



Art of Work Roles People Play

Utah Museum of Fine Arts • www.umfa.utah.edu
Educator Resources and Lesson Plans
Fall 2016

Artwork, Artist



Hirosada was the leading artist and the most prolific of the Osaka printmaking school. He specialized in producing commissioned prints which served to promote the Kabuki theaters that were very popular in large cities like Edo (today Tokyo). Hirosada's depiction of leading actors with unusual expressions and twisted poses created a dramatic and expressive style to his prints.

Customary for Edo period artists, Gosotei Hirosada used a number of different art names through his career including Konishi Hirosada, Gorakutei Hirosada, and Utagawa Hirosada. It is also speculated that Gosotei Hirosada was possibly the well-known artist Utagawa Sadahiro I, because of similarities in their work. Hirosada is mentioned as a pupil of Kunimasu Utagawa with the dates of 1819-1865.

[*http://artelino.com/articles/hirosada.asp](http://artelino.com/articles/hirosada.asp)

Konishi Hirosada (also called Gosotei Hirosada) (c. 1819–1863), Japan
Untitled
Woodblock print
ca. 1850s
ED1996.12.3

[*http://www.osakaprints.com/content/artists/artist_listpp/gallery_hirosada.htm](http://www.osakaprints.com/content/artists/artist_listpp/gallery_hirosada.htm)

Roles People Play

Lisa McAfee-Nichols

Introduction

Using Hiroshige's woodcuts as a spring board, students will create an edition of relief prints that express a role the worker plays in contemporary society. How does this role affect others? How does the person working act or feel? How can we create a dynamic composition when depicting what some would consider mundane work? What various roles does each person play in our society and culture?

Concepts

- A. Printmaking is an art form that produces multiple prints from one matrix.
- B. Relief prints are created by carving away from a block to create lights/darks and positive/negative space.
- C. Printmaking is an art form that has been used throughout history with its roots beginning in Asia spreading throughout Europe and the rest of the world.
- D. Creating a matrix takes careful planning and technical skill.
- E. The process of carving a matrix involves active decision-making and requires critical thinking skills.
- F. There are many ways to create a print; relief is one approach to printmaking.
- G. Art Elements and Principles including line, shape, space, texture, pattern, and composition are used in creating a print.

Objectives

Using *Untitled* by Hiroshige as inspiration, students will:

- 1. Students will analyze and interpret Hiroshige's prints to identify expressive and unusual qualities.
- 2. Students will identify a variety of roles people play in society today.
- 3. Students will identify relief prints, how they are made, and the concept of creating multiple prints.
- 4. Students will draw a design to be transferred to their linoleum block and carved to create a matrix for printing.
- 5. Students will analyze and discuss how spatial relationships and exaggeration can enhance the emotional impact of art.

Intended Audiences/Grade Levels 8-12th grade. Although this lesson plan is designed for high school students, it can be adapted using suitable materials for Elementary and middle school*

State Core Links (see State Core Links at the end of this lesson plan)

Duration 5-7 class periods on a block schedule. Time may vary depending on scheduling.

Materials for designing the matrix

1. Linoleum blocks cut into 4"x 6" or larger pieces, one per student
2. Speedball carving tools.
3. Pencils, rulers, ball point pens, and erasers
4. Drawing paper cut to size of linoleum pieces.
5. Carbon or transfer paper.
6. Bench hook

Materials for printing the matrix

1. Finished carved matrix for printing (students should have 50% or more carved away for printing)
2. Paper for printing (I have used bond paper, and washi paper. Whatever your budget will allow). Colored printmaking papers can also be used.
3. Clean newsprint for tables
4. Plexiglas pieces or large glass work surfaces for rolling out ink
5. Water soluble Printmaking ink and extender, or water soluble oil paint
6. Brayers
7. Wooden rice paddles or wooden spoons
8. Rags, paper towels, aprons

*** Materials: for Elementary and Middle School**

Relief prints can be made with a variety of materials. Here are some alternative materials that can be used for any grade:

1. Styrofoam plates from meat trays can be used to create a matrix. Lightly sand the surface so it isn't shiny, press in with a pen or pencil (instead of carving with a speedball carving tool). Water color can be used to print, I have also seen water based markers used to print instead of ink.
2. Easy-cut is a soft rubber material that is easy to carve with cutting tools and works great for middle school. It is printed the same as a linoleum or wood block.
3. Polymer clay (also known by the brand name Sculpey or Fimo) can also be used to create a matrix. The clay is rolled flat and any texture or utensil can be used to make detailed impressions. Then bake as directed.

Vocabulary/Key Terms

Artist Proof trial impressions taken prior to editioning a finalized version of an image.

Bench Hook A metal or wooden plate with a raised edge on each end to hold a woodcut or linocut in place on a table while cutting.

- Brayer** A small, hand-held rubber roller used to spread printing ink evenly on a surface before printing.
- Edition** A set of identical prints that are numbered and signed.
- Extender** (tinting and reducing medium): transparent additive to ink which dilutes the pigment color while maintaining the correct consistency for rolling.
- Matrix** A block that has been carved and ready to print.
- Print** The actual picture the artist makes from the matrix through a printmaking process.
- Relief Print** A means of making prints by creating a raised design on a flat surface. The design is inked or covered with color and stamped or printed on paper or another surface.

Activity Part One: Creating the Matrix

History and background: Introduce the history and art form of wood block printing. Use Hiroshige's woodcuts as examples and describe the technical process. Give a historical background of Hiroshige's work and compare them to other traditional Japanese woodcut artists. For instance, how do Hiroshige's prints compare to Utamaro's portraits? Utamaro was one of the first Japanese artists to be known and collected by Europeans and influenced the Impressionists.

