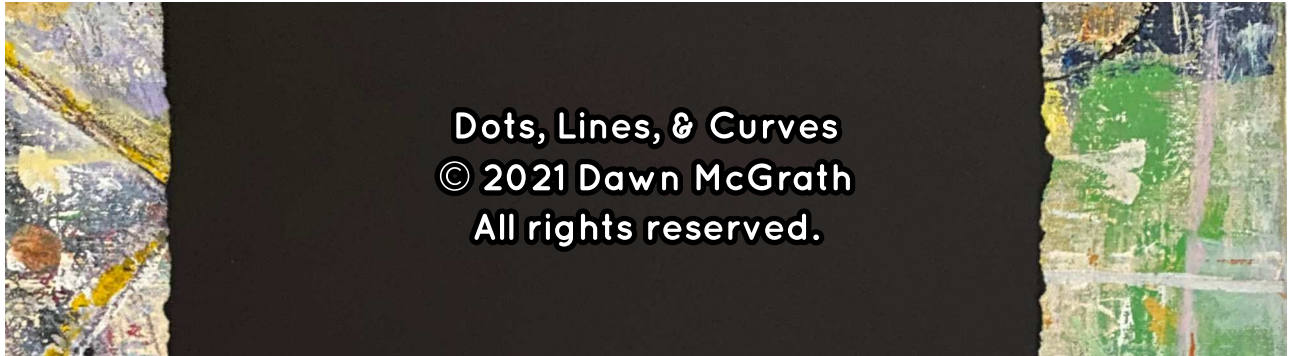
# Dots, Lines, & Curves



Better Together

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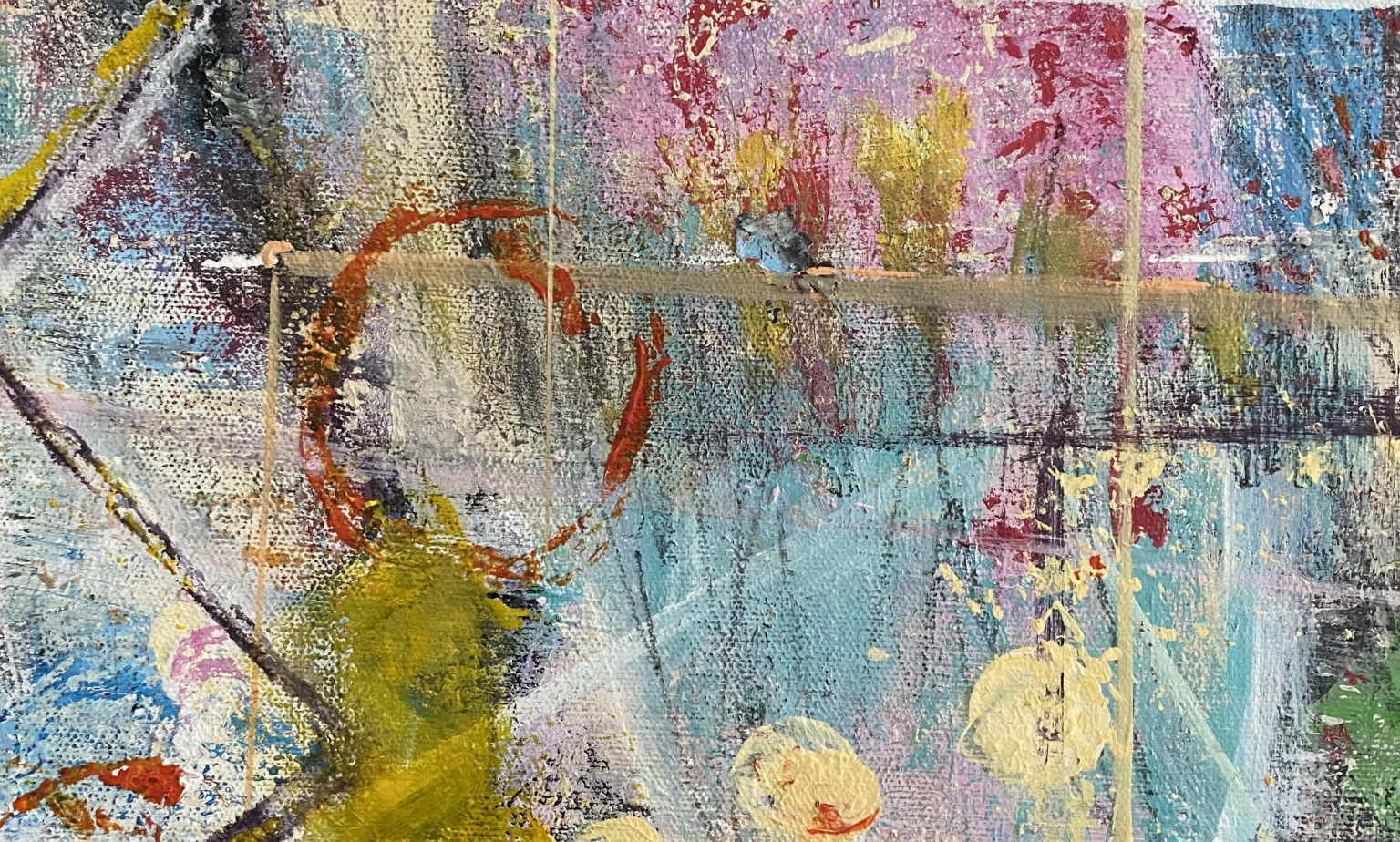
To request permissions contact the author:  
[dawn@welltogethernow.com](mailto:dawn@welltogethernow.com)

First edition: 2021

The artist photographed collaged materials on black paper set atop a mixed media canvas (acrylic, paper, ink, and charcoal).



<https://welltogethernow.com>



*Special thanks to Carin Doben  
for allowing me to photograph  
her painting for the cover and  
background images in this book.*

*You are a creative inspiration.*





For Ramina and Maggie:  
You are the dot and curve to my line.







