

## **Title of Lesson: Printed Tales: A Nature-Inspired Bookmaking Activity**

**Grade Level and Number of Students:** 10

### **LESSON RATIONALE**

The Handmade Festival at the Hermitage Museum provides a unique opportunity to connect artmaking with nature, history, and community in a setting that celebrates craft and creativity. The Hermitage, with its historic home, gardens, and art collections, is itself a site where art and environment intersect. This lesson invites children and families to engage in the art of printmaking while also constructing a simple accordion book. Participants will not only create a handmade object but also experience how art connects to the local landscape, using natural elements gathered from the Hermitage gardens.

This lesson emphasizes the importance of learning traditional art processes, such as printmaking, while connecting them to interdisciplinary applications. Printmaking introduces participants to design principles, including repetition, texture, and contrast.

The big idea of this lesson is that artmaking can serve as a bridge between creativity and daily life. By creating a personalized field guide, participants see how artistic practices enrich personal memory-making, environmental awareness, and community traditions. This shows that art is not limited to museums or galleries, but can be created and lived through simple, meaningful processes.

Through this process, participants learn the value of handmade craft in a digital world, develop an appreciation for the tactile nature of artmaking, and take home a meaningful object that embodies their experience at the festival.

**PROCESS:** Printmaking and Bookmaking

**BIG IDEA:** Storytelling Through Nature

**LEARNER OBJECTIVES:** *(what will the students be able to do? This should be a list- student will be able to conceive...? Develop...? Understand...? Create...? Imagine...? Evaluate...? Etc. Here you should have something about what they are making- such as students should be able to create a structure using what processes?)*

- Participants will craft and design an accordion book.
- Participants will use natural elements and printmaking techniques to design a cover for the press.

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**MATERIALS NEEDED FOR LESSON** *(be specific; how many of each item, what size paper, what color markers/paper, what kind of recycled materials, what size brushes, what kind of markers fine point/broad tip, etc.?)*

**Art supplies:**

- Chipboard (6 × 6 in) – 2 per person → 20 total
- Printed cover paper (7 × 7 in) – 2 per person → 20 total
- Black inside cover paper (5.5 × 5.5 in) – 2 per person → 20 total
- Accordion pages – long strips, folded to just under 6 in tall (10 total, 1 per person)
- Gelli plates – 4–5
- Brayers – 4–5
- Barren - 4-5
- Acrylic paint – 6–8 colors (small bottles/tubes)
- Plants/natural materials – for pressing/printing
- Sponges – 4–5
- Water bucket – 1–2
- Towels/rags – 2–3
- Scrap paper sheets – stack for rolling off brayers / test prints
- Mod Podge – enough for 10 books
- Glue brushes/sponges – 4–5
- Bone folders – 4–5

**Additional Materials**

- Hand wipes (2–3 tubs)
- Latex gloves (optional)
- Paper towels
- Table covers
- Instructions/steps (poster/ table copies)
- Colored Pencils and Markers (for adding to cover)

**Materials/ Station Prep**

- Pre-cut 7 × 7 in printing paper for book covers
- Pre-cut 6 × 6 in chipboard for covers
- Pre-cut 5.5 × 5.5 in black paper for inside covers
- Set up gelli plates and prepare acrylic paints
- Gather flowers, leaves, and other natural elements for printing
- Set up glue stations with Mod Podge, brushes/sponges, and bone folders
- Set up blow dryers / fans for drying prints
- Cover tables / work area to protect surfaces
- Create instruction sheet for participants

- Make teacher samples for demonstration

## Vocabulary

**Baren-** a handheld tool used in printmaking to apply even pressure to the back of paper

**Brayer-** used to apply a thin layer of ink or paint on a printing plate or block before transferring the image to paper

**Repetition-** reusing elements like shapes, colors, or forms multiple times within a composition to create unity, rhythm, and emphasis

**Contrast-** arrangement of different or opposite elements to create a specific difference to highlight features within artwork and provide visual interest

**Texture-** the surface quality of an artwork; can be perceived through touch or visually

## Motivating Participants: Personal and Social Relevance

At the Hermitage Handmade Festival, visitors are surrounded by art and nature. Our station gives them a chance to slow down and make something by hand using natural elements gathered from the grounds. The project is open to all ages, so families and individuals can work together at the table. Each person leaves with a handmade accordion book, blending printmaking with book arts and offering a personal keepsake from the festival.

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## LESSON PROCEDURES

**As part of the planning process, create an elevated teaching example that will inspire your students, at your level of artistic mastery, along with a series of process samples and visuals to use in teaching the lesson. Include a professional image of the final work and 3-5 process images, with captions, at the end of the lesson plan.**

- A. **Organizer:** *(How will students be informed of the learning objectives and major activities of the lesson? Will you have handouts? Visuals? Will you put the objectives in a PowerPoint?)*

Participants will start at one end of a line of tables, where we will be ready to greet them and provide a brief overview of the project and the printmaking process. We will also have a handout complete with process photos or graphics

and a projected slide containing written directions and visual steps to create their booklet. Samples will also be provided at the beginning of the process, allowing them to understand and plan their final product.

- B. **Extension Activity:** *(students who finish task early should have another activity or station to continue to be engaged during class time. Explain that activity/work station*

Participants who finish their task early will have the opportunity to embellish their cover with pressed flowers or drawing materials such as colored pencils and markers. They will also be given the choice to sit at the extension activity table to work on individual prints rather than create their accordion storybook.

