

Deconstructed Books

There's more to "deconstructing" a book than just altering the pages. In this project, deconstructing means changing the object from a book to a sculpture. The tools are very basic — scissors, glue and a desire to experiment!

When looking at a finished piece, this project may appear complicated, but when a deconstructed book is created one page at a time, it's surprisingly easy to do. By learning a few simple paper manipulation techniques, students will also learn about symmetry, balance and positive/negative space.

Grade Levels 3-12

Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Gather hardcover books with appropriate content — old textbooks, thrift store and flea-market finds, or books that are being "retired" from your local library — or have students bring in a book they have outgrown.

Process

1. Open the book to the center spread. Take one of the pages and:

Fold it: fold it forward or backward, fold it in half, fold the corners down, make an accordion fold or make multiple folds.

Cut it: cut strips, shapes, angles, rounded edges and free-form shapes. Use straight scissors or scissors that make decorative cuts.

Roll it: wrap the page around a pencil to make curls and twists, form tubes, cones or rolls. Some pages or parts of pages can be rolled to form support for other shapes to make them more dimensional.

Punch it: decorative shape punches or simple hand-held hole punches are an easy way to add interest to pages.

Rip it: torn edges can be just as intriguing as cut ones. For precise deckles, press a deckle-edge ruler against the page and tear the paper.

Crimp it: use a paper crimper to create corrugated and textured pages.

Emboss it: if the pages are lightweight, place texture plates beneath the paper and burnish with fingers to pick up textures.

Glue it: use glue wherever needed to make pages and shapes stay put.



Materials

Hardcover books

Blick® White Glue, 4-oz (23882-1004); share one between two students

Deconstruction Tools, recommend:

Armada™ Paper Shaper Scissors, set of 12 (57056-1007)

McGill® Craft Punches, assorted (61830-)

Fiskars® Hand Punches, assorted (58923-)

Armada™ Paper Crimpers, (12874-)

Armada™ Velvet Touch Scissors, pointed (57062-2005)

Art Deckle® Ruler (55413-1012)

Optional Materials

Crescent® Matboard (13007-), to mount finished books

Process, continued:

2. Repeat on the opposite page and then move onto the pages behind it. Things to keep in mind:
 - If you don't like a page, simply rip it out and move on to the next one!
 - Not every page needs to be altered. Keep some pages toward the front and back cover intact.
3. When deconstruction is complete, either display the sculpture on a tabletop, or mount it to matboard or foamboard to display it vertically.

National Standards

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

K-4 Students describe how different materials, techniques and processes cause different responses

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 #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

K-4 Students describe how different expressive features and organizational principles cause different responses.

5-8 Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas.