Meet the **dots**.  
Dots can do a lot.

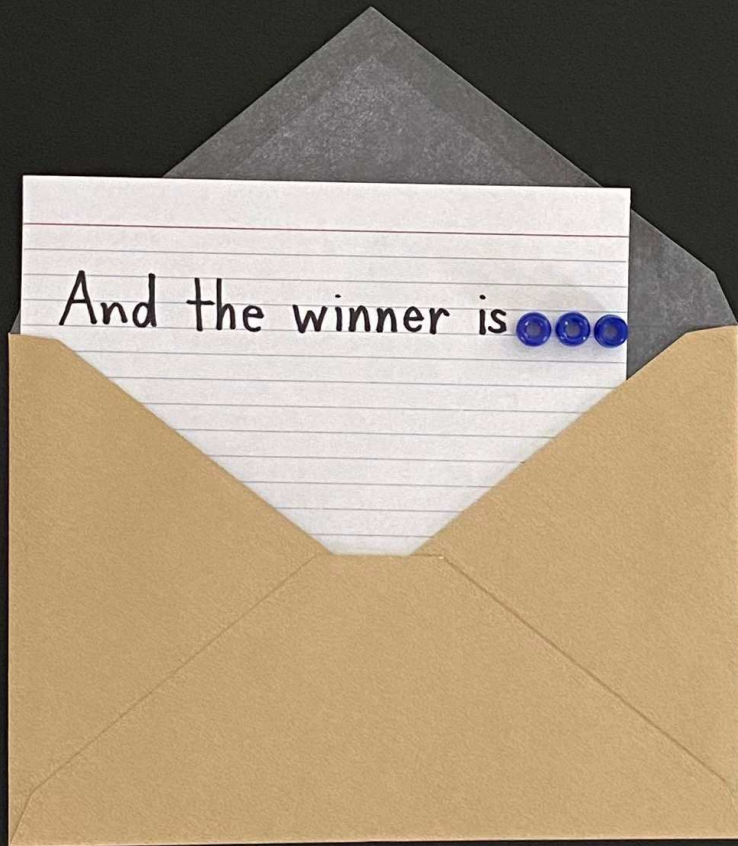


They can **freckle** a face



or **end** a thought.





And the winner is . . .

With **three in a row**, dots can say,  
"More to come..."



Sometimes, dots get **sad** and think,  
"We're mere **crumbs**."



Dots can be **polkas**, **dabs**, and **spots**.

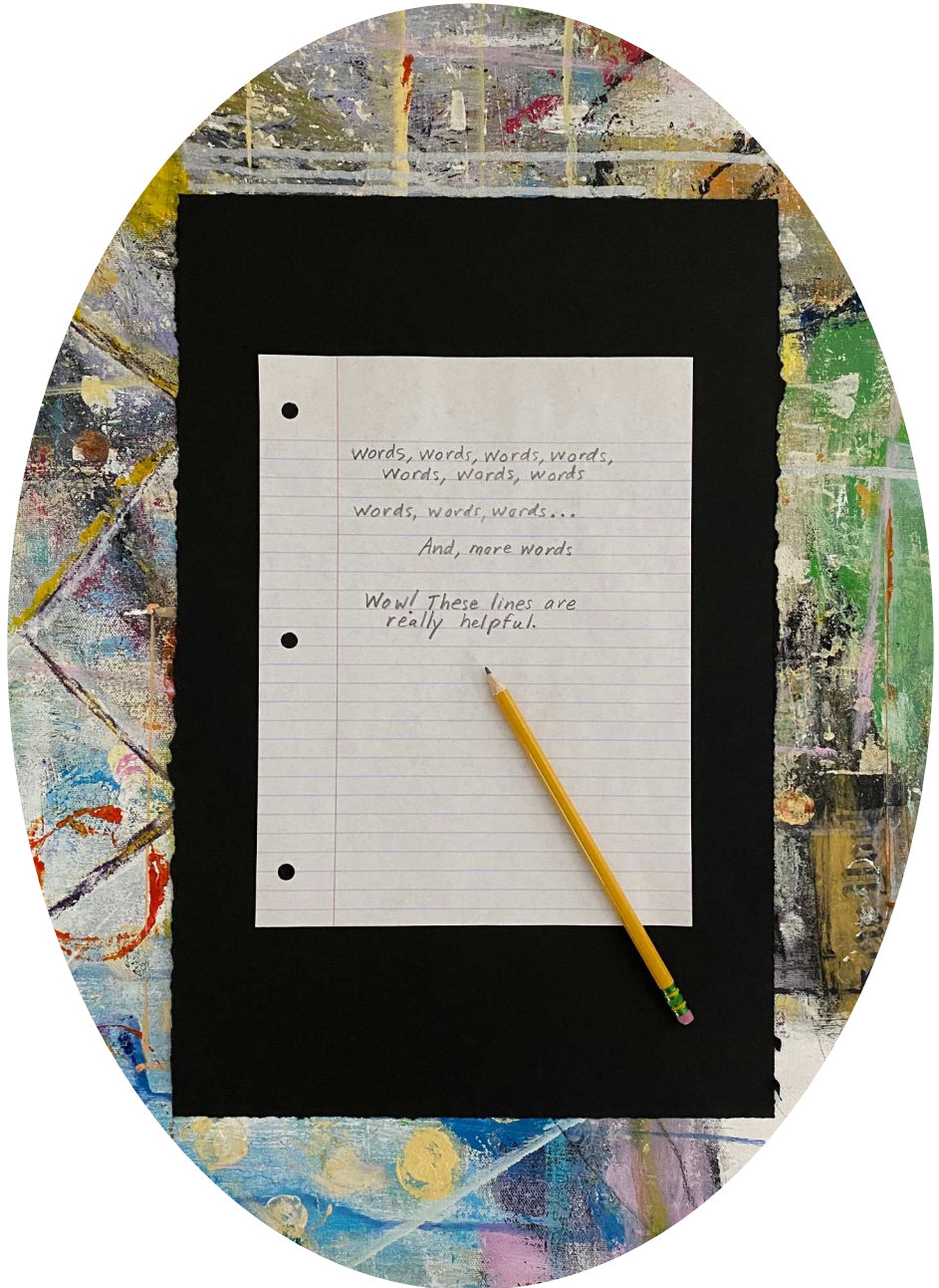
**Together** they form shapes,  
which **alone** they cannot.



