



HAND MADE FEATHER PENS

Developed with Robert Hackbarth
Parker High School, Janesville, WI
Grades 9-12

OBJECTIVES

Students will...

- Explore the arts and crafts of ancient cultures.
- Invent and create pens that could be representative of that culture.
- Be encouraged to investigate alternative materials (found-objects), both natural and man-made, that could be incorporated into the design of their original pens.

STANDARDS

J.12.2 — Choose materials and techniques to influence the expressive quality of art.

J.12.3 — Identify ways different cultures think about art.

J.12.8 — Know concepts of beauty in different cultures.

K.12.2 — Invent new artistic forms to communicate ideas and solutions to problems.

K.12.4 — Continue to use a variety of tools, such as more sophisticated application of words, numbers, sounds, movements, images, objects, emotions, technology, and spaces, to help understand and communicate about the visual world.

K.12.6 — Know the similarities and differences of world cultures by studying their fine arts: music, dance, theater, literature, and architecture.



INTRODUCTION

Discuss design principles to help students make decisions concerning focal point or emphasis, variety, contrast, and unity. This will help incorporate art elements of line, shape, form, color, value, and texture when choosing embellishments. If multiple tools are being made, explore ways to create unity between them, such as repeating a color theme, textural feature, and/or decorative elements.

DIRECTIONS

1

Have students choose a large feather, thread, and decorative elements such as additional feathers, beads, colored wire, hemp cording, and found objects. Loosely arrange the materials to form a 3-D “model” of what the finished feather pen might look like.



2

Push the pen nib onto the end of the feather quill to determine a starting point for tying on additional feathers. Mark the feather at the top of pen nib. Do not glue the pen nib in place. Removal of the tip will allow for measuring and placement of embellishments such as beads and feathers.

NOTE: Broken pen nibs are easily replaced if not glued in place.



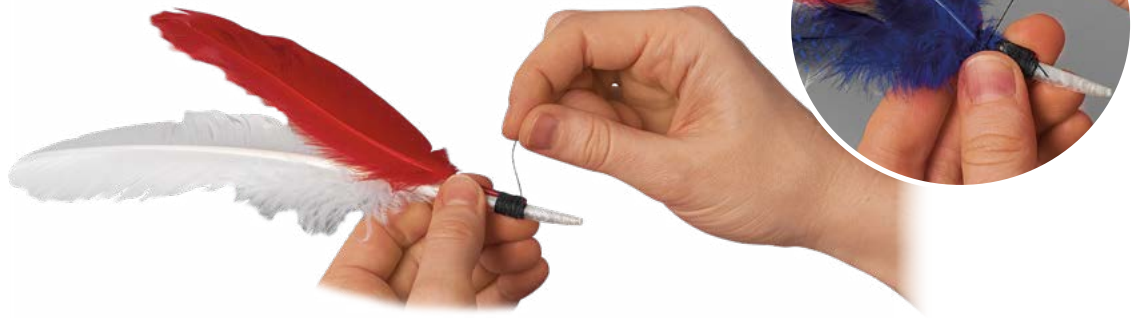
3

Pull a foot or two of thread through the beeswax several times to coat the surface and make it tacky. Wrap and overlap the thread several times around the feather quill above the pen nib.



4

Place one or two additional feathers on top of the thread and continue to wrap the thread tightly around the feather quills. Repeat as many times as necessary to achieve the desired results.



5

Tie off the thread with several knots and coat the thread with acrylic polymer or clear nail polish to secure the thread and make it water resistant. Let dry.



6

Slide beads onto the quill and over the thread to form a finger grip. Glue with epoxy, making sure to leave enough space for the pen nib to slide onto the quill.

NOTE: Beads will need to be drilled to slide over quill and thread.



7

Colored thread, hemp cord, wire, or leather lace can be added behind or between the beads by following the tying instructions described in steps 3 and 4. Further embellishment of the feather pen is limited only by the imagination of the student. Polish the pen nib with steel wool to help ink adhere and flow better. Slide pen nib on to feather quill.





BASIC MATERIALS

- Speedball® pen tips, box of 12 — 9702834, 9702836
- Artistic Wires LTD™ copper wire spools (15 ft. each of 22-, 24-, and 25-gauge) — 9719330
- Black waxed cord, 75-ft. spool — 6500408(A)
- Hemptique® Hemp cord, 205-ft. spools — 9731843(A-L)
- Suede leather lace, black, 25-yd. spool — 9707266
- 50-spool thread assortment, 125 yds. per spool — WA27428
- Natural beeswax, 1-lb. block — 4100591
- Acrylic polymer, 1-qt. jar — 9724866
- 5-Minute® Epoxy Gel™, 1 oz. — 9704806
- Steel wool
- Scissors
- X-ACTO® knives
- Paintbrushes
- Drill and drill bits
- Self-healing mats

FEATHERS

- Duck Quill Classroom Pack, 250-300 feathers, each 3"-5" L — 9714856
- Nasco Feather Classroom Pack, 10 bags of different feathers — 9718639
- Nasco Natural Feathers Classroom Pack, 7 different types of feathers in assortment — 9726612

BEADS

- Assorted bone beads, 12-oz. pkg. — 9726695
- Acrylic Old World bead assortment, 1-lb. pkg. — 9716355
- Metallic Old World bead assortment, 1-lb. pkg. — 9716354
- Unpainted wooden beads, 1-lb. pkg. — 9708044

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS (NOT PICTURED)

- Found objects
- Sticks/twigs
- Bones
- Turkey, pheasant, and/or goose feathers
- Clear nail polish instead of polymer

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