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A Girl's Guide to Nail Art

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A Girl’s Guide to Nail Art
Emma Rohnstock, Film/Media

Why Nail Art?
Nail art has led me to be more creative in my life and helped me find my passions of film, photography, and art. I started sharing my nail art through an online blog, but wanted to formalize my interest through a book and possibly a publication in the future. By making this book, I wanted children who read it to learn a new skill and find inspiration in each technique. Nail art has allowed me to express myself artistically and become more confident, so I hope this book will allow a younger audience to do the same. I wanted to share my enthusiasm for these visual media of nail art, photography, and book design with young readers.

What’s Involved?
The process of writing an instructional nail art book for children involves photography, writing, and compilation. There were many decisions that went into the final product: which designs to use, how to display each page, and which elements to keep consistent. It was important to know my audience and understand the goal of the book: to teach readers how to execute each creative design.

Stages of Design
In developing and editing the “Crayons” page I altered and fine-tuned many elements. I changed the background to allow the reader’s eye to focus more on the steps and purpose of the book. Blurbs from the author help guide the readers in addition to the steps. Another page and picture help spread the instructions out and make the layout more pleasing. I included a fun, colorful title to go along with the nail art. In regards to the steps, graphic art guides the readers through the instructions with visuals in addition to words and simplifies the text boxes and fonts to help with readability and usability.

Process
Research
- I looked at nail art books that have already been published, focusing in on each element.
- I observed how they were made, written, what the pictures looked like, how the steps were set up, what colors were used, how much was written on each page, the age ranges, and tone of instructions.

Audience – Be+
- Since determining my audience would be children, I wanted to include different ways to entertain the readers as well as inform them. I did this mainly by adding coloring pages with blank hands for kids to make their own designs.
- I researched ways to check readability and choose good fonts and layouts, in order to help inform the readers as well as I could.

Bibliography
- I was surprised to learn that the bibliography was helping me make decisions on my book, such as the number of designs to include to create it, all in the very early stages of the project.

Adobe InDesign and Illustrator
- Since I had not had any experience with either of these programs beforehand, I took this opportunity to learn what I would need to know to compile this book. I learned the programs through tutorials as well as with help from my Dad and friend, Olivia.
- In my research, I decided to use digital art to show each step of each design, instead of photos, and needed to learn the process of developing them.

Making Decisions
- To develop the book there were many decisions that needed to be made. This included choosing which designs would be used, developing a readable script, deciding which pictures to include, how to lay out the pages, what backgrounds and colors to use, which elements would be consistent, and how to design the cover so that it shows what should be expected within the book.

Develop a Script
- After choosing the designs I wished to include in the book, I looked at each design individually to break them down step-by-step.
- The bibliography helped with this process in wording each step and determining how much text to include, as well as with specifics, such as word choice and addressing the audience directly.

Taking Pictures
- In compiling this book, one very important element was the photographs. During this process I made the decision to include pictures of how the nails should look when they were finished as well as various pictures of the objects or concepts behind the nails. For example, for the “Wild Watermelon” nails, I included a picture of cubes of watermelon and for the “Gorgeous Gowns” nails I took a photo of pearls and a red dress.
- In this process, I used many photos I took myself, but also a few that I credited to others in order to help with the look of my final product. In the photos I took I had to focus on lighting, setup, and background to achieve the best quality photos possible for this specific book and audience.

In working on the “Converse” spread, my main objective was to make it less crowded. There were so many elements on the page – the Converse shoe background, numerous steps and words, and Converse nail art picture – that the reader could not focus on the main purpose of the page. Since the goal of the book is to inform, the instructions should be easy for the reader to see.

With this in mind, I decided to spread the steps out onto two pages, simplify the text boxes and fonts, zoom out from the finished nail photo, simplify the background, add some blurbs from the author, and use another Converse photo in a consistent format to the finished nail art photo. This allows readers to focus on the steps and instructions while also keeping the pages pleasing to the eye.

Editing
- As I continued to develop the book, I needed to edit the wording, pictures, and layout of the pages. This included the “Letter from the Author” page, the “Acknowledgements” and “For more from the author” section, as well as the steps and the blurbs from the author on each page.

Entertain and Inform
- Throughout the process of compiling the book, every decision needed to be made while keeping in mind the purpose: to inform and entertain.
- Using the designs and step-by-step instruction I was able to set the pages up and make decisions about the steps in order to instruct the audience on how to perform these steps on their own.
- In order to entertain the audience (children ages 6+) I made decisions to use fun colors, fonts, pictures, and layouts as well as add multiple hand and nail coloring pages at the end of the book.

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