A black rectangular background is set against a colorful, abstract, textured border. On the black background, there are several items: three flat sticks (one orange, one yellow, one light brown) in the top left; two pencils (one pink, one teal) in the top right; two brown sticks crossing in the middle left; a yellow pencil on a piece of lined paper in the middle right; two toothpicks forming a cross in the bottom right; and a bundle of many thin brown sticks at the bottom.

Meet the **lines**.  
Lines are more than fine.





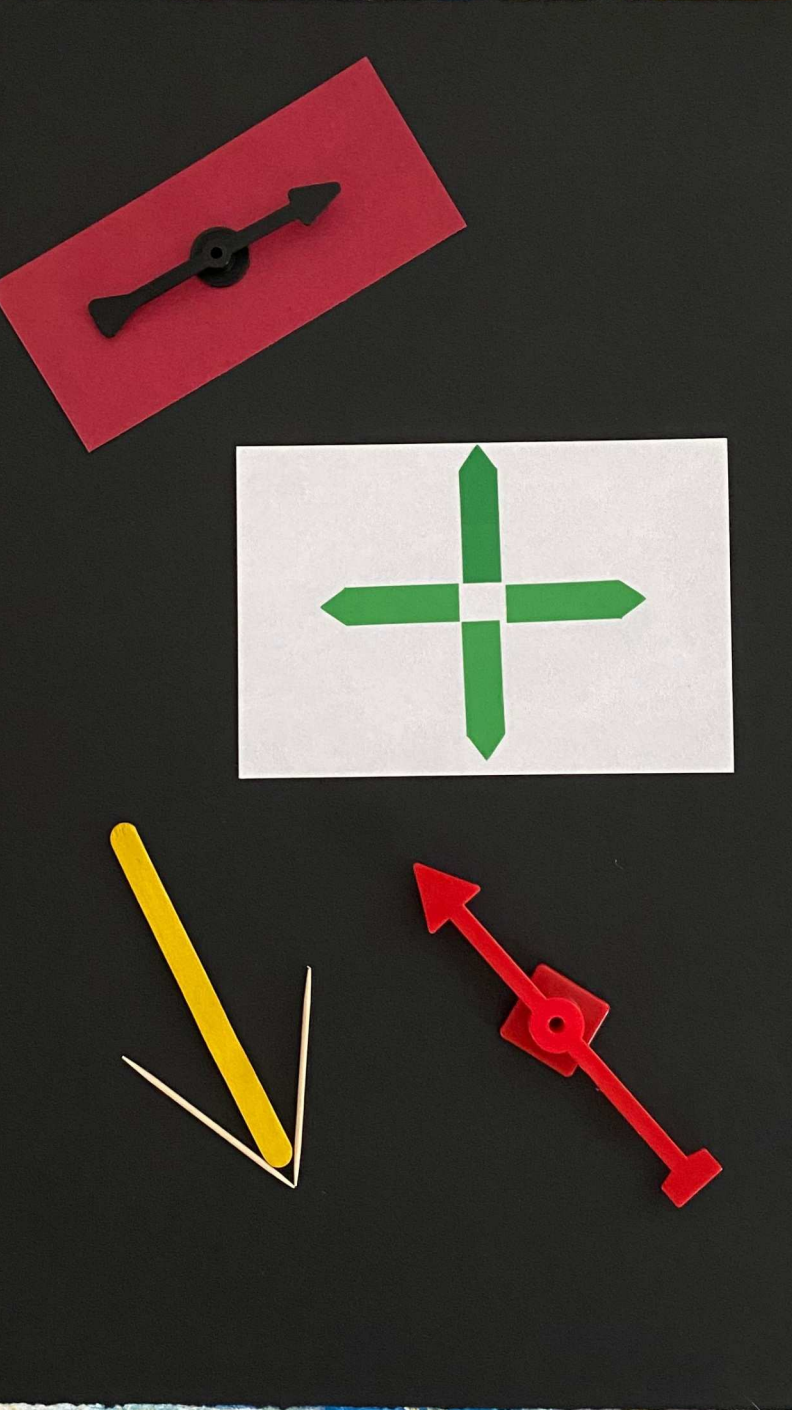
Words, words, words, words,  
Words, words, words

Words, words, words...

And, more words

Wow! These lines are  
really helpful.

They help to keep words on pages **aligned**.



Some lines tell us which **direction** to go.



I'm feeling blue.



Sometimes, lines get **lonely**, especially when they're **solo**.



Together, they make **stripes** and **plaid** designs.



When lines **connect**, they can really **shine**.

