



Welcome to ***“PULP U”*** where you can learn about paper and how to make the best choices for your needs. And, it’s tuition free!!

Today’s class focuses on myths. First, we are sorry to report that John Travolta is not one of the cheerleaders at *Pulp U* but his character and the movie’s storyline did influence our theme. You see, paper comes in a multitude of forms, formats, sizes, brightnesses, colors and finishes. Each category of paper has distinct features but, of course, all paper is interrelated by nature of its history, content and origin. Much like the movie, *Pulp Fiction*, which had 6 interrelated parts and more mishaps than can be counted, paper can be confusing and usage mishaps can, and do, happen.

Paper is not your basic 8-1/2 X 11” slice of office life anymore.

- The industry as a whole employs 700,000 and the jobs are quite diverse—from foresters, lumberjacks, chemists, barker operators and artists.
- Paper made history in the U.S. in 1690 when the first paper mill was established by William Rittenhouse, William Bradford, a printer and two wealthy Philadelphia businessmen.
- Paper used to have a high rag (fabric) content; however, a shortage of rags caused a dilemma. Trees and bark were “discovered” to be a great, seemingly unending source and so wood was made into paper.
- Basically, wood is chipped into small pieces, then water, heat, and sometimes chemicals, are added so the wood fibers separate. The fiber is mixed with water (and often with recycled fibers) and then beat to pulp slurry. The slurry is sprayed onto wire screens and eventually the water is squeezed out, bonding the paper, which is dried and pressed.

Voilà...we have some of the 90 million tons of paper we Americans use each year. An astounding array of products is manufactured in the paper industry, including resins from tree sap.

Internationally, paper is made from an assortment of trees, like coconut and mulberry, but in the U.S. it is separated into two categories: hardwoods (Oak, Maple, and Aspen) and softwoods (Pine, Spruce). Interestingly, hardwoods have a shorter, weaker, but smoother fiber. Softwoods have a longer, stronger fiber and are best used for cardboard and utilitarian products. Luckily, both hard- and softwoods fibers can be

ideally combined for whiteness, strength and a better writing surface. This brings us to a much debated topic these days. Does brightness equal whiteness?

Perhaps you've purchased paper that claims to have 104 brightness, thinking that it's far superior to 92 bright. After a visit to the paint store, we all know, all too well, just how many shades of white and bright there are. Human eyes can discern color more than brightness, so we actually react to a paper's color and its blue-white or yellow-white shade. The truth is, brightness does not equal whiteness...it is a personal color spectrum choice. The 104 brightness rating is based on a foreign scale and truthfully, there is no difference. It's--okay, we can't resist...pulp fiction!

Just for fun, take the ***Pulp U True or False*** quiz to learn more.

1. Most paper manufactured in the U.S. comes from whole trees.
2. A watermark on paper is just that, caused by water.
3. More paper is sent to landfills than recovered for reuse.
4. A piece of paper can not be folded in half more than 6 times.
5. Wasps were the first creatures to produce paper.
6. Color is added to paper after it is dried.
7. Paper jams are caused by using the wrong type of paper.

Answers:

1. False. End-products like sawdust, woodchips and recycled fibers are used.
2. False. A watermark is actually a thinner spot on the paper than the rest of the sheet.
3. False. More paper is recovered than sent to landfills.
4. True. Try it.
5. True. Caution: do not try to harvest paper from a wasp's nest, buy it from Walker's instead.
6. False. The dye is added to the slurry mixture.

7. False. About 99% of paper jams are caused by poor storage or machines in need of service (not brand of paper).