

PRINTMAKING –
FOR THE ARTISTICALLY CLUELESS

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The Advantages:

- ☞ the process is sophisticated yet simple
- ☞ can be used to reinforce any area of curriculum
- ☞ can be kept for future use
- ☞ can be further embellished at a later date
- ☞ easily reproduced
- ☞ excellent proprioceptive feedback (it feels good to do)
- ☞ individual or community activities/projects

The Challenges:

- ☞ ink stains
- ☞ requires initial investment in tools
- ☞ sharp tools necessitate keen teacher supervision

Today's Objectives:

- ↳ learn basic block printing technique.
- ↳ print an 'edition' of a simple design
- ↳ gain confidence to implement printmaking in the classroom.

Materials (all from Nasco – www.eNasco.com):

Safety-Kut printmaking blocks 4" X 6" (product # 9704655 \$1.06/ea.)
Subi print paper 9" X 12" (product #9707438(X) \$5.15/pkg. 100 sheets)
Water Soluble Block Printing Ink (product #9720514 \$30.50/8 tubes 5oz.each)
Ink mixing trays 6" X 9" (product # 9703440 \$9.15/pkg of 10)
Speedball linoleum cutter handles (product #9701404 \$3.39/ea)
Speedball linoleum cutters "u" gouge (product # 9701401(C) \$1.56/ea)
Speedball linoleum cutters "v" gouge (product # 9701401(A) \$1.56/ea)
Red Baren (product # 9724408 \$7.95/ea)
Lightweight hard rubber brayer 4" roller (product #9701362 \$6.07/ea)
scratch paper; pencils, craft sticks or plastic utensils, drying line or flat space.



Designing and Carving:

- develop the learning objective and assemble to resources necessary for inspiration.
- trace the Safety-Kut plate onto the scratch paper for a drawing guide.
- draw a simple, large design onto the scratch paper (avoid complex small details).
- when satisfied, draw the design directly onto the Safety-Kut block (see below for directions for lettering and for graphite transfer process).
- use gouges to cut design onto the block (refer to "techniques and effects" below).

ALWAYS CUT AWAY FROM THE BODY AND KEEP HANDS OUT OF THE LINE OF THE CUTS!!



Inking and Printing:

- label paper with name



- place a small amount of ink (use a craft stick or plastic utensil) on a tray.
- use the brayer (roller) and spread ink, first vertically, then horizontally, until it has a tacky quality.
- roll ink onto the Safety-Kut plate.
- carefully place paper onto the Safety-Kut (it cannot be moved or it will smudge).
- rub back of paper, applying even pressure, with bare, (do not move paper!).
- remove (“pull”) paper carefully.
- hang to dry.

***Note:**

Prints are numbered as a fraction. The denominator is the number of prints “pulled” off a single printing plate. The numerator is the order in which a given print was “pulled.”

Lettering:

1. Letters and numbers must be carved in reverse.
2. Draw the design in normal fashion.
3. Trace over the design in black marker.
4. Turn the paper over. The design should be visible through the paper.
5. Trace the design, with lettering onto the back of the paper. It will now be reversed.

If using a stencil, flip the stencil horizontally and then trace.

Alternatively, add lettering to white spaces after print has dried.

Graphite Transfer:

1. After drawing design, turn paper over.
2. With a #2 pencil, shade heavily over the back of the paper in the area of the design.
3. Lay the paper, shaded design down, onto the Safety-Kut plate.
4. Use a pen or pencil to trace heavily over the design.

The graphite should transfer onto the Safety-Kut plate.