



## A Dive into Printmaking

**Lesson Description:** In this lesson, students will learn about the art of printmaking and create their own prints using the relief printing technique.

**Lesson Objective:** The objective of this lesson is for students to gain an understanding of printmaking and the relief printing technique, as well as to develop their creativity and fine motor skills.

**Art History/Theory Relation:** Printmaking is an art form that involves creating multiple copies of a work of art by transferring an image from a matrix (e.g., a block of wood or a metal plate) onto a printing surface (e.g., paper or fabric). Relief printing is a printmaking technique in which the image is carved into a surface and the raised areas are inked and transferred onto the printing surface. This technique has been used for centuries to create prints, books, and other printed materials.

**Example Piece:** "The Great Wave off Kanagawa" by Katsushika Hokusai is an example of a print made using the relief printing technique. It depicts a large wave towering over boats off the coast of Japan, with the image carved into a block of wood and printed in black ink on paper.





## **Materials Needed:**

NOTE: While All for Art lesson plans are usually flexible with materials and we make it a policy to strive to make art available to everyone, no matter how limited the resources available to them are, printmaking does require specific materials. However, all these materials are relatively cheap and can be found at most craft stores!

- A block of linoleum or wood
- Carving tools (e.g., a small knife or a linoleum cutter)
- Ink
- A brayer (a roller used to apply ink)
- Paper
- A printing press (optional)

## **Step-by-Step Procedure:**

1. Begin the lesson by introducing the concept of printmaking and the relief printing technique. Show examples of prints made using this technique and discuss the tools and materials used in printmaking.
2. Have the students brainstorm ideas for their own prints. Encourage them to think about their interests and experiences and to come up with unique and creative ideas.
3. Divide the students into small groups and give each group a block of linoleum or wood, carving tools, ink, and a brayer.
4. Have the students work together in their groups to carve their designs into the blocks. Encourage them to think carefully about the composition and the details of their designs, and to take their time in carving the blocks.
5. Once the students have finished carving their blocks, have them apply ink to their blocks using the brayer. Then, have them place a sheet of paper on top of the block and press down firmly to transfer the image onto the paper. If you



have access to a printing press, you can use it to apply even pressure and produce a cleaner print.

6. Have the students repeat the printing process to create multiple copies of their prints. Encourage them to experiment with different inks and papers and to try out different printing techniques (e.g., adding layers of color or texture).
7. Once the students have finished their prints, have them share their creations with the class. Encourage the students to explain their thought process and the techniques they used to create their prints.
8. As a final step, have the students reflect on their experience creating prints. Ask them to think about what they learned, what they enjoyed, and what challenges they faced. Encourage them to continue experimenting with printmaking on their own and to share their art with others.

### **What Students Should Aim to Accomplish with their Final Piece:**

With their final prints, students should aim to create an interesting and well-composed image that shows their creativity and skill. They should strive to use the relief printing technique effectively and to produce multiple copies of their prints that are of good quality.