



ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing

Thumb Print Self-Portrait

**A Copy-Righted Activity Re-Posted with Permission from
Cheryl Trowbridge
www.teachkidsart.net**

Objectives:

The participants will:

1. Learn about the uniqueness of their finger prints
2. Create writing (such as poetry) that tells their life story
3. Use the art elements of line, color, symmetry and form to create their art

Audience:

This lesson could be adapted by any age group. For this lesson, the participants will be asked to write about themselves so this can be a wonderful lesson for self awareness and reflection.

Learning Opportunity:

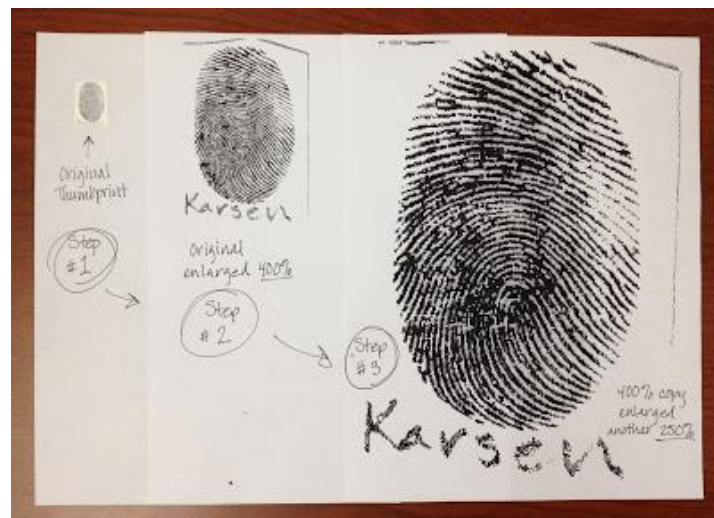
Did you know that your fingerprints were formed before you were born? Their patterns even grow with you as your hands and fingers continue to grow. For over a century, fingerprints have been the foundation of identification. People leave their fingerprints everywhere thanks to the oils that are on their hands. These fingerprints can be dusted, recorded, digitally analyzed and compared to

Supplies/Materials:

- Black stamp pad
- Copy paper
- Black (F) and (UF) Sharpies
- Colored pencils
- Examples of the 3 types of fingerprints: loop, whorl, and arch
- Access to photocopier for enlarging fingerprints (another option is to take pictures with your phone and enlarge the image on a computer)

Prior to Class:

1. Ask the students to write out sentences and phrases that describe themselves. They can focus on physical attributes, talents, likes and dislikes, dreams—whatever would help describe who they are as a person.
2. Collect a thumbprint from each student. Identify the 3 different types: loop, whorl, and arch. (Note: This was more challenging than I expected! You need thumbprints that are clean and crisp... if they're blurry at all, they only get worse when you enlarge them. You'll find that some thumbs just print more clearly than others, but keep trying and eventually you'll get a thumb print from everyone that's good enough to work with!
3. Another option for collecting fingerprints is to rub a soft pencil on some paper, rub your finger onto the pencil, and then press a piece of clear tape onto your finger. Lift the tape off carefully and stick it onto a piece of white paper. This works amazingly well!



4. Next, you need to enlarge your thumbprints.

- A. First, cut them out and write students' names in pencil, then enlarge them one at a time.
- B. Make the first enlargement at 400%, then enlarge that one 250%, and you should end up with the desired result—a thumbprint roughly the size of your face!

Class Instructions:

1. Give each student their thumb print enlargement.
2. The thumbprint enlargements will be very pixelated so instruct the students to take a (F) Sharpie and trace over the lines of their thumbprints to smooth the pixelated lines as much as possible. Tell them not to worry if some lines start and stop, or run into each other--just do their best to darken them and smooth them out.



3. Next, have the students center a clean sheet of lightweight paper over the top of the thumbprint. Note: They may want to tape the two papers together to keep them from sliding around. Here's a tip: before taping anything that you'll want to remove the tape from later, first stick the tape onto your pants, then when you lift it off, the tiny fibers that are stuck to

To see this lesson in its entirety, visit <http://www.teachkidsart.net/thumbprint-self-portrait/> .

Extensions and Adaptations:

Using fingerprints for art can be fun for all ages. Pick up colored ink pads at any craft store:



Have some baby wipes on hand to clean your fingers between colors—they work like magic!



Use your imagination to see what you can create.





Smaller “artists” may require a little assistance.



Experiment, use your imagination and have fun!



Special thanks to **Cheryl Trowbridge** for granting Hildegard Center permission to re-post this activity and for sharing a wealth of information, resources and ideas on her excellent website www.teachkidsart.net ! Cheryl has her art education credentials and has been teaching art to kids for over 20 years. She is inspired by watching children of all ages discover their ability to be creative. Her passion is to make successful art lessons accessible to help share the joy of art with all the kids in our lives. Visit Cheryl's on-line store <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Teach-Kids-Art> to purchase a variety of resources for helping kids create art.

If you have used this activity, we'd love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website www.hildegardcenter.org .

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