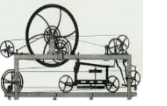




WILLIAM MORRIS KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER



Biography

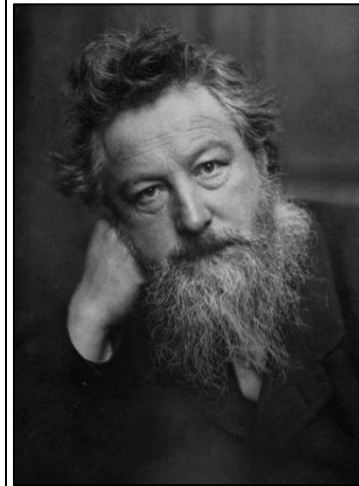
-William Morris was a British textile designer. He was also an architect, writer, a poet, a translator and a social activist!

-He had a great impact on the design of churches, houses and furniture in the late 19th and early 20th Century.

-He is most famous for designs such as *Strawberry Thief*, *Woodpecker Tapestry* and his beautiful handprinted versions of the works of Geoffrey Chaucer.

-Morris closely observed nature to influence his patterns.

-He founded the Kelmscott Press in 1891.



-Morris lived between 1834 and 1896. He spent much of his life in London, but also lived in other areas, e.g. Oxford and Birmingham.

Significant Works

Woodpecker Tapestry (1885)



-The *Woodpecker Tapestry* shows a woodpecker in a fruit tree. It is unusual in that it was one of the very few tapestries designed only by Morris (many were a team effort at Morris & Co).
-It was inspired by a Roman tale. A sorceress turns King Picus into a woodpecker when he refuses to become her lover. The text at the top and bottom of the tapestry outlines this transformation.

Strawberry Thief (1883)



- The *Strawberry Thief* textile design is perhaps William Morris' most famous of all.
- Morris was influenced by the thrushes that he saw stealing the fruit in the garden of his countryside home at Kelmscott Manor.
-To print the repeating pattern, Morris used the painstakingly slow indigo-discharge method, which he admired above all other techniques. The tapestry became hugely successful.

The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer (1896)

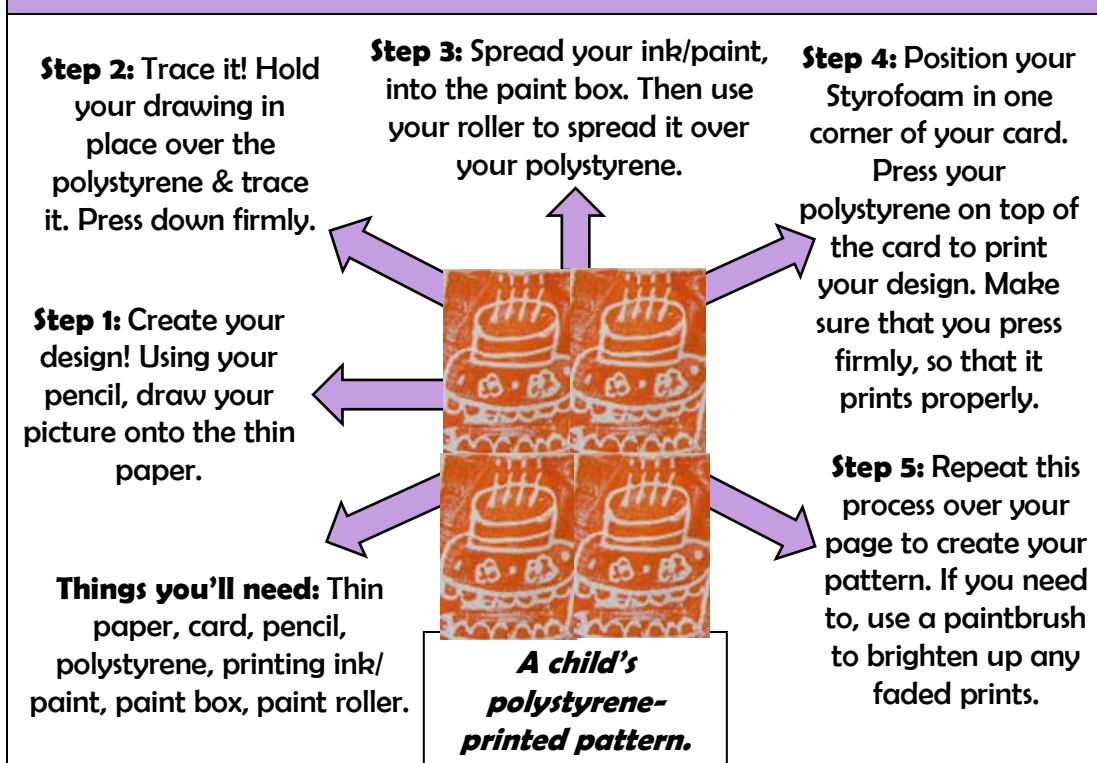


-Morris founded the Kelmscott Press towards the end of his life. He wanted to revive the skills of hand printing, which the mechanics of the Industrial Revolution had destroyed. *The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer* was his greatest triumph in this field. It contains 87 wood-cut illustrations. He used many 15th Century printing techniques.

Styles and Techniques

<p>Embroidery</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Embroidery involves decorating fabric or other materials using a needle to add thread or yarn. -Embroidery was the first technique that Morris adapted for products that he sold. -His embroideries were often commissioned to decorate the inside of new churches. -Morris felt restricted by embroidery, so he developed his craft to other forms, including tapestries. 	
<p>Tapestries</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tapestries are a form of textile art, which are traditionally hand woven on a loom. -In Morris' time, tapestries were highly-prized wall coverings, used as decorations in homes and churches. -They were practical as well as luxurious: they provided insulation, and wealthy owners moving from one residence to another could take their tapestries with them. -Throughout his life, Morris was fascinated by tapestries, which he saw as the 'noblest of all weaving arts.' 	
<p>Hand-printing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In the later part of Morris' life, he became more and more enthusiastic about the beauty in calligraphy and page decoration. He set up the Kelmscott Press in 1891. -He designed his own fonts, made his own paper and printed by hand. The illustrations were wood-cut – carved into wood before being printed on the page. 	

How do I create art like Morris?



Key Vocabulary

Morris

UK

London

Oxford

Pattern

Printing

Textiles

Embroidery

Woodpecker Tapestry

Strawberry Thief

Works of Geoffrey Chaucer

Wood-block

Hand-print

William Morris Timeline

<p>21st March 1834 Born at Elm House, Walthamstow, Essex, to wealthy parents.</p>	<p>1847 Morris' father dies. Morris is aged only 13.</p>	<p>1853 Begins studying theology at Exeter College, in Oxford.</p>	<p>1855 Takes a tour of France with friend Edward Burne-Jones.</p>	<p>1856 Gives up his architecture apprenticeship to focus on painting.</p>	<p>1859 Married Jane Burden.</p>	<p>1971-73 Goes on trips to Iceland and Italy.</p>	<p>1975 Sets up Morris and Co. textile company.</p>	<p>1880 Works on the Throne Room at St. James's Palace.</p>	<p>1884 Morris founds the Socialist League.</p>	<p>1891 Morris founds the Kelmscott Press.</p>	<p>3rd October 1896 William Morris dies at Kelmscott House.</p>
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