

Golden Door Book (art + history; art + literature)

"Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free; The wretched refuse of your teeming shore; send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me; I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

The poem at the base of the Statue of Liberty opens a doorway to multiple topics for discussion, research and interpretation in the classroom:

- The Statue of Liberty, her history, symbolism and value as a public artwork
- Ellis Island and immigration in America, both past and present
- The concept of freedom and liberty

Bookmaking is an artistic way for students to express ideas, symbols and subject matter. Using The Golden Door as a theme to search for historical and aesthetic content, students create a paper collage containing relevant images, text and expressions. These books can be extremely meaningful, incorporating personal family history and written records or prose.

Canvas panels provide a hardcover "door" that opens a simple accordion-folded page. The materials listed are for the example shown in the photo — the beauty of paper collage is in the exploration of many different types of materials and methods — use this project as a starting point.

This lesson plan also incorporates a simple and safe method of transferring images and text onto a page.

Grade Levels 5-12

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



Materials

Blick Canvas Panels, 4" x 8" (07008-0048), 2 per student

Sargent® Matte Acrylic Medium, (00733-1007), share one quart across classroom

Sargent® Metallic Acrylic, Aztec Gold (00730-9035), share two 8-oz bottles across classroom

Unfinished Wooden Beads, use 1/4" size (60711-0000), one per student

Matboard, any color (13007-), one 2" x 6" piece per student

Stonehenge 90-lb Drawing Paper, Warm White (10423-1782), 22" x 30" sheets, use a yardstick to tear a deckle edge, one 30" x 8" page per student

Unryu Paper, Red (11223-3005) White (11223-1005) and Blue (11223-5055). 25" x 37" sheets, cut to one 8" x 9" piece each color per student

Blick Colored Pencils, assorted colors (22063-), distribute throughout class

Wooden School Rulers (55427-1012), one per student

Blick Art Gum Eraser (21507-1024)

Prismacolor® Colorless Blender (21342-0000), one per student

Blick Scholastic Golden Taklon Flat Wash Brush, 1/2" (05859-4012), one per student

Rectangular 6-Well Tray (03068-1006), share between 2 students

Elmer's® Glue-All, 4-oz bottle (23810-1004), share between 4 students

Raffia, natural (60908-1372)

Images to transfer. Use ink-jet or laserprint images for best quality

Optional

Bone Folder (12964-1000),

Preparation

1. Research and gather images to use. Plan a preliminary sketch of the book, especially the inside page. Look at samples of paper collage in books and magazines. Some excellent resources:
 - [Collage Sourcebook: Exploring the Art and Techniques of Collage](#) (69934-1001)
 - [Al-pha-bet-i-ca: An A-Z Creativity Guide for Collage and Book Artists](#) (69947-1001)
 - [Collage Art](#) (70178-1001)
 - [Collage Techniques](#) (71628-1001)

Process

1. Create the door panels first. Cut matboard into four 1" x 3" pieces (beveled edges, if possible). Glue onto one canvas for door panels. Tear pieces of white unryu paper into pieces, use brush to apply a small amount of acrylic medium on the back as glue, then place and paint the edges down with more medium. Allow paper to wrinkle for texture.

Paint the entire surface with gold paint, including edges and the canvas wrapped on the back side. Paint second canvas panel in the same manner.
2. Use an accordion fold for the inside page — measure 3-3/4" for each panel, use ruler to make an accurate fold. Create a hard crease with the bone folder.
3. Create a paper collage on the front and back of the page. Leave the first and last section of the page on the back side blank — they will be glued to the covers and will not be visible. Overlap the folds — they can be pressed back into a hard crease when finished. Use acrylic medium to apply unryu paper as in step 1. Unryu is translucent, so it is very effective in layers. Paper will buckle slightly as the collage is built, but it will flatten by pressure once the book is finished.
4. Transfer images as part of the collage:

Step 1 IMPORTANT! Images must be reversed (mirror image) to transfer properly! Trim away as much white



space as possible.

Step 2 This transfer method works best with small images, because the medium dries quickly. If transferring larger images, apply in sections. Paint a layer of acrylic medium over the image, making sure the entire area is covered. Position face down on the page and burnish lightly into place with fingers.

Step 3 Color over the back of the image with the colorless blender marker — it will cause the toner/ink to release from the paper. Burnish lightly again and peel away paper. Allow to dry, then gently rub away any excess paper with gum eraser.

Transfer Hints

- Expect imperfect transfers, (they work best with this type of collage).
 - Photocopies will transfer with this method, but not as well as inkjet or laser copies.
 - When transferring text or pieces with small details, burnish by tracing the back of the paper with a pencil. This will help the small areas release.
5. On the back canvas panel, lay a piece of raffia across the center of the panel. Glue the back page to the canvas panel over the raffia. Glue the first page to the front canvas panel (the door). Rubber bands are helpful in holding the book as it dries. As a final step, use a strip of unryu wrapped around the bottom of the bead to secure it to the door, allow to dry and paint gold to match.

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 experience and ideas

9-12 Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of the ideas relates to the media, techniques and processes they use.

Content Standard #3 — Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas

5-8 Students use subjects, themes and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artwork.

9-12 Students describe the origins of specific images and ideas and explain why they are of value in their artworks and in the work of others

Content Standard #6 — Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

5-8 Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts.

9-12

Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues or themes within the humanities or sciences