



## Making a Journal



### Overview

During this project, students will sew together their own journal. While the work in the printing office was male-dominated in the early 19th-century, many printing offices relied on the needle skills of women to help bind together books. Some women worked in the print shop, while others worked at home.

### Women in the Printing Office

The records of the Merriam printing office in West Brookfield, Massachusetts, note three women who worked as bookbinders during the years 1818 to 1833. These young women were members of the Merriam family and ranged in age from 12 to 25. Women worked alongside men in many of these print shops and book binderies. In a survey of Massachusetts printing establishments, 49 of 56 of these employed women.

Female bookbinders typically worked in their own room in the printing office, separated from the men. Their job consisted of collating and folding pages, pressing sheets, and sewing the bindings. There were a handful of women who were considered “practical printers,” which meant that they could set and correct type. Setting type means to arrange the individual letters and characters in order to be printed.

In the colonial period and early America, some women made very important contributions to printing. Mary Katherine Goddard printed the first Declaration of Independence on her Baltimore press. Hannah Bunce Watson of Connecticut printed a newspaper that later became the *Hartford Courant*.

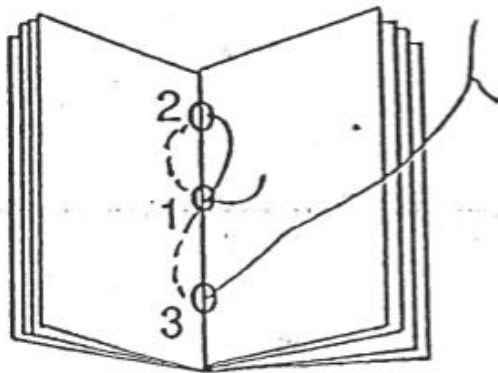
### Supplies Needed

- 1 piece of thick 8.5”x11” paper (cardstock, brown paper, construction paper all work)
- 3-4 pieces of 8.5”x11” white paper
- Sharp sewing needle
- 1 ½’ piece of thick thread (cotton thread, yarn work--regular sewing thread is too thin)

- Crayons, colored pencil, markers
- Pencil to write with
- 19th-century journal entries

### Directions for Sewing the Journal

1. Thread your needle. Do not double the thread--instead, leave a small tail at the top.
2. Put the sheets of white paper on top of your piece of thick paper.
3. Fold all paper in half so that it is creased running vertically.
4. Open the paper so the inside is facing you. Take your needle and thread and make a hole in the center of the page.
5. Draw the needle through all your sheets of paper, including the cover. Leave a tail of thread on the inside of the journal, about 2 inches long.
6. Flip your papers over so that the cover is now facing you.
7. Take your needle and thread and pass the needle through at the top of the crease. Make sure to go through all the pages. Don't lose your tail!
8. Flip your papers over so that the inside is now facing you.
9. Take your needle and thread and pass the needle back through the center of the journal.
10. Flip your papers over so that the cover is now facing you.
11. Take your needle and thread and pass the needle through at the bottom of the crease. Make sure to go through all the pages.
12. Flip your pages over so that the inside is now facing you. Remove the needle from the thread.
13. Tie the two thread ends together in a knot. Trim the extra thread.
14. Enjoy your journal! Decorate the cover, if you like!



- Down through hole #1
- Up through hole #2
- Down through hole #1
- Up through hole #3
- Tie ends in a knot close to hole #1
- Cut string ½ inch from knot
- Cut the top and side edges

## Primary Source Activity: Looking at Journals from the 1800s

### Questions

1. Look at the journal entries from Elizabeth Fuller and Louisa Trumbull. What are some similarities and differences between her life and yours? Do you write about similar things?
2. What are some other materials you could make a journal out of?
3. How do journals and diaries help us understand life from the past?

