

Paper Crafts and Paper Cuts

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With information constantly shifting to online formats it seems that a paperless society is quite possible. However, the online format can never deliver the tactile experience that holding a piece of paper can. Those who seek the solace of paper should consider paper crafts as a means to reconnect with the real thing.

The human connection with paper has existed for thousands of years. It began in Egypt when, “the first form of paper was invented over 5,000 years ago.” This type of paper is known as papyrus. The name is derived from the “plant called *Cyperus papyrus*” of which the paper is made of its thin slices layered (Garber, 2006, p. 6). Today’s method for making paper is “attributed to the Chinese inventor T’sai Lun in the years around 105 AD” (Garner, 2006, p. 6). This method involves using a screen to extract fibres from

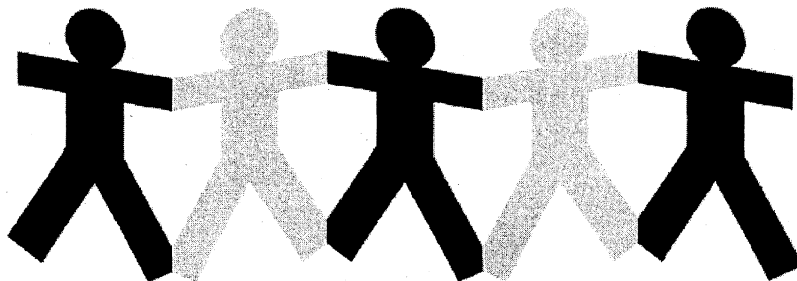
water. “The fibers from trees were discovered to be an ideal and cheap source” and are what the majority of today’s papers are made from (Garner, 2006, p. 7). There are specialty papers made to satisfy any individual’s needs.

Making paper crafts involves using any type of paper, they “mix any form of paper or card stock to create interesting and innovative craft projects” (Garner, 2006, p. 8). It is not necessary to exceed the budget when offering a craft program. Paper for programs can be sourced “in fine art supply and craft stores, as well as in home improvement stores, party and office supply stores, and from online suppliers. Recycled magazines and catalogs are another excellent source of paper” (Le Van, 2006, p.8). Crafting with recycled materials gives a new purpose to materials that have been rendered useless.

References

Le Van, M. (2006). *The art of jewelry, paper jewelry: 35 Creative projects*. New York: Lark Books.

Garner, L. (2006). *The complete book of papercraft: Over 50 designs for handmade paper, cards, gift-wrapping, decoupage, and manipulating paper*. New York: St. Martin’s Griffin.



Programming Ideas

The number of paper-based craft projects is infinite. For inspiration look on your library's shelf, search online craft sites and visit local craft shops and craft shows. Complicated projects can be reworked and simplified for programming purposes.

Focus on techniques that can be applied to paper, embossing, stamping, folding, laminating, stitching, decoupage, paper-mâché, stencilling, tearing or weaving. Also consider making paper!

Handy Tools

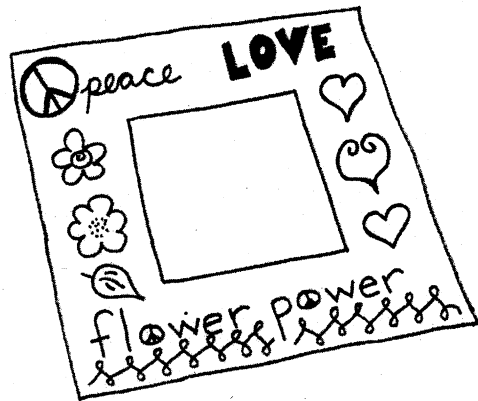
- Metal-edge ruler
- Geometry compass
- Bone folder used for creasing and scoring
- Pencils
- Tapes
- Glues
- Paintbrushes
- Waxed paper
- Latex gloves for messy crafts
- Recycled containers
- Rags
- Heavy Books
- Utility Knife/Craft knife
- Scissors
- Cutting mat or thick layer of newspaper
- Paper cutter
- Hand punches (office variety or decorative)

Projects

1- Decoupage picture frame

Basic Equipment:

- Old Magazines
- White Glue
- Cardboard
- Scissors
- Ruler
- Pencil



- A. Measure and cut picture frame from cardboard.
- B. Select and cut images from old magazines, wrapping paper or wallpaper remnants to cover item.
- C. Dilute white glue with a little water; use a craft paintbrush to glue items in place; seal the picture frame with an even coating of the glue mix.

2- Money origami serpent

Basic Equipment

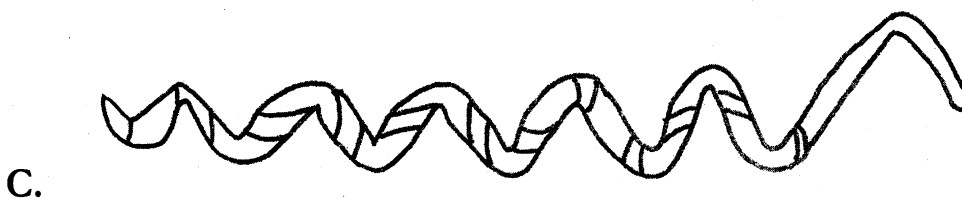
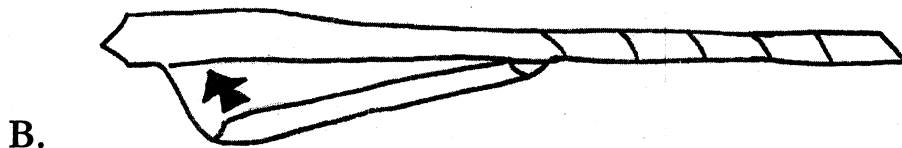
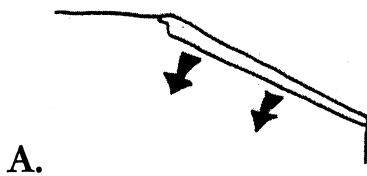
- 1 crisp bill or 1 piece of paper with the same dimensions

Shaping paper through folding is clean and equipment free. There are thousands of instructions online which allow origami to fit with any theme.

