

Pen and Ink

Linking literacy and technology

Primary

English



Background information:

Exploring different ways of making marks can be a fun and interesting challenge. Recreating your own quill pen from a feather and writing in a traditional way is far removed from our ball point pens.

To extend this experience further make your own inks by using a variety of natural materials and see what colours you can create.

Equipment

- Feathers- found, or bought from craft suppliers. (For found feathers microwave for 5 seconds before using them to kill any bugs)
- Sticks
- Jar
- Acorns
- Bark
- Reeds/hollow stems

Activity

Making a pen and ink that can be used to write a story.

Ink making

Add 10 acorns and small bits of bark to a jam jar just cover with water and leave for a few days.

Quill making

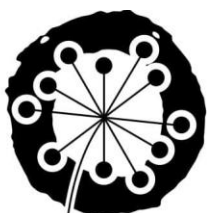
Find thick bird feathers. Beaches where ducks have been are a good source.

Cut a slant in the tip of the feather then make a small hole above this.

As an alternative, many water reeds are hollow and can also be used.

Taking it further

- Find blackcurrants and cook in water over an open fire, reduce the liquid to make purple ink.
- Crush ½ cup of berries through a sieve into a bowl. Add 1tsp of salt and 1tsp of vinegar. The vinegar will bind the pigment and the salt will preserve the ink. This is a traditional ink used in the 1600s.



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