

Teacher Kit 4: *Monotypes and Monoprinting* All Ages



Don Phillips, *Camouflage, 22/38*, 1978. Collection of Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery.

Overview

Focus:
Printmaking techniques

Hands-On Workshop:
Process Monotypes - in three steps

Elements of Design:
Form, shape, line, space, colour

Principles of Design:
Balance, unity, emphasis

Mono Printmaking

Just as the term 'painting' can apply to an endless list of techniques and specific mediums, printmaking offers a vast array of methods and approaches. Most printmaking techniques involve creating a permanent printing plate which allows artists to print whole editions of a work. Artists might pull 10, 20, or 200 prints from the press for any given plate. In contrast, mono printmaking techniques make it impossible to create two prints that are exactly alike.

When it comes to mono printmaking, prints can generally be classified under one of two approaches. *Monoprints* are created by physically altering a print that has been produced using any number of printmaking techniques. On the other hand, *Monotypes* hybridize print-making and painting techniques and are produced from a clean, unworked surface containing no indentations.

In this Teacher Kit, your students will have an opportunity to learn about a variety of printmaking methods and will try their hand at creating a three-step monotype print.

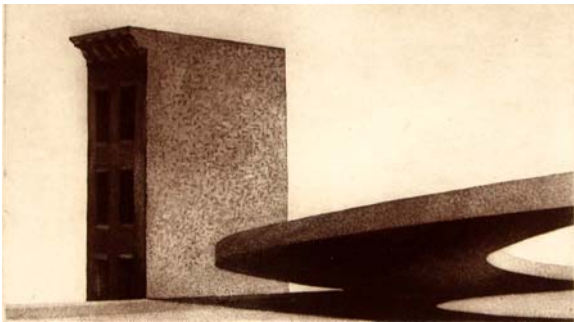
Meet the Family: Other Printmaking Techniques

Relief Prints (Woodcut, Linocut, Wood engraving, Lithography, Stonecut, potato prints, etc.)

In a relief print, it's the surface of the 'block' that reveals the final printed image. Artists carve away with metal tools or acids to create a positive image.



Stanley Lewis, *Metamorphosis II*, 38/50, 1965, stone cut, 46 x 61 cm. Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Gift of Mr. Yvan Dubuc, 1994.



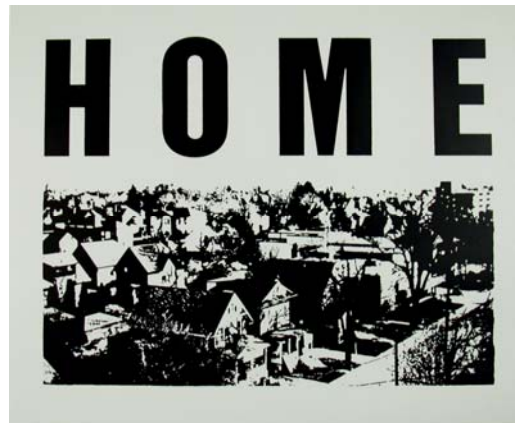
Hugh Mackenzie, *Building with Curving Ramp*, 1987, aquatint, 22 x 35 cm. Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery, Gift of the Artist, 1992.

Intaglio (Engraving, Etching, Aquatint, Mezzotint, Collograph, etc.)

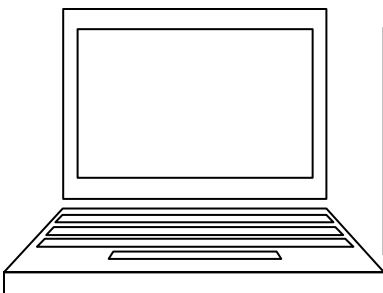
Unlike relief printing, intaglio printmaking relies on the carved away surface to produce the final image. Artists cut into a surface (usually a soft metal like copper) with metal tools or acids. Ink is applied and rubbed away from the plate's surface. The plate is processed with dampened paper through a printing press. As such, the paper is pushed into the grooves of the plate creating the final image.

Screenprinting

Thanks to artists like Andy Warhol, this new-kid-on-the-block technique has risen from a largely commercial printing technique to one with truly artistic possibilities. A fine mesh screen is stretched tightly over a frame, a stencil is adhered, and ink is applied to the screen using a squeegee. Stencils can be manually applied or created using photographic techniques. Artists achieve rich design possibilities by layering colours and stencils through multiple printings on the same surface.



