

Sugar Plum Faire--Grade 6: Candle Dipping

Responsibilities: Grade 6 Sets up, staffs, and cleans up the candle dipping room

2018 – Please note: Amy Thone and Hans Altwies will be helping get all of this together!

Overview: Small beeswax tapers are made by repeatedly hand dipping a wick into a pot of melted beeswax, followed by a dip into a pot of cool water. Fresh leaves can be provided for dipping in wax as an alternative to making a candle. Leaves are often preferred by younger children, because it is much faster to reach a finished product. Leaves require only 2 dips, while a candle can take 30 dips. (2012 suggestion--during set up, 6th graders could make “half done” candles for little ones.

The mood for this craft is peaceful and meditative which establishes the proper rhythm for even dipping. To create this mood, the lights are low, live music is played and patrons are reminded not to talk upon entry into the room. Moving slowly and steadily is important to give the wax time to set on the candle before it is dipped back into hot wax. If a candle is re-dipped too soon, wax will melt off rather than deposit onto the candle.

Location: Science Room

Preparation: Festival committee should check to see that there is sufficient beeswax and other school provided supplies. Class rep double wrapped blocks of wax in heavy duty garbage bags and threw it out a 2nd story window onto concrete. This made many pieces small enough to fit in a 3 liter olive oil can (what we use to melt the wax for dipping). The 6th graders tried chipping the larger pieces using chisels and putty knives. It was more effective (safer, faster, and less messy) to melt larger pieces in a disposable aluminum roasting pan in a low oven (beeswax melts at about 145F) and pour melted wax into aluminum pie pans to make ½ “ thick “wafers”. These wafers can be snapped in half or quarters and they melt quickly in the dipping pots.

Supplies Provided by School

Item	Stored in
2 x 8 ft Tables	Skinner Hall
2 Wooden Dipping Shields	Festival Cave
Beeswax & Wick	Festival Cave
3 or 4 electric Hot plates	Festival Cave
2 Dipping Pots & 1 Melting Pot	Festival Cave

2 Double Boilers (stock pots)	Festival Cave
4 Water Dunk Pots (olive oil tins)	Festival Cave
2 Brass candlesticks to check candle size	Festival Cave
Music Stand	Music Room
Masking Tape	Office
Gift Wrapping materials (tape, tissue paper, ribbons)	Office
Paper for the floor and tables	Office

Set Up: Friday 3 - 5 pm

- **Clear the floor:** Move as much of the furniture around as possible to make as much room as possible.
- **Melt wax:** Start the melting pot of wax so the kids can prepare wicks.
- **Cover the ENTIRE floor** with paper--beeswax gets flung about and covering everything will save scraping later on. Use wide masking tape.
- **Darken room:** most windows in the Science Room have shades. If a window did not have covered this window with painters paper using duct tape (masking tape will not stick to the window frame)
- **Set up Tables:** as shown in diagram. Cover tables with parchment paper. You can't tape parchment paper, you will have to tie it to the tables with twine.
- **Set up Dipping Stations:** The wooden shields and the deep dipping pots make the dipping stations very high for small people. In 2012, littles climbed up on the science room stools to reach the pots. Could the dipping stations go on desks set to the lowest height or on benches? Bright ideas welcome!
- **Set up Water Dunk Stations:** These are olive oil cans filled with cool water. Place on a rimmed baking sheet or towel to catch drips. This will help keep the parchment paper dry so it can be reused.
- **Tape down electrical cords:** People WILL walk over the cords so the cords MUST be taped SECURELY. And don't try to run all the cords on one outlet to reduce the number of "bumps in the road". You will simply blow a fuse. Both kinds.
- **Set up Musicians corner:** a music stand and 2-3 chairs should be sufficient
- **Wick Prep:** Cut (~10") and pre-dip 100 wicks. Dip each wick 4 times, straightening in between dips. Tie to as many sticks as we have.
- **Set up a token taking station** (desk and chair and pencil) just outside the door
- **Set up a gift wrap station** (2 desks, 2 scissors, ribbon and tissue paper) in the hallway
- **Decorate as desired:** In 2012 we strung twinkle lights and filled the space underneath the dipping tables with leftover greenery from the Cookie Forest. It was stunning. However, after the first

twelve people entered, no one saw the greens because this is such a crowded activity. A single lovely centerpiece is sufficient--add twinkle lights if you want to be fancy.

Staffing: Saturday 10:45 - 3 pm

- **Musicians** Aureole Lopez Shulman organized in 2012
 - provide live music to maintain a reverent mood in the candle room

- **Token Takers/Gift Wrappers**
 - Check off sugar plums
 - record # of plums used
 - maintain QUIET in the hallway
 - help gift wrap finished candles if patrons desire

- **Wax Monitors** (6th graders can help But 2 adults are preferred,)
 - Melt wax for topping off dipping stations and pre-dipping wicks
 - Monitor wax level in dipping stations--top off with more melted wax as needed
 - Monitor water level in the double boilers (add from the dunking pots)
 - Monitor dunking pot temperature--these can get as warm as bath water over the course of the day--fresh water around 1 pm will help.
 - Cut & prep additional wicks
 - Assist patrons with dipping technique;
 - Check candles for maximum size (use candlesticks provided) Don't be shy about telling people when a candle is done. Beeswax is expensive and we lose money on jumbo candles. This IS a fundraiser!
 - Cut finished candles off sticks
 - Maintain a quiet atmosphere.

- **Door Monitor**
 - Controls access into the dipping room. There should be no more than 12-14 people dipping at the same time.
 - This task requires a friendly but firm demeanor. The ability to hobnob is a definite plus. Stand just inside the door and chat with patrons waiting to enter. Explain how dipping candles require a slow but steady rhythm. Talk about how precious beeswax is.
 - When a space opens up at the dipping table, the door monitor gives the patron a wick and ushers him/her into the dipping room.
 - Last dippers enter at 2:50!

Clean Up: Saturday 3 - 4 pm

- Pour out about half the wax in each dipping pot into aluminum pie pans to create beeswax "wafers" (facilitates melting for the next candle dippers).
- Remove wax from parchment paper--add to dipping pots.

- Remove parchment paper from tables. Re-roll and save for use next year if possible.
- Return cool wax, pots, and other school supplied items to storage. (see above)
- Remove decor and window coverings,
- Remove floor coverings
- Sweep
- Return all furniture to original location

Candle dipping technique:

- 1) Quick dip
- 2) Slow drip drip drip
- 3) Walk and let it cool
- 4) Dunk in the pool