



Traditional Paper Making in Taiwan

Reading Worksheet — Level F | tahricteaches.com

Taiwan's **traditional** paper making industry represents one of the island's most precious cultural treasures. This **ancient** craft was introduced from mainland China during the Qing Dynasty and has been carefully preserved by dedicated artisan families for over three centuries. Despite modern technological advances, several communities continue to practice these time-honored **techniques**, maintaining an important connection to Taiwan's rich **cultural** heritage.

The intricate **process** of handmaking paper requires exceptional **skill** and patience that takes decades to master. Artisans begin by carefully selecting **bamboo** stalks and mulberry tree bark, which are then chopped into small pieces and soaked in large water vats for several weeks. The materials undergo repeated washing and beating until they transform into a smooth, fibrous pulp that forms the foundation of high-quality paper.

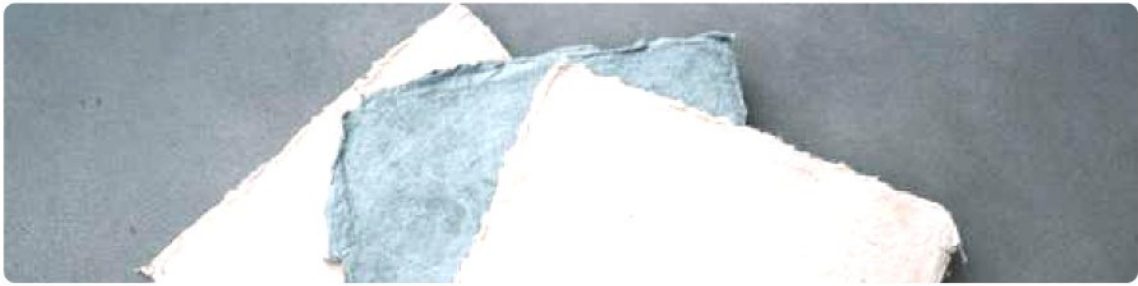
Traditional Taiwanese papermakers employ sophisticated **methods** passed down through generations of craftspeople. The wet pulp is carefully spread across bamboo screens using wooden tools, then pressed and dried naturally under the warm sun for several days. Each sheet must be handled with extreme care, as even the smallest imperfection can ruin months of meticulous preparation work.

The exceptional quality of handmade Taiwanese paper attracts artists, calligraphers, and collectors from around the world who appreciate its unique texture and durability. These **artisans** create paper with remarkable strength that can last for centuries without yellowing or deteriorating. Many luxury art supply companies specifically seek out traditional Taiwanese paper for their most discerning international customers.

Unfortunately, this valuable **craft** faces serious challenges in the modern era as younger generations often prefer more profitable careers in technology and business. Only a handful of dedicated families continue practicing traditional paper making, working tirelessly to preserve these irreplaceable skills. Cultural organizations and museums now actively support these artisans through educational programs, workshops, and tourism initiatives designed to ensure this magnificent tradition survives for future generations.

A. Vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| 1. traditional ____ | a. a tall, fast-growing grass with hard, hollow stems |
| 2. ancient ____ | b. relating to the customs and beliefs of a group of people |
| 3. techniques ____ | c. special ways or skills used to do something |
| 4. process ____ | d. skilled workers who make things by hand |
| 5. skill ____ | e. a job or activity requiring special skill with the hands |
| 6. bamboo ____ | f. following customs and beliefs passed down over time |
| 7. methods ____ | g. belonging to the very distant past; very old |
| 8. artisans ____ | h. a series of steps taken to make or do something |
| 9. craft ____ | i. the ability to do something well through training |
| 10. cultural ____ | j. particular ways of doing something in an organized way |



B. True or False

- ___ 1. Paper making in Taiwan was introduced from mainland China.
- ___ 2. The craft has been practiced in Taiwan for over 300 years.
- ___ 3. Making paper by hand takes only a few hours.
- ___ 4. Bamboo stalks and mulberry bark are soaked in water for several weeks.
- ___ 5. The wet pulp is dried in an oven to speed up production.
- ___ 6. Handmade Taiwanese paper can last for centuries without yellowing.
- ___ 7. Young people are very eager to learn traditional paper making.
- ___ 8. International artists and collectors seek out handmade Taiwanese paper.
- ___ 9. Museums and cultural organizations help support traditional papermakers.



C. Fill in the Blanks

Word Bank: traditional, process, skill, bamboo, artisans

1. This _____ art form has been practiced in Taiwan for over three centuries.
2. The paper making _____ requires many weeks to complete properly.
3. Expert _____ carefully select the best materials for their work.
4. The _____ stalks must be chopped and soaked in water vats.
5. It takes decades of practice to develop the _____ needed for this craft.

D. Comprehension Questions

1. When and how was paper making introduced to Taiwan?
2. What materials do Taiwanese artisans use to make paper?
3. Why do international artists prefer handmade Taiwanese paper?
4. What challenges does traditional paper making face today?
5. How are cultural organizations helping to preserve this tradition?

E. Discussion Questions

1. Why might young people in Taiwan prefer modern careers over traditional crafts?
2. What can governments and schools do to help preserve traditional arts and crafts?
3. Do you think handmade products are more valuable than machine-made ones? Why or why not?



Answer Key

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A. Vocabulary: 1-f, 2-g, 3-c, 4-h, 5-i, 6-a, 7-j, 8-d, 9-e, 10-b

B. True/False: 1-T, 2-T, 3-F, 4-T, 5-F, 6-T, 7-F, 8-T, 9-T

C. Fill Blanks: 1-traditional, 2-process, 3-artisans, 4-bamboo, 5-skill

D. Comprehension:

1. Paper making was introduced from mainland China during the Qing Dynasty, more than 300 years ago, and has been preserved by dedicated artisan families ever since.
2. Artisans use bamboo stalks and mulberry tree bark, which are chopped, soaked for several weeks, then washed and beaten into a smooth fibrous pulp.
3. Handmade Taiwanese paper is prized for its unique texture and durability; it can last for centuries without yellowing or deteriorating.
4. Younger generations often prefer more profitable careers in technology and business, leaving only a handful of families to continue the craft.
5. Cultural organizations and museums support artisans through educational programs, workshops, and tourism initiatives to keep the tradition alive.

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