W. Rickert, *Home*, 6/10, n.d., serigraph, 66 x 102 cm. Collection of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery.



Computer Generated Prints

A wide range of graphic software applications such as Photoshop have opened avenues for a new generation of printmaking techniques.

Process Monotypes In three steps

This activity accommodates multiple ages and uses simple materials that are safe for use in any classroom.

Getting Started

This exercise may be completed in one to two sessions depending on the depth of research undertaken and the complexity of student compositions. To complete this activity in one period, we recommend using acrylic paint, as it tends to dry faster than tempera.

Review the following to keep in mind when creating:

- **Brushstrokes and mark-making** - make conscious choices about artist tools to reach desired effect(s)
- **Subject matter** - abstract or representational?
- **Composition** - ensure the three printing layers create a cohesive whole
- **Colour theory** - warm, intense, and dark values come forward; cool, grayed and light values recede
- **Mirror image** - keep in mind that printing will reverse your printing plate image

Easy-Find Materials

- Reference materials - monotype and other printmaking techniques
- Tempera or acrylic paint
- Quality paper - for printing
- Scrap paper - for stencil
- Scissors
- A variety of paint brushes
- A variety of mark-making tools (q-tips, toothpicks, scrap cardboard, etc.)
- Plexiglass squares/vinyl tiles
- Rags and paper towels
- Newspapers/vinyl tablecloths
- Oil pastels or crayons
- Printing plate wash-up station(s) - sink(s) or deep basins, water, cloths for cleaning and drying plates

Step 1 - Explore prints

Look at a variety of historical and contemporary examples and discuss artistic processes and techniques (the works provided with this package may serve as a launching point).

Step 2 - Make a plan

Choose your subject matter. Will you create an abstract or representational print? What colours will you layer for maximum impact? What tools will you incorporate to achieve desired textures?

Step 3 - Print your 1st layer

Create a stencil. Cut out paper shapes that will serve as the white space in your first printing layer. Keep in mind that printing will reverse your image.

Make a print. Brush a layer of paint onto your printing plate. Position your stencil on the plate as desired and quickly centre and apply your printing paper. Press firmly and evenly with both hands before carefully peeling the paper back from the printing plate to reveal the first layer.

Clean and dry your printing plate while your first layer dries thoroughly. For primary grades, consider calling on older classroom helpers and/or parent volunteers to help with this task.



Printing the first layer...



Applying paint and texture to the 2nd layer before printing...



Adding the finishing touches...

Step 4 - Print your 2nd layer

Use a paint brush or sponge to apply paint to your clean and dry printing plate in a design of your choosing. Be mindful as you create, that this design should work in cooperation with your first layer to produce an overall balanced composition. Use mark-making tools to create desired textural marks in the paint before applying your printing paper. You will need to work quickly to ensure the paint doesn't dry before printing. Apply your printing paper and process your second printing layer as outlined in step 3.

Step 5 - Add finishing touches with oil pastel or wax crayons once your 2nd layer has dried. Share and celebrate your completed monoprints!

Additional Resources

Printmaking Vocabulary

Plate - A surface that, when altered using any number of processes, becomes the basis for a print

Edition - A series of prints made from the same plate; you can tell how many prints an artist has pulled and in which order they were created by looking at the fraction written at the bottom of a print

Working drawing - Many artists begin the printmaking process by creating preliminary sketches as a way of mapping out the intended effect of multiple layers and to view colour choices

Mark-making (stippling, cross-hatch, etc.) - Lines, indentations, or marks added to an artwork to produce real or implied texture

Printmaking Books (available from KPL)

Technique:

- *Printmaking for Beginners* (Stobart, 2002)
- *Handmade Prints: an introduction to creative printmaking without a press* (Desmet & Anderson, 2000)
- *The Encyclopedia of Printmaking Techniques* (Martin, 2002)
- *Simple Printmaking: a beginner's guide to making relief prints with linoleum blocks, found objects & more* (Diehu, 2000)

Printmakers:

- *David Blackwood: Master Printmaker* (text by Gough & Proulx, 2001)
- *Art of the Far North: Inuit sculpture, drawing & printmaking* (Finley, 1998)

