

Soapstone Helpful Tips and Tricks

Here is a helpful video from Dave at Rubble Road. This video gives many excellent tips on how to work through the soapstone carving and sanding process with students.

<https://www.rubble-road.com/teachers>

Rubble Road also has many helpful videos on their YouTube Channel Rubble Road Soapstone that are very helpful with Tips Tricks and Techniques that will increase your confidence in presenting Soapstone field trips.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKHWv0lyHC-Brht4DU12NiQ>

Other helpful tips and reminders:

- **Dip the soapstone and sandpaper into the water often during the carving process. It is important that the dust from the soapstone is always contained. Soapstone dust is fine and can be harmful if inhaled.**
- When using rasps (if applicable), ensure you review safety rules with the students. Here are some key points to cover:
 - o Make sure the pointy end is directed away from a child's body
 - o Do not touch spikey end
 - o No running or walking around with the rasp (There should be no running in general during the program!)
 - o Always make sure that while using sharp tools, no one else is close or in range to avoid injuring others.
- Use light pressure and carve in layers rather than carving deep into the soapstone right away. Using too much pressure can cause the soapstone to break.
 - o If a student's soapstone breaks while carving, Presenters can glue it back together with superglue
- Cleanup – Ensure the soapstone sediment does NOT get poured down the drain!



IMPORTANT NOTE: The step-by-step instructions below is just a brief overview of the carving process. You **MUST** review the actual Soapstone Presenter plans provided in your kit to view the full, detailed instructions on how to run the 2-hr in-school field trip program.

Overview of the Soapstone Carving Instructions

1. Fill a small container or bowl with approximately 1 inch of water.
2. Use a pencil to lightly draw details on the shape (optional).



3. Place the shape in the water. This will help to soften the soapstone and to reduce the amount of dust created. Throughout steps 4-6, be sure to dip the shape, as well as the pieces of sandpaper, into the water quite often.
4. Use the coarsest sandpaper (100 grit) to round the edges of the shape and to add definition. The piece of sandpaper can be folded to reach smaller areas of the soapstone shape. You can also use a small tool like a sharp nail or a paper clip to add details.
5. Use the medium sandpaper (320 grit) to polish the soapstone and remove scratches. Again, the sandpaper can be folded and must be dipped in the water. The soapstone should lather up and become very slippery and smooth. All scratches must be removed with this piece of sandpaper before moving on to the next step.
6. Use the last piece of sandpaper (600 grit) to further polish the soapstone. This piece of sandpaper will not remove any scratches.
7. Let the soapstone shape dry completely before applying oil to the entire soapstone.
8. Use a cotton pad/cotton swab to apply tung oil, canola oil, vegetable oil or coconut oil to the shape to preserve the colour and to add a protective coating. Oil might need to be reapplied in the future if the shape loses its lustre.



We hope this helps, and if you have any other issues or questions, please contact our development team. Lastly, if you have any other tips or tricks, please feel free to share them with us!

