



Mesa Contemporary Arts Museum Printmaking Activity: Relief Prints

The art of Printmaking encompasses many techniques that can create an infinite variety of images. This project allows beginning printmakers - children and adults- to gain a basic understanding of the media and the fun of creating personal, colorful works of art. Relief prints using printing plates made from thin foam are an easy and inexpensive option for anyone wanting to experiment with the art of printmaking.

Website Link:

To view the prints MCA Museum's Original Art Print Calendar, please visit our Museum Store at <https://boxoffice.mesaartscenter.com/Online/default.asp>. Here you will see a variety of different printmaking techniques from artists both nationally and internationally. These artists were all selected through an annual jurying process for MCA Museum's Original Art Print Calendar.

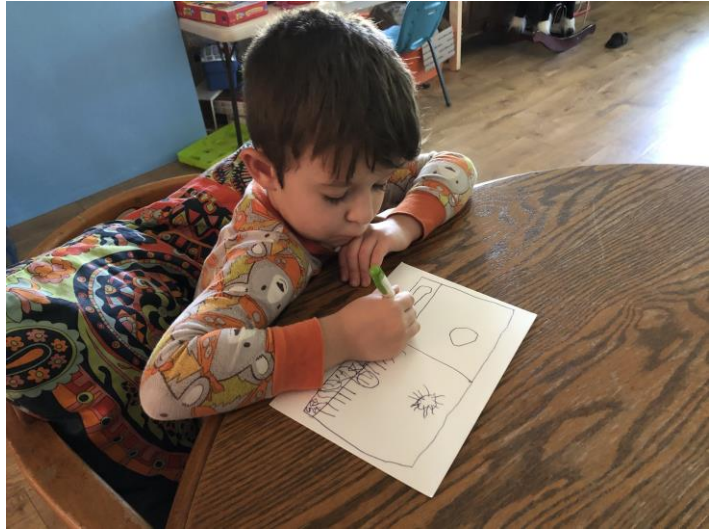
Supplies:

- Poster board 7"x 10"
- Pencils
- 6"x 9" foam printing sheets (*These can be obtained by purchasing packages from Dick Blick (Dickblick.com) or by recycling foam from take-out food containers.*)
- Printing paper (*Can be copy paper, construction paper or fine quality printmaking paper purchased from art stores.*)
- Water-based ink in a variety of colors (*Speedball or Dick Blick water-based block printing inks work best, but you can experiment with washable acrylic and/or tempera paints.*)
- Brayers (2 each) (*Print brayers work best and can be purchased at art supply stores, or use small, smooth paint rollers from a hardware store.*)
- Acrylic palettes, for rolling out colors (*Large plastic plates, cardboard or old cookie sheets can be used.*)
- Double stick tape

Instructions:

1. Create a printing plate: Use double stick tape to attach foam (Styrofoam) to center of poster board.
2. Use a pencil to make a simple line drawing on the foam printing plate.

**Press hard when drawing on foam!
The high/low created by indented lines
will create a printable surface on the
foam plate.**



3. Use brayer to roll out an even layer of ink on palette. Coat the brayer evenly with ink.
4. Roll inked brayer across surface of drawing on foam plate. Cover top surface with an even coating of ink.



5. Lay print face side down on paper.
6. Use clean brayer to roll over backside of paper or press with your hands and transfer ink to paper.



7. Peel print paper back to reveal your first print!



8. Make as many prints as you want! 😊



**Thank you to our young artist, Azoah,
for creating this beautiful work of art!**

Options:

Experiment with the foam printing plate:

- Draw an image on thin paper, lay it over foam and trace over design to transfer image to printing plate
- Remove paper and retrace design to deepen lines and ensure a crisp image when printed
- Press objects (Anything that will make an impression in the foam) into foam printing plate to add variety to drawn images
- Cut foam into shapes and tape onto poster board to create a different design

Experiment with colors:

- Roll a new color over the old ink to mix a new color on the palette
- Use two colors side-by-side on the same palette
- Add additional colors to foam plate using a brush

Experiment with papers:

- Try printing on thicker and thinner papers
- Try printing on color papers
- Try printing on patterned papers

***Printmaking Lesson developed by artist Shelly White, MCA Museum's Art Education Specialist.**