Printmaking Web Links

Cybermuse Printmaking Showcase (The National Gallery) - Learn more about the techniques of lithography, serigraphy, etching, and woodcuts. Don't forget to follow the link to the virtual prints gallery:

http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/cybermuse/showcases/techniques/print/print_intro_e.jsp

Open Studio - Canada's leading fine art printmaking centre (with links and information on techniques, supplies, and additional resources) <http://www.openstudio.on.ca/>

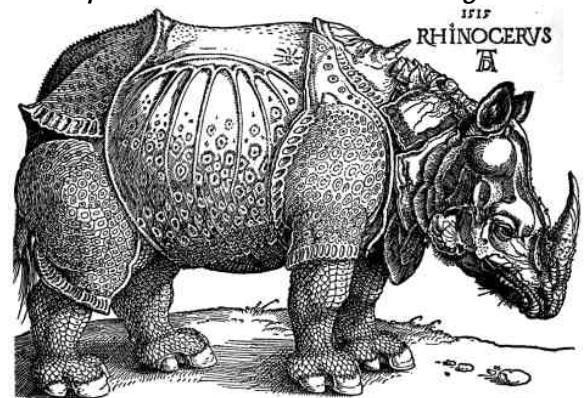
Art Pad - Use this interactive tool to create a virtual working drawing (painting) before you start the printmaking process

<http://artpad.art.com/artpad/painter/>

Famous Printmaker Links

Edwin Holgate- Cybermuse artist profile (NGA) http://cybermuse.gallery.ca/cybermuse/search/artist_work_e.jsp?iartistid=2482

Albrecht Durer- Virtual gallery of his complete work <http://www.albrecht-durer.org/>



Albrecht Durer, *Rhinoceros*, 1515 (Woodcut) Wikipedia.com.

MC Escher-The official website <http://www.mcescher.com/>

Andy Warhol- Educational Resources from The Andy Warhol Museum <http://edu.warhol.org/index2.html>



Kindergarten

Mix paint to create new colours and textures
**mix all colours that will be used*

Grade 1

Distinguish between geometric and organic shapes and forms **approach the first process layer (stencil) as an exploration of geometric shapes, leaving the free brush work in the second layer as an opportunity to explore free-flowing, organic forms*

Grade 2

Identify and describe a variety of textures

Describe different ways in which a variety of art materials, tools, and techniques can be used and demonstrate understanding of their safe and proper use **allow students to choose their own mark-making materials to apply intended textures*

Grade 3

Produce two-dimensional works of art that communicate their thoughts and feelings about specific topics or themes **ask your students to respond to a relevant topic or enduring theme by developing a representational or abstract monotype that reflects their thinking*

Grade 4

Demonstrate understanding of the proper and controlled use of art tools, materials, and techniques singly and in combination **have students reflect on new understandings of tools and materials after completing this exercise*

Grade 5

Identify tools and techniques used by artists to create the illusion of texture **take this opportunity to fully explore the effectiveness of a variety of mark-making tools*

Grade 6

Identify colour relationships **allow students to decide and defend their choices when it comes to colour usage*

Grade 7

Organize their art works to communicate ideas, using at least one of the principles of design **e.g., have students create a plan to show how they will create a unified composition with three process layers*

Grade 8

Identify strengths and areas for improvement in their own work and that of others, and describe possible strategies for improving their work **initiate structured critique sessions in small peer groups and give students an opportunity to repeat the process of creating an additional monotype after the reflective process*

Grade 9

Demonstrate the ability to create representational, abstract, and non-objective artworks that convey ideas or concepts (e.g., warmth, conflict) **focus the works on a theme*

Grade 10

Demonstrate the ability to use an increasing range of tools, materials, processes, and technologies in producing works of fine art and applied design **explore commercial art or computer generated prints as an additional exploration to this exercise*

Grade 11

Apply the elements and principles of design to express a particular concept or idea **challenge students to use this medium as a way of exploring particular subject matter/themes of individual significance*

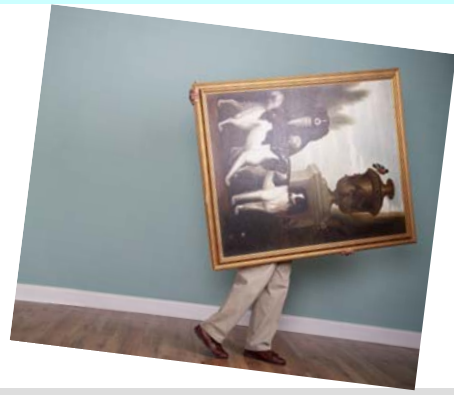
Grade 12

Explain the decisions and strategies used to communicate particular meanings in their art works **give students an opportunity to explore and create their own processes and approaches to mono printmaking after researching relevant historical or contemporary artists*

Look and Discuss: Open-ended questions for exploring artwork

Exploring and discussing historical and contemporary works of art are a valuable complement to any art-making process.

