
Orizomegami with Jody Alexander

Chapter 1 - Introduction

Overview

- This is Orizomegami. It's the Japanese art of folding and dyeing papers and here's some examples of what we're gonna be doing. We're gonna be taking a Japanese paper, folding it and then dipping the corners into food coloring dye. You can also use inks, but we're gonna use food coloring. The results are really beautiful, as you can see, and they're great for book covers. For the Japanese side-sewn book, it works beautifully and it's a great project to do with kids, start to finish. You can do this paper dyeing technique and then this is the children's version of the Japanese side-sewn binding.

Chapter 2 - Color

Materials

- So let me go over the materials and tools that you'll need. It's pretty simple. First of all, you'll need some Japanese paper. You want it to be fairly thin 'cause that's gonna allow the ink to spread or the dye to spread. This is just a student grade coso paper. It's pretty readily available in art supplies stores. I got this in a roll so you can get a lot of it for a fairly low price. I wanna show you an example of where it didn't work so well. This is a higher quality Japanese paper that I thought would work really nicely, but I think it was maybe a little too thick and maybe not absorbent enough, so you can see how I was snipping in my corners and I thought it was bleeding in, and when I opened it up it wasn't. This is a different effect though, so you might like that, so experiment with different kinds of papers. You're also gonna want a cupcake tin to put your water in and your dyes, so you'll just need tap water as well. You want to get some food coloring. These are just from the supermarket and they work perfectly fine, but you can also use inks. You could try India inks or even drawing inks and see how that works, so again, experiment with your tools and materials and that's all we need to get going.

Prepare and mix colors

- Okay, so we're gonna pour some water into our cupcake tin here. I'm just gonna pour about a half of an inch. This is just tap water in here. I'm just gonna fill all of these up, and that way I can mix my colors a little bit too. I'm gonna take my food coloring, just squeeze, squeeze some of it in there. So there's my green. I'm gonna do a blue, and just squeeze a little bit in there. I don't measure, you can always test it. Just do, maybe five to 10 drops. This is yellow. That's yellow, and then we have a red. And then I'm gonna make some mixtures. So I'm gonna make an orange with a few drops of yellow and a few drops of red. And I think I'll make a purple with a little bit of red. So my red is getting some good use there, and a little bit of blue. They tend to mix themselves pretty well, but if you want you could do a, get a stir stick, stir 'em around, make sure they're nice and mixed. You can test 'em with a little piece of paper and kind of see how your colors are if you want. You could just even take paper towel, and I could just see it, see. That's a little light, might wanna put a little more green in. Let's see how I did on our mixtures. Ooh, that's a nice orange. So you can test 'em that way. Purple, ooh. So we might wanna do just a little more green. Yellow looks pretty good. I think red should be good, I put a -- Oh no, I might want a little more red, make that a little more vibrant. Let's check on the blue. Blue looks good. So I'm just gonna put a little more red in there. And my green

seemed a little weak. And this is all just to your liking, whatever you want. And we're ready to start folding our paper and dipping.

Chapter 3 - Fold

Square fold and dip

- This is my piece of Kozo paper. I just ripped off a piece that's approximately 12 inches by eight inches, but you can do whatever size you want. I'm gonna fold it in half, and then I'm going to meet that center fold, and then meet that center fold again. That's so I have kind of equidistant folds. And then I'm gonna take it, and I'm gonna to start folding it back and forth, accordion style. It's really important that you go back and forth, and you don't just roll it. Because if you're just rolling it, you're gonna hide those edges and corners that you're dipping, and the ink isn't gonna spread as well. So I'm going back and forth, kind of like I'm making an accordion, or like I'm making a fan. Okay, so I've got that done, and now I'm gonna fold some small squares on here, in the same style, same accordion style. I'm just gonna go back and forth. My squares here are approximately an inch long, maybe a little longer. I never measure, I just start folding. And again it'll depend on what design you want. And as you experiment more you'll figure out exactly what you want. Okay, so we wanna fold in that little edge there at the end. All right, so you can see we have this little folded square. And now we're going to dip each corner into a different color of coloring. A little yellow, and a little red, You could have held them a little longer in there, to have the ink spread a little bit more. I like a little white space. Now let's open it up and see how it did. You wanna be very careful when you're opening up and unfolding this paper. It's delicate paper and now it's wet, and it tears very easily. And the wetter it is, the easier it tears. I didn't get mine too wet here, 'cause I didn't dip it for very long. Almost got it. There we go. It's a pretty nice piece of orizomegami. So this is an example of folding a square, so I had four corners to dip in, and I wanna show you an example of folding your paper into a triangle, so you have three corners to dip, and we'll see what the difference is.

Triangle fold and dip

- Now, I'll show you a variation where we're gonna fold the paper into a small triangle and that will give us three corners to dip into our dye and we'll see what the difference is. You'll get a little different pattern in this one. So, you can see I folded my piece of paper in half. I met that center fold and now I'm just going back and forth with my folding, just like I did with the squares. It's exactly the same as I showed with the squares so far. I'm gonna go back and forth folding in accordion style. Remember, don't just wrap it, go back and forth. All right, so we've got our little accordion fan. And now we're gonna make little triangular folds. So, I'm makin' this little triangle here. Okay, I quick can just fold that last little one down. Okay, we've got a little triangle. Not the neatest folding job, but the edges are out enough that I think I'll be able to dip 'em. All right, so let's try some of our mixed colors this time. I'm gonna dip one corner into the orange and I'm gonna dip the other edge into the purple, 'cause this is a real dark color. It's nice. And then, let's dip the third corner into a green and get some really nice contrasting colors there. All right, little bit of white space in the middle, which I like, but you can saturate it a little more if you want. Just be aware that the more you saturate the paper, the harder it will to open it up at this point, but it can be done. All right, this one's looking nice, too. A little bit of a, a little bit of a different pattern. All right, so that's dipping in three colors into the triangle. Let's show again our square. And you can get different effects by dipping, maybe, rather than the corner in, you could dip the straight edge in. I've had students that, after they've done their dipping, they maybe ran some ink with a pen and ink over the edge, of one

edge or one corner. So, just play around with this and you'll get some really beautiful effects. So, that's Orizomegami. It's folding and dying. You can use these for covers, for books, or in other art projects, you can use it in collages. They can even be wrapping paper. I've seen some people make beautiful papers and use it as wrapping paper.

Chapter 4 - Conclusion

Samples

- Okay, so here's some examples. This is the square fold and dipping in the four corners that I did. This is the triangular shape and then dipping in the three corners. And I want to show you some of the things that you can do with these, this is the Japanese side-sewn book. This is the noble binding, and what I've done is, since it's such a thin paper, I folded it. So that the fold is on the fore-edge of the cover here, and then the two edges are on the spine, and that way you've got a little thicker cover, little more sturdy. And then you've got the great printing on both sides too. And remember that this is such a great project to do with kids. They can do this folding and dying technique, and then they can do this Japanese side-sewn children's version and again, same thing, I folded, the paper so that you've got the fold on the fore edge and it makes it a little sturdy. And you can make the big holes, and use a different kinds of materials for binding.