



Accordion Poetry

Transform a single line of text into a dimensional work of art

(art + literature)

Books have been made by hand for centuries. Accordion books are wonderful because they will stand upright, and all of the pages can be viewed at the same time. This makes them great for displays and exhibits. Accordion books have a rich history around the world, and are made in many parts of Asia. In fact, the accordion book was first invented to accommodate very long scrolls that were hard to manage because of their size. The accordion book is most often composed of a continuous folded sheet of paper and is often enclosed between two covers. It can either be expanded or kept flat.

This book style is perfect for presenting a one-line poem or favorite phrase. For example, a one-line haiku such as the Yuma Indian poem about a water-bug can be beautifully illustrated in an accordion book:

"The water-bug is drawing the shadows of evening toward him across the water."

GRADES 5-12 Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials

Blick® Canvas Panel, 4" x 6" (07008-0046); need two per student

Canson® Student Drawing Paper, 18" x 24" (10240-1009); share one piece between two students

Blick® White Glue, 16-oz (23882-1006); share one among class

Foam Brush, 1" (05114-1001); need one per student

Snippy® Scissors, pointed (57040-2005); need one per student

Lineco® Bone Paper Folder, Small (12964-0001); share four among class

Hygloss® Ribbon Rainbow, assortment (61498-1009); share one bag among class

Shizen® Handmade Paper by the Pound, assorted 8-1/2" x 11" (11298-1002); share one package among class

Sharpie® Calligraphic Markers, Set of 5 (20882-0059); share five sets among class

Westcott Wood Ruler Measuring Metric and 1/16" Scale (55427-1012); share five among class

Optional Materials

Creativity Street® Craft Sticks, Box of 1000 (60401-1001)

Sakura® Metallic Pen Touch Calligrapher (20817-)

Shizen® Paper Assortments & Embellishments (12433-)

Plaid® Mod Podge® (02916-)



Process

1. Cover each canvas panel with decorative paper(s) by brushing glue or Mod Podge® on each panel and affixing papers. Before applying the final layer of paper, tuck the end of a ribbon under it at the midway point so the book can be tied shut.
2. Have each student identify the line of text that they will be using for their book. Count the number of words, and allow one page for each word. Alternately, if grouping more than one word on a page, determine the number of total pages needed.
3. Cut drawing paper into 6" x 24" strips (3 per sheet). Measure 4" increments along the strip and make accordion-style folds every 4" to create six pages. If more pages are needed to contain the desired amount of words, create another strip of pages in the same manner and join by overlapping and gluing pages together to increase length."
4. Using a pencil, mark the paper lightly at 4" intervals along the length.
5. With a bone folder or craft stick, fold the paper back and forth accordion-style at the markings, and apply even pressure to the folds.
6. Cut various decorative papers to embellish each page. Create borders and design motifs that will showcase each word of the line of text.
7. Using calligraphy markers, write each word of text on the embellished pages. If desired, reference calligraphy type styles for inspiration.



Step 1: Cover each canvas panel with decorative papers and affix a ribbon to each so the book can be tied shut.



Step 2: Embellish each page in a unique way to showcase each word of the text.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

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

- 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.
- 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 #3 — Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

- 5-8** Students integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks. Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks.
- 9-12** Students reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture.



Step 3: Use calligraphy markers to write the words of the text on the embellished pages.