

Squeeze, Squish, Print!



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Discover monoprinting fun with this highly tactile printmaking process.

A monoprint is a unique print. It's meant to be one of a kind. Often, the process is quick and the results are a surprise. For beginning artists and printmakers who are eager to explore different techniques, monoprinting can be very satisfying.

Using washable tempera paint as an alternative to printmaking inks adds to the fun—especially when it's squeezed before it's squished!

Drizzle straight from the bottle or place in a squeeze dispenser for more control. Apply to a piece of coated palette paper; the paint is translucent and lightweight, and it slides right off with very little pressure. Little hands can smear and squish the back side of the palette paper, keeping their hands clean while enjoying the sensation. The palette paper can be used many times before it is disposed.

Printing in layers and using stencils and masking tape adds to the fun. These abstract pieces are always unique and full of rich depth as colors overlap and create multitudes of new colors.

Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cover work surface with paper or plastic cloth, or provide trays for catching excess paint.
2. Fill squeeze bottles with tempera paint.
3. Cut mixed media paper in half to 9" x 12" pieces. Cut Dura-Lar sheets in half to 8.5" x 5.5".

Basic Monoprinting Process: Layers

1. For best results when applying layers of color, work from light colors to dark colors, with the darkest colors reserved for the last layers.
2. On coated side of palette paper sheet, apply a light-colored tempera, such as yellow. Squeeze out lines, squiggles, dots, etc. Start with a small amount; too much paint can be sloppy and take longer to dry.



Materials (required)

Blick Essentials Washable Tempera, pints, assorted colors (00135-); share 3-6 colors across class

Blick Disposable Palette Paper Pads, 9" x 12", 50 sheet pads (03063-2023); share one across class

Pacon Art1st Mixed Media Paper, 12" x 18", 500 sheets, (09701-1006); share one across class

Richeson Squeeze Bottles, 4 oz (04916-1004); place assorted colors of tempera in bottles and distribute at stations around classroom

Grafix Dura-Lar Clear Acetate Alternative, .003", 8.5" x 11" pad of 25 sheets (55506-1303); share one across class

Blick Masking Tape, natural, assorted widths (24149-); share 3-4 across class

Optional Materials

Roylco Plastic Paint Spreaders, set of 4 (04986-1004)

Richeson Multicolor Art Trays, 15" x 10.5", set of 5 (04512-1059)

Blick Essentials Colored Pencils, set of 12 (22429-0129)



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Basic Monoprinting Process, continued:

Set a limit such as "three squeezes" to help students know when to stop.

3. Pick palette sheet up and lay it paint-side down over the mixed media paper. Move the wet paint from the palette sheet to the paper by applying pressure with fingers or spreading with tools. Move in multiple directions, stopping before the paint reaches the edges of the sheet. The paper does not need to be completely covered—leave some white space if possible.
4. Hold palette sheet by one corner and peel it away. Most of the paint will be on the mixed media paper, but there may be a little left on the palette sheet. This can be wiped off with a paper towel or left to mix with the next layer.
5. Repeat with one or two colors of a medium hue, such as orange and red. The goal is not to cover the entire sheet with the second color, but to allow areas of the first color to remain visible. New colors will appear as the translucent tempera reveals layers beneath.
6. Repeat steps 2-5 one or more times until the monoprint seems complete.

Monoprinting process with Masking

1. A variety of masking methods can be used to block or hide areas of the print so that paint can't reach it. Masking allows shapes and defined lines to be part of the layering process. Here are a few ideas:

Masking Tape: Available in many different widths, tape can be used straight from the roll to make straight line patterns or cut into shapes (squares, triangles, etc) with scissors.

Apply tape to the blank mixed media paper, then print over it following steps 2 and 3 of the basic monoprinting process.



Step 1: Fill squeeze bottles with tempera paint and apply to coated side of palette sheet.



Step 2: Place paint-side-down on paper and manipulate with fingers or tools on the back side of the sheet.



Step 3: Experiment with layering colors, masking patterns, and stencilling shapes.

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Monoprinting process with Masking (continued)

Allow time for paint to dry before removing tape. Repeat on subsequent layers.

Stencils: Prepared stencils can be used or custom shapes cut from lightweight film. Using a permanent marker, draw shapes on Dura-Lar polyester film, then cut with scissors.

Arrange stencils on blank mixed media paper, then print over them following steps 2 and 3 of the basic monoprinting process. Between layers, pick up stencils and rearrange them.

Paint does not need to dry completely between layers. Stencils can be washed and reused.



Mixed Media Monoprints

1. Once paint has dried, use fine line markers or colored pencils to trace edges of shapes that have been formed by masking. This defines them as positive spaces within the print.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

