



LANGUAGE ARTS AND VISUAL ART

Artists Books that Reveal Time and Space

Secondary
Lesson by Christopher McAfee

This lesson may be adjusted to fit whatever timeline you need. It can be the focus for one day, or worked on for an hour a day over a week or more.

Objective:

To explore the structure of books as more than just a container for information and to consider how the book's unique characteristics can be used to share mind-bending concepts.

Questions to Consider

- What are books made out of?
- What other materials could be used to make books? (Think way outside the norm)
- Does a book have to be rectangular?
- When is a book like a work of art?
- How is a book like a painting?
- How is a book like a sculpture?
- How can a book evoke ideas of space and time?
- How can a book evoke ideas of light and dark?
- Is a scroll a book?
- Is a Kindle a book?

Ideas to Ponder

A book is a symbol that contains symbols. Books not only convey information through the symbols on their pages, but the book is also a symbol of knowledge conveyed.

As a 3-dimensional object, a book is an organization of space. When a book opens or when pages are turned, the space is reorganized.

Books are usually meant to be "read" sequentially from the first page to the last. In this way, books can be said to organize time. This is done in partnership with the reader/viewer who can choose to "read" the book quickly or slowly, or who may choose to read the last page first. The writer/artist may also choose to reroute time throughout the book.

Books are dark until they are opened allowing light to come in. Or are they? Does the enlightenment of the information illuminate the interior of the book even when it is closed?

Activities

- Build a basic 6-page board book
- Embed objects in the book's pages

Materials

- 4-ply Matboard (or similar board). Six 4x4" sheets.
- Cardstock. Two 4x4" sheets, three 4x8" sheets
- Clear polyester film (Mylar), 8 mil is best but 4 will work. Two 1.5x1.5" squares
- Book cloth. One 4x3" strip
- Double-sided tape
- Glue stick (or double-sided tape)
- Coin battery (3v)
- LED lights
- Electrical wire (1-2")
- Electrical tape
- Random flat object less than the size of a quarter
- Two 1x1" mirrors

Tools

- Ruler
- Scalpel or X-Acto knife
- Scissors
- Writing utensils (colored pencils, ink pens, etc.)



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Process

Prepare the boards and paper

1. Cut six 4x4 pieces of board.
2. Cut cardstock into two 4x4 pieces and three 4x8 pieces
3. Fold the three 4x8 pieces in half so they form squares.
4. Number the boards and cardstock pieces to keep them in order.
5. Cut holes for windows and embedded objects in the boards.
6. Cut corresponding holes in the card stock.
7. Laminate 2 sets of 2 boards together. These will be the front and back boards of the book.

Attach LED to battery

8. Cut the short leg of the LED in half.
9. Strip the wire ends.
10. Tape one end of the wire to the short leg of the LED.
11. Tape the long leg of the LED to the (+) side of the battery.
12. Test by pressing the wire against the (→) side of the battery.

Attach floating object(s) to 2nd board

13. Cut 2 mylar squares to 1.5x1.5".
14. Tape 1 mylar square to one side of the board, covering the window.
15. Flip the board over and place the floating object(s) inside the window.
16. Tape the other mylar square over the other side of the window.

