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Make an Artist Book

Pictures have long been used in books to either add information or to make the text more attractive. Thus, it's not surprising that artists have been involved with bookmaking for centuries. While some artists work as book illustrators, other artists are more interested in making us look at the book in new ways. These artists create unique, one-of-a-kind books that are thought of as works of art in themselves. In this project, you will get to make your own "artist book."

Materials You Need: A grocery bag, scissors, glue stick, stickers, ink stamps, old postage stamps, felt-tip markers, colored papers, and magazines with lots of pictures.

Getting Started: To begin you need to make the pages of your book. There are many ways to construct a one-of-a-kind book. Here are instructions for making a book out of a paper bag and a book that has a cardboard cover. If you search the Web you can find tutorials on how to make a concertina book or a book using a Japanese binding technique.

The Project: Books are special places for telling stories, expressing feelings, and sharing ideas. You can write and draw in your book. You can cut shapes from colored paper or pictures from old magazines and glue them in your book. You can cut and fold the pages of your book. You can also paste stickers and stamp shapes in your book. Whatever you choose to do, you need to first have an idea or story you want to share with others.

Once you've made the pages of your book, try one of these ideas for making your book unique:

- Tell others about an adventure you've had.
- Make an "I am Book" that shows others special things about you.
- Describe, in pictures and words, a recent trip you've taken with your family.
- Illustrate a story about your favorite hero.
- Make up a story about something that might have happened many years ago.
- Share your ideas about how to make the world a better place.
- Imagine that aliens land in your back yard one night. Tell the story of your "close encounter."
- Make up your own story to share with others.

Remember that as a "book artist," you should make each page of your book interesting to look at as well as interesting to read. Think about how you can make your book unique by arranging the pictures and text on each page. Once you have finished your book, share it with others.

Want To Do More? Browse Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord's MakingBooks.com. Also, check out *Art, Books, and Creativity* (artbookscreativity.org) for ideas on how to integrate bookmaking across the school curriculum.