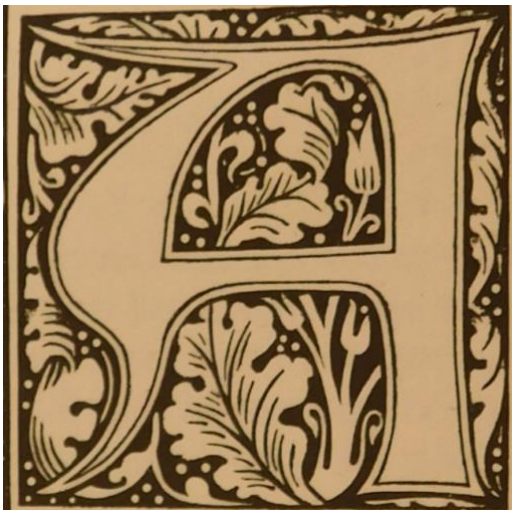


Let's make an Illuminated Letter inspired by William Morris and Autumn!



We Need:

- A4 paper for practice drawings
- Good quality paper or card, A4 size or 20 cm x 20 cm
- A pencil to sketch out your design
- Rubber, sharpener
- Ruler
- Coloured pencils, felt-tip pens or paints (paint-brushes)
- Optional - gold crayon, pen or paint
- Optional - tracing paper or greaseproof baking paper
- A helpful adult
- Letter outlines of the alphabet inspiration sheet (See end of document)
- Autumnal plants, flowers and trees inspiration sheet (See end of document)



Decorated letter from book, *Child Christopher and Goldilind the Fair*, by William Morris

Before there were printing machines, all books were made by hand. They were often decorated with large initial letters at the start of the first word of a page. These special letters were called illuminated letters because they were lit up by the use of colour and sometimes gold or silver.

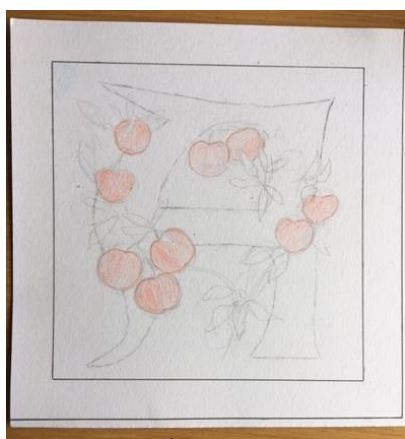
The first printed leaflets and books were made about five hundred years ago. It was a slow process and early books were made with great care. However, in the Victorian Period, about 150 years ago, this changed. The development of steam-powered cylindrical presses meant that large volumes of paper could be printed quickly and cheaply. As a result, the design and quality of factory-made books became less important.

William Morris, a famous Victorian designer, wanted books to be as beautiful as the early books which, in turn, were inspired by the illuminated letters of the past. He designed drawings for the big initial letters used for the first letter of a paragraph or poem. He decorated initials with plants, leaves, climbing stems, flowers and fruit. The plants in the countryside and in his garden inspired William Morris's drawings.

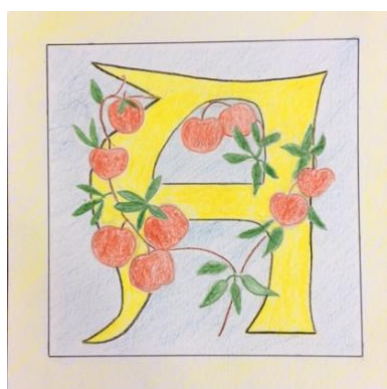
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Let's Start:

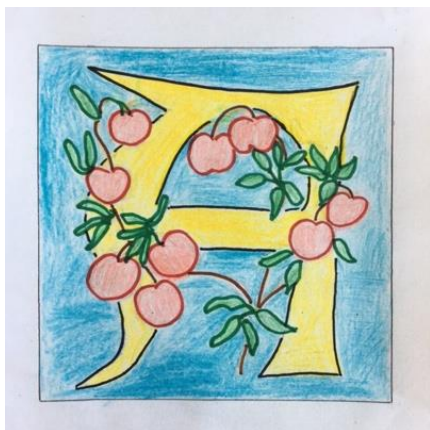
1. Choose a letter. How are you going to decorate your letter so it has an autumnal Theme?
2. It's worth trying out a few ideas on A4 paper before you make your final drawing on good quality paper/card. Start by practising the letter. Make it nice and big. You can draw it in any style.
3. How are you going to decorate your initial? You could add climbing stems, leaves, flowers, fruit or animals.
4. Which colours are you going to use? Test out some different colours to see if they work well together on your A4 paper.



5. When you are ready, draw a square 20 cm x 20 cm on the good quality paper/card. (You could use the sides of the paper to help you.) Inside the square, draw a smaller square 16 cm x 16cm, so you have a border of 2 cm.
6. Draw (or trace) your letter and design on to this paper/card. Use pencil or coloured pencils. These can be rubbed out if you want to alter your design.



7. Draw around the outline of the letter and design with coloured pencils and colour it in. You could go around the outlines with felt tip pens to make your design stand out and add a colourful background and border if you wish. (If you are using gold paint, start with this first, followed by the other colours. Remember to wash paint-brushes with soap and water.) Well done, you have completed your illuminated letter!



Don't forget to show your creations off! Tag us on Twitter using #WMSCreate or send us an email at: learning@williammorrissociety.org

A B C D E F

G H I J K L

M N O P Q

R S T U V

W X Y Z

A B C D

E f G h

I j K L

M n o p

Q R S T

U v W X

y z F

Autumnal Plants, Flowers and Trees



Blackberries



Dandelion



Rowan or Mountain Ash



Oak



Horse Chestnut



Old Man's Beard