### Lesson Steps

- **Pick natural materials** – Choose leaves, flowers, or other elements provided at the table.
- **Choose paint colors** – Select 1–2 acrylic colors for your print.
- **Prepare the gelli plate** – Squeeze about 3 small drops of paint onto the plate and spread evenly with a brayer.
- **Arrange materials** – Place your natural elements on the plate in your desired composition.
- **Pull your print** – Lay your 7 × 7 in cover paper **printed side down** on the plate, press for about 15 seconds, then peel back to reveal your print.
- **Optional second print** – Either take another sheet for a “ghost print” or add another color to the plate for a layered print.
- **Set prints to dry** – Move your finished prints aside and let them dry before assembly.
- **Place chipboard on print** – Put your 6 × 6in chipboard in the center of your dried print, printed side down.
- **Glue edges** – Use a brush loaded with Mod Podge to paint along the edges of the chipboard.
- **Fold and press edges** – Fold the edges of the print over the chipboard and press flat with a bone folder to create crisp edges.
- **Attach black inside cover** – Glue a 5.5 × 5.5 in black sheet to the inside of both covers to hide raw edges.
- **Attach accordion pages** – Move to the next station to glue your accordion pages inside the covers.
- **Optional decoration** – If you want, stay and decorate your book with markers, colored pencils, or additional touches.

**LESSON SEQUENCE** *Also referred to as scripting or timing, work in the table below and include times. Be very specific from beginning to end. Remember to include material distribution, introductions, cleanup, assessments, and closure. While writing, keep in mind that the scripting must be detailed enough so that a substitute or colleague should be able to teach your lesson from the info you provide. Write out complete questions and prompts. Length of class time for elementary are 45 minutes, middle school 1 hour 20 minutes and high school 1 hour and 45 minutes.*

**Introduction/Greeting:** Hello we are the art education cohort of 2026. Thank you for stopping by our booth! If you choose to participate you will be leaving here with a personal accordion book that can be used for your creative endeavors. You will also create your cover for your book by using printmaking. There will be visual steps on the projector as a reminder for instructions.

**Printing station sequence:** Begin at the first station with picking out some natural elements that are provided. Move onto the next station where you pick your paint colors. The next step is to create your first print. Add the paint onto the gelli plate and use three drops of your paint, about the size of a penny, and take your brayer to spread the paint across the plate. Then place your natural materials in your preferred composition. Take your paper, printed side down, and place it on top of your plate. Then use a baron or your hands to add pressure for about 15 seconds and peel off your paper, congrats you have made your first print! You may have noticed that there is still the imprint of your natural materials on the plate, you can use this! There are two options from here, the first option is taking another sheet of paper and pulling that print. The second option is to layer. In order to do that, wait a minute for the leftover paint to dry, add a different color and distribute equally with your brayer, and pull that print. Place the prints to the side to dry for assembly.

**Book/Cover Assembly:** Take your dried print and place your chipboard cover in the middle, printed side down. Use a brush loaded with Mod Podge to paint along the edges of the board, then fold the edges of the print over the chipboard and press them flat with a bone folder to create crisp edges. Next, glue a black sheet onto the inside of the cover to hide the raw edges, repeating for both the front and back covers. Then, attach your accordion pages by gluing them over the black sheets inside the covers. Once that's done, you can move on to decorating your book with markers, colored pencils, or any additional touches if you want.

**Floater Help:** As being the help that floats around the event I will be helping where any help is needed! When it comes to step one, which is to create your gelly print, I will go around the tables and assist in how to create the prints. Asking questions on what the participants are doing, figuring out their goals, and helping them achieve them. I will further emphasize all given steps when it comes to creating the prints as well, such as adding pressure for about 15 seconds and peeling off your paper. Regarding step two, which is book assemblage, this is one of the most difficult steps, therefore anticipated for needing the most help. Although all materials will be prepped and ready, participants will need additional hands-on assistance in creating their book. This is where I would go

around the table to assist in making sure the participants are folding their covers correctly onto the bookboard, as well as using mod podge to glue them down. I will help them get the crisp results they are looking for! This also allows for opportunity to spark conversation as to what they would like to put into their own storybooks, or ask why they created their covers the way they did. Once their covers are fully secured and dry, this is then when I will assist in attaching a sheet of paper on the backing of the bookboards where the fronts of the covers are seen, though this can be optional. This leads to a cleaner look of the finished book, as well as further secure the covers. Once that step has been completed, I will assist them in gluing their accordion pages in, creating their finished book. Finally, as a floater, I will go over to the extension activity table where participants are given the option to create additional prints, or do this rather than create a book. At this station is where I will help them create their own prints and show them different techniques that they can use to create more intricate prints.

**DIFFERENTIATION STRATEGIES:** (These should also be reflected in the lesson sequence)

- ☒ Flexible grouping
- ☐ Open-ended activities
- ☐ Exploration by interests
- ☐ Negotiated criteria
- ☐ Anchoring/Extension activities
- ☒ Independent studies
- ☐ Tiered activities/products
- ☐ Journal prompts
- ☐ Multiple levels of questions
- ☐ Scaffolding
- ☐ Choice/TAB

### **Flexible Grouping**

We would encourage families, friends, or individuals to work together while sharing tools and ideas. Some might prefer collaboration over working independently.

### **Independent Studies**

Participants could take home a “how-to” card explaining how to use their field guide and what to possibly include in it from the Hermitage Museum and other natural environments.

Include 3-5 process images of your teaching sample with descriptive captions, handouts, and assessment checklists/rubrics. Upload your PowerPoint as a separate attachment.