

# Handmade Books

(art + math; art + history; art + literature)

It is essential that children discover the personal confidence in making something that is useful and a piece of art. This lesson introduces students to the basics of making books using a simple stitching process. The size of a book can vary to adapt to scrapbooks, sketchbooks and notebook or journal. Styles of binding differ as well. Eastern stab binding and accordion folded books are common handmade styles. Most covers are made from Japanese hand-made papers similar to those suggested in this lesson. Alternately, cloth and leather covers can be used but are more costly.

## Grade Levels K-12

*Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.*

## Process

1. Fold two sheets of 9" x 12" drawing paper in half to 6" x 9". Trim one sheet of decorative paper to 10" x 14". Fold decorative paper in half to 7" x 10".
2. Measure for the three holes on the fold of both the drawing and decorative papers. Be sure to use the folded edge. Cover holes should be 2-1/2" from the top and bottom edges and in the middle at 5". Inside pages should have holes 2" from the top and bottom edges and in the middle at 4-1/2". Use a paper punch or tapestry needle to punch holes where measured directly on the fold.
3. Bind the book. Place the white pages into the cover being certain to line up the punched holes. Holding the book open, stitch with needle in the following method:
  - a) Through the center hole from the outside leaving extra thread for tie-off and embellishment
  - b) On the inside of the book, thread through the upper hole
  - c) On the outside of the book, thread through the lower hole
  - d) Thread back through the center hole from the inside.



## Materials

- [Handmade Decorative Papers by the Pound](#) (11298-1005) 20-35 sheets 11" x 15" per package, need one sheet per student
- [Blick White Sulphite Drawing Paper](#), 80-lb (10209-1043), 100-sheet package 9" x 12" sheets, need two sheets per student
- [Blick Plastic 12" Ruler](#) (55403-1012), need one per student
- [Blick Economy Graphite Pencils](#) (20302-2009) box of 12, need one per student
- [Blunt Tapestry Needles #13](#) (65104-1009), package of 12, need one per student
- [Boston® Light Duty 3-Hole Punch](#) (58943-1003), share two across classroom
- 18" Binding Cord per student, suggest one of the following:
  - [Creativity Street® Embroidery Floss](#) (63100-1009) package of 24
  - [Caron® 4-Ply Natura Deluxe 100% Acrylic Knitting Yarn](#) (65226-), assorted colors
  - [Nylon Jewelry Cord](#), 25-yd spool White (60616-1025) or Black (60616-2025)
- [Assorted Plastic Beads](#) (60716-1005)
- [Assorted Metallized Beads](#) 1-lb bag (60776-1001)

## Process, continued

4. Tie the line together on the outside. Add beads and knot. Knots can be decorative also.

### Options

- For young children, skip process steps 2 and 3. Pass the cord or yarn directly through the folded cover and pages and tie on back center.
- Create various sizes of books. Use heavier cover paper or card stock for larger books. Experiment with square or narrow shapes. Binding can be on any folded side.
- Make felt covered books. Stitch on felt before binding. Use same binding steps
- Use a variety of papers for pages.

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## National Standards

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

**K-4** Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

**5-8** Students select media, techniques, and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices

**9-12** Students apply media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks

Content Standard #5 — Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

**K-4** Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art

**5-8** Students compare multiple purposes for creating works of art

**9-12** Students identify intentions of those creating artworks, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works

Content Standard #6 — Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

**K-4** Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

**5-8** Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts

**9-12** Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues, or themes in the humanities or sciences