

Considerations for Making Books from Found Objects

1. **Finding substrates/objects** – thrift stores, yard sales, antique shops, Etsy, friends. Take home anything that really “speaks” to you, even if you have no plan for it yet.
2. **How to start** – discovering the **format** – **how** to create a book around the object.
 - a. Meditate on it! **Look at every part, different angles, etc.**
 - b. Consider how it will **open (or otherwise view/access)**.
 - c. Are there **movable** parts? Consider how best to showcase that and/or accommodate into the construction planning.
 - d. How will it best be **displayed?** – on **wall or pedestal/tabletop?** For example, an item with a handle that has a hole for hanging may be perfect to display on a wall. Be sure to take into account the orientation (hanging against wall or lying flat on table) when planning how best to construct a book that will display well in that orientation.
 - e. Look for other possible **challenges** to overcome, such as an item requiring an unusual book/page shape or movement, and how to ensure the book and pages remain secure and undamaged with handling.
3. **Theme*** – Integrating a meaningful and cohesive focus into the **construction** and **content**. Consider: What is the object’s **function?** When is it used? and how? What sort of text and/or images would reflect its function?
4. **Construction – book form/format:**
 - a. **Form and Binding** – integration/attachment – thread? wire? signatures or single pages? accordion or other folding? pockets?
 - b. **Cover material** – first, is it necessary (considering the object’s features)? If needed, what material is best? – paper (weight, **strength**, color/pattern), cardboard, metal, cloth or book cloth?
 - c. **Pages** – weights, strength, design/pattern, content (in most cases, it’s best to complete pages’ **content** – images, text – **BEFORE** binding)
 - d. **Measure** carefully!
 - e. Make a **mock-up!** Test the fit, binding, etc.
 - f. Make/plan **adjustments**, then make the **book!**

* Artist’s books are not just decorated journals. There is generally a theme or connection between **form** and **content**. For more info: <https://blog.library.si.edu/blog/2012/06/01/what-is-an-artists-book/>