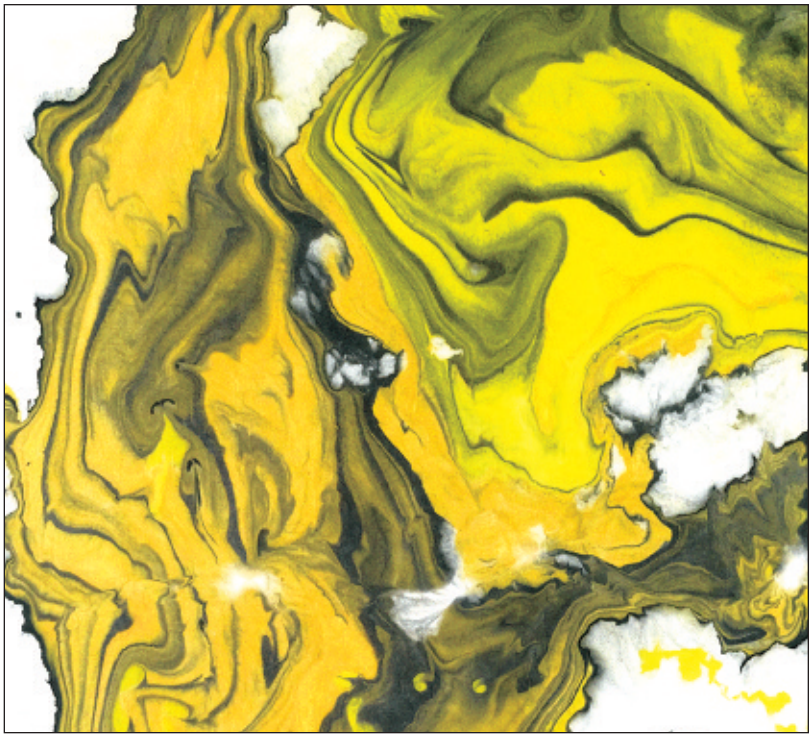
Simple Suminagashi

art + social studies



If you're a teacher, student, group leader or parent... you'll love this project. It's "no fail" — everybody gets great results. It's fast, it's easy, requires very little in the way of set up or clean up. And the best part is, it gives students the opportunity to try a traditional art from another culture, Japan.

The word "Suminagashi" translates literally as "spilled ink." Centuries before the art of marbleizing papers was practiced in Western cultures, Japanese craftsmen created patterns by floating ink on the surface of water and transferring it to a sheet of paper. Because the nature of water is ever-changing and constantly moving, Suminagashi printers are viewed as great masters of control. Each monoprint is like a fingerprint — unique and unreproducible.

Grade Levels K-12

Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials

Boku-Undo Suminagashi Marbling Ink (01309-1009); share one 6-color set across classroom

Zerkall™ Copperplate Paper, (10435-1022); share one 22" x 30" sheet between nine students

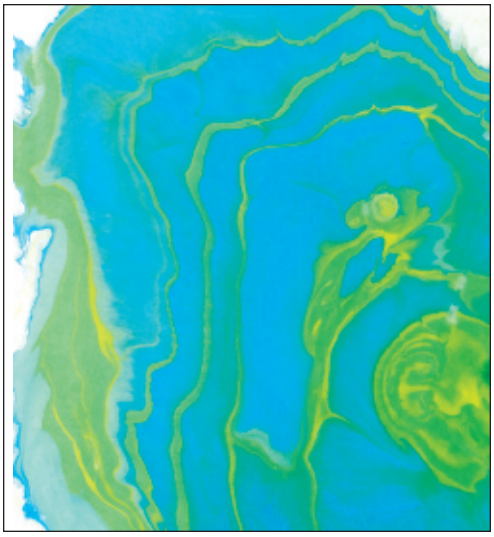
Pan with plain tap water, at least 1/2" deep

Paper towels for blotting

OPTIONAL:

Blick® Scholastic Red Sable Round, 3/0 (05863-7030), need two per student

Round 10-Well Tray (03041-1010), share between two students



Preparation

1. Fill a plastic or aluminum pan, approximately 9" x 12" size with a minimum of 1/2" tap water. No other additives are required.
2. Cut paper down to 7" x 10" pieces. Other papers may be used. For best results, use an unsized paper at least 80-lb weight (175gsm).

Process 1: Traditional Suminagashi

1. In Japan, the traditional manner of creating Suminagashi prints involves making many concentric circles of two or more colors, sometimes hundreds in one print.

Process 1: continued

To make a traditional print, use two very small brushes and a small amount of two colors of Boku Undo ink. Load each brush with a different color. Touch one brush very gently to the surface of the water to apply the first color. Touch the second brush inside the first ink float. Repeat, over and over again, alternating colors. Reload brushes when needed. Make a single set of concentric circles, or make a few on the surface of the water.

2. Make a print by laying unsized paper onto the surface of the water as flat as possible. The paper will absorb the ink immediately. Blot gently between two paper towels and allow to dry.

Process 2: Paper Dot Suminagashi

1. The Boku-Undo ink set contains a few punch-out dots of coated paper. These dots float on the surface of the water. Ink may be applied with a brush, dropper, or straight from the bottle. Apply one drop to the surface of a paper dot. The ink slides off the coated surface and onto the water in a thin, lightweight layer that floats around the dot— like an oil spill!

   Repeat by applying more dots of color.