### Sample Diary Entries

#### Louisa Trumbull at Twelve, Diary

#### Louisa Trumbull

1834

#### Primary Sources: Diary

*Many nineteenth-century New Englanders kept diaries, but almost all of them began their journals when they were young adults. Documents like Louisa Jane Trumbull's diary, which records the daily life of a girl in her own words, are rare. Louisa was the daughter of George Trumbull, a merchant and banker, and his wife Louisa Clap Trumbull, living in Worcester, a fast-growing county seat in central Massachusetts. She began her diary in 1832, when she was ten years old, and kept it until she was thirteen. With eleven children, Louisa's family was large even for the early nineteenth century. Her conflicts with her younger sister Sarah suggest that the large families of the past were not necessarily any more harmonious than the much smaller ones most of us live in today.*

#### Excerpts from Louisa Trumbull's Diary

January 29th 1834. Our quarter\* at Mr. Wright's was out yesterday and Mr. Wright gave us today for a holiday. I have spent a very happy day today, in fact I have not been so happy as I have been today for this long while. I will now write how I have passed my time. I got up this morning at eight o'clock and after eating my breakfast I washed up the breakfast things and then sat down to my work and sewed until twelve o'clock. I then put up my work, swept the kitchen, prepared some bread and milk for Susan and Charles. I then made my own & Joseph's bed and fixed up my room. I then ate my dinner & afterwards warmed my india rubbers\* and put on my cloak and bonnet and went up to call for Mary Jennison to go down street with me. We went down to Mr. Harris's and bought me a lead pencil & Sarah a book. I then went to Mr. Dorr and Howland's and bought a slate & Slate pencil for Nancy. I then returned and gave Sarah her book & Nancy her slate with which they were much pleased. I then read some in the Juvenile Repository\* and have spent my evening in writing in my journal. I suppose one reason of my being so happy today is because I have tried to be as pleasant as I possibly could and I think I have succeeded tolerably well. Sometimes I feel almost discouraged about trying to be pleasant but I know that if I persevere I shall at length accomplish the glorious event for which I have so long toiled and toiled in vain.

Wednesday afternoon, February 11th 1835. Nothing of special moment has occurred since I last wrote. I do not feel much better and I begin to be afraid I never shall get out again, as I have been completely isolated from the world without for the space of a fortnight\* and three days. Caroline [Louisa's older sister, 14 years old] is going to singing school\* tonight. What is there I would not give to go with her! As soon as I can I mean to go round and drink tea with everybody that I can do so without an invitation. I have today received my usual scoldings not unaccompanied with blows and thumps from Sarah [Louisa's younger sister, 10 years old] And much would I give that for one day Mother could witness how much she troubles and belabours\* me. Of all the punishments that could be inflicted upon me, none could be equalled or begin to be equalled by obliging me to live with her. For her I feel not that love which one sister should feel for another, but I cannot love anyone be it who it may who is in really [reality] my enemy I wish to go from my home to escape the tongue and hands of Sarah!!

Saturday morning, April 4th 1835. In keeping a journal I at first did it because my sisters kept one. Afterwards I wrote because it was the wish of my mother and now it is done not only to serve as means of being employed about something useful and proper, but because it is a source of pleasure to me. In after life, said my Mother, you will read with pleasure what you are now writing. And even now I am much interested in what I wrote a year or two ago. In the pages of these two books [her diaries] there is probably little, perhaps nothing, that would amuse any save myself. But as they were written for no eye save mine, if they amuse my mind or gratify mine eye their purpose will be accomplished. Therefore I begin my next book as I began my last in many respects. My purpose being (as may be very plainly seen by reading it) to keep an account of the most important things that happen in our family. Together with the births, deaths, and marriages of our friends and acquaintances.

May 8th 1835. Elizabeth Paine has got a beautiful wax doll as large as a baby that is a fortnight old. It is most elegantly dressed and opens and shuts its eyes. It was sent to her from London. She has got a great collection of toys but this, I believe, is considered the handsomest plaything. I also have a beautiful doll far handsomer than hers. It is much larger, has beautiful blue eyes and five teeth. It is named Isabella Frink Trumbull [Louisa's baby sister]. Her doll was given her by a friend. Ours was given by a much greater friend, even our God.

