Pamphlet Stitch

The pamphlet stitch is a simple book form that even early elementary students can make. It has a cover and pages that function like a traditional book. This book can be used for many purposes, but this lesson focuses on helping students write and illustrate short stories.

Grades/Age Group: K-12

Approximate Time Required:
  Prep: 10 minutes
  Teaching: 10 minutes

Materials needed (sizes can be scaled as desired for your class project needs):
1. 3” x 6” text weight paper, 4 per person
2. 3” x 6” cover weight paper, 1 per person
3. 10” thread, 1 per person
4. Bone folder
5. Needle
6. Awl or push pin

Procedure:
1. Jog all 4 sheets of text paper together and fold in half. Crease with bone folder. This is called a signature. Folder cover in half as well.

![Diagram of Pamphlet Stitch]

2. Open signature to the center folio. Make marks along the center fold to signify where sewing holes will be made. Mark in the center, ¼” from the top, and ¼” from the bottom edges. Line up the center fold of the signature with the fold in the cover paper. Poke holes through cover paper as well and sew your book with a pamphlet stitch: Go through the center hole (B), then through the top hole (A), then through the bottom hole (C), then back through the center hole (B). Tie your two ends of thread into a square knot around the thread running down the center.
Pamphlet Stitch – Lesson Overview:

Key Points:
1. This is a good example of a simple book form that can be used in conjunction with any subject.

Ideas for Innovation:
1. Kids can fill their pages with words and pictures.
2. Can be used with predesigned pages.
3. For younger kids: use a hole punch to make large holes and ribbon or yarn instead of thread.

Learning Objectives:
1. Students will increase their dexterity skills by folding cutting and gluing accurately.
2. Students will explore new ways to interact with what they’re learning.
3. Students will have foundational skills for making simple books on their own.
4. Students can write their own story, and enhance writing skills.

Core Standard Applications:
Language Arts:
Creative writing is an important skill for young people to develop. It not only enhances important verbal and written skills, but helps them grapple with issues in their own lives through a creative lens. To help students write a short creative story in their pamphlet stitch books follow these steps:
1. Start by reading a handful of picture books with your students. As you go along ask students to predict what comes next in the book to prompt them to analyze story structure. Also encourage students to explain what information the words and images tell and if they share different information.
2. Next talk to students about how all stories have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Students should answer the following questions about the beginning, middle and end of their story:
   - **Beginning:**
     - Who are your characters?
     - What are their personalities like?
     - What do they look like?
     - Where/when does your story take place?
     - What problem do your characters face?
   - **Middle:**
     - What changes do your characters face as they are trying to solve their problems?
   - **End:**
     - How is the problem solved?
     - How do things end?

3. Next have students fill their book with words and images that tell their story. If you are working with older students you can have them fill out a story board first to help them design their story more in depth before starting on the final project.
French web with hard covers, cloth hinge, and separate pastedown

Prepare textblock:

1. Prepare sections (5-10 sections of 4-6 folios).
2. Cut a card template to the H and W of your sections.
3. Cut two strips of book cloth (grain long) to the height of the template, and ~1" wide.
4. Mask off and glue out ~3mm strip along long edge of book cloth (apply glue on cloth side).
   Adhere book cloth along spine edge of section. Repeat with last section, and dry under weight.
5. When adhesive is dry, wrap cloth strip around section spine, to create a flange.
6. Arrange textblock so that the flanges are facing out.
7. Mark hole placement at spine edge of template, and mark head on template and sections.
   You should have a single hole at the head and tail sewing stations, and pairs of holes along
   the remaining length of the spine. Holes in each pair should be ¾" to ½" apart.
8. Mark the head of each section, and punch sewing holes.

Sew textblock using French web pattern:

1. Start at the tail on the outside and use a running stitch along the first section. Leave tail

2. Enter sewing hole at head of section 2. Emerge from the next hole in the section, cross down
   through stitch in section 1, and enter next hole in section 2. Proceed in this manner until you
   reach the tail. (The stitches holding sections 1 and 2 together resemble an X.)

3. At tail, tie a square knot. Then enter section 3.

4. Come out at second hole of section 3, cross down through the upper-left "leg" of the X, and
   enter next hole. Proceed in this manner to the head. Come out of the hole at the head, make a
   kettle stitch between sections 1 and 2.

5. Add section 4 the same way you added 3. This time, however, you will go under the top right
   "leg" of the X.
6. Add any remaining sections the same way—i.e. If you are sewing toward the tail, go under the "leg" closer to the tail; if you are sewing toward the head, go under the "leg" closer to the head. At head and tail stations, always make a kettle stitch.