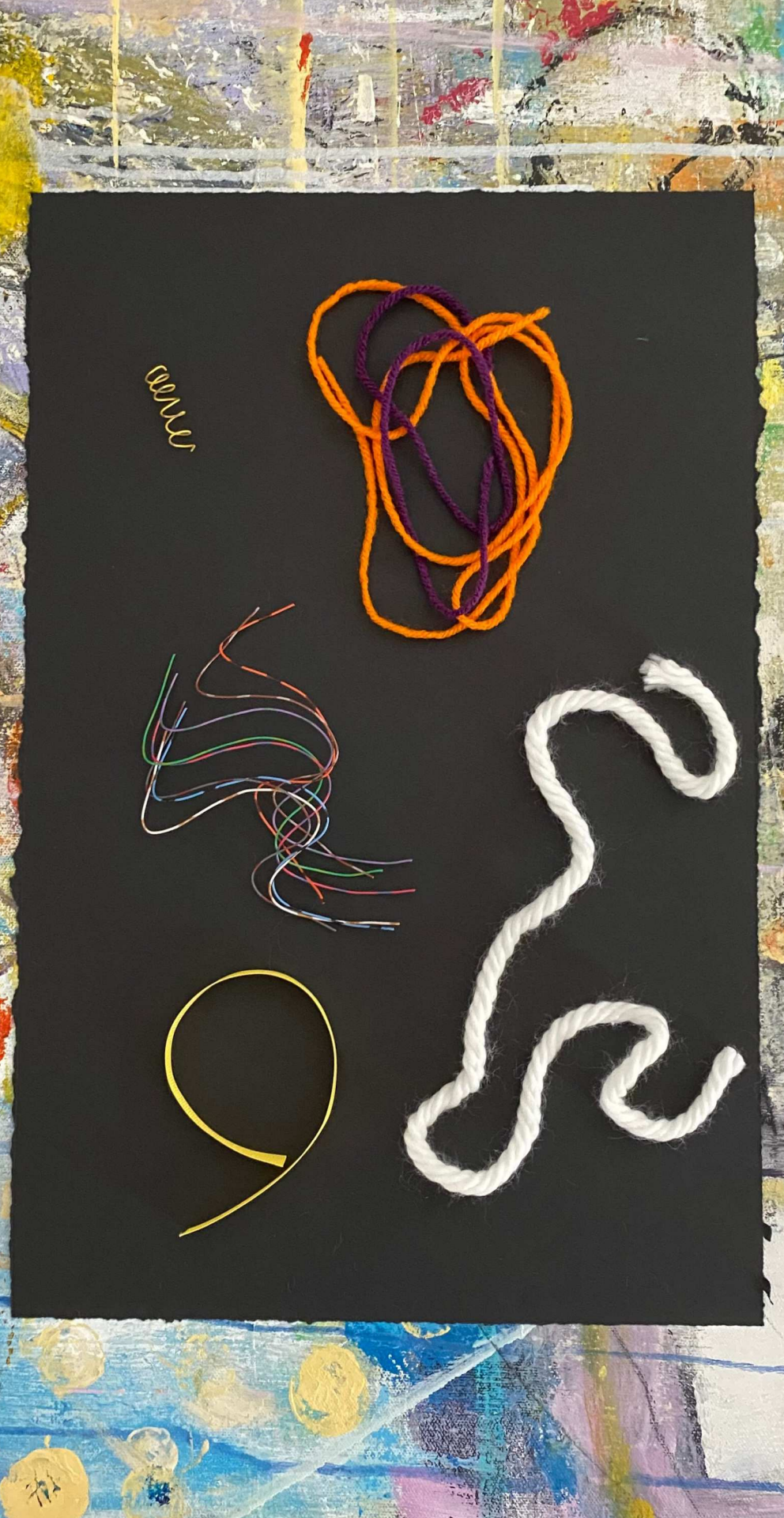


A collection of various curved objects is arranged on a black background. The objects include a long, thin, light brown rope; a thick, bright blue rope with several loops and a small pink spiral; a red braided rope with a figure-eight shape; a white plastic straw bent into a sharp curve; a green wire bent into a large 'C' shape; a multi-colored wire with a yellow band; a silver paper clip bent into a complex, multi-looped shape; a small silver paper clip; and a small silver paper clip bent into a square-like shape. The background is a black sheet of paper with a rough, torn edge, set against a larger, abstract, multi-colored background of yellow, blue, and purple.

Meet the **curves**.  
Curves create swerves.



They **find** the **beauty** in the world they observe.

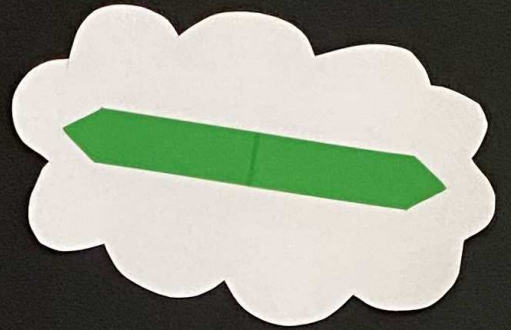
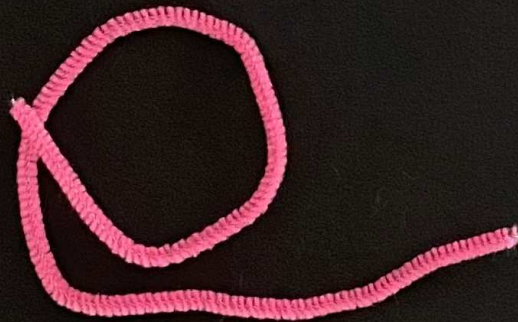


