

Block Print: Geometric Shapes

by Kim Fjordbotten

Materials

One-sided corrugated cardboard
Recycled cereal or cracker box
Speedball Block Printing Ink
Brayer
Stevenson acrylic gloss medium
3/4" paintbrush, flat
Pencil, scissors
Before you begin, please read *The 1-2-3 Printing Station* below.

Goal

Students learn basic geometric shapes and use them to create interesting designs. This is a good preliminary project for future block printing projects.

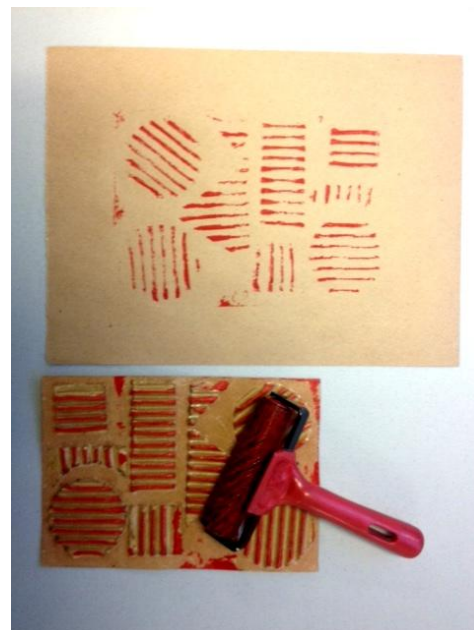
Procedure: Create the Block

- Create or trace geometric shapes onto a piece of corrugated cardboard.
- Use scissors to cut them out.
- Experiment with different arrangements.
- Use acrylic medium to glue them down.
- When dry, coat entire front with acrylic medium.
- Let that dry, then coat the entire back with acrylic medium.

You now have a waterproof printing block that is washable and reusable.

Procedure: Print the Block

1. Put your block on a stack of recyclable paper. Coat the brayer evenly with ink from the palette.
2. Roll the brayer over your block.
3. Inspect your block to make sure it is evenly covered with ink.
4. Now, put it onto the registration area marked for it.
5. Place the paper to be printed carefully on top of the block. Press the paper onto its surface by rubbing gently with your hand.
6. When the paper is in place, take a clean brayer and roll over the back of it to help transfer the ink from block to the paper.
7. When satisfied that all areas have been pressed, pull your paper off the block reveal your transferred print.
8. Take advantage of this easy printing process to make several copies to exchange with classmates.





The 1-2-3 Printing Station

Procedure

Here is a simple printing station set-up. It keeps the process organized, controls the materials and makes cleanup super-easy.

1. Palette Area

Tape a sheet of disposable palette paper to the table. This will be the palette area. Put a small blob of printing ink onto the palette paper. Use the brayer to roll out the ink into a small square in order to coat the brayer uniformly with ink.

2. Inking Area

Place the block on a stack of recyclable paper such as newsprint or an old telephone book. Use the roller to coat the block. Roll the brayer carefully back-and-forth in one direction. Then, go back and load up the roller on the inking palette. Turn your block, and roll the brayer back and forth in the other direction. If the papers under the plate become soiled simply flip over a page to reveal a new, clean surface for the next student to repeat the process.

3. Registration Area

Teachers, create a template to help students to know exactly where to place their block and paper. Mark a sheet of paper with the exact dimensions of the block centered in an area the size of paper to be printed. This is the registration area. A piece of glass or Plexiglas placed on top will protect the template so the surface can be quickly wiped clean as needed.