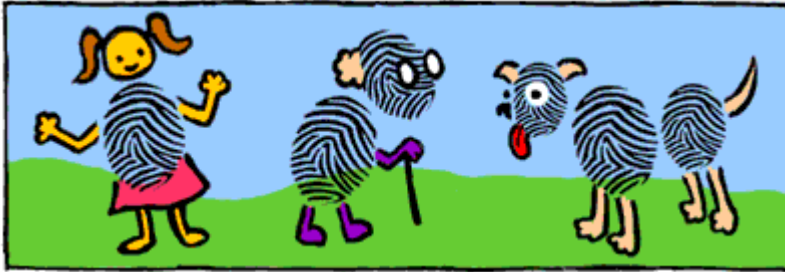


Fingerprint Critters

Use your fingerprints to make a homemade comic book.

By Franny Shuker-Haines



Materials:

One or more washable-ink stamp pads

Paper

Wet paper towel

Several dry paper towels

Crayons or colored pens or pencils

Instructions:

1. Show your child how to press his thumb onto the stamp pad, and then firmly onto a blank sheet of paper.
2. Before he does anything else, show him how to clean the ink off his thumb. Help him press it onto the wet paper towel to remove the excess ink, then dry off with a dry paper towel.
3. Now, he can add little arms and legs to his thumbprint with a pen or pencil. He'll have fun making a silly-looking person.
4. He can also use the thumbprint as a head, and draw the rest of the body. Or, he can use other fingerprints in combination to make funny people: an index-finger head, a thumbprint body, and pinky-finger hands and feet. (Just remind him to wipe off his fingers in between colors and before picking up the pen or pencil.)
5. Let him experiment with other animals, too: a row of fingerprints for a caterpillar, three in a row for an ant, a big red thumbprint for a ladybug's body, or a stack of fingerprints for a snowman!
6. Ask him if he'd like to make a scene with his fingerprint creatures. He can fill in the background with sky, grass, trees, or other scenery, using crayons or colored pencils.
7. Parents, beware: When this activity's over, have your child walk straight into the bathroom with his hands up. No touching anything until his fingers are clean!