

STEM in the lab

.....● Inspiring Idaho's future STEM workforce

POTATO STAMP ART



GRADE LEVELS

This activity is appropriate for students in grades K-4.



MISSION

Create a fun art piece using potatoes.



VOCABULARY

POTATO: one of the most important food crops, a starchy plant tuber which is cooked and eaten as a vegetable.

DESIGN: an arrangement of shapes or lines created to form a pattern.

NATIONAL POTATO DAY: on this day, we celebrate potatoes.

ERIC CARLE: a children's book author, designer and illustrator.

STEM: the central body or stalk of a plant or shrub.



MATERIALS

- » Potatoes
- » Hot water and scrubber to clean potatoes
- » Adult will cut potatoes in half
- » Yellow, orange, and red paint (brown or green could also be added)
- » Trays or plates
- » Green crayon or marker (green paint could also be used)
- » Cotton swabs
- » Card stock
- » "The Tiny Seed" written by Eric Carle



ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

Do you love potatoes? Potatoes are a delicious food and a creative art tool. In honor of national potato day, try creating a fun art piece using potatoes. Think about how you could construct stamps out of potatoes and paint with them. What type of images could you design? This potato art lesson ties into the popular book "The Tiny Seed" by Eric Carle. For an extension at home, try making magic potato mud. This is another great activity to celebrate your love for potatoes!

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Read Eric Carle's "The Tiny Seed" or listen to the story read aloud (links provided under Resources). Look at the cover of the book:

What art materials did the illustrator use to design it?

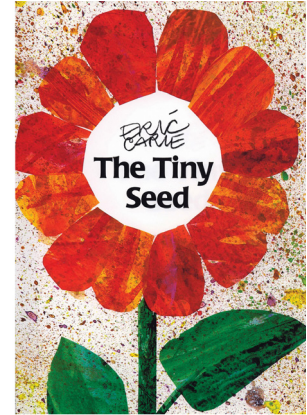
How could you create a piece of artwork that resembles the book cover?

Remember you are using potatoes to design your art piece.

What shape does a potato make when you use it like a stamp?

Do you notice those shapes on the cover of your book?

What colors were used on the cover?



Book cover credit: eric-carle.com

- 2 Gather potatoes from your garden, farmers market or local store.

- 3 Clean potatoes using hot water and a scrubber. Let potatoes dry.

- 4 Allow an adult to cut the potatoes into halves.

Where should an adult cut your potato?

Draw a line where they should cut to represent half of the potato. Look at the base of your potatoes.

What shape does it create?

Was your prediction from earlier correct?

To test your prediction, trace the base of one of your potatoes on a piece of paper or dip a base into paint and practice stamping it onto paper. What do you notice about the shape the stamp creates? Try finding it again on the cover of the book.



- 5 On a clean piece of card stock, draw a stem using a green crayon or marker.

What types of plants have stems?

- 6 Design a flower using your cut potatoes and paint as a stamp.

- 7 Add dots to your art piece using your fingers or cotton swab.

EXTENSIONS

- » Design various shapes, animals, plants and other pieces of artwork.
- » [Make magic potato mud!](#)
- » Next year, plant potatoes in your garden for more fun potato STEAM projects.
- » Create other children's book covers to combine art and literacy.
- » Use cookie cutters to construct other shapes out of your potato for your potato stamps.

RESOURCES

- » **"The Tiny Seed" Story read aloud K-2**
<https://youtu.be/d1fV8T1dozU>
- » **"The Tiny Seed" Story read aloud K -4**
https://youtu.be/L_A_e6h-DhU
- » **How To Make Magic Mud - From a Potato!**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_0J4dRqg7CE

LEARN MORE

Students + Parents + Educators

For information on grants, training and student opportunities, curriculum ideas, and other resources, please visit ***stem.inl.gov***.