

A lot of the documents we look after are made of very old paper or stretched out animal skin (called parchment). Many have wax seals on them, either to seal them closed or to show that someone had approved what was written there. You can see examples of these on our website. Why not use the instructions below to try and make your own old-looking documents and seals?



P818/4

The Parchment

1. You can try drawing on the paper before or after you apply the mixture. You could try doing both to see which way works best. You can write a letter or try drawing a map or a portrait. If you are going to do the drawing first we don't recommend using felt tip pens, they run when the paper gets wet!
2. If you decide to write a letter, try writing from the point of view of somebody who lived in past.
3. Make a mixture of coffee and water or tea bags and water (**please make sure it has cooled down before you use it!**) and brush it on to a sheet of plain white paper using a small paint brush or a sponge.
4. Leave the paper to dry
5. When the paper is dry you could roll up the paper to make a scroll and tie up.
6. You could fold the paper over to make an envelope and seal it with wax - **please only do this with an adult's help.**



Making Your Own Parchment and Seals



The Seal

1. To make the seal why not try making your own playdoh? There are lots of recipes online using ordinary household ingredients. Adding food colouring means you can make the seal any colour you like! (You could use also use clay (if you have it) then paint your design).
1. You can use moulds and shape cutters to create your design or why not try drawing your design on the playdoh or clay?
3. Or you could design your seal on paper, colour it in and attach it to your parchment using ribbon or wool.
4. Why not use wax (either a from a candle or wax melt) to make a seal? **Please only do this with an adult's help.**
5. Charters and some official documents can have more than 1 seal attached to represent different people – why not get everyone in your household to make or draw a different seal and make a parchment?