Use one of the KW|AG permanent collection images included in this package or another work of your choice along with any combination of the questions below to start the discussion.



1. What do you see when you look at this artwork (colours, shapes, mediums, subject matter, objects, textures, etc.)?
2. Do you like this work of art? Why or why not?
3. Does this work of art remind you of anything you have ever seen or experienced before?
4. What is the mood/emotion of this artwork?
5. What questions would you ask to find out how the artist made this work of art? See if you can brainstorm possible ideas about the artist's process
6. Without revealing the title to students prior to viewing, ask: What do you imagine the title of this artwork to be?
7. Reveal the title of the artwork. How does this contribute to our understanding of this artwork? Do we begin to look at it in a different way?
8. What would be the ideal location to display this artwork in (e.g., museum, living room, public park, etc.) why?
9. What words come to mind when you look at this work. Write them down and share them.
10. Do any of the colours appear to be coming forward or receding? Warm, intense, and dark value colours come forward, while cool, grayed and light value colours recede. Can you see this anywhere?
11. What elements and/or principles of design has the artist drawn on to create this artwork?
12. Does this artwork communicate the idea of movement? How do you know whether objects are moving or stationary?
13. What is the focal point of this artwork? Where is your eye drawn?
14. If this artwork were to speak, what would it say? Do you believe this artwork has a message or story? Does artwork need to have a message?
15. Is there anything missing from this artwork, what would you add or approach differently if you were the artist?
16. Do you think this artwork is older or younger than you? How do you know?
17. What materials and tools do you think the artist used to create this artwork?
18. What artistic problems or obstacles do you think the artist would have encountered while creating this work?

Extensions

Additional Monotype Processes to try

- Use natural materials (leaves, grasses, etc.) as stencils
- Ink over a masking tape composition
- Spray water, alcohol, or mineral spirits onto an inked or painted surface before printing
- Use a dull pencil to draw on the back of your printing paper while it is inverted on the painted print plate
- Apply paint with an alternate tool (the back of a wooden spoon, a brayer, a toothbrush, etc.)
- After painting your printing plate, create an image by selectively rubbing the back of the printing paper with your fingertip; vary the pressure to pick up different amounts of paint
- Mix laundry soap, cornstarch, or sand into your paint to make monotypes that are BIG on texture
- Use a variety of materials as printing plates (plastic bags, overhead sheets, parchment paper, dinner plates, old cutting boards, tiles, etc.) to experiment with different effects
- Create a collage with coloured paper or magazine images before inking your plate and printing
- Instead of oil pastels/crayons, try accenting your monotype print with coloured pencil, charcoal, conte, paint, or markers
- Change the surface of your printing paper before you print by adding a wax resist with crayon or melted wax
- Try processing your monotype printing plate more than once to get a 'ghost print'

Other printmaking techniques to try without a printing press

Collographs

- Create a collage landscape on a heavy cardboard base using various widths and textures of boxboard, cardboard, and tape; seal your collograph with acrylic or polymer medium (or white glue, in a pinch) before inking and printing
- Create an abstract design using string and other found objects (leaves, twigs, buttons, bubble wrap, plastic, etc.); seal as above and print

Relief Prints

- Draw a design into a styrofoam meat tray with a pen (ensure edges are removed); ink and print
- Carve a design into a piece of linoleum using gouging/carving tools (a brayer and printing ink will create the clearest prints)
- Carve a design into an eraser and use it as a stamp
- Stamp with found objects (utensils, tin cans, spatulas, vegetables, etc.)
- Use a slab of plasticine as a printing plate; carve a relief stamp into its surface and print

Works consulted:

Hume, Helen D. *The Art Teacher's Book of Lists*. John Wiley and Sons: San Francisco, 1998.

Printmaking Aspects and History. n. author. Online at <http://www.monprints.com>. Accessed 10/22/08.

* Process images courtesy of T. Ethelston and K. Sunday