

# william wood-write

## Round Top European letter opener instructions



### Needed:

Mandrel B, drill 8 mm, bushing 3B – use #1 and #3, wood size 5/8" x 5/8"

### Preparing the blank

1. Cut the material blank approximately 1/16" shorter than the tube. This is to give enough exposed tube to be pressed into the center band when the letter opener is assembled. You can cut the blank the same size and then part off 1/16" at the lathe if you want. Otherwise, you will need to square up that end of the blank with a skim cut while on the lathe.
2. Drill the blank through the center, lengthwise, with an 8 mm drill bit.
3. Scuff up the tube with sandpaper to clean off the oxidation and give the glue a better adhesion surface.
4. Plug the ends of the tube with a material of your choice – we recommend base plate wax – to keep the glue from getting into the tube. Push the tube ends into a thin section of the material to form a plug. *This is important: glue inside the tube is a common cause of kit failure.*
5. Prepare your glue. We recommend two part epoxy. Use a fast drying type, one hour or less. Be sure to mix it thoroughly. Wax or baking paper or even a Post-it notepad all make excellent mixing surfaces. You can also use thick CA glue.
6. Roll the tube in the epoxy. Insert the tube through the blank with a twisting motion until one end is flush with the blank. Rake the glue flush with that end. Now push the tube back into the blank until the 1/16" brass is exposed from the other end. Clean as much glue from the exposure as possible.
7. Set aside until the epoxy has had time to reach its maximum strength. If you're using CA glue, the wait is only about 60 seconds.
8. When the glue has cured, use a hobby knife to remove the plugs from the ends
9. Using a barrel trimmer of the proper size, square off the ends of the blanks until you can see bright brass tube. STOP at this point. This can also be done with the proper jig and a disk sander.

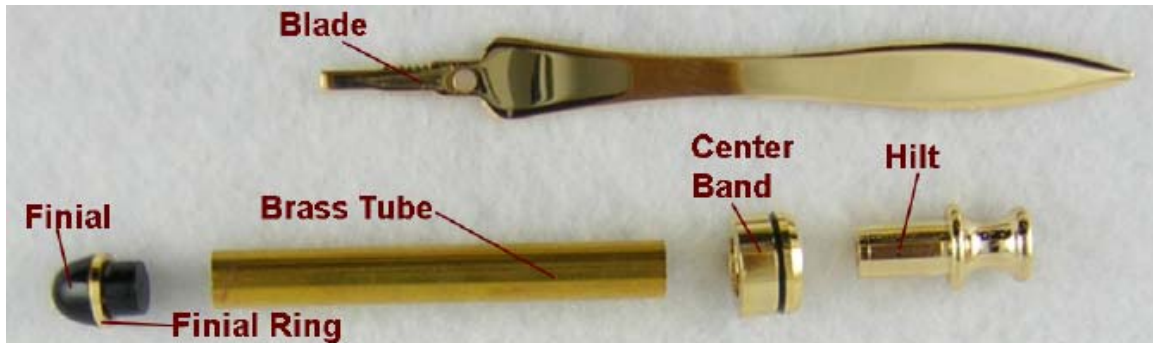
### Turning the blank



1. Assemble the blank on the mandrel using bushings #1 and #3 from the 3B bushing set. Match the center band diameter with one bushing and the finial ring with the other bushing. Fill the empty mandrel space with spare bushings or brass tubes.

2. Tighten the tailstock before tightening the blank on the mandrel. This will center the mandrel first. Then tighten the nut that holds the blank.
3. Turn the blank to the desired contour making sure that the area next to the bushing is turned to the size of the adjacent bushing.
4. After turning, sand the surface in progressive steps until you get to 400 or 500 grit.
5. Use a finish of your choice and sand using Micro Mesh up to 12,000 grit for a high polish finish.
6. Remove the blank from the mandrel.

### Assembling the parts



It is important to align your parts properly when pressing them into place. The use of a good pen press or small arbor press is recommended, but it can be accomplished with a good "C" clamp and much care.

1. Push the hilt through the center band.
2. Press this assembly into the end of the finished blank that has the brass tube exposed.
3. Place the finial ring over the finial and press it into the other end of the blank.
4. Screw the blade into the hilt.
5. Admire your beautiful letter opener.