

KIDS@TURNER Art Activity at Home

Make My Own Eraser Stamp

- **Activity Type:** Relief Printmaking
- **Aimed Grade:** 6th- 8th grade
- **Time:** 40 - 45 minutes
- **Description:** Students will carve their initials into an eraser to create a stamp. First, their initials will be sketched first and then transferred to the eraser. Then students will carve out their initials, ink up the eraser, and print the image. The stamp is reusable once finished!

Related Artwork



Lisa Martin, *Nice*, 2016

Key Terms/Main Ideas

- During this art project, students will learn new skills in the printmaking medium. This includes technical skills and vocabulary. The main ideas for this project are understanding what relief printing is, the importance of planning the design, knowing the steps of the process, and knowing how to print.
- Relief printing is achieved by carving into a surface (matrix) leaving raised areas that are inked for printing. This form of printmaking has been around for centuries, as early as 255 BC! It was also the first form of printmaking. Like the image above, it is important to design the letters backwards and from right to left; think of it as creating a mirrored image. Relief printmaking relies on carving away the negative space to create the image.
- Terms to note:
 - Printmaking: transferring artwork on a prepared surface to another, generally paper or fabric.
 - Relief printmaking: a form of printmaking in which the whites, or negative space, is carved away. The remaining surface is inked up and then printed.
 - Matrix: the surface that is being carved.
 - Negative space: the white areas left behind in the final image. This is what is being carved away from the matrix.
 - Positive space: the black areas left behind in the final image. This is what is left on the matrix once the desired spaces are carved away.

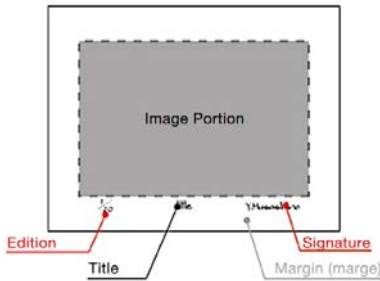
Material Preparation

- Eraser (preferably soft and easy to carve)
- Pencil
- Paper
 - Computer paper works fine, but a thicker paper provides more vivid results.
- Pen
- Carving tool
 - This can be handmade with an aluminum can, exacto knife, scissors, pencil, and tape (see the visual procedures on page 4).
 - This tool can also be bought at craft stores and is called a Speedball Lino Cutter, generally costs around \$15.
- Paper plate
- Water-based ink
 - This can be found at any craft store. Acrylic ink works as well.
 - If ink is not accessible, Sharpie works too. The Sharpie must be reapplied to the eraser more often when printing.
- Painting brush to apply ink
- Rags or paper towels
- Water source for cleanup

Instruction

1. First prepare the printing and carving surfaces. Carving the eraser should be done on a non-smooth surface to avoid slipping. The inking will take place on the paper plate. Have clean papers on the side for the student to print on along scrap paper for test prints.
2. Have the student first practice writing their initials backwards and from right to left on a piece of scrap paper before starting on the eraser. Holding the image in front of a mirror once finished allows the student to see if they did it correctly.
3. Once they can write their initials correctly, have the student use a pencil to repeat the process onto the eraser.
 - a. If it helps to better see their initials, a sharpie or pen can be used over the pencil.
4. Next carve away the negative space of the eraser, all the areas the student does not want to receive ink. This can either be the initials themselves, or the area surrounding the letters. In the examples below students carved out the space within their initials while in the example above, the space around the design is carved away.
5. When finished carving, with a clean paint brush, brush away any excess eraser scraps left in the design.
6. Next apply an even layer of ink to the eraser. The layer of ink does not need to be thick just even. Do this on the paper plate to avoid mess.
 - a. This goes for the sharpie alternative as well.
7. First, have the students complete a test print on a scrap piece of paper. If the test print appears patchy, more ink needs to be applied.
 - a. Pressure is needed for the image to appear. Make sure to press down hard when printing. Pushing the eraser down onto the paper for 20-30 seconds is enough. If using the sharpie method, apply pressure for a longer amount of time, 30-35 seconds.
8. After the test print is complete, apply another layer of ink (a light layer works) to the eraser.
 - a. If using a sharpie, coat the entire raised surface of the eraser again (the uncarved areas).
9. On a clean sheet of paper, have the students print their initials. Remember to use pressure and hold the stamp down!
10. Finally, peel away the eraser to reveal the stamped initials!

11. Leave papers clean on a flat surface area to dry.
12. Repeat the process as many times as you'd like!
13. Optional: Have the student sign and edition the print like a real artist!



- Artists generally do this in pencil.
- Below the image in the left-hand side is where the number of additions is placed. If the student only made one print, it would be 1/1. If the student made 2 the first print would have 1/2 and the second would have 2/2 and so on.
- In the center below the image the student writes the title of the work.
- Finally, in the right corner below the artwork the student signs their name and adds the year, generally done abbreviated (ex: 2024 = '24).

Clean Up:

1. Rinse the eraser and paint brush in with water. The water-based ink or acrylic paint dissolves in water.
 - a. Sharpie can be removed from the eraser with rubbing alcohol.
2. Throw away a paper plate used for inking.
3. Wipe away excess ink and mess of areas. Water based ink can be removed with any cleaning solution, even soap and water.
 - a. Rubbing alcohol can be used again to remove sharpie off surfaces.

Discussion questions & Expected Student Responses:

Discussion Questions	Expected Student Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask the student if they had any prior knowledge about printmaking or even relief printmaking. If yes, have they ever printed before? • In what other ways can relief printing be used? • Why is this artform important? • Would the student like to try relief printmaking at a larger scale? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They might have no knowledge, or a general understanding of what printmaking is. Relief printing is the most accessible form of printmaking, making it a technique they might know. • Besides stamps, relief printing is used for creating business card, diplomas, greeting cards, and/or other decorative hand printed items. • It is important because it is easily accessible. • It is environmentally friendly form of art because the matrix can be reused over and over. Since the matrix can be reused, many prints can be created • Relief printmaking creates an appreciation for detail and precision, and it is a great way to share art. • Hopefully yes!

Visual Procedures/Sample Artwork

How to create your own carving tool:

1. Obtain an empty aluminum can and cut it.



2. Cut it to make a blade.



3. Fold the piece to create a V-shape blade.



4. Tape half of the V-shape tool.



5. Attach it to a pencil.



Stamp's image revealed by carving around design:



Final printed image of above stamp. Image is signed and editioned:



Student examples:

