

Shimmering Treasures

Lesson Plan
Grades 9-12



Summary

Artists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries like Giotto di Bondone, Taddeo di Bartolo, and Carlo Crivelli made paintings of religious figures with gold, intricately-decorated backgrounds. These artists used metal punches to make polished and varied surfaces that “sparkle like millet grains” as light falls across them. Use the same type of tools used by Italian Gothic painters to make patterned metal jewelry or wall hangings.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Recognized paintings made in the Italian Gothic style
- Learn the process of gilding and punch work
- Use a variety of punches to create relief designs for jewelry and other decorative pieces

Outline of Lesson

- Lecture on the gilding process (See “Historical Materials and Techniques” section of the Kress Reconstruction website)
- Craft activity
- Presentations

Activity

- Invite students to study examples of punch work and experiment with combining individual punches to create simple and complex patterns. Have students choose a jewelry blank or sheet of copper to decorate.
- Encourage students to plan out a punch work pattern or design on a sheet of drawing paper before beginning work in metal.
- Once finished with their jewelry or decorative piece, have students present their work to the class. Ask them to describe the significance of their pattern or design.

Materials

Pencils

Drawing paper

Assortment of jewelry blanks and/or small copper plates

Assortment of punches or jewelry or leather working

Small hammers

Key Terms

Gilding – A thin layer of gold or other metal used for decoration

Relief – A molded, carved, or stamped design that stands out three-dimensionally from a background surface

Punch – A metal tool with a raised, blunt design on one end that is hammered into a gilded surface to make shallow imprints and designs

Resources:

["Gilding" on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)

["Taddeo di Bartolo Historical Reconstruction" on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)

["Giotto Historical Reconstruction" on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)

["Carlo Crivelli Historical Reconstruction" on the Kress Reconstruction Website](#)