7. To finish, make a double kettle stitch, re-enter the last hole, and trim off tail inside section.

Prepare boards:

1. Cut two pieces of binders board to the height and width of template (grain parallel to the spine edge).
2. Determine position of inset on cover.
3. Use blade and straight edge to make cuts in the board (only cutting through a couple of layers).
4. Peel several layers of board away from inset area, to desired depth (thickness of inset material is ideal). Smooth down with bonefolder.
5. Cut two pieces of paper or cloth with which to cover (grain parallel to the spine edge). $H = H$ of template + 1.5; $W = W$ of template plus 1.5"
6. Glue out cover paper/cloth.
7. Position board on glued-out surface. Flip board over, and work material into inset area. Once this secured, adhere well to remaining surface (use hand and bonefolder).
8. Miter corners of paper at 45-degree angle, one board-thickness away from the corner.
9. Turn in edges (head, tail, spine, fore-edge), making sure you get full adhesion along the board edges and on the flat surfaces.
10. Nip in press and dry between boards (protect with wax paper).

Adhere boards and separate pastedowns:

1. Miter corners of flange at 45-degree angle.
2. Place scrap paper underneath cloth flange.
3. Glue out flange, remove scrap and replace with clean scrap.
4. With textblock closed and square, position board on top of textblock, lining up edges of board with edges of textblock.
5. When you are happy with the positioning, press down firmly.
6. Flip book over and repeat with second cover.
7. Cut two pieces of paper for pastedowns: $H = H$ of template - 4 mm; $W = W$ of template - 5mm (for a 2mm square, extra mm trimmed to allow for stretch).
8. Open book, glue out pastedown, and position centered on inner face of board.
9. Repeat with second board.
10. Insert wax paper (against pastedown), nip in press, then allow to dry under weight.

—Handout by Emily Tipps, 2013
Single Pamphlet with Tab/Slot Flap Closure

Materials:
- Cover paper
- Text paper - 6 pgs per section
- Thread

Process:
1. Stack text paper, jog, and fold into a section.
2. If time allows, nip and trim textblock at head tail and fore-edge (or just fore-edge).
3. Cut cover paper:
   a. height of textblock, plus 4mm for square at head and tail
   b. width = 3-4 times the width of textblock
4. Position section at left edge of cover paper. Mark placement of textblock on cover, score and fold, wrapping around section.
5. Punch holes for pamphlet sewing through spine of section and cover.
7. Trim short flap of cover paper so it is flush with the fore-edge of the textblock.
8. Score long flap of cover paper, just to the right of textblock fore-edge.
9. Fold flap over textblock and front cover.
10. Trim long flap to about 2/3 the width of the textblock.
11. From there, cut tab into a V or T shape:

12. With top flap in place, mark slot placement with pencil on either side of insert.

13. Punch holes on marks, then cut a slit connecting them.
14. Insert tab into slot to close.
Cased-in Pamphlet

Binding Instructions

1. Bind pamphlet:
   a. Place 5 text sheets on top of cover sheet cut to the same size. Fold all together as a group.
   b. Punch three holes for sewing.
   c. Sew using a pamphlet stitch.

2. Prepare case:
   a. Cover boards:
      i. Glue out cover paper (slightly larger than boards) and adhere to one side of each board.
      ii. Allow glue to dry, then trim excess paper away from edges of boards.
   b. Fold spine piece:
      i. Make two parallel folds down the center of the spine piece paper, 3/16” apart.
   c. Attach boards to spine piece:
      i. Draw two lines in pencil, 3/16” away from each spine fold.
      ii. Glue out edge of board, and stick to spine piece, aligned with the line you just drew.  
         (Repeat with second board.)

3. Case in:
   a. Insert pamphlet into case.
   b. Insert scrap paper between text paper and cover paper (in pamphlet).
   c. Glue out outside of cover paper (avoid going all the way to the spine).
   d. Remove scrap paper and close case over pamphlet. Rub with bone folder to secure.
   e. Flip book over and repeat with other board.
   f. Allow to dry under weight, protected with wax paper or reemay and blotting paper.
Photos to take/ Stories to tell:

At home:
- Favorite spots in the house
- Projects you are working on
- Something you hate about your home
- What does your house look like, inside and out?

The morning routine:
- What time do you get up?
- How do you get yourself (and anyone else) ready to go in the morning? (shower, lunch packing, getting dressed, that sort of thing)
- What do you have for breakfast?

The evening routine:
- When do you get home?
- What do you do when you get home?
- If you have children, what are their bedtime routines?
- How do you get ready for bed?

Your commute:
- The vehicle
- What do you do while in your vehicle?
- Are you by yourself or with others? (bus, car pool, mass transit)

At work:
- Your workspace
- Your tools
- Your coworkers
- Your boss

At school:
- Your friends
- Your classes

- Your teachers
- Your homework

Mealtimes:
- Preparation
- Recipes
- Do you eat alone or with others?

Personality traits:
- What are the things you do that make you, you? Quirks, idiosyncrasies, common actions or sayings
- How about the rest of your family?
- Don’t forget your pets!

Out and about:
- Stores you frequent
- Things you buy
- Parks and museums and other outings
- How you get there
- Receipts for anything from groceries to movie tickets

Activities:
- Do you or any of your family play sports?
- Perform music or act?
- Exercise
- Games played
- Hobbies you enjoy
- Toys played with

Chores:
- Dishes
- Laundry
- Cleaning
- Pet care
- Yardwork
- What are your non-work related responsibilities?