What begins  
as a line, then  
**bends** and **bows**

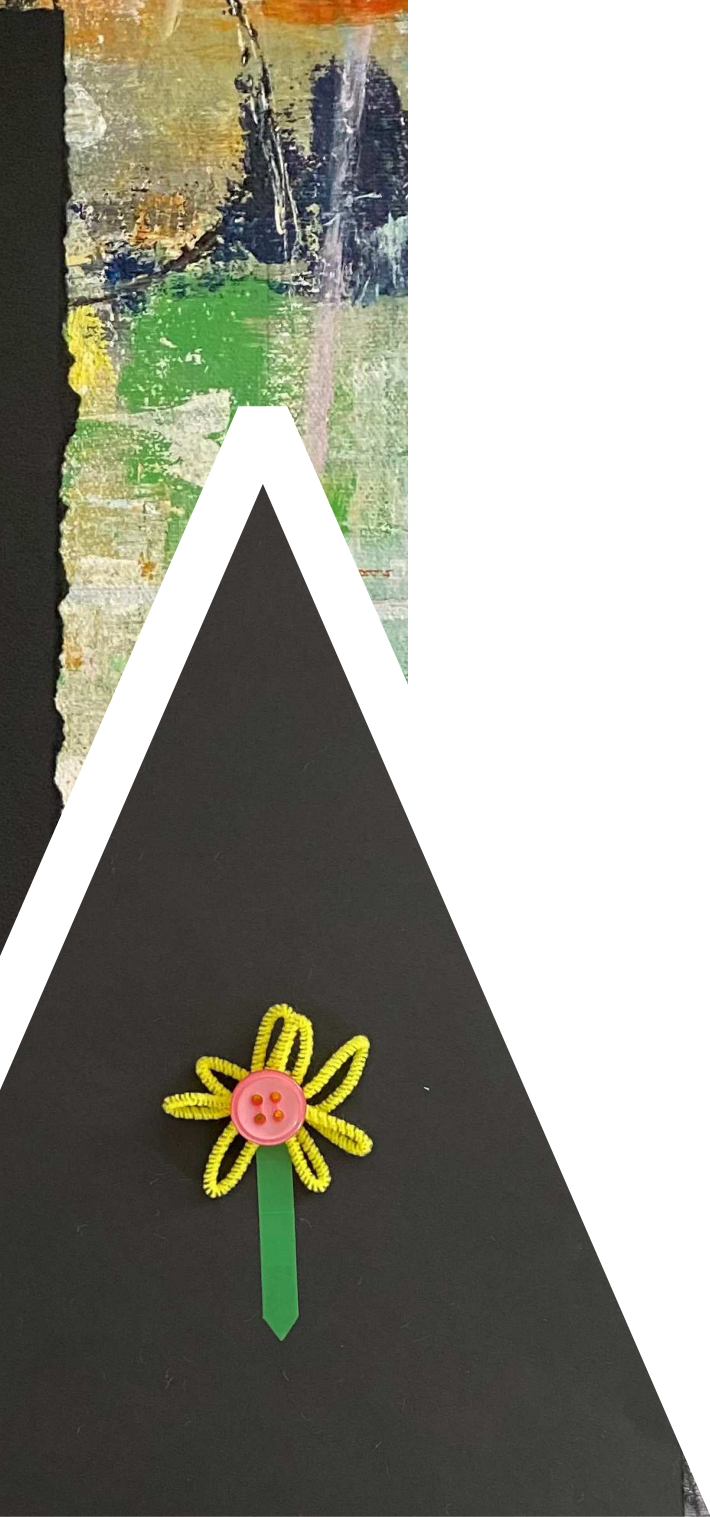


like the **spiral**  
inside the  
bloom of a rose.

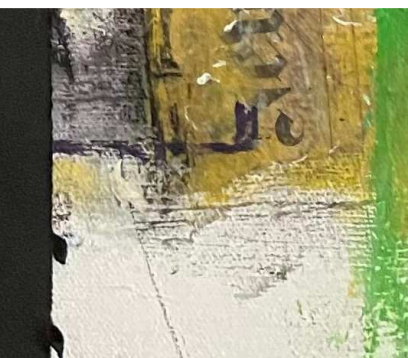




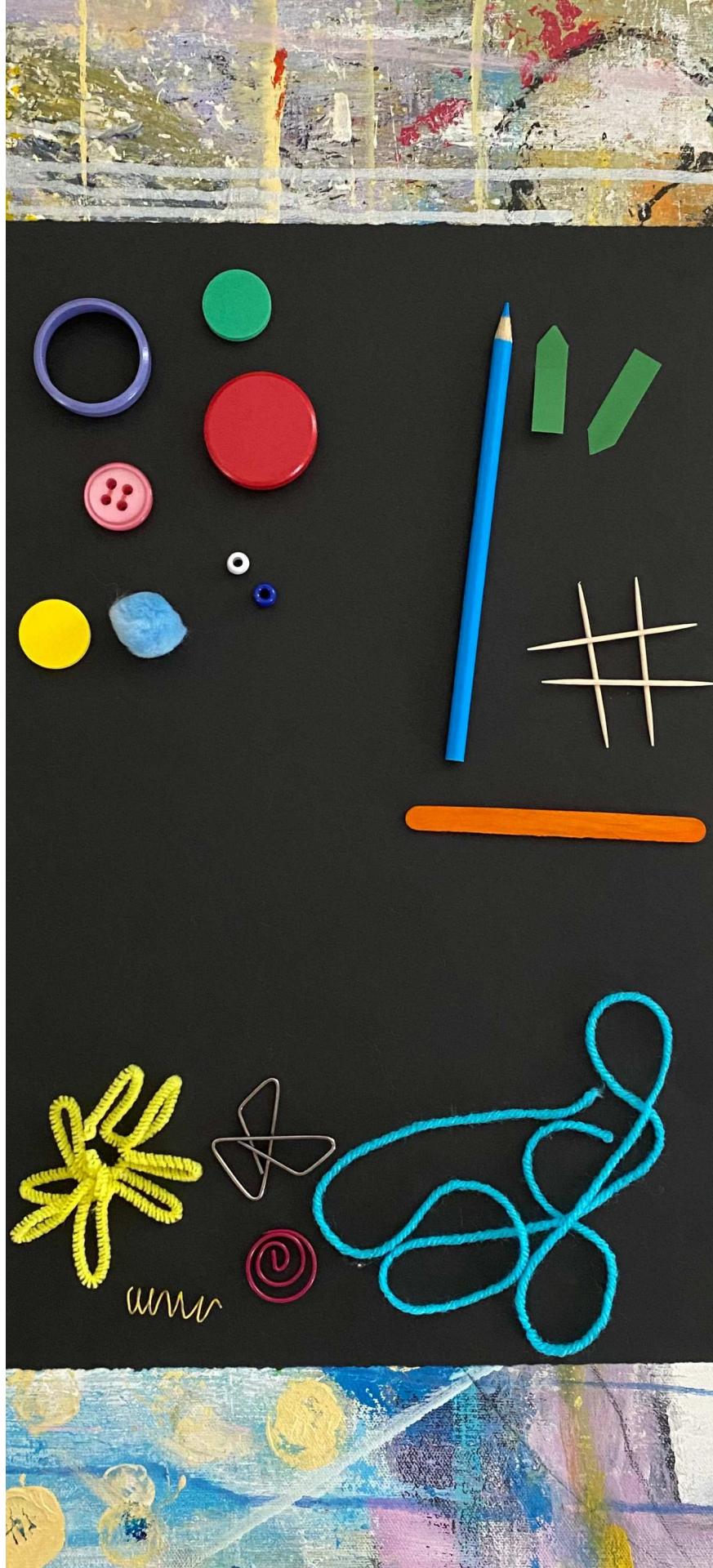
Curves **imagine** what it's like to be  
a **dot** or a **line**...