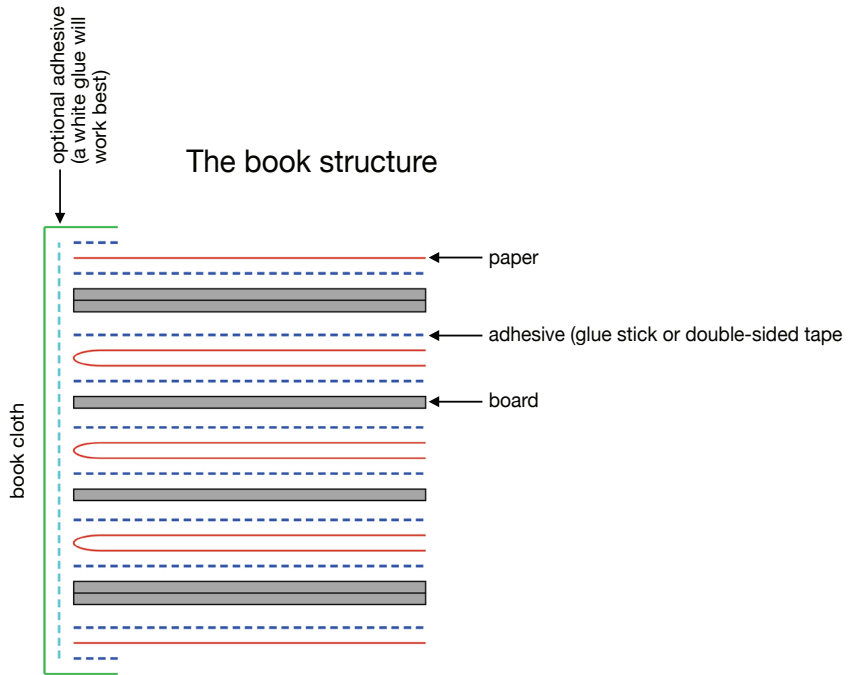
Start assembling the book

17. Starting at the back and moving to the front
 - a. Back (fourth) Board
 - i. Glue the 4x4 piece of cardstock with 2 round holes to verso of the back board.
 - ii. Flip the board over and attach the LED/battery, lacing the wire through the small hole.
 - iii. Glue the associated folded cardstock to the recto of the back board.
 - b. Third Board
 - i. Fold the cardstock closed and glue the 3rd board down.
 - ii. Place a mirror, face up, in the window of the 3rd board.
 - iii. Glue the associated folded cardstock piece to the recto side of the 3rd board. The window is cut into the cardstock should overlap the mirror on all four sides.
 - c. Second Board
 - i. Fold the cardstock closed and glue the 2nd board down. This board has two windows, one for the mirror and one with the floating object(s) already inside.
 - ii. Place the 2nd mirror, face down, in the window of the 2nd board.
 - iii. Glue the associated folded cardstock piece to the recto side of the 2nd board. This should cover the back of the mirror but leave the floating object(s) exposed.
 - d. Front (first) Board
 - i. Fold the cardstock closed and glue the 2nd board down.
 - ii. Glue the remaining cardstock square to the recto side of the front board.
18. Glue the cloth strip around the spine of the assembled book.
19. Write or draw on and in the book.

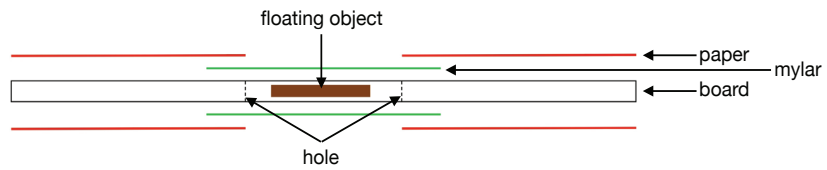
**Verso=back. This can refer to the back of a book or to the back of a loose document. In an open book, this may refer to the page on the left-hand side, since this is the back of that leaf.

**Recto=front. This can refer to the front of a book or to the front of a loose document. In an open book, this may refer to the page on the right-hand side, since this is the front of that leaf.

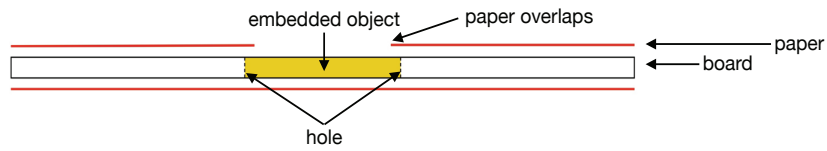
Book Diagram 1



Mylar window with floating object



Window with embedded object



Book Diagram 2

LED with Battery

The long leg on LEDs is the positive leg.
The flat side on coin batteries is the positive side.

