

Creating a Prototype

How do artists use prototypes to explore ideas and refine their designs?

How do writers use drafts to explore ideas and refine their writing?

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will learn that artists and writers use tools to help them explore and test new ideas and designs. Students will make prototypes of their artists' books and will plan where the text and images will go on each of the pages. Based on their prototypes, students will decide if revisions to the text, images, and book forms are needed.

LENGTH OF LESSON: Two 45-minute sessions

KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING

Visual Art

- Artists create prototypes to explore and test new designs.
- Artists may alter some aspect of their work in the process of creating a prototype.

Writing

- Writers create drafts and dummy books to refine their writing and plan the placement of text in their books.
- Writers may alter some aspects of their work in the process of creating drafts and dummy books.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

Visual Arts and Writing

- Create prototypes of their chosen book forms
- Plan the placement of text and images on the covers and pages of the books
- Plan changes to the text, images, and/or book forms if needed

FOR THE TEACHER

Have a few prototypes made from scrap paper to show students an example of a prototype. If any examples of a prototype and its completed form are available, show those to students so they can see the kinds of modifications they might make while creating the final book.

Students may need help cutting their paper to size.

SUPPLIES

- Student journals
- Pencils or pens
- Scrap computer or copy paper
- Tape, glue, staplers
- Rulers
- Scissors →

VOCABULARY

A **prototype** is an original type or form of something that serves as an example for making something new. It is usually made to test the design before producing the new object.

Dummy books are made by authors and illustrators to show how a book will look when it is published and to show where the text and images will go on each page.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN: OBSERVE, CREATE, AND REFLECT**Introduction**

Tell students they will be using scrap paper to create prototypes of their artists' books. The purpose of the prototype is to figure out how to make the book form and how the different elements will be arranged in the book. This process will help students determine how their selections of text and images will work within the book forms and will help them decide if they need to make revisions.

Quick Write

After introducing the lesson, give students a few minutes to respond to one of the following prompts:

- One way I like to solve problems is to _____.
- Remember a problem you once had while making something. How did you deal with it?
- What questions do you have?

Observe: Look and Discuss

Show examples of prototypes to students. Ask them to point out how the prototypes are different from other completed artists' books they have seen. Use some of the following questions to guide the discussion.

- What kinds of changes do you notice from the prototype to the completed book?
- Why do you think the artist made these changes?
- Do the changes affect the meaning of the book? How?
- Why is the prototype made with scrap paper?

Create: Artists' Books Prototypes

Using the materials list and sketches from the prior lesson, tell students to gather enough paper for their prototypes and begin to make their book forms. Since it is just for practice, it doesn't matter if the book construction is a little sloppy; students will use these prototypes to figure out how to put the books together and to practice gluing, taping, and binding.

Once the book form prototypes have been made, have students review the plans they created in the prior lesson and decide where the text and images will go on each page. Have students compare the plan they made to their prototypes, making sure there are enough pages for the images and text.

- To help plan the placement of text in their books, have students write all the text they chose in the previous lesson onto one page or type it into the computer. Then have them circle the words or sentences that will be placed together on a page. Have them write the page number by the circled words.



- On those same sheets of paper, have students write where the images will go. For example, they could write “image #1” within a group of circled sentences to show they will be on the same page or between two groupings to show the illustration will have a page to itself.
- Some pages might have only one word, while others could have three paragraphs. Some pages might have only illustrations or only words.
- Students can look at the text and images they have selected and decide if it is enough or too much to fit in their books.
- If necessary, have students renumber the pages to include all the text and images or revise the amount of each that will be placed in the books.

Reflect

Have students respond to one of the following prompts in their journals.

- While making my prototype, I learned _____.
- My ideas for my book changed because _____.
- I’m still curious about _____.

LESSON EXTENSION: IDEAS FOR STUDENTS WHO WANT TO WRITE OR DRAW MORE

- Write a set of instructions or draw diagrams that you will follow to assemble your book.
- Describe a time when you changed your mind or altered your plan in the middle of a project or activity. What happened?
- Write about, make a sketch for, or create a prototype for an invention you would like to make one day.