

Scrimshaw Crayon Art

Scrimshaw is the technique of carving designs on the surface of bone, ivory, or baleen. Create scrimshaw-inspired art by etching designs on paper!

Materials Needed:

White paper, crayons, toothpick or paperclip.

Caution Toothpicks and paper clips can be choking hazards. Closely supervise children during this activity.

Instructions:

Step 1: Cut a piece of white paper in half.

Step 2: Prepare your paper:

For Black-and-White Art: Color the paper with black crayon. Fill in all the white spaces, so that as little white as possible shows through the black.

For Rainbow Art: Cover a sheet of paper with different colored crayons. Use

Scrimshaw Art

Scrimshaw is the technique of carving on the surface of bone, ivory, or baleen. Artists usually use walrus tusks, whale bone, whale teeth, or baleen (bony plates in the mouths of some whale species). They carve or etch designs on the surface, and add ink to make the designs different colors.

Scrimshaw was popularized by sailors on whaling ships in the 1700s and 1800s, but today it is practiced by people all over the world. Common scrimshaw designs in Alaska include animals such as polar bears, seals, and caribou; and scenes of daily life such as hunting and dogsledding.

Scrimshaw Whale Tooth by Gary Dorning
UA2015-019-0027AB

Scrimshaw on Baleen by Harry Apodruk
Burke Museum Collections, 1999-97/205

Scrimshaw on mineralized walrus ivory
by Peter Mayac: UA2001-010-0033

Incised Killer Whale Tooth
by Peter Mayac UA8003-0048

Scrimshaw cribbage board on walrus tusk by Billy Komonaseak, EH0717-0116