   Experiment by disturbing the surface of the water with a paintbrush handle, toothpick or other tool. Swirl colors gently and pull plain water through.

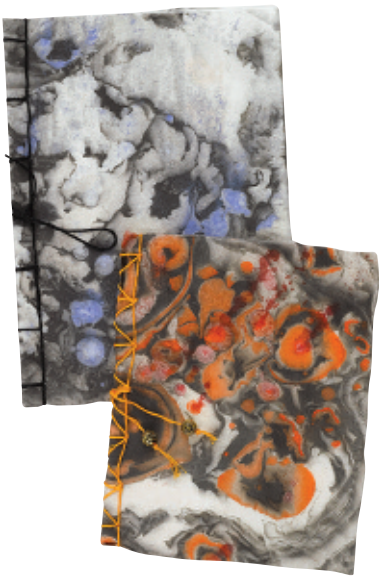
2. Make a print by laying unsized paper onto the surface of the water as flat as possible. The paper will absorb the ink immediately. Blot gently between two paper towels and allow to dry.

Hints for both processes:

1. Ink may react to additives in some public water sources. Test ink first to see if it floats easily on top the water. If it sinks too much, you may want to use bottled water.
2. Boku Undo colors are manufactured in Japan using modern formulations, so they're waterbased and rated AP non-toxic. They wash off hands easily with soap and water, but an apron is recommend to protect clothing.
3. Prints may be dried flat or hung up to dry. Once the ink is absorbed into the surface of unsized paper, it won't rub off.
4. Boku-Undo inks will not stick if the paper is wet. Create masks by brushing letters and designs onto the paper with water before printing. The area that was wet first will remain white.

Options:

1. Use the finished print to make cards, journal covers, backgrounds for collage, drawing or printmaking projects, etc. See page 3 for a simple demonstration on Japanese Stab Binding for bookmaking.



2. Make Suminagashi prints directly onto Blick® Ready Mat singles, such as White 8″ x 10″ (17220-1332)

3. Make Suminagashi prints directly on fabric, such as a Silk Scarf (63000-1022). Note: print small areas at a time and allow to dry between. Fabric will absorb water and Boku-Undo ink will not stick to surfaces that are already wet.

   To make fabric permanently set, soak in a solution of Jacquard® Dye-Set Concentrate (64900-0250) and cold water. See label for instructions.

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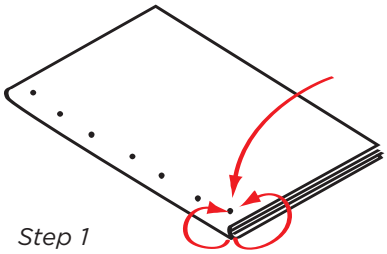
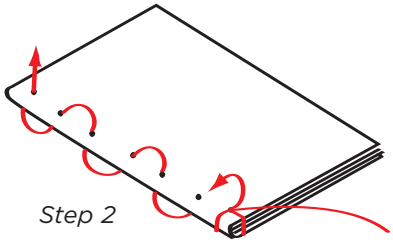
Make A Suminagashi Journal with Stab Binding:

1. Create a monoprint using the above process. Once dry, fold the print in half to make a cover.
2. Fold and cut drawing paper for inside pages. Recommend using four sheets or less.
3. Lightly, measure and mark a vertical pencil line approximately 1/2" from the fold on the back cover.
4. Measure and make a pencil dot 1/2" from the top and bottom, and a dot in the center of the line.
5. Measure and mark thirds between the center dot and the end dots (7 dots total).
6. Use a push-pin to pre-drill the dots, pushing through the cover and the pages.
7. Thread a needle with embroidery floss. Follow the diagram below for stitching process. Leave plenty of floss at both ends for tie off.



Step 1



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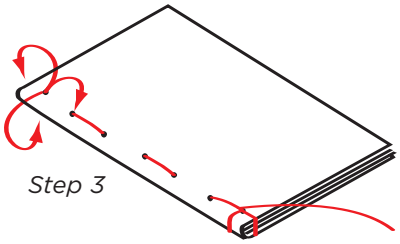

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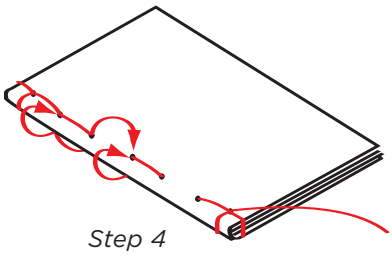

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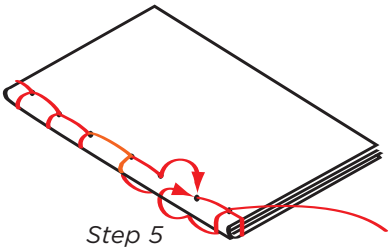

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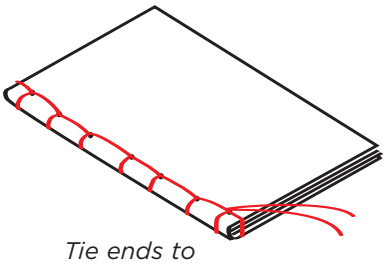

Tie ends to complete

National Standards

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

K-4 Students use different media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas, experiences, and stories

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

Content Standard #4 — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

K-4 Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places

5-8 Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts

Watch the Lesson at:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J410yQ7Pl1E&feature=youtu.be