

Making Walnut Shell Ink [avoid this activity if you have nut allergies**]**

Much like students of today, students in the 19th century were expected to bring their own paper and writing utensils to school. However, ink was not readily available. If it was purchased, it was very expensive. It was usually made at home by the students and their families. Here is a “recipe” you can follow to make your own ink, and then use it to write with a quill or dip pen.

Materials:

Paper bag	Hammer	Small saucepan
Measuring cup & teaspoon	Cheesecloth or Strainer	Small containers with covers
4 empty walnut shells	1 cup water	½ tsp. salt 1 tsp. vinegar

Directions:

Using a hammer, crush the shells in a paper bag. Put the crushed shells into a saucepan and add water. When the water is boiling, add the salt and vinegar. Turn down the heat and simmer for 15 minutes. To remove the pieces of shell, strain the ink through a strainer or a piece of cheesecloth over a container. Pour ink into small containers that have tight covers.