or **together**, all three.

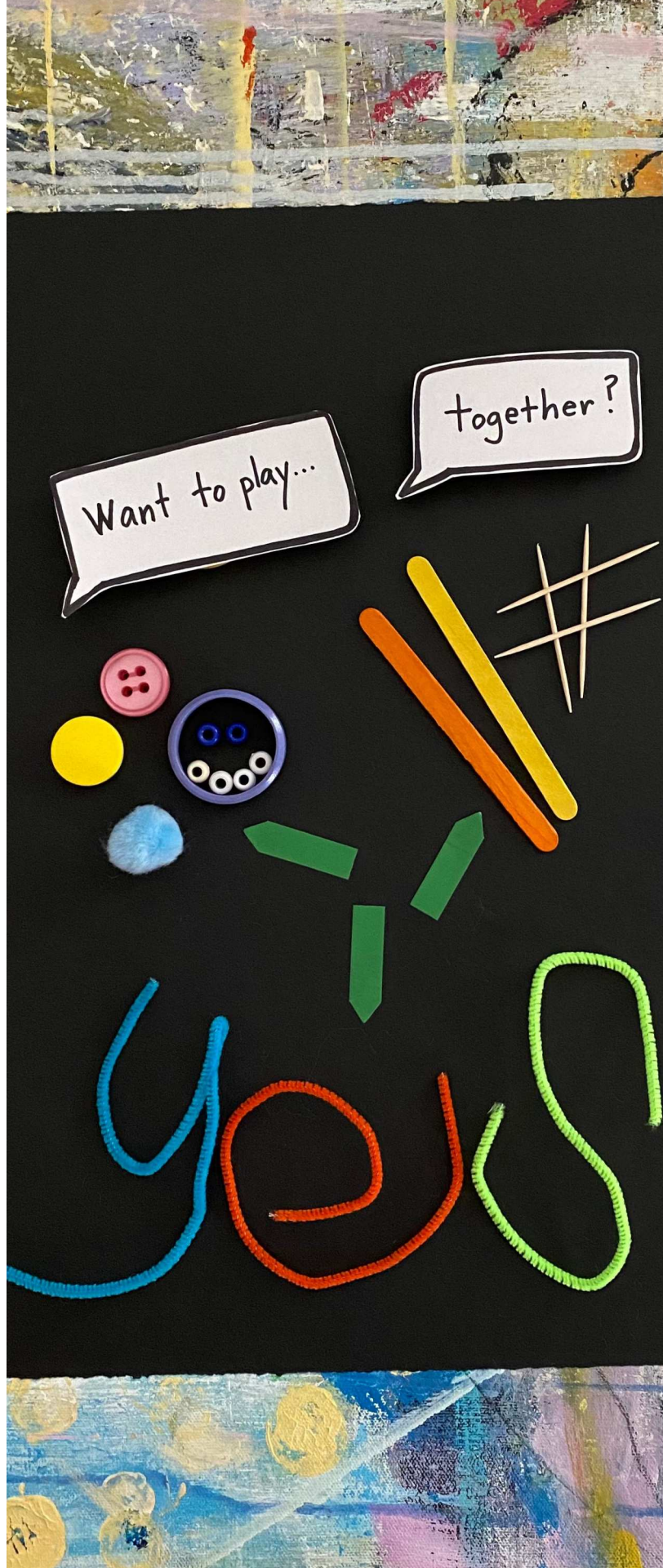


For a while it's quiet,  
where they all exist,  
**close but separate,**  
until one day a twist.



The dots and the lines,  
impressed by the curves,  
**ask to play,**  
despite their nerves.

Together these three,  
**different and the same,**  
choose to **connect**  
one day in a game.



A dot says, "Hey, I've got a thought!  
Starting here, **let's combine** and tie us a knot."



A line gets in place,  
attached to the dot,  
and calls to a curve,  
"I'm holding your spot!"



A curve joins the line, and **three become one**.  
The shape is now growing with **teamwork and fun**.

