



## **Abigail Merickel – Japanese Bookbinding, Nature Printing & Haiku**

Students will learn a simple Japanese bookbinding technique to create their own book, embellishing it with twigs, beads, markers and colored pencils. Through the medium of Printmaking, they will experience the visual arts language and hands-on printing techniques. They will learn the history and uses of Nature Printing. Creating nature prints from leaves, feathers, shells, driftwood and fish will introduce them to the Principles of Design through their compositions. Japanese culture and literature will be explored when the students write their own haiku poetry to compliment their images.

\*This bookbinding and nature printing residency can be adapted to social sciences and science curriculums.

**OBJECTIVES:** The students should know, or be able to do, upon completion of the residency:

- To plan and produce hand-pulled prints using printmaking techniques and tools
- To understand how the arts serve a variety of personal, professional, practical and cultural needs
- To understand that the arts have a historical connection
- To communicate verbally and in writing about one's own artwork
- To create a work of art using experiences, imagination, artistic methods and composition to achieve desired effect

**LESSON PLAN:** Grade level 3-12 , Age 8-17 years old, 25-30 students per class, 1 ¼ hour lesson per session

Session 1:

- Introduce myself as an artist; Anticipatory set: story of Japanese fishermen in 19<sup>th</sup> century and origin of Gyotaku; Introduce the residency showing the book and nature prints students will make.
- Introduce History of Nature Printing: gyotaku, Da Vinci, Lewis & Clark, herbarium, illustration, decorative arts
- Assemble book: fold, mark & punch holes, get 5 inch twig, 4-5 beads, 1 rubber band, demonstrate how to assemble book, cut edges with paper cutter
- Decorate book cover: show student samples of book covers for inspiration, demonstrate inking leaves with washable markers and printing with helper paper, add color pencil shading (contrasting or harmonizing colors- introduce color wheel) in background, add a critter: bug, dragonfly, caterpillar, etc.

Session 2:

- Introduce “composition” by showing students two book covers. Introduce Principles of Design: balance, symmetry, emphasis, repetition, variety; Composition exercise: students use nature objects to create compositions in pairs or teams in which they create compositions which exemplify a chosen principle of design
- Introduce nature artists' work as inspiration; stress the importance of titles; show interesting student samples with titles
- Demonstrate nature printing using leaves, feathers and other natural objects; Students begin nature printing: 1<sup>st</sup> print: one nature object with title; students print 2-4 more nature prints combining nature objects into compositions; all other prints should be titled compositions



#### Session 3:

- Introduce Haiku; illicit from students which animal they might be describing; How could you illustrate this haiku? How might you depict this haiku with nature printing?
- Explain Haiku: a form of Japanese poetry; connected in some way with nature; may have surprise ending; seventeen syllables in stanzas of 5, 7, and 5 syllables. Write haiku examples on board and demonstrate the counting of the syllables; Suggest ideas: pine trees, birds, frogs, butterflies, a pond, stream, or waterfall; take further suggestions from students; students write 3-4 haikus.
- Have students look at previous day's prints: Create a haiku to compliment a nature print; create new nature prints to compliment the haikus just composed; Students create 2-4 more nature print compositions to compliment their haikus; Demonstrate two color printing with woodblocks and how to create triptychs.

#### Session 4:

- Talk about title page and layout of book; select favorite nature prints and haikus and glue into book; Embellish book cover by adding color pencil shading (contrasting or harmonizing colors) in background, add a critter: bug, dragonfly, caterpillar, etc.
- Closure: gather everyone together and talk about "Your book as a Heritage"; have students share experiences and observations about the project

\* A variation of this residency was a Science focus rather than Language Arts. Students created nature prints that illustrated the six kingdoms of their 7<sup>th</sup> grade Science curriculum.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT:** I can offer the following activities or workshops: slide show of artist's own work with follow up discussion; workshops to teach all of the residencies; workshop to help teachers implement printmaking or bookbinding techniques in their classroom as related to the Oregon Content Standards. Several workshop possibilities: papermaking, handmade cards, handmade books, mixed media/collage art, how to publish student produced work as greeting cards to be used as fundraiser.

**FACILITIES AND SUPPLIES:** Tables in a self-contained room are preferable but a classroom setting is workable. Materials vary depending upon the project but include easily obtainable school, arts & crafts store, and/or household supplies. Special printmaking supplies—brayers, cutting tools, plexiglass---are artist supplied. All residencies require some set up and cleanup. Volunteers are required. Drying and storage space is necessary. Minimum of three visits. Cost is approximately \$1.00-2.00 per child/per residency.

**MULTI-DISCIPLINARY:** The Japanese Bookbinding, Nature Printing & Haiku Residency connects and supports social studies by looking at Japanese culture. It also supports language arts by incorporating listening, reading and writing of haiku poetry. This residency has also been taught with a science emphasis rather than the language arts. The Haiku portion was omitted and instead, we focused on the use of nature printing to illustrate the six kingdoms of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Science curriculum. The finished book, which was used as a formal assessment tool by the classroom teacher, was the culminating project of their year long Science curriculum.

**OTHER OFFERINGS:** A slide show of my work with a follow up discussion; Workshops for teachers to teach all of the residencies; workshops to help teachers implement printmaking or bookmaking techniques in their classroom as related to the Oregon Content Standards