

background, such as diamonds or a checkerboard, it must be even and uniform. You may wish to demonstrate the easiest and quickest way to do this, as follows.

For a diamond pattern: Place your ruler diagonally from one corner of the border to the opposite corner and draw a pencil line. Repeat with the remaining two corners to create a large X. Lay your ruler along one line of the X and draw a parallel line a ruler's width away. Then lay your ruler on the second line and repeat the process. Continue both above and below each line of the X until you have filled the page with diamonds.

For a checkerboard: Place a dot exactly halfway across each line of the border. Connect the opposing dots to divide the background in half both vertically and horizontally. (You should have four equal quarters.) Lay the ruler on the vertical center line and make a parallel line a ruler's width away. Lay the ruler on the second line and draw another line. Repeat this process both vertically and horizontally until your checkerboard is complete.

6. Once you have approved a student's design, give him or her a piece of parchment. The student draws the design lightly in pencil on the parchment, then begins painting it in. For images that include a person, I have students leave the skin unpainted so that the parchment color serves as a flesh tone. Gold paint should be used effectively, not overdone.
7. All black lines are put in with a fine line marker after the paint is dry. This makes painting easier in some cases. For instance, if students are creating leaves, they simply paint a flat green shape and, when it is dry, outline it and add the vein lines with marker. Details of faces, fish or dragon scales, blocks on a castle wall, and so on, all are added on top of the dry paint. Virtually every element is outlined (see figure 21).

Variation

For a variation on this idea, see the Music Manuscript Illumination lesson on page 163.

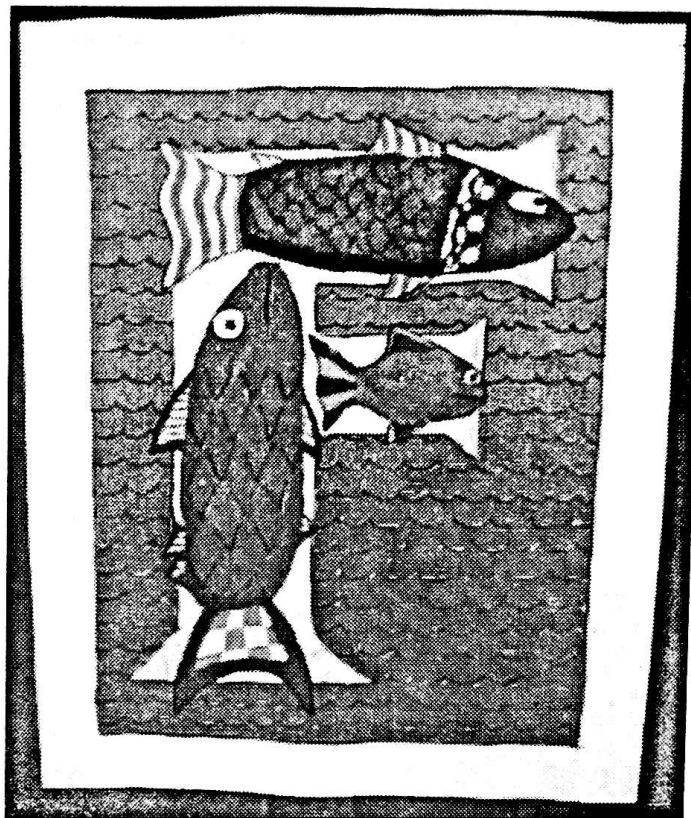


Figure 21. Fifth grader Lindsey Garrison added fine details such as patterns for fish scales and water in this lovely manuscript illumination.