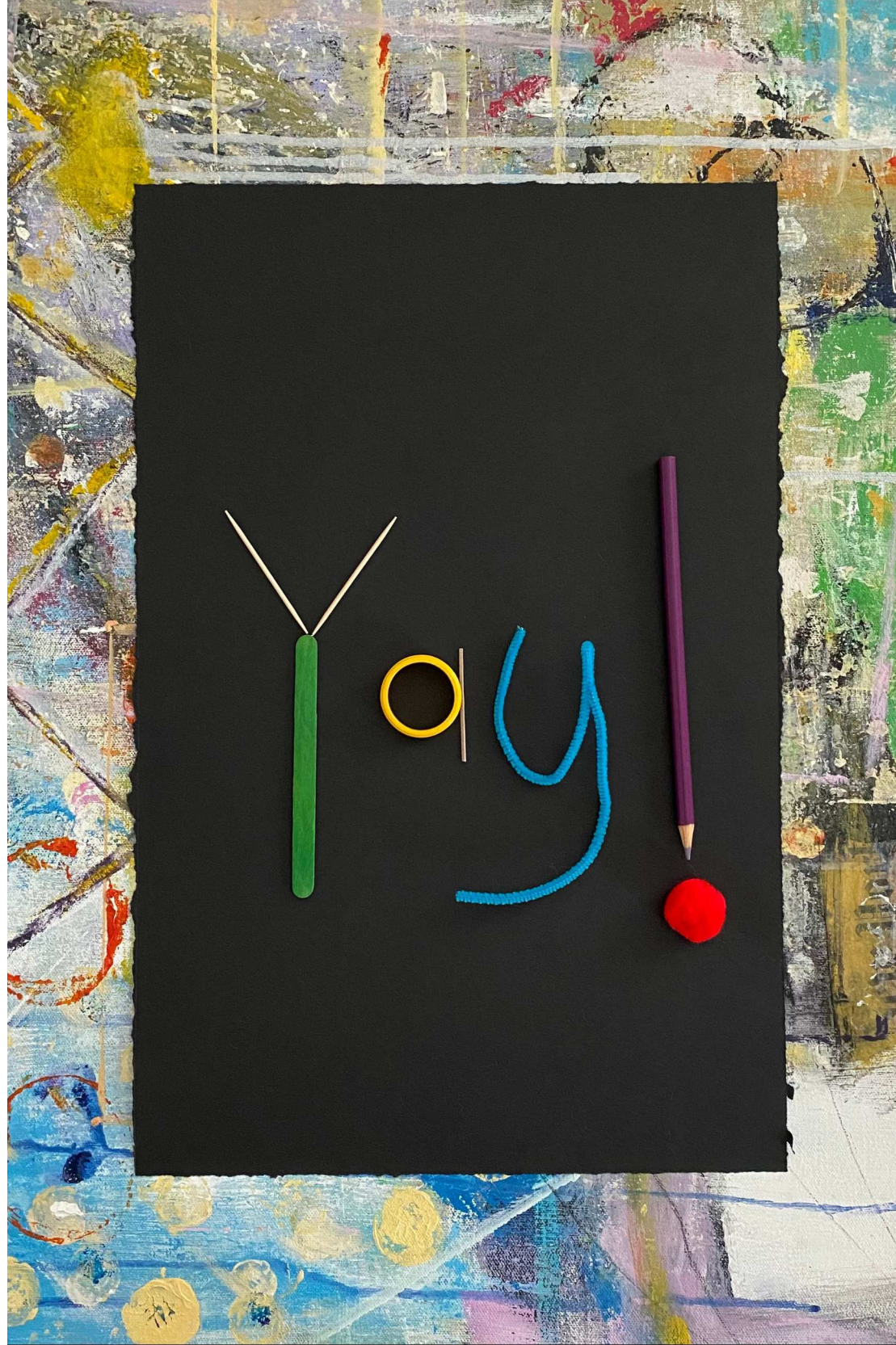


Next, comes a line  
who slides into space,  
to **cross underneath**, while the others stay in place.