## **Glossary**

\*belabours - to strike with blows; to thump

\*fortnight - 14 days

\*india rubbers - rubber overshoes

\*Juvenile Repository - A publication of educational stories and poems. There was a Juvenile Repository published in Boston in 1833 and 1834.

\*quarter - a term of school, usually 12 weeks

\*singing school - music classes sponsored by people interested in improving quality of singing at church services; social gatherings for young people

### **Source**

Journals of Louisa Jane Trumbull, Worcester, Mass., 1829-1837, Volumes 1-4. Trumbull Family Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass. Selected entries. Edited by Old Sturbridge Village.

## **Elizabeth Fuller at Fourteen, Diary**

### **Elizabeth Fuller**

**1790**

#### **Primary Sources: Diary**

*Elizabeth Fuller was almost 15 years old when she started this diary. Although she did not write in her diary every day, she made regular entries from October 1790 through December 1792. She lived with her family on a farm in Princeton, Massachusetts.*

### **Excerpts from the diary of Elizabeth Fuller**

1790

Oct. 7 Very pleasant to-day. I have to work very hard.

Oct. 11 I washed to-day.

Oct. 12 Pa got in his corn

Oct. 13 Mrs. Perry, Miss Eliza Harris, Miss Sally Puffer, and Miss Hannah Haynes, and Wareham, and Rebekah Hastings were baptised by immersion. I was fifteen to-day.

Oct. 18 Pa and Ma set out for Sandwich. I am quite sick, don't sit up but very little.

Oct. 21 I was so bad that we sent for Dr. Wilson. When he came he told me I had a settled Fever.

Nov. 5 Nathan Perry here about an hour this eve. I am a good deal better, have been out of my room two or three times. 8 o'clock Pa and Ma came home, we were overjoyed to see them, but had done expecting them.

Nov. 24 We baked two ovensfull of pyes. Mr. Nathan Perry here this eve.

Nov. 25 Thanksgiving to-day we baked three ovensfull of pyes. There was no preaching so we had nothing to do but eat them. The pyes were a great deal better than they were last Thanksgiving for I made them all myself, and part of them were made of flour which we got of Mr. H. Hastings therefore we had plenty of spice.

Nov. 26 Mr. Ephriam Mirick here. Pa went to town meeting.

Nov. 27 Mr. Gregory killed\* our hogs to-day.

Dec. 4 I minced the Link meat.\*

Dec. 16 John Brooks here killing\* our sheep. A severe snow storm.  
Dec. 17 Very cold. I made sixteen dozen of candles.  
Dec. 22 David Perry here to get Timmy to go to the singing school with him.  
Dec. 24 I scoured the pewter. Pa went to Fitchburg.  
Dec. 26 Sabbath. Stormy weather. We all stayed at home. Pretty warm.

1791

Jan. 1 A very severe snow storm to-day.  
Jan. 13 Hannah Brooks here borrowed half a pound of wool. David Perry here to get Timmy to go to singing school.  
Jan. 14 I am a Passing Grammar. David Perry here.  
Jan. 15 Enoch Brooks here, brought home the wool. I am a studying today.  
Jan. 17 The Severest snow storm there has been this winter. I washed\*.  
Jan. 18 Fair but cold. I studied in the afternoon  
Jan. 20 I am writing Grammar. Nathan Perry had Pa's Horse to carry Caty and Lucretia Mirick to Col. Whetcombs.  
Jan. 21 I am a writing Grammar to-day. Pleasant weather. Nathan Perry put our Horse into their sleigh and carried Me to the singing school & back again. I had a fine ride and a fine evening; they sung a great many Tunes, I sang with them.  
Jan. 23 Sabbath. I went to church. Mr. Davis Preached.  
Jan. 24 I washed. Timmy went to Mr. Perrys in the eve.

