

Hanko and Chop

Inspired by designer Alexander Girard, these toy-like stamps deliver an artist's most unique expression — their signature.

(art + social studies)

Beginning in China as early as 1000 BC and continuing in many cultures to this day, a small personal seal is used to sign official documentation in lieu of a handwritten signature. These seals could represent an individual, a family, business or a government ranking and are used for official identification, often accompanying a fingerprint or hand signature. "Chop" is the colloquial term, but there are many different types of seals, including "Hanko" in Japan and "Dojang" in Korea.

While most seals are very generic today, in the past, the Chop could be quite intricate, with carved sculptures and identifying images carved into the handle. The "stamp" portion was specifically designed to represent the person who used it.

In the 1950's and 60's, a design trend rose to popularity that was inspired by prints and patterns found in folk art and toys from around the world. Designer Alexander Girard created modern interpretations in fabrics, furniture and a collection of highly stylized dolls. Walt Disney Studios created the whimsical "Children of the World" attraction for the 1964 World's Fair, which later became known as "It's a Small World"

"Toys," said Alexander Girard, "represent a microcosm of man's world and dreams; they exhibit fantasy, imagination, humor and love."

In this lesson, students design a personal "chop" - not just the seal portion, but a self-identifying handle as well. Wooden shapes may be used to

create stylized figures that may look like toys, but are really small-scale sculptures. Finished pieces can be used to stamp with ink on paper or to create stamped patterns in clay - functional pieces with the emphasis on "fun!"

GRADES 3-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. View images of Alexander Girard's dolls, Japanese Kokeshi, Russian nesting dolls, Venezuelan folk art figurines and other whimsical toys to be inspired by ways the figure can be stylized.

Process for creating a Paper Stamp:

1. Choose pieces from the wood shapes assortment for the figurative handle of the stamp. Blocks, turnings, beads and die-cut wooden shapes can be glued together to form interesting shapes, heads, hats, etc. In order to be the most functional and lasting, keep the figurative handle small - no more than 5" tall.
2. Add color to the handle using paint or paint markers. Allow to dry.
3. Trace the shape of the handle's base onto a piece of paper and design a personal chop design using a stylized version of initials, or an image as a personal identifier. NOTE: Any lettering should be designed backward so that when stamped, it will read correctly. Transfer the design to the flexible printing plate using graphite transfer paper.



Materials (required)

Hygloss Wooden Blocks, 48 pieces, Assorted (60452-1048); share across class

Hygloss Wooden People Shapes, assortment of 40 (28979-1040); share one across class

Weldbond Universal Adhesive, 2 oz (23912-1060); share 3-4 across class

Options for adding color:

Zig Posterman Paint Markers, set of 8, assorted fine and medium tip colors (21322-); share 3 sets across class

Blick Matte Acrylics, 2 oz, assorted colors (00727-); share at least 4 colors across class

Materials for Stamp to use with ink on paper

Inovart Smooth Cut Print Plates, 6" x 9" x 1/16", pkg of 2 (40414-1049); share one pkg across class

Richeson Transfer paper, 24" x 24 ft (11758-2424); share across class

Colorbox Pigment Ink stamp pads, Scarlet, (60257-3080); share five across class

Options for cutting printing plates:

Speedball Linoleum Cutters, Set 1 (40203-1009); share 12 sets across class

Scratch-Art Scratch-Foam Soft Surface Printing Board, 9" x 12", pkg of 12; share 1 pkg across class

Materials for Stamp to use on clay

Creative Paperclay, 16 oz (33230-1006); share 1 pkg across class

Blick Broadline Water-Based Markers, Black (21224-2001); need one per student

Kemper Wire Loop Sgraffito Tool (30317-1063); one per student

Materials (optional)

Wooden Bead Assortment (60706-1006)

Simply Art Wood Shapes, assorted (60408-)



4. With a black marker, color in areas of the stamp that should be left to print. Using carving tools or scissors (depending on the complexity of the design), carefully carve away all material around the design. light touch - carving does not need to be deep. For younger ages, use scissors to cut out the shape or, as an option, use a foam printing plate, which can be embossed with a pen or pencil.
5. Peel the backing paper from the flexible printing plate and press the adhesive against the bottom of the handle.
6. Stamp onto paper using a stamp pad. Traditionally, a chop is printed with red ink.

Process for creating a Clay Stamp

1. Follow Steps 1 and 2, above, to create a figurative handle for the stamp.
2. Design the chop mark as above, on paper.
3. Roll a ball of air dry clay and flatten it to about 1/2". Press the bottom of the stamp handle into the clay. It should be surrounded by a small amount of clay on all sides. Press and shape it around the bottom of the stamp handle
4. With a watersoluble marker, trace the design on the paper and immediately press the smooth bottom of the clay onto the image to transfer the lines.



Step 1: Create a figurative handle for the stamp using wood shapes. Add color with paint markers or acrylics.



Step 2: Design a personal "Chop"



Step 3: Carve design into flexible printing plates or air-hardening clay



Step 4: Print onto paper or press into clay.

Process for creating a Clay Stamp, continued

5. Using a mini loop tool, a pencil, or other pointed tool to carve away all material that is not meant to print. stamps.
6. Turn the handle and stamp on its side so that air reaches the clay. Allow to dry completely before pressing it into wet clay to make

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.

