

# The Iditarod Finisher's Belt Buckle

**Developed by:** Heidi Sloan 2018 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™ and  
Laura Wright 2016 Iditarod Teacher on the Trail™

**Discipline / Subject:** Art

**Topic:** Embossing

**Grade Level:** 2nd grade - 12th grade

**Resources / References / Materials Teacher Needs:**

1. <https://iditarod.com/zuma/zoom-lens-7/>
2. Repoussé and chasing techniques explained:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Repoussé\\_and\\_chasing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Repoussé_and_chasing)
3. Video tutorial: [Repousse' technique](#)
4. Embossing explained: [https://www.ehow.com/facts\\_7511474\\_embossed-vs-engraved.html](https://www.ehow.com/facts_7511474_embossed-vs-engraved.html)

**Options for the belt buckle:**

\*Craft rolled aluminum - 36 gauge - teacher's preference in color: silver, gold, or copper:

[https://www.amazon.com/Louis-Crafts-Aluminum-Metal-Sheet/dp/B0042SUIGM/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511113150&sr=8-1&keywords=aluminum+roll+36+gauge](https://www.amazon.com/Louis-Crafts-Aluminum-Metal-Sheet/dp/B0042SUIGM/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1511113150&sr=8-1&keywords=aluminum+roll+36+gauge)

\*Clean Styrofoam meat trays (less expensive version)

\*Cardboard or craft foam sheets and pencils or a wooden stylus for embossing

\*Printable worksheet of alphabet letters in reverse for the repoussé technique:

<http://www.coolest-free-printables.com/2014/04/28/backwards-english-letters-stencils/>

**Lesson Summary:** Students will research the Iditarod finisher's belt buckle and then create a new belt buckle for the 2018 race using repoussé and chasing embossing techniques.

**Standards Addressed:**

National Core Art Standards - Visual Arts:

VA:Cr1.1.2a : Brainstorm collaboratively multiple approaches to an art or design problem.

VA:Cr1.1.3a : Elaborate on an imaginative idea.

VA:Cr1.2.4a : Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.

VA:Cr2.2.3a : Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.

VA:Cr3.1.5a : Create artist statements using art vocabulary to describe personal choices in art-making.

VA:Pr6.1.3a : Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art.

**Learning objectives:**

Students will create a “new” Iditarod finisher’s belt buckle for the 2018 race using aluminum and repoussé and chasing art techniques.

**Assessment:**

1. Students can write an artist statement discussing their personal choices in the creation of the buckle.

**Procedural Activities**

1. Give each student access to the article on the creation of the Iditarod finisher's belt buckle. After reading, discuss the history.
2. The teacher will ask students to share their "noticings" of the buckle. What types of images are on it? How does it connect to the race and its history?
3. The students will collaborate and brainstorm other ideas for the buckle.
4. The teacher will discuss embossing and how repoussé and chasing can create intricate designs in metal, and that they will pretend to create a new Iditarod Finisher's Buckle for the 2018 race!
5. The teacher will demonstrate both techniques for the class with a piece of aluminum. Repoussé is pushing into the metal from behind and creating design. Chasing is pushing into the metal from the front, and both techniques work together to create an intricate, detailed design in metalworking.
6. Students should design their new buckle on paper first, and they can use images of Alaska and huskies from library books or the Internet to help with inspiration. Remind them that they are creating a mirror image of the buckle on their paper.
7. Once they have a design drawn, students will be given a piece of cardboard or craft foam, a wooden stylus or pencil for embossing, a piece of aluminum, and scissors.
8. Students will use scissors to cut the shape of the buckle: oval, square, rectangle, etc. For younger students, or to save time, the teacher can pre-cut the aluminum.
9. Students will lay the aluminum piece onto cardboard or foam and use it to push into, which will help the embossing be deeper.
10. Students will push into the shape from the front (chasing) to create design, and then turn it over and push in from the back (repoussé) to add more detail.
11. Students can use the reverse alphabet sheet to create words such as "Iditarod" by pushing from behind to let them pop out.
12. When finished, students can create artist statements and explain their personal choices for the design.

**Materials Students Need:**

1. Paper for a sketch
2. Small piece of cardboard or foam
3. Piece of aluminum
4. Scissors
5. Pencil or wooden stylus
6. Visual examples of the finisher Iditarod belt buckle
7. PDF or printed copy of the alphabet letters in reverse

**Technology Utilized to Enhance Learning:**

1. <https://iditarod.com/zuma/zoom-lens-7/>
2. Image of the belt buckle for inspiration - print off image and have for display

**Other Information**

1. The teacher can precut the aluminum pieces and tape the edges if needed (good idea with elementary students)
2. The buckle can be any shape. Allow students to be creative; oval, rectangle, square, etc.
3. The buckles can be put on display with paper belts on a bulletin board to share. If desired, a mosaic pattern can be designed onto the belt with geometric shaped colored paper or drawn on shapes.

**Modifications for special learners/ Enrichment Opportunities:**

1. For students with special needs - have the belt buckle shapes pre-cut and ready to emboss
2. For enrichment - students can create 3-D belt buckles by cutting and gluing extra shapes such as huskies or sleds onto the buckle with small bits of cardboard. This will make the belt buckle more 3-D and allow shapes to “pop out” from the basic shape.
3. Students can also paint the belt buckle with black tempura paint when finished and then wipe off the excess as it dries. The black paint will sink into the crevasses created and make a “burnished” look to the piece.