- A. Begin with the bill placed horizontally on the work surface. Tightly, roll the bill on an angle from the top right corner. This will create a long narrow tube.

B. To keep the tube from unravelling roll the bottom left corner the other direction.

C. Fold the tube so it forms a zigzagged serpent body. Make sure to include a head.



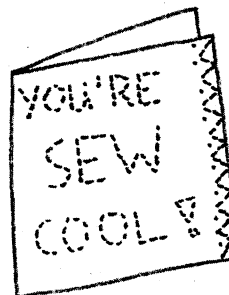
Adapted from

Randall, C. (1998). *The Serpent*. Retrieved March 30, 2009 from <http://members.cox.net/crandall11/money/snake/>

3- Cards for any occasion

Basic Equipment

- Cardstock
- Needle
- Embroidery thread in a variety of colours
- Stitch Pattern
- Scissors
- Glue

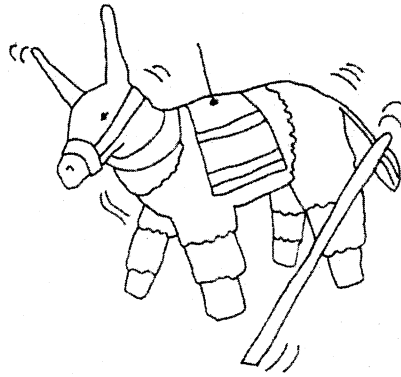


- A. Fold a piece of cardstock to form a card.
- B. Draw or transfer the stitch pattern on to the front cover of the card. A stitch pattern is not necessary if you plan to do a freehand design.
- C. Thread the needle with an embroidery thread and knot the long tail. Start stitching from the inside of the card.
- D. When finished with the strand of thread or designated colour knot it on the inside of the card and trim the ends.
- E. To hide the knots on the inside of the card cut a piece of cardstock and glue it on the inside of the front cover.

4- Paper-Mâché Piñata

Basic Equipment

- Balloon
- Strips of newspaper
- Flour
- Water
- Wax paper
- Tissue paper
- Glue



Use balloons, cardboard, rolled up newspaper, chicken wire and/or toilet paper rolls to create forms to be covered by paper-mâché. The possibilities are endless.

- A. Mix water and flour together to make a paste. Rip newspaper into strips. Inflate the balloon.
- B. Working over the wax paper dip a newspaper strip into the paste. Run the dipped strip through two fingers to removed excess paste.
- C. Smooth the dipped strip on the balloon. Continue to add strips making sure to overlap them. Build-up a minimum of three layers. Leave the knot and a small surrounding area of the balloon exposed.
- D. Let it dry overnight.
- E. Decorate with pieces of tissue paper or paint it. Let it dry.
- F. Pop the balloon and remove the rubber. Fill the empty balloon with candy, cover the hole, suspend from a tree branch and start whacking!

Paper Craft Resources for Librarians

Books

Garner, L. (2006). *The complete book of papercraft: Over 50 designs for handmade paper, cards, gift-wrapping, decoupage, and manipulating paper*. New York: St. Martin's Griffin.

Hart, J. (2006). *Sublime stitching: Hundreds of hip embroidery patterns and how-to*. San Francisco: Chronicle Books.

Le Van, M. (2006). *The art of jewelry, paper jewelry: 35 Creative projects*. New York: Lark Books.

Malone, M. (1998). *New paper crafts: An inspirational and practical guide to contemporary papercrafts, including papier-mache, decoupage, paper cutting, collage, decorating paper techniques and paper construction*. London: Lorenz Books.

Nguyen, D. (2007). *Monster origami*. New York: Sterling.

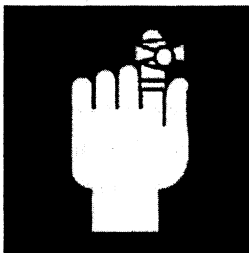
Electronic Resources

Randall, C. (16 January 2008). *Money Origami*. Retrieved March 30, 2009 from

<http://members.cox.net/crandall11/money/>

Sublime Stitching. (2009). *Sublime stitching: This ain't your grammas embroidery!* Retrieved April 10, 2009 from

<http://www.sublimestitching.com/>



TIP: First Aid for Paper Cuts

One of the hazards associated with paper crafts are paper cuts. While they may seem more of a nuisance than a wound it is necessary to treat them. Paper cuts from recycled materials (newspapers, magazines, etc.) are especially prone to infection due to the build up of grime and germs over time. As a preventive measure make sure to follow these easy first aid steps:

1. Wash the affected area with soap and water immediately.
2. Pat dry with a clean towel.
3. If available, apply ointment to reduce the sting and chance of infection.
4. Cover with an adhesive bandage.
5. Get back on the crafting horse!

Reference

eHow. (2009). *How to treat a paper cut*. Retrieved April 11, 2009 from
http://www.ehow.com/how_2071868_treat-paper-cut.html