

Foldable Books

TARGET SKILL: SEQUENCING

Booklets, flip books, and folded paper are great tactile means of engaging students through writing. Students first create their booklet, then record their learning in a more interesting and engaging (yet meaningful) manner. These are fun to make and students don't even feel like they're writing. The physical act of cutting, folding, and stapling builds anticipation for the write-to-learn activity. Any process or events that occur over time may be recorded in these little gems. This might be the steps to a science experiment, with observations, data, and conclusions. Or, students can record the formula for area and an example for each of several polygons, one per page. They are also good for vocabulary development. Foldables® are a registered trademark of Dinah-Might Adventures, LP, an approved Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Provider for the state of Texas.

GETTING STARTED

Decide on the format for the booklet. Gather the needed materials ahead of time, and prepare an example of the finished product.

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Some booklets can be made from one sheet of paper; others require several sheets. To make a booklet from one sheet of paper, follow these steps.

1. Hold a piece of copy paper in landscape layout. Fold and unfold paper in half lengthwise.
2. Turn the paper to portrait layout. Fold and and unfold the paper twice widthwise. (You should have eight sections when the paper is completely unfolded.)
3. Hold the paper in portrait layout again. Fold the top edge to the bottom edge once. Along the fold at the top, cut halfway down the center.
4. Open the paper. Fold it lengthwise again.
5. Press the two ends together so that the center expands, making a diamond shape.
6. Press all the pages down. Fold the pages on top of each other. Now you have a booklet with four sheets (six sides plus a front and back cover).

To make a flip book, stagger several sheets of paper about an inch apart. Fold all the pages backward over the center so that the back pages peek out the bottom, one beneath the next. Staple along the top edge. Use the top as a cover or title page. Students may now write on the remaining pages. The bottom of each flap, peeking out, is a good place to title each page. This example is from the *Learning through Writing: Grade 3* (Kopp 2008) lesson called "Resources Make the Goods."

Another paper-folding idea reflects the topic's learning. In the table example on the previous page, if students are comparing four historic figures, they can fold a length of drawing paper over itself with the edges meeting in the middle, then cut four flaps, one for each person. The historic figure's name and image might be on the flap with the description of his or her accomplishments beneath it.

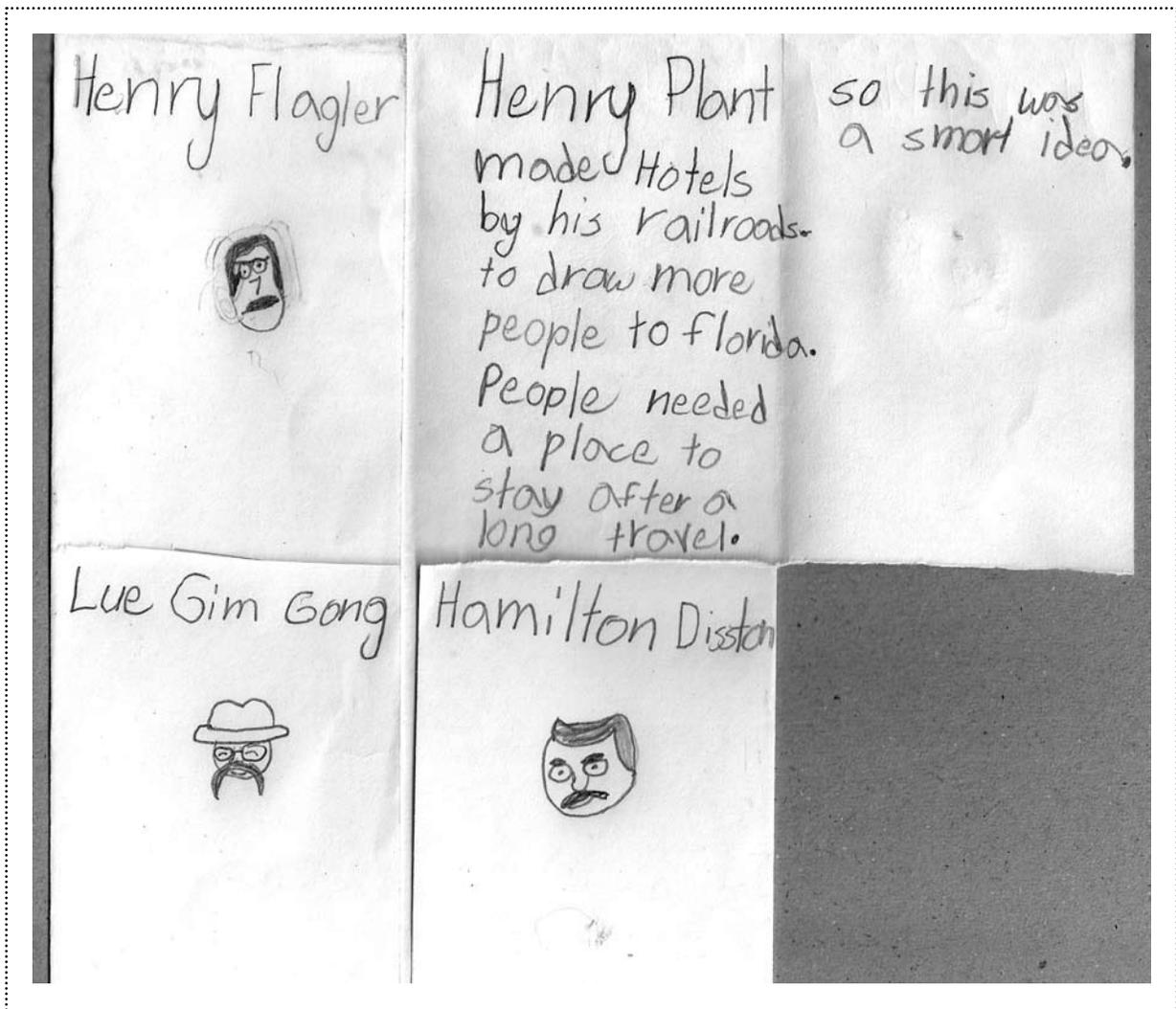


Figure 3.8: Foldable book comparing historical figures

ADAPTING TO STUDENT NEEDS

Folding and cutting may take practice. Be sure to walk students through the steps one at a time, and be sure all students are successful with the paper-folding component of the project. Too much frustration before they even begin writing will lead to an unwillingness to complete the work. Students with fine motor deficiencies may benefit from you cutting for them. Use their paper to model for the class. Once the model is complete, this student has his or hers all ready. ELL students unable to write extensive details may benefit from just having to list the most pertinent information in their booklets, building word use and vocabulary.

Learning Logs and Journal-writing Strategies to Engage Students through Writing

There's no better way to improve comprehension than by having students make connections (to themselves, another topic, or the world) with their learning. One easy way to accomplish this is to have students record information and personal reflections in a log or journal. These typically