



## SHIBORI

### SETTING THE STAGE

Shibori is an old Japanese tradition of tie-dyeing fabric, most commonly using indigo (a blue color) dye. The first record of Shibori dyeing being used was in the 8th century in Japan. Shibori became popular among the lower classes who were forbidden to wear silk during the 17th-19th centuries. It's kind of the Grandmother of current tie-dyeing. We're making a kid-friendly version of Shibori using color diffusing paper & washable paints. You can use the blue and also other colors. There are endless number of ways that cloth can be folded, tied, pressed, and stitched to create different Shibori dye patterns. See how many ways you can think of to dye your paper!



photo credit  
@ashleyselvarajah

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- Something to cover your work surface & also to lay wet dyed paper on: you can use newspaper in a pinch, but that can rub off so we suggest opened up paper or plastic grocery bags, butcher paper sheets, old plastic tablecloth or shower curtain, or even recycled magazines or catalogues.
- Set of Washable Paints: tempera, liquid watercolors, even acrylics.
- Color Diffusing paper sheets, coffee filters, tissue paper, watercolor paper, or good quality solid color paper napkins.
- Paint Bowls: recycled yogurt type containers, disposable food storage bowls, or wide mouth jars.
- Sticks or spoons for Mixing
- Paper Towels for wiping hands and spills
- Optional: Pipettes or eye droppers for dropping more color into the folds of the paper. The droppers you get with kids' liquid medicines work great!
- Optional: Colored paper for mounting some of your favorite paper cuts.



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## SHIBORI PROJECT INSTRUCTIONS



**#1** Before beginning, spread out some paper or plastic to protect your work surface (opened up paper or plastic grocery bags work well, an old plastic tablecloth or shower curtain, ...) You'll also need to have a place to lay your dyed papers so they can dry. To prepare for dyeing, put a blob of blue paint in a recycled yogurt container or old bowl. Add a small amount of water, a little at a time, mixing until it's liquid enough to dip your paper in. The amount of water you use to dilute your paint will depend on how dark you want your colors & what kind of paint you're using. Try it before adding more water - you can always add more water but can't take it away. Remove the stick or spoon from the cup & lay on the paper when done mixing (so it doesn't tip or flip out of the cup).

**#2** Take out the paper you're going to use. There are tons of different ways you can fold it - experiment and decide which ways of folding produce patterns that you like. Some common ways to fold are accordion folds, triangles, and combinations of those. To make accordion folds you make a series of folds back and forth on your paper so that it looks like a zig zag or a bunch of the letter w. Once you fold your entire piece of



accordion folds, it will be a long narrow rectangular strip. You can then make accordion folds the other way until you end up with a small, almost square. Or you can fold the long strip into triangles. You can look at the photos on your resources page for reference and the video tutorial! If your paper is a square, it's easier to fold it into triangles. If it's not square you can do triangles and some other folds (see the video).

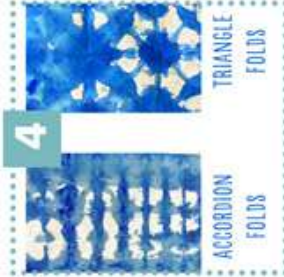
**#3** Let's make our first one with only blue paint since the traditional style of Shibori is with indigo dye. Fold your paper and then dip the edges and corners into the blue paint. You want the paint to cover at least about 50% of the paper surface. It's good to leave some parts of the paper white. Carefully unfold your paper and see what it looks like! You're the artist and get to decide how you want to do things! \*Note: You'll probably get your hands pretty dirty. This paint is washable & we recommend washing hands frequently during this project.

Do you like your blue Shibori? Is there just enough white or too much? What do you think of the pattern? Try it again, folding your paper differently. Compare them & decide which folding



technique you like better. You can also use a dropper to squirt additional paint into the folds. Try lots of different folds!

**#4** Mix up all or some of the other colors that you'd like to use if you have more colors. Try a multi colored Shibori. We recommend choosing 2 or maybe 3 colors to use together on one piece of paper. If the colors touch, they may mix, which can be super fun too.



## TAKING IT FURTHER

If you want to take it further, you can use your dry dyed paper for Chinese Paper Cutting. It's a lot like making paper snowflakes. Fold your paper in half & draw or trace half of a symmetrical design on the fold. Then cut it out - being careful not to totally cut the fold! You can cut small designs through the fold, but be careful not to sever it. Be as simple or as complicated as you want - like a heart or a butterfly. We have some downloadable templates for inspiration & watch the video. Then, if you want to, you can mount your favorite one on a piece of colored paper!