1. Discuss as a class the ways Hiroshige's work could be used to promote theatre? What do you think this play was about? Who was this character? Who were the other characters? How would you depict them in a print?
2. Explain the concept of multiples. Ask students to think about why it is important to print-makers and collectors. Why do they collect band or movie posters.

Discussion: Discuss the expressive quality, gestures, facial expressions of the subject in this print, and how the composition is arranged. What do the landscape and objects around the figure tell us about him?

Brain storm with students the variety of roles within our society and how they relate to the work people do every day.

- What roles do they play?
- How have jobs changed since their parents were their age?
- Is that change related to technology, or other events?
- How can we find importance in what may be considered mundane everyday jobs?
- How will we choose to depict a work role in society and the social, emotional, and/or cultural ramifications of that role?

Choose a few of the jobs you discussed as a class.

- How would students draw those people?

- What would their facial expressions look like?
- What actions would they be doing?
- What uniforms, props, or scenery would be around them to help identify their role in society?

Drawing: Guide Students through exercises that will help them develop a theme for their drawing (Stay away from letters or numbers in the work. Keep in mind the drawing will come out in reverse as a print). Work with them to create unusual and dynamic compositions of ordinary roles through cropping or unusual perspectives or exaggerated facial expressions.

Time should be spent on the planning stage with all areas of the drawing worked out prior to transferring to the linoleum block. Plan out areas of light and darks, use of contrast, line, and use of positive and negative space. Discuss compositional issues as they work. How do we create drama and movement or unity and balance in a piece for instance?

Prepping: Sand the linoleum blocks with fine sandpaper for a smooth clean surface. Tape transfer paper down to the linoleum block with student's completed drawing taped on top of the transfer paper. Students will trace over their lines on the drawing to transfer the design to the block. Lift one side before removing completely to make sure drawing is completely transferred. Remove the transfer paper and drawing. Keep the drawing for reference.

Carving: Prior to carving, show examples of linoleum prints and explain how the light and dark areas are created. Demonstrate safe use of carving tools and carving technique such as carving away from their fingers and hand.

Students will then carve their matrix. Work slowly and carefully. Don't dig too deep. Remind students that what they are carving out will be white, what is raised will be printed as black (or other color of ink). When the student is finished carving they are ready to print an "Artist Proof" to determine if more areas need to be carved away or adjustments made in the composition.

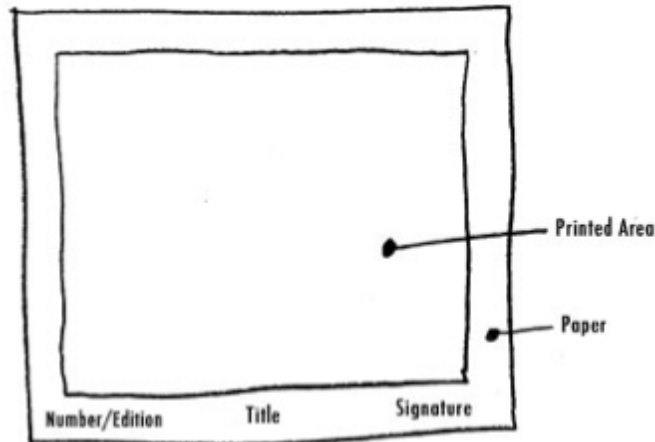
Activity Part Two: Printing an Edition

Set-up: Cover tables with newsprint. Have the following supplies ready: clean paper to print on, Plexiglas or glass slab for rolling ink out, brayer, rice paddle or wooden spoon, ink, palette knife.

Demonstrate: Demonstrate to students how to print an artist's proof. Brayer should be charged evenly with ink. Different colors can be used depending on preference. Roll the ink onto the linoleum matrix covering the flat areas evenly. Move your matrix to a clean area and clean your hands if necessary. Lay printing paper down evenly onto matrix. If desired, a registration sheet can be made from newsprint to help students lay paper on straight and even. Place a piece of clean newsprint on top of the printing paper and matrix then rub with flat side of spoon or paddle all over evenly.

Pull the print! Examine the print to adjust quantity of ink or pressure etc. I always have students print as many prints as they can, more than they need. Lay the prints to dry overnight on a drying rack or surface.

Signing and numbering When prints are dry, have students select the best quality prints for their edition. In pencil students will number, title, and sign their prints.



Method(s) for Assessment

- a. Assess daily effectiveness of written plans and teaching strategies in leading students to fulfill goals.
- b. Observe student behaviors and assess the degree to which students were engaged in activities.
- c. Assess drawings and prints of students to see if desired criteria was fulfilled and what concepts need to be reviewed.

State Core Links

Visual Arts: Printmaking

Standard 1: Making: Students will assemble and create prints by manipulating printmaking media and by organizing images with the elements and principles of art.

Standard 2: Perceiving: Students will find meaning by analyzing, criticizing, and evaluating prints.

Standard 3: Expressing: Students will create meaning in prints.

Standard 4: Contextualizing: Students will find meaning in printmaking through settings and other modes of learning.

Sources:

- * <http://artelino.com/articles/hirosada.asp>
- * http://www.osakaprints.com/content/artists/artist_listpp/gallery_hirosada.htm
- Anderson, Jim & Desmet, Anne. Handmade Prints. Davis Publications, Worcester, Mass., 2000.