



STUDIO SPARKS KIT

Beginner Printmaking

4-H PROJECT AREA : 4-H VISUAL ARTS CHALK/ CARBON/PIGMENT

Printmaking is an ancient and versatile art form originating in China around the 9th century with woodblock printing. Printmaking allowed for the reproduction of images and text, revolutionizing the spread of ideas. Over time, printmaking evolved to include lithography, screen printing, and digital methods, cementing its place as both a fine art and a tool for mass communication.

This project introduces printmaking as a cost-effective, sustainable activity utilizing styrofoam for the image you create, called a “block.” The printing block name varies based on the method you are using such as woodblock (woodcut), linoleum block (linocut), engraving plate, etching plate, lithographic stone (lithography), or screen (screen printing).



STEP 1

Gather materials and cover your work surface. This is a great introduction to printmaking using styrofoam. If you are using something that has come in contact with food, ensure it is washed first. The process you will be using is a relief print where you will be “carving” an image into your styrofoam.



STEP 2

Start with your styrofoam and, with your scissors, cut any edges so you have a flat work surface.

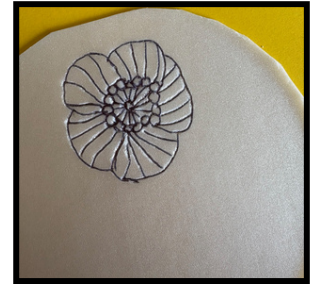


Supplies

- Styrofoam plate or takeout container
- Dull pencil or ballpoint pen
- Block printing ink
- Scissors
- Brayer (hand tool used to rub the ink)
- Tray or non-porous surface like a cookie sheet to roll out ink
- Newspaper, scrap paper, or paper towels for transferring ink
- Heavy paper for printing on
- Hand wipes or damp towel to clean “block” and hands
- Table covering

STEP 3

With a dull pencil or ballpoint pen, begin drawing your image or design into the styrofoam. Keep in mind that wherever you put a line, printing ink will not be on that portion of your final print. Decide whether you want to make several individual images or have a larger image on one piece of styrofoam.



STEP 4

With your scissors, carefully cut out around the outer edge of your images.

STEP 5

On your non-porous surface, squeeze some printing ink. With your brayer, roll over the ink making sure to cover the entire roller portion of the brayer.

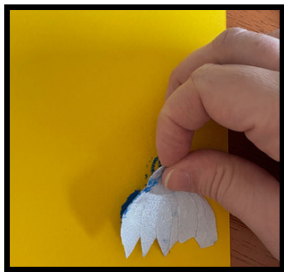


STEP 6

On your newspaper, scrap paper, or paper towel transfer surface, place your image, or "block" with the drawn side facing up. Roll the inked brayer on the "block," covering the entire surface.

STEP 7

Carefully lift the "block" and press firmly, ink side down, onto the surface you are printing. Press the entire surface of the "block" to ensure ink transfers evenly.

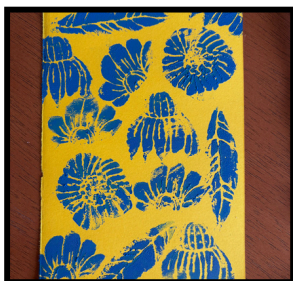


STEP 8

Remove the "block" from the paper. You can continue reusing the same image by reapplying printing ink, if you wish.

STEP 9

Repeat steps 5 (as needed) through 8 until you are happy with your page.



STEP 10

Once complete, let dry. There are many options of ways you can utilize your print. You can frame it as it is, use it as the background of another project like a journal page, or even make custom wrapping paper. The options are endless.

You can also save the images you used as your blocks, wash them, and reuse later.

REFLECTION

- What did you learn about the printmaking process that you didn't know before?
- What did you enjoy most about the printmaking project?
- Did you encounter any unexpected results during the printing process? How did you handle them?
- How does printmaking compare to other types of art you've tried?
- How did your print turn out compared to what you imagined? What surprised you?
- What other printmaking techniques would you like to explore further?

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