

JELLY PAD RECIPE

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WHAT IS A JELLY PAD?

A jelly pad (gelatine hectograph) is an early duplicating technology. It was used for printing images directly into students' exercise books. Today photocopiers are used to copy stencils which are often pasted into exercise books. Jelly pads saved paper, were portable and relatively chemical free.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

An image drawn using hectograph carbon paper is placed onto the surface of the jelly. The jelly absorbs the image which can then be transferred to paper when a blank piece of paper or page of a book is placed onto it.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. You need a sheet of hectograph carbon paper and a sheet of white shiny paper. (NSW schools used to use purple Fordigraph spirit duplicator carbon paper.)
2. Place the white paper on the desk shiny side up and place the carbon paper on top, carbon side down.
3. Draw or trace an image onto the back of the carbon paper (the reverse of how carbon paper is usually used).
4. Lightly moisten the surface of the jelly pad. Place the white paper with the carbon image face down onto the jelly and gently smooth it over with your hand. Carefully peel it off. (It can be reused over and over again.)
5. Press a blank sheet of paper onto the image, smooth it over and carefully peel it off the jelly.
6. About 40 copies of the one image can be reproduced this way before it gets too pale.
7. Over time the image sinks to the bottom of the jelly, eventually discolouring the jelly. The jelly pad continues to work even when completely discoloured.

JELLY PAD RECIPE

- 375ml glycerine (glycerol)
- 250ml water
- 60g gelatine

Melt all ingredients together in a saucepan over low heat, stirring gently.

Pour into a rust-proof, shallow, rectangular dish and allow to set hard on a flat surface.

The jelly pad can be re-melted in its tray in the oven if it gets damaged or has bubbles on the surface.

Note to teachers visiting the Schoolhouse Museum on school excursions

Shhhhhh.....

The students will use a jelly pad on their visit and it is one of the magical moments for them so please don't show them one or tell them about it until after your visit.

Thanks for keeping it a secret!

**NSW SCHOOLHOUSE MUSEUM
OF PUBLIC EDUCATION**
Cox's Road, North Ryde, 2113
Phone/Fax 9805 1186
info@schoolhousemuseum.org.au
www.schoolhousemuseum.org.au