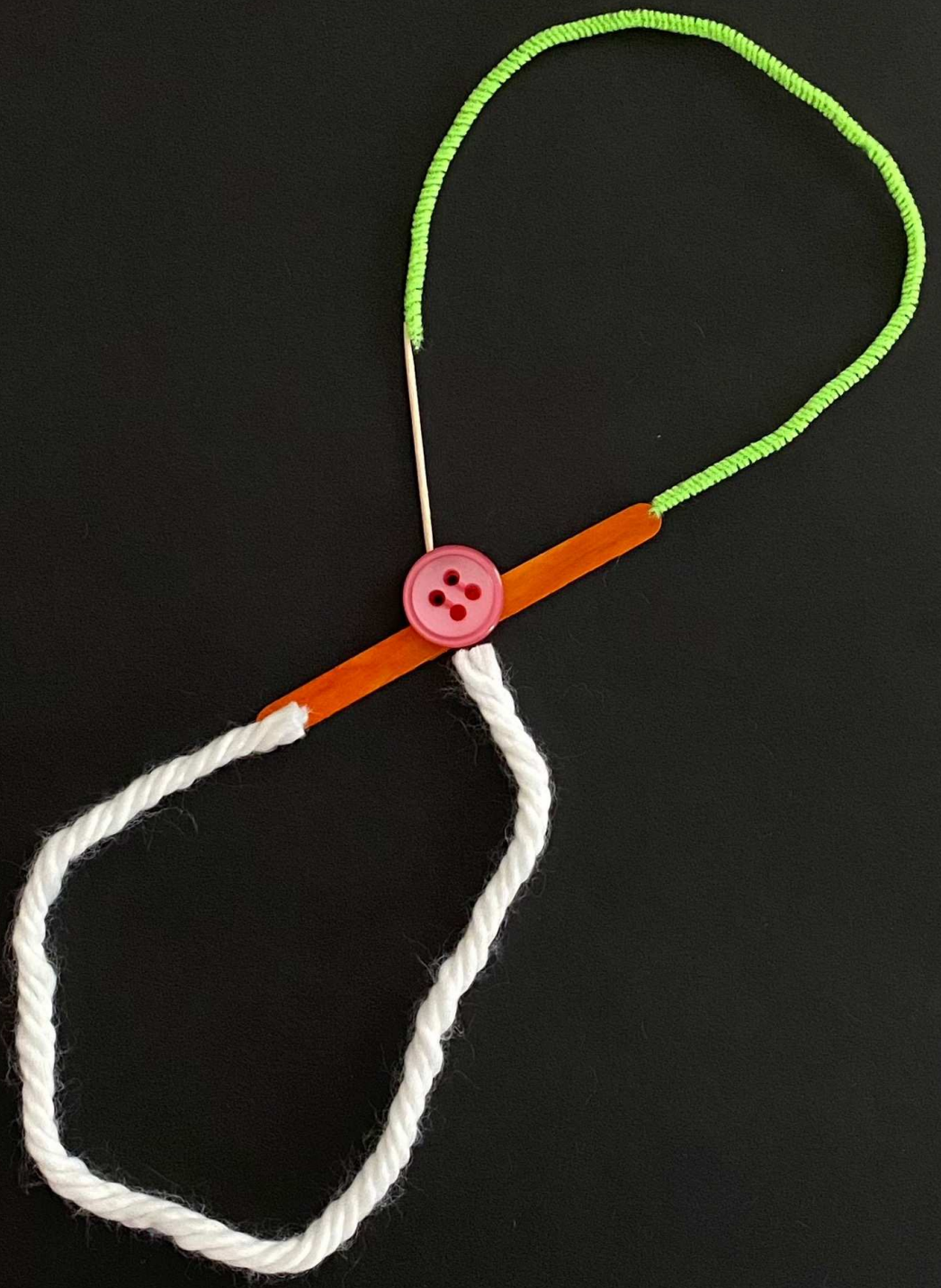


A final curve joins in, returning to the start.  
**Stronger**, here and now, **than standing apart**.





The **community cheers** for what they have done.  
Through a **blending of differences**, harmony is won!





**Together** is better.  
**Acceptance** preserves  
the powerful **connection**  
of dots, lines, and curves.



**Fun facts about the  
characteristics and relationships  
of Dots, Lines, & Curves:**

- Dots are the building blocks for everything else.
- Some artists use dots to create patterns that form images. This technique is called Pointillism.
  
- In art, lines are also thought of as “moving dots.”
- Lines can be thick, thin, zigzag, rough, or smooth.
- Lines can move in any direction.
  
- Curves are another type of line.
- Curves can be open or closed.
- Sometimes artists use curves to express a sense of comfort and harmony.
  
- The painting photographed throughout this book is called *Kitchen Lights*. The artist used dots, lines, and curves to create abstract art inspired by something common.

## Extension Activities:

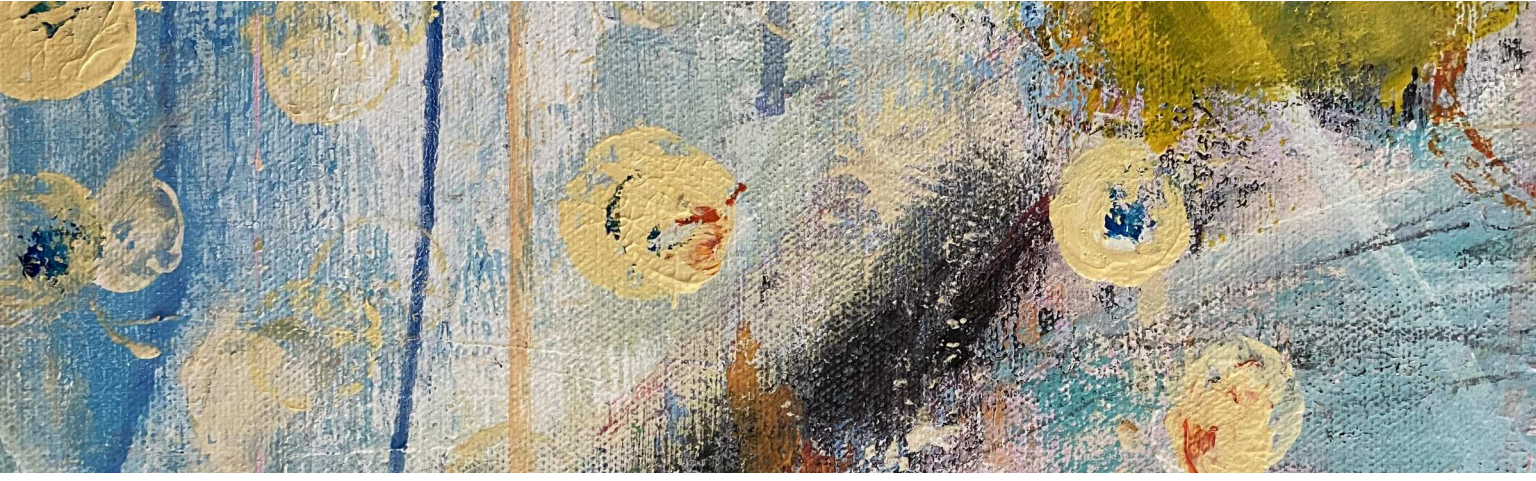
### Scavenger & Sketch:

- Take a walk together to hunt for interesting examples of dots, lines, and curves. Take photos as you go. Sketch a few of your favorite finds from photos or memory.

### Conversation & Collage:

- Answer the following together: What messages does the author send in the story, *Dots, Lines, & Curves - Better Together*?
- Brainstorm a list of vocabulary words that go along with the themes in this book (e.g., kindness, teamwork, togetherness, play, friends, community, inclusion, respect, etc.).
- Choose one word each from the brainstorm list, and create a collage with a combination of dots, lines, and curves to spell or represent that theme. (Use the *Yay!* collage from the story as a visual exemplar.)







[Dawn McGrath](#) is an author whose work focuses on youth wellness by blending social-emotional learning, health literacy, and social justice education. *Dots, Lines, & Curves* is her first children's book. The story addresses diversity through a wide lens to invite all children to see themselves in the characters as similar, different, and better together.

After more than a decade as an educator and special education administrator, Dawn founded Well Together Now to develop wellness programs that highlight the correlation between connectedness and wellbeing. She is also the author of the BellXcel Ladders SEL Curriculum.

Dawn lives in Salem, MA, with her wife, daughter, and Asti (her black lab).







With a little courage, curiosity, and creativity,  
Dots, Lines, & Curves learn that celebrating  
differences means more fun for everyone.



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