7: The Making of Books

The earliest book was developed as early as 3000 years ago and was utilized as a portable resource for documentation or drawing. These early book formats contained bamboo wood or palm leaves fastened together as pages. Other early book formats include the use of clay tablets to record information on, as well as codexes — the Western codex was formed by drilling holes alongside a wooden tablet and then linking these tablet pieces together with cord or leather to create a book format. The discovery and use of parchment as a new type of book page, permitted the creation of thinner books that had easily foldable pages and could be securely nestled between a wooden cover. The Chinese invention of paper around 1050 propelled the evolution of books and greatly contributed to an increase in book production. Sheets of paper could be glued together and folded onto themselves to create endless pages between two hard covers. Then, Gutenberg’s invention of the moveable type around 1450 made it possible to make many copies of a text at an affordable price and fast pace. Since then books have continued to circulate around our world. Modern books machines that set the type, make paper, and print the text allows for wider distribution and greater availability of books for the public. However, books are not just simply for reading; books can be a form of art. Known as artists' books, these types of books involve a return to the intricate and personal handcrafted process of making books. Using glue, needles and wax thread, various stitching techniques, and a range of fabric or wood covers, each artists’ book is unique. In this activity, further explore the world of books — beyond reading a story — and create your own artist book, known as a Zine. Zines are the most easily made artists books that often contain content that tell a story or communicate an important message to a certain audience. Zines can be either digital or print documents, but they always reflect the artists mind and express endless creativity!

Reading Recommendations:
Children
1. *The Letters are Lost!* by Lisa Campbell Ernst
2. *How Paper is Made* by Neil Curtis
3. *Yoko Learns to Read* by Dan Elliot
4. *Llama Llama Loves to Read* by Anna Dewdney
Juniors
1. *Funny Papers* Elaine Scott
2. *The Papermakers* by Leonard Everett Fisher
3. *Fine Print* by Joann Johansen Burch
4. *Gutenberg* by Leonard Everett Fisher
5. *Read for Your Life: Tales of Survival From the Editors of Read Magazine*

Teens
1. *A Short History of the Printed Word* by Warren Chappell
2. *A History of Reading* by Alberto Manguel
3. *Fahrenheit 451*
4. *Gutenberg's Apprentice* by Alix Christie
5. *The Pleasure of Reading in an Age of Distractions* by Alan Jacobs

Activity:
**Materials**
1. Piece of paper (normal white printer paper will work!)
2. Something to write with (you can use crayons, colored pencils, markers, pens, or pencils)
3. A pair of scissors

**Procedure**
Making your own personal zine can be a quick and fun activity. The content of the book is up to you — fill it with drawings, poems, short stories, journal entries, stickers, and much more!!

1. Start by folding your sheet of paper in half, hamburger style.
2. Unfold the paper. The sheet is now split into halves. Fold one side of your paper into the middle to meet the crease.
3. Repeat step 2 for the other side of the paper.
4. If you unfold your paper you should have four equal sized vertical columns.
5. Fold your paper in half again but this time vertically.
6. Unfold your paper you should now have 8 equally sized rectangles.
7. Now, this is a very important step as cutting your zine correctly will ensure it folding properly. Fold your paper back in half like above. Now cut halfway in at your crease, this cut will create a opening in the middle of your paper.
8. Now you should have a sheet with 8 sections and a slit in the middle.
9. Fold your paper lengthwise (along the crease that has the slit). Hold the paper at either end, then push the ends in toward each other. The sections should fold into each other to form an eight-page booklet.
10. Now it’s time for you to fill in your blank booklet and turn it into a zine! How you fill it in is completely up to you. Use the basic supplies only or add extra elements.
11. That’s it; you have made a zine — one of the most effective forms of a book. You can keep it for yourself, give the original away as a one-of-a-kind gift, or make copies to share with your friends.
**Dive Deeper:**
After reading and/or completing the activities, does this topic peak your interest?

**Check out these websites to further explore the topic of book making:**
5. DUM DUM Digital Zine — [http://www.dumdumzine.com](http://www.dumdumzine.com)

**Check out these videos and films to visually learn more:**
1. How to make a zine from one piece of printer paper — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxqr9e3wCxi](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxqr9e3wCxi)
2. Exploring London’s DIY Zine Revolution — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jl_Eg0jPOA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7jl_Eg0jPOA)
3. Mini Zine Flip Through — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_X1_69Jn5Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_X1_69Jn5Q)
4. Artist’s Books — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SrVzNnxCl0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9SrVzNnxCl0)
5. Art of Book Making — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T17aCX2iBBY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T17aCX2iBBY)
6. The evolution of the book TED Talk with Julie Dreyfuss — [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YqYtdPUis4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_YqYtdPUis4)

**To stimulate the brain and engage in active learning, ask these questions:**

Looking to build upon writing skills? Share your responses to these questions in a personal journal or brief paragraph essay.

Looking to build upon verbal communication and discussion based skills? Share your responses around the dinner table at night with family members; each person can contribute to the conversation with their own perspectives.

Looking to visually demonstrate your ideas? Share your responses by drawing and labeling a diagram, creating a storyboard with pictures, construct a 3D model, or acting out a scene.

1. Zines are a fun, quick, and powerful form of artistic expression that can communicate a wide variety of ideas and messages to the public. Imagine you are a Zine/Magazine Editor and you have your own company that produces these types books and material for the public to read. What is your Zine/Magazine about — is it related to fashion, gardening, home improvements, toys, cooking, art, etc…? How many copies of your publication would you distribute, and how are you distributing them — is it an exclusive publication for a selected few, or is it free to the public; are you hand making all of the copies, or are they going to be available online?
2. Do you prefer to read books digitally (online) or would you rather hold the physical book in your hand and flip through the pages? What do you think some of the benefits and drawbacks are to reading books online versus in print?

3. Do you think print is a dying medium? Will the digital age overpower our need to print and read physical books, newspapers, or magazines?