

Chinese Block Printing with Artist Pui Lee!

What is Printmaking?

Printmaking is the technique for printing text, image or pattern onto another surface like paper or fabric. It is just one way an artist can create a really cool artwork to be proud of! Printmaking is definitely lots of fun and the best thing about it, is that you can make repeat copies easily too.

Chinese block-printing traditionally involves carving an image in reverse onto a piece of wood. The woodblock is then inked and printed onto paper or fabric.

Block-Printing Instructions (suitable for all ages):

1. You will need to gather the following materials:

- Paper
- Pencil
- Sharpener
- Polystyrene Block -if you don't want to buy any, see if you can find any amongst unwanted packaging!
- Printmaking ink -if you don't have any, use paint
- Palette -or any smooth, flat surface
- Roller for inking -if you don't have any, you can use a paintbrush very carefully to apply the ink
- Protective gloves if you have particular skin allergies
- Roller for pressing print down -if you don't have any, you can use the back of a spoon or just your hands
- *TIP: You might want to wear old clothes and an apron for this activity -printmaking can get a bit messy!*

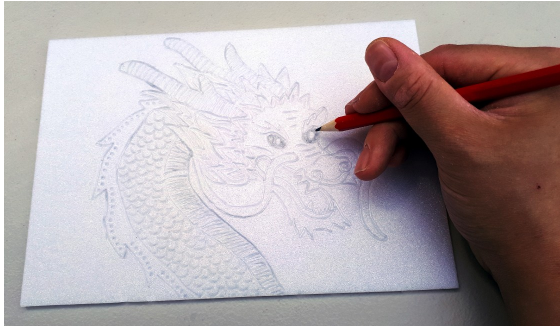




2. What design will you create?

First plan a design of your choice on a piece of paper. It can be anything you like, an animal, an object, text - be creative!

TIP: Remember your design will print out in reverse... So any writing will also need to be drawn in reverse so that it prints the correct way around!

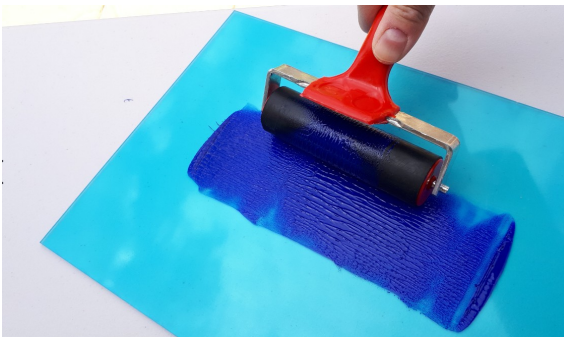


3. Then draw out your design onto the polystyrene block using a slightly blunted pencil. Press enough to create a groove into the surface of the block but be careful not to press too hard and go right through it.

TIP: Remember the areas that you press into the polystyrene will not print. So this will show as the colour of your paper.



4. For your print, take a new piece of paper and draw lightly in pencil around your polystyrene printing block to mark where your design will be printed.

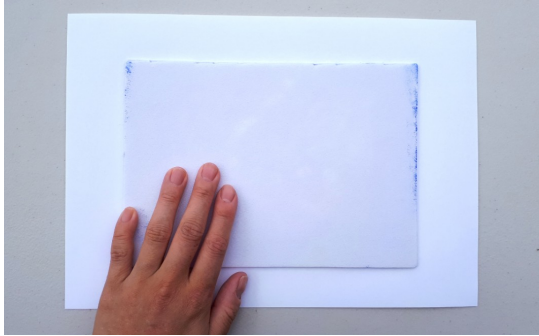


5. Squirt out some ink onto a flat surface. You then need to use a roller and spread the ink out by rolling forwards and backwards in all directions.



6. Now carefully roll the ink over your design on the polystyrene block.

TIP: Make sure you don't miss the edges of the block!



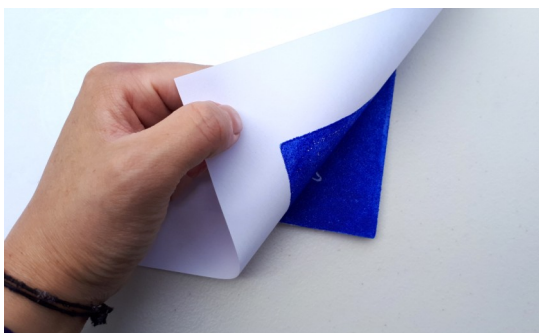
7. Carefully hold onto your block by the edges and place your block with inky side down onto your piece of paper where you have marked up earlier.

TIP: Once your block touches the paper, the ink will have transferred onto the surface. If you have placed it incorrectly, you will need to carefully lift it off and start again from Step 6. You may need to ink up again.



8. Turn the whole thing over and use a clean roller to roll over the piece of paper. Press down firmly to apply lots of pressure. You should be able to feel the block underneath.

TIP: If you don't have a roller, you can use the back of a spoon and press down firmly, whilst moving it across the paper. Make sure you reach all areas where the block is in contact with the paper.



9. Hold down the corner of the piece of paper with one hand and gently peel it off the block with your other hand to reveal your very own hand-made print! :-)

TIP: You can then sign and date your print. Then put it into a nice frame once dried!



11. Now you know how to create your own block print, you can now make many more! Simply wash the ink out of the block with warm soapy water and you can use it again and again by following the instructions earlier! ...**Happy printing!** :-)

12. The possibilities are endless! For example, you can experiment with different ink colours, different papers, different shaped blocks etc! :-)