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Japanese Fish Rubbing

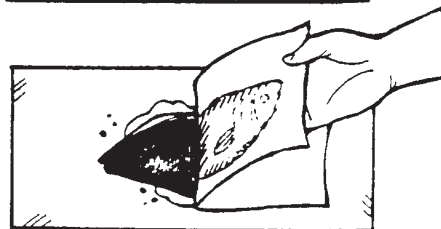
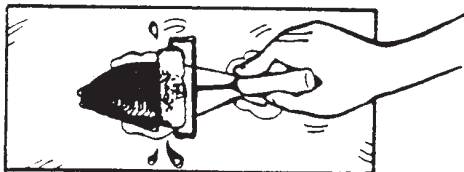
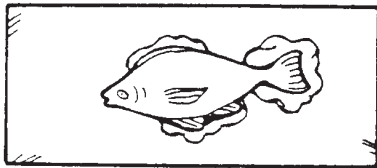
The ancient art of *gyo-taku* evolved from an even older Chinese tradition of stone rubbing. This was a method of copying inscriptions that were carved into stone. The Japanese borrowed this print-making technique, and developed it into the regional folkcraft of fish rubbing. In coastal fishing villages of Japan and other areas abundant with fish, this art form is still created.

Materials:

- whole fish (not gutted or scaled)
- heavy white tissue paper
- black ink (block printing ink or tempera may be substituted for the black ink)
- small paint roller or brayer or large, wide paintbrush
- paper towels
- newspaper to cover the work area
- watercolors or crayons
- paper towels

Procedures:

1. Cover the work area with layers of newspaper. Place the fish on top of the newspaper. Pat the fish dry with paper towels.
2. Position the fish and spread the fins where necessary. Place small wads of paper towels under the fins to raise them.
3. Roll ink lightly over the fish.
4. Lay a sheet of tissue paper over the fish and gently rub with your hands on the surface of the paper.
5. Slowly peel away the paper to reveal the print of the fish.
6. Pat the fish dry, and repeat the procedures to create more prints.
7. When the prints have dried, lightly color some areas of the fish with watercolors or crayons.



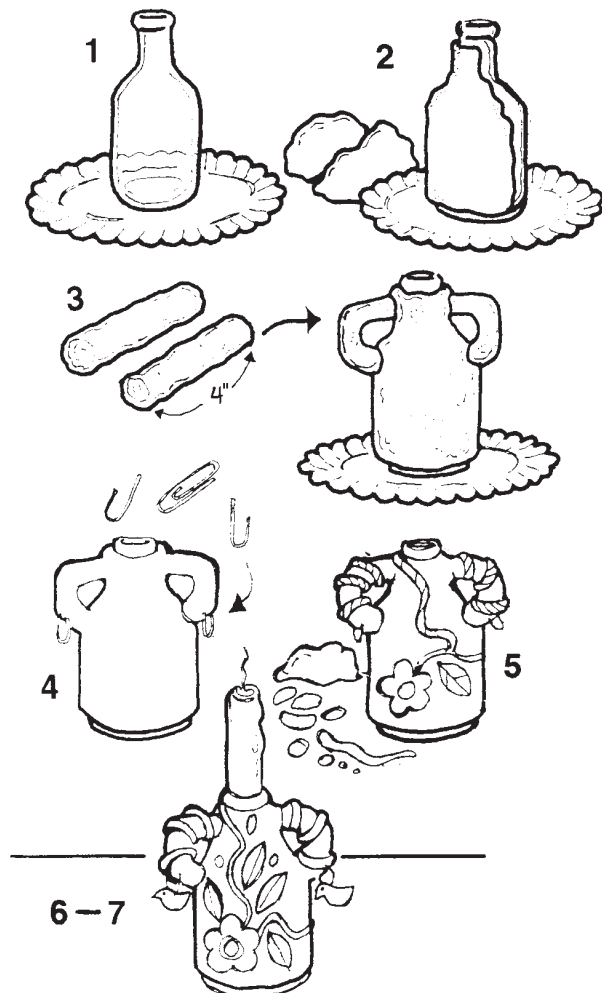
Mexican Tree of Life

The Tree of Life is an elaborate, candle-bearing sculpture, usually created out of clay. Because it is meant to depict the creation of nature, the tree is decorated with flowers, birds, animals, people, and fruit. Each Tree of Life is different, varying by height, size, intricacies, and number of candleholders (anywhere from one to perhaps a dozen).

The Tree of Life originated with the Moors and was brought to Spain in the eighth century. Eventually it was introduced into Mexico. The potters of Izucar de Matamoros in Puebla and the Metepec region of Mexico are famous for this elaborate artform.

Materials:

- short glass beverage bottle
- 3 tiny paper clips
- paper plate
- paintbrush
- self-hardening clay
- assorted clay tools
- tempera or acrylic paint



Procedures:

1. Place the bottle on top of the paper plate. The plate will help in rotating the sculpture and it will also serve as a work area.
2. Cover the bottle with the clay. Do not put clay on the bottom of the bottle or cover the top opening.
3. Roll out two pieces of clay to form fat, sausage shapes about 4" (10 cm) long. Attach these shapes as illustrated, one on each side of the bottle near the neck. These are the branches of the tree.
4. Break one paper clip in half to make two hooks. Insert the straight end into each branch. The curved hook end must be sticking out. This will be used to support hanging clay bird ornaments.
5. With the remaining clay, sculpt and attach large leaves and flower shapes to the tree. Make two birds and insert a paper clip into the top of each body.
6. When the clay sculpture hardens, paint it with vibrant colors. Hang the birds from the hooks on the branches.
7. Remove the Tree of Life from the paper plate. Insert a short candle into the neck of the bottle.