

Make Your Own Quill & Ink



ART & NATURE

For centuries, the feathers from large flight birds were used as writing instruments, called quill pens (or quills). These quill pens are even still used today! Practice your penmanship and patience with this fun activity. Follow along and make your own quill pen and ink!

Materials:

- Large feather
- Berries
- A small bowl and spoon
- Small jar (inkwell)
- Paper
- Toothpick
- A sharp knife or razor blade *

* Adult assistance required.



DIRECTIONS

Making the Quill: Adult to assistance required

1. Once you have found a feather, it is time to make your quill!
2. Boil the tip of the feather in hot water. This will help remove any debris and help soften your quill.
3. With a sharp blade, cut the tip of the feather at an angle.
4. Using a toothpick, hollow out your quill. Remember this is the reservoir for your ink!
5. To help the ink flow best, place a small slit in the middle of the tip of your quill (see photo)



Make Your Own Quill & Ink, continued



Making the Ink

Important: Berry ink spoils quickly. When making a batch, make a small amount, seal with a lid or discard.

1. Gather your berries. You may use fresh or thawed frozen berries.
2. Mash your berries
3. Separate the juice from the berry mash.
4. Place the juice (your ink) in your inkwell
5. Optional: Add vinegar (this will help hold the color)
6. Dip your new quill in your ink and begin creating!



Thinking Deeper

- How was this different than writing with a pen or a pencil?
- What other items could you use to try to make different types of ink?

Practice writing with your quill in the box below and send it in to us!

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