Feb. 9 storm weather. I am a picking blue wool\*. Nathan Perry here to-day.  
Feb. 17 Excessive cold, I do not know as there ever was a colder day. I picked wool.  
Feb. 18 Cold. I finished picking wool.  
Feb. 22 I began to break\* the blue wool for Pa's coat, broke a pound & three quarters in the P.M. Pa went to Sterling.  
Feb. 23 I broke four Pounds of blue Wool to-day.  
Feb. 24 I finished breaking wool. Mr. Stephen Brigham here.

Mar. 1 Pa went to Mr. Stephen Brighams to write his will. Ma began to spin the wool for Pa's coat. I card\* for her & do the household work.  
Mar. 2 Ma is a spinning.  
Mar. 7 very warm. Anna Perry here visiting. I made 18 dozen of candles & washed.  
Mar. 25 Ma finished spinning her blue Wool to-day.  
Mar. 29 Mrs. Garfield came here to show me how to draw in\* [the] Piece did not stay but about half an hour.  
Mar. 30 I tyed in\* the Piece & wove two yards.

April 1 I wove two yards and three quarters & three inches to-day & I think I did pretty well considering it was April Fool day. Mr. Brooks & Mr. Hastings here to get Pa to do some writing for them.

April 2 I wove three yards and a quarter.

April 4 I wove five yards & a quarter. Mr. Cutting here this eve.

April 8 I wove two yards & a quarter.

April 13 Mrs. Brooks here a visiting. I wove.

April 14 I got out the Piece in the A.M. Pa carried it to Mr. Deadmans. Miss Eliza Harris here.

April 15 I began to spin Linnen spun 21 knots\*. I went to Mr. Perrys on an errand. Pa went to Mr. Matthews to write his will & some deeds. He has sold Dr. Wilson 20 acres of Land & given Sam a deed of some I believe about 25 acres.

April 22 I spun two double skeins\* O dear,  
Quadrille\* has murdered wit, & work will do as bad,  
for wit is always merry, but work does make me sad.

April 27 I spun five skeins of linnen yarn.

May 4 I spun two skeins to-day finished the Warp\* for this Piece. Nathan Perry worked here this P.M.

May 13 I spun four skeins. Ma is making Soap. Rainy.

May 14 I spun four skeins. Ma finished making soap and it is very good.

May 27 I wove five Yards to-day.

June 5 I made myself a Shift\*. Mrs. Perry here a visiting. Nathan Perry here this evening.

June 7 I made myself a blue worsted Coat.

June 6 Mrs. Brooks here a visiting. I helped Sally make me a blue worsted Gown.

June 10 I helped Sally make me a brown Woolen Gown.

## Glossary

\*break wool - first process in carding, to comb wool roughly

\*card wool - the process of brushing the wool fibers to untangle them and align in the same direction prior to spinning

\*draw in - part of the process of threading a loom before weaving can begin

\*kill animals - butcher for meat to eat, hide for leather, and other useful products

\*knot - measurement of thread or yarn with a number of coils tied by a knot

\*minced the link meat - cut up sausage

\*picking blue wool - pulling dirt out of wool before it is carded or combed. The wool had already been dyed blue.

\*quadrille - 1. a dance for four couples done in a square formation. 2. a card game for four players.

\*shift - the basic undergarment for women during the 18th and 19th centuries; similar to a shirt, unfitted and held in place by the corset

\*skein - a length of thread or yarn, wound to a certain length on a reel and usually put up in a loose knot, often 560 yards

\*tyed in - attached the warp threads to the beam which will store the finished cloth

\*warp - the threads that run the full length of a piece of woven cloth

\*washed - did the laundry

**Source**

Diary Kept by Elizabeth Fuller, Daughter of Rev. Timothy Fuller of Princeton, in Everett Blake, History of the Town of Princeton, Vol. I, Narrative, (Princeton, Mass.: Published by the Town, 1915), 303-311.

Selected entries. Edited by Old Sturbridge Village.