Basic Book Cradle for Exhibits

Tools and supplies needed:
- Straightedge
- 4 mil. polyethylene strapping
- Double-sided tape
- X-Acto, scalpel, or Olfa knife
- 4-ply archival mat board
- Cutting mat
- 10 point archival board
- Pencil

1. Begin by finding the page at which the book will be open and determining the desired angle of opening. Place the book, held at the desired angle, on a piece of waste board or paper and trace the opening as shown. These will be the shapes of your two cradle parts.

2. Cut three pieces of mat board to the same length (or height) as the book (see image at left) by approximately 4 times the width of the book; set one piece aside for the base of the cradle. On a strip of scrap board, mark the lengths of each side of one cradle part tracing plus an extra side the length of the bottom (center image) and transfer these measurements to a piece of mat board (right image), marking them along both the top and bottom edges of the board. Repeat for the other cradle part. The two mat board pieces should look something like this:
3. With a knife and straightedge, score a line between each set of marks (left image). **Score lightly - cut only about halfway through the board** - and cut off the excess portion. Fold up the cradle part (center image) and check it to make sure it fits the book before adhering the two bottom sides to one another with double-sided tape (right image).

4. Repeat with the second piece of board. Place both cradle parts on the third piece of mat board and place the book in the cradle, adjusting till the parts fit as desired (center image), then trim the base board and adhere both cradle parts to it with double-sided tape.

5. Cut two pieces of 10 point board the size of the text block and place them in the book behind each of the pages the book will be open to. Cut another 2 pieces of 10 point to the size of the book and place them on the front and back covers. Wrap a strip of polyethylene strapping across each of the display pages (center image) and around to the outside of the book, adhering the strip to the outer 10 point board with double-sided tape (right image). Finally, place the strapped book in the cradle (see image at the top of these instructions).