



What a Relief!

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Franz takes the art cycle to the playground where students help to make a relief print that tells a story about their school by discovering and recording textures and shapes that ordinarily would be overlooked. Students choose a surface carefully while trying to imagine where ink will stick when a roller is passed over it. Franz demonstrates the use of an ink slab to hold the ink squirted from the tube, a brayer to apply ink and baren to press the paper uniformly onto the printing surface. Students draw an earth on poly-plate and use it with heart-shaped cracks in the asphalt, the bumps from a storm drain cover and the treads of a fire escape—all which are inked and combined into a final print. Water-based inks are emphasized for environmental friendliness and clean-up. Franz reviews techniques and demonstrates traditional methods of relief printing in his studio.

WHAT ARE SOME OBJECTS IN THE CLASSROOM THAT MIGHT BE USED TO MAKE A RELIEF PRINT?

WHAT THINGS COULD BE CARVED OR SHAPED TO MAKE RELIEFS?

CLAY
WOOD
LINOLEUM
STONE
POTATOES
WAX
RUBBER
CARDBOARD

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

Photocopy the **ACTIVITY SHEETS ON PAGE 19-20**. Find different surfaces like a tennis-shoe sole, Swiss cheese, a sponge, a basketball, a rubber ink stamp, a woodcut, a piece of textured carpet, a coin, etc. and explain that relief printing relies on bumps and holes to work properly. Any raised surface could be considered a bump—like Lincoln's head on a penny. Any depression can be considered as a hole, like the indentations on a golf ball. Ask the students to guess which parts of the objects might print if they were inked with a roller. In relief printing the printing surface is raised above the background; the earliest known printed images were made from carved reliefs in wood, stone and clay. Advise students to watch how Franz and the students on the playground use the inks, tools and textured surfaces to make a colorful multi-layered relief print about the environment.

THE LESSON

Students are introduced to a simplified relief printing process as a means of artistic expression. Students who view the episode and participate in the activities will be able to identify and use printmaking tools to make simple relief prints. Awareness of printmaking as an artform is established and students are familiarized with the utility and benefit of water-based inks in the printing process and are encouraged to experiment with printing.