

# Nature-Inspired Batik T-Shirts

by Susan Stover, for Jacquard Products

Drawing inspiration from nature, students create a simple motif or design for a T-shirt and make it using traditional batik methods — layering color with dye.

Images may be realistic or abstract. The projects must include work with tjanting tool, paintbrush, and at least 3 dye-baths.

## Grade Levels 9-12

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

## Process

1. Plan the design by sketching on paper. Decide what color goes where and plan the process for layering the color from lightest to the darkest. Remember that the color underneath will affect the next color that is dyed. For example: if the first color is yellow and the shirt is then dyed blue, it will make green.
2. Place the shirt on the Artmate Board. An alternate surface would be a piece of cardboard covered with plastic wrap — be very cautious that it doesn't slip during waxing.
3. Sketch the design onto the fabric lightly with a water soluble pencil. Melt the wax, making sure it is hot enough to penetrate the fabric, but not so hot that it is smoking.
4. If there are any areas to be left white, wax those areas first. Use the tjanting tool for drawing lines and the paintbrush to wax in any shapes. If you do not want any areas white, you can dye the shirt in your first color.

### Hints for the tjanting tool and painting:

Let the tool heat up in the hot wax for a little bit. If the tool is warm the wax will not cool too fast. Hold a folded piece of fabric under the tool or brush to carry it from the wax pot to the shirt.



## Materials

Procion® MX® Fiber Reactive Cold Water Dye (01302-) assorted colors, need at least three jars

Vinyl Powdered Disposable Gloves (35200-1060), one pair per student

Jacquard® Soda Ash (01302-1005), share on 5-lb bag throughout class

Prismacolor® Water Soluble Pencil (20468-1010), one per student

100% cotton White T-shirt

Blick All-Purpose Newsprint (10311-2013), one 9" x 12" sheet per student

Jacquard® Batik Wax (01200-1001) 1-lb tin

Wax Melter Kit (64902-1009)

Tjanting Tools (64913-1009), share six 3-tool sets across classroom

Blick Scholastic White Bristle Brushes, Round size 2 (05162-1002), need one per student

Artmate™ T-Shirt Board (44943-1030), one per student, reusable

Jacquard® Synthrapol (01302-1015), one 6-oz bottle per class

Iron

Kwik Cover® Tablecloths (04500-)

## Process, continued

### 5. First Dye Bath:

Following the directions on the Procion MX bottle for tub dyeing, use cold water for the first color. It is helpful to dissolve the soda ash in a little hot water on the side before adding it to the dyebath. Rinse well with cool water and Synthrapol. Hang to dry.

6. After the T-shirt has dried, apply wax to areas that are to remain this color. White areas may need a little more touch-up wax.
7. Repeat the dyeing and waxing process for the next colors building up the image and layering the color.
8. After the last dye bath is complete and the fabric has been rinsed and dried, it is time to melt out the wax.
9. Protect the ironing surface with lots of layers of newsprint. Lay a few layers of newsprint on top and underneath the waxed areas. Use a dry iron and iron over the newsprint. The wax will melt and be absorbed into the newsprint. Replace the layers of newsprint as they become saturated. Continue to iron until all the wax comes out.



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## National Standards

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 #2 — Using knowledge of structures and functions.

- 5-8** Students select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas.
- 9-12** Students create artworks that use organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems.