**Sustainable DIY Project**

**Secret Compartment Book**

Do-It-Yourself projects are a great way for you to help the students on your floor break the ice and get to know each other. Not only is this project fun and useful, but it also diverts waste by recycling old textbooks that students no longer want and can’t sell back! These books provide a nifty way to hide something, whether it’s a spare key, a secret note, or even money. They also make great presents, so consider doing this activity around the holidays! This project does require the use of a sharp tool, so be sure to supervise your students!

![Image of a book with a secret compartment]

**What You Will Need:**

- A Book, preferably a thick one with a hard cover
- Box Cutter or X-ACTO Knife
- Paint Brush
- White Glue (such as Elmer’s Glue)
- Plastic Food Wrap or a Large Baggie
- Water
- Ruler or Straight Edge
- Optional: Felt or Other Fabric

**Activity Suggestion:**

If any of the students on your floor don’t have a book to use for this project, take your floor to the Monroe County Public Library to purchase cheap, used books. The Friends of the Library Bookstore sells hardback books for $2.50 each. Go online to the library website for the bookstore’s hours: [http://mcpl.info/friends/friends-library-bookstore](http://mcpl.info/friends/friends-library-bookstore).
Project Steps:

1. Select the first few pages that you want to have free at the end of the project (plus one more) and hold them to the front cover with plastic food wrap or a large baggie so they do not get messed up with the glue. These pages, except for the last one, will not be cut out. This will allow the book to look like a book when it is opened up and will cover the hole itself.

2. Mix a solution of about 50% white glue and 50% water.

3. Brush the three edges of the book with the glue solution so that it is reasonably absorbed. This will hold the book’s pages together. Try not to get any glue on the cover or the front pages you separated from the rest of the book. Clean the brush off immediately or else it will harden.

4. Place something heavy on top of the book and let it dry for 15 to 30 minutes.
5. Open the book to reveal the first glued page and use the ruler to draw a rectangle about a half-inch within the book’s edges.

6. **Carefully** cut along the drawn rectangle with the box cutter, making the cuts as vertical as possible. A ruler may help to keep a straight cut. Apply only enough pressure to cut a few pages at a time, and rip them out as you go. Don’t rush: the slower you do this step, the neater your compartment will look.

7. Once all the pages have been cut out, brush the glue solution onto the inside edges of the hole and allow it to soak in. The glue dries clear, so don’t worry too much about drips. While waiting, apply a second coat of glue to the outside edges of the pages.

8. Brush the "frame" of the hole with a **light** coat of glue. The saved page will be glued directly on top of the hole, essentially covering it (for now). Then, close the book **without** the plastic wrap, place a heavy object on top, and let dry again for 15 to 30 minutes.
9. Cut the saved page neatly along the edges of the hole so that the hole is visible and accessible once again. The insides of the book may still be moist because the book had been closed while drying. Now is a good time to let the book dry while it’s open.

10. Optional Step: Line the inside of your book with fabric for a nice touch, Cut out pieces of felt or other fabric (old t-shirt, socks, sheets...) to fit the inside compartment of your book. You’ll cut out four pieces for the inside edges and one large piece for the bottom. Then, glue these pieces into the compartment to hide any jagged, uneven edges.

11. Make sure that the book is completely dry before filling it with your prized possessions and hiding in plain sight on your bookshelf.

Source: www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Hollow-Book