

Mini Zines



Mid-Valley
STEM-CTE HUB



www.midvalleystem.org
midvalleystemctehub@linnbenton.edu
Linn-Benton Community College
Albany Campus - CC-212



Mini Zines

The Mini Zine STEAM Kit introduces students to creative self-expression and communication through the art of zine-making. Using a single sheet of paper, students learn how to fold, cut, and assemble a mini booklet—called a “zine”—to share stories, document ideas, or present information. This activity promotes literacy, design thinking, and storytelling skills while integrating art, writing, and visual communication. This kit encourages students to combine creativity with critical thought as they explore topics across science, technology, engineering, art, and math through handmade publications.



Grade Level

4th - College

Group Size

1+ per zine

Time Duration

60 minutes - multi session

Content of Kits

Components

- Zine Folding and Creative Commons instructions
- Assorted Magazines
- Washy Tape
- Stickers
- Stencils
- Glue Sticks
- 6 Scissors
- Example Zines



Usage

Getting Started

- 1. Prepare Materials:** Lay out the paper, scissors, and drawing tools for each student or group. Review a completed sample zine or template to show how one sheet of paper becomes a booklet.
- 2. Fold and Cut:** Demonstrate how to fold the paper in half three times to create eight panels, then make one center cut (through the middle fold) to form the zine's pages. Open and refold the paper to create the booklet shape.
- 3. Plan the Content:** Encourage students to decide on a theme or purpose for their zine—this could be about a STEAM topic, personal story, invention idea, or creative concept. Have them sketch or plan their content before illustrating and writing.
- 4. Design and Create:** Using the markers, pens, and colored pencils, students fill each page with drawings, captions, or text. They can also use the glue stick to add small paper pieces, collages, or cutouts for mixed-media zines.
- 5. Share and Reflect:** Once complete, students can present their zines to classmates, explaining their topic and creative choices. Encourage sharing through classroom displays or digital scans.

Storage

- Store markers, pencils, rulers, and glue in labeled containers for reuse.
- Keep paper flat in a folder or bin to prevent bending or creasing.
- Save a few completed student zines as classroom examples or inspiration for future sessions.

Troubleshooting

- **Folds Not Aligning:** Demonstrate folding carefully, corner to corner, before creasing to ensure straight lines.
- **Pages Out of Order:** If a zine is folded incorrectly, unfold and refold along the same creases until the pages align.
- **Ink Bleeding or Smudging:** Use pencils or colored pencils instead of markers if the paper is thin or ink transfers.
- **Students Unsure What to Make:** Provide prompts such as “Explain a science concept,” “Design your dream invention,” or “Share a message that inspires others.”



Activity Guide

Beginner

All About Me Zine

Students create a mini zine that introduces who they are. Each page can include a different topic—such as favorite hobbies, family, dream job, or fun facts. This activity helps students get comfortable with folding, organizing content, and illustrating while building self-expression and storytelling skills.

Intermediate

STEAM Concept Explainer

Students select a science, technology, engineering, art, or math concept—like the water cycle, simple machines, or color theory—and use their zine to teach it to others. They organize each page into steps or visuals that explain the concept clearly.

Advanced

Innovation or Invention Zine

Students imagine and illustrate an invention that could solve a real-world problem (e.g., a device to clean ocean plastic or help pollinators). They use their zine to describe how it works, what problem it solves, and its potential impact.

Extension Activities:

Community Voices Zine Collection

Teams of students create zines that highlight community stories, social issues, or local science topics (such as recycling, biodiversity, or water conservation). After creating their zines, they compile them into a collaborative “zine library” or distribute photocopies for others to read.



Learning Extensions

STEAM Connections: Math - Art - Research

Learning Objectives:

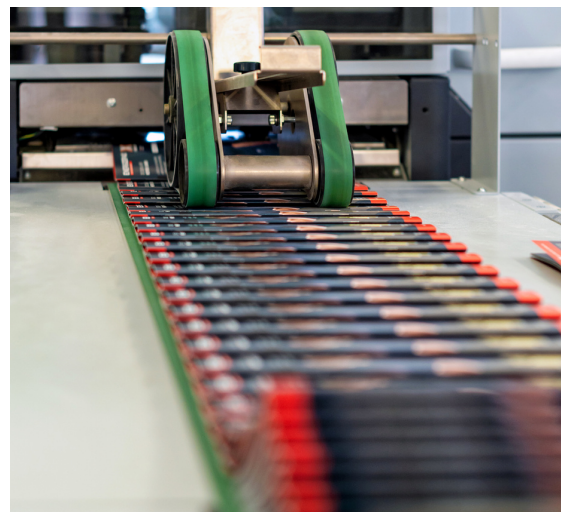
- Develop literacy and storytelling through creative writing.
- Strengthen spatial awareness and fine motor skills through folding and assembly.
- Explore graphic design and composition principles.
- Connect STEAM topics to creative expression and communication.
- Build confidence in presenting ideas visually and verbally.
- Develop good research practices.

Career Connections:

- **Graphic Designer:** Uses layout and design to communicate messages visually.
- **Author/Editor:** Writes and organizes stories or informational text.
- **Engineer/Inventor:** Documents ideas and prototypes through sketches and notes.
- **Educator/Researcher:** Shares information through visual aids and creative publications.

Essential Employability Skills:

- Creativity and Innovation
- Communication
- Visual and Information Literacy
- Collaboration
- Feedback Exchange
- Problem-Solving and
- Iterative Processes
- Organization
- Attention to Detail





Resources and Accessibility

Safety Guidelines

- Use scissors carefully—provide safety scissors for younger students.
- Keep glue and markers capped when not in use.
- Clean workspaces after each session to prevent residue or paper scraps.

Accessibility

- Provide pre-folded or pre-cut zine templates for students with motor challenges.
- Offer dictation or scribing support for students with writing difficulties.
- Use large-format paper or bold-line templates for students with visual impairments.
- Allow digital alternatives (e.g., scanned or tablet-created zines) for accessibility and creativity.

Library Catalog



Library Resources



Feedback

QR to feedback survey

