

Making Woodblock Prints

(This activity could be done in the classroom, or in collaboration with the art teacher.)

TEACHER: Today, we are going to make our own version of woodblock prints. Since it is difficult for us to carve into wood, we are going to make our prints using a different material and tools. We will be cutting shapes out of foam, and gluing them onto corks to use as stamps. We will use scissors, instead of a chisel to make our designs.

Materials Needed:

- **Small and medium precut squares of craft foam (enough for each student to make at least two stamps)**
- **Scissors**
- **Corks, laundry detergent caps, etc. (Be creative! Collect anything you think would be easy for the students to hold onto while stamping, and which has a flat surface for adhering the foam.)**
- **Glue (hot glue, glue dots, or self adhesive foam work best, because drying time is minimal, and students can start stamping right away)**

Model for the children how to carefully draw a design onto their foam square. Then take your scissors and carefully cut out the design. (If you are using precut shapes, demonstrate all of the different ways you can cut a triangle, square, circle, etc. to make an interesting design.) Next, glue the foam shape onto the base (cork, cap, etc.). It often works best for kids to move to a “gluing station” when ready, so an adult can assist with this step. The stamps are now ready to be used.

Depending on the setup of the classroom, children could immediately begin making art with their stamps, or the teacher could collect them and set up a stamping station during Choice Time.

Stamp pads, or paint could be used for the ink. If using paint, you can make your own stamp pad by pouring a small amount of paint onto a sponge, or you can place a small amount of paint in a shallow lid. Be sure you demonstrate that only a small amount of “ink” is needed. Likewise, explain that it may not be necessary to re-ink the stamp after each use.

**If you have children who are having difficulty cutting small shapes, precut foam shapes are readily available in craft stores. It may be easier for the children to make stamps from these directly, or use them as a starting point for their own creative designs.*