

The Road Book

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This workshop covers an historical book structure useful for maps, prints, or other material, inspired by an example the instructor observed while working as a book conservator. The Road Book (the title of this 1904 New England road atlas) is a pamphlet bound single-signature structure, but the configuration and attachment of the pages allows for clear double-page spreads. A simple (and perhaps obvious) idea once learned, it's a useful structure. We will talk about a few adaptations, materials, and share our ideas for its use. Our model will be softcover, but easily adapted to a hardcover version. Participants should have solid basic bookbinding skills to get the most out of the workshop. More detailed instructions for pre-cutting materials will be sent prior to the workshop.

Tools

Bone folder

Bookbinding needle

Scissors

Awl

Ruler, metal (12" fine)

X-acto knife and sharp blades

Self-healing cutting mat

Glue stick

Glue, small amount needed (PVA, Sobo or even Elmer's will do for the workshop)

Glue brush, ¼ or ½"

Small container of water for glue brush

Waste paper for gluing, including some 1.5" strips, 9-10" long (about 10)

A small weight of some kind if you have one

Pencil

2 binder's clips

Right triangle

(1) 1-2" wide x 12" long piece of brass bar stock or a piece of binder's board or cardboard the same size (for a jig)

2" x 12" Westcott/C-thru or another brand of gridded ruler (optional)

Colored pencils, markers, fine black pen (optional, for drawing designs on the maps as desired)

Materials

- 24" linen bookbinding thread (#18 best), button & carpet thread or perle cotton #8 or #5 thread

All paper should have paper grain parallel to the height of the paper. No need to use expensive papers for the workshop model.

- (6) maps, each 8.5 high x 11" wide. Photocopies on 80 lb. or other heavier text weight or on cardstock paper, or drawn/painted on watercolor or printmaking paper. You can use printed maps also, but best not to have folds already in the maps. All these maps should be in "landscape" orientation. If you prefer to use prints or plain paper, that's fine too. Weight of the paper can vary, the thicker the paper of the maps, the heavier/thicker your book will be.
- (1) strip 8.5 high x 19-25" wide heavy paper for a cover. If the paper is a bit less wide, that would be okay for your model. Some options that could be used: 90-140 lb watercolor paper, any paper heavy enough for a paper case (like St. Armand Colours paper 250gsm/140lb, or papers from your favorite papermaker), or an 80-100 lb cover weight paper. It needs to be able to fold well without a lot of cracking.
- (1) piece of Eastern-style tissue, 9" high x 4-6" wide (we will cut into ¾" wide strips) Okawara, or medium weight mulberry or kozo. OR you can substitute if you have to: medium weight drawing or text paper 50-70 lb. or Tyvek might work also. Nothing really lightweight, as we will be sewing through the paper.
- (1) small strip of Tyvek for a spine reinforcement 9" high x 1" wide OR the same size scrap of cover paper.