

## POTATO PRINT VALENTINE CARDS

Our American custom of sending Valentine cards came from England. The traditional words actually imply: "You are my Valentine, and I offer you my companionship, affection and love for the next twelve months and am willing to consider marriage if this companionship proves satisfactory for both of us." Although elaborate cards can contain jewels, fabric, and glitter, you can also use a potato to print special handmade Valentine cards.

### You will need:

- potato
- small bladed sharp knife
- tempera paint and brush
- thin line marker
- bottle of iridescent or glittery fabric paint (optional)
- pack of blank cards and envelopes

Cut a potato in half as evenly as possible. Shapes for potato printing should be "blocky"; cut with a thin, sharp blade. On one half of your potato, sketch a simple heart shape. Carefully run your knife blade around the outside of your design. Cut away the part of the potato you don't wish to print. (Your design should stand up in at least  $\frac{1}{4}$ " relief.) You can leave your heart solid or cut out the middle. On the other half of your potato, cut a leaf shape.

Before printing, stamp your potato a few times on newspaper to remove some of the liquid. Paint tempera paint on the raised portion of your potato and stamp on cards. When you have completed stamping your cards, you can add stems to the heart "flower" and leaves with the fine line marker. We made hot pink hearts with bright green leaves and blue stems. With a thin marker, add the stems and any words or greeting you like. When card is dry, you can highlight your design with glittery fabric marker if you wish.

