

# Easy Fabric “Batik”

## (art + social studies)

Batik is an ancient art in which melted wax is applied in intricate designs on fabric which is then dyed and the wax is removed, leaving the design area the color of the fabric. Artists in Indonesia, India, Africa, China and many other parts of the world have created beautiful batik fabrics that are unique to the materials, symbols and ideas of their own culture.



Explore the beauty of fabric batik without the danger of hot wax or dyes. Simply trace a design onto muslin with washable glue and add color with a high-quality tempera paint. The glue is removed with water, leaving a white line and the fabric retains enough of the paint for brilliant color.

## Grade Levels 3-8

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

## Preparation

1. Cut muslin to 9" x 12" pieces with scissors.
2. Protect work surface with vinyl table cover.

## Process

1. Create a line drawing with a dark-colored pencil on 9" x 12" paper. Place muslin over drawing. Pencil lines will be visible through the fabric. With masking tape, tape both the drawing and the fabric to the work surface.
2. Trace the line drawing onto



## Materials

Blick Premium Grade  
Tempera, pints

Yellow (00011-4006)  
Magenta (00011-3046)  
Turquoise (00011-5115)

Optional:

Blue (00011-5006)  
Violet (00011-6506)  
Orange (00011-4506) and  
Emerald (00011-7056)

Unbleached Muslin, 38" wide,  
(63104-1338), cut to  
9" x 12" pieces for 12 pieces  
per yard, need one piece per  
student

Blick Masking Tape 3/4"  
(23006-1000),  
distribute throughout class

Elmer's Washable Clear  
School Glue 5-oz  
(23810-1600), one per student

Economy Camel Hair Brushes  
(05118-9144), one per student

Tonic Teacher's Scissors  
(57079-1008), one pair for  
cutting muslin

Design® Ebony Layout Pencil  
(20411-2009), 1 per student

Blick White Sulphite Drawing  
Paper, 80-lb (10209-1043),  
9" x 12" sheets, one per  
student

Rectangular 6-Well Tray  
(03068-1006), one for every  
3-4 students

Kwik-Cover Tablecloth  
(04500-) to protect work  
surface

Paper towels

Sink or water source

## Process, continued

the fabric with the glue, either by squeezing directly from the bottle or using a brush. Allow time for glue to dry, usually 2-3 hours. The dried glue will be transparent, so drawings can remain under the muslin while painting. Paper that sticks will release when washed.

3. Apply tempera paint to the muslin, brushing up to and right over dried glue lines. Allow colors to mix and blend, painting to the edges of the fabric. As an option, turn the piece over when the front is dry and paint the back side as well. Dry time can be decreased by using a hair dryer or placing in a sunny location. The painting will feel very stiff.
4. When paint is completely dry, place in sink and run warm water over the entire piece. Place painting on a few paper towels and use a soft cloth or fingers to gently rub the glue away (a slick feeling indicates that the glue is still present). Rinse with warm water again to remove glue. Some of the color will discharge with the water. Although it will not be quite as brilliant as the original painting; it will be much softer. Do not wring the water out of the painting, blot it between paper towels and hang to dry, if possible.
5. Iron the wrinkles out of the muslin once it has dried again. The edges may be left with natural fray, or a small hem can be folded and pressed to the back side. Secure with a small line of glue or an iron-on fabric adhesive (found at sewing centers).

## Finishing Ideas:

1. Glue top of “batik” to a 12” dowel rod to make a banner.
2. “Batik” art may be stitched together to form a classroom quilt
3. Turn the batik into a pillow by sewing a second painting or piece of fabric to the backside and stuffing with Polyester Flufferfill (66902-1006).

## To make wearable glue “batik”

This process can be used to make shirts and other washable/wearable art. Follow steps 1 and 2 for creating the design. In step 3, substitute Blickrylic Economy Acrylic for the tempera paint. Mix 1 part [Chromacryl Textile Medium](#) (00709-1006) with 2 parts acrylic for permanent color. Apply up to the glue lines, but avoid painting over them with the acrylics or it may be difficult to remove the glue. After thoroughly rinsing, heat set with an iron.

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## National Standards

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

**K-4** Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories

**5-8** Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

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 different responses to specific artworks

**5-8** Students describe and compare a variety of individual responses to their own artworks and to artworks from various eras and cultures