

Decoupage Journal

Your high school grad is sure to appreciate the message of this graduation gift as he takes his first tentative steps into adulthood: "A man's errors are the portals of discovery," as James Joyce so aptly put it. While the decoupage book cover is a compilation of cross-outs and inkblots, the inside is perfection bound, a testament to the possibilities of the future.

Most students go through several drafts of a paper before submitting it for class. Teachers, peers and students themselves frequently mark them up in a flurry of pen, marker, and highlighter. Begin gathering these discarded drafts of your child's papers—the more marked up and colorful, the better. You may end up having to raid the recycling bin or talk to a teacher to do this surreptitiously.



What You Need:

- Old drafts of your child's school papers
- Journal filler such as essays, poems, song lyrics or even simple blank paper
- 2 sheets of card stock
- 3 metal binder rings
- Paint brush
- Hole punch
- Photographs (optional)
- Mod Podge (you can use craft glue, but Mod Podge is a combination glue/sealer and works better)

What to Do:

1. Rip the drafts into 1" squares.
2. Apply a thin coat of Mod Podge to the back of one of the squares.
3. Lay the square onto a sheet of card stock.
4. Apply a thin layer of Mod Podge over the square using your paintbrush and repeat with additional squares all over one side of both card stock pieces. Vary the layout and the colors—don't be afraid if the ink blurs slightly, as it will add to the kaleidoscope effect. You can also add fragments of photographs, graduation programs, etc., to personalize the cover if you wish.
5. After the last thin coat of Mod Podge, allow the covers to dry overnight.
6. Now decide what you want to use as the journal content. You might print out "clean" final drafts of the same papers you used to create the covers and create a portfolio of your son's work throughout the year. Perhaps your son is the creative type—use the decoupage cover to hold a group of original poetry or song lyrics. Blank paper, lined or unlined, will turn the twin covers into a beautiful journal.
7. Use the hole punch to create even holes in the card stock covers and whatever you have chosen to use as the journal. Insert the metal rings into the holes to bind.
8. Write a dedication on the front inside cover, maybe a special quote on perseverance, dedication, or the beauty of a work in progress.

High school graduation is a special time for kids who may feel a little bit like their rough drafts: works in progress, still in need of guidance, but just on the verge of something great. This decoupage journal is the perfect way to celebrate their past, present, and future accomplishments.