



Larger Than Life

Created by Lee-Jean Lin
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"Nobody sees a flower, really, it is so small. We haven't got time - and to see (a flower) takes time like to have a friend takes time."

- Georgia O'Keeffe

Project Description

Inspired by Georgia O'Keeffe, students will create their own version of a close up flower, while exploring monoprinting with foam board and paint.

Learning Objectives

1. Students will learn about the life of Georgia O'Keeffe and her bond with nature.
2. Students will be introduced to the medium of printmaking.
3. Students will transfer a contour line drawing onto a foam plate to make a monoprint of a flower.

Supplies: Per Student

- Scratch foam (9"x12"), Black paper (9"x12" - Artagain)
- Sketch paper (9"x 12" newsprint)
- Plates (for mixing paints)
- Dull pencils
- 2 watercolor brushes (small and medium)
- Paper towel for wiping brushes between colors (no water cups)

Supplies: Shared

- Tempera paint (blue, yellow, red, fluorescent pink, fluorescent yellow, fluorescent green & white)
- Photographs of flowers
- Masking tape

Art Vocabulary

Monoprint – A printmaking technique whereby each print is unique and irreproducible.

Tint - In color theory, a tint is the mixture of a color with white, which increases lightness.

Secondary Colors – Colors mixtures of two primaries. R & Y= orange, Y & B=green, and B & R= violet.

Complementary Colors – Colors opposite one another on the color wheel. R/G, B/O, & Y/V

Warm and Cool Colors- Warm colors = warmth: R, Y, and O. Cool colors = coolness: B, G, & V.

Contour Drawing- Contour means "outline" and presents exterior edges of objects.

Texture- Element of Art describing the surface quality, i.e., rough, smooth, glossy etc. can be physical (tactile) or visual.

Negative Space - The space around and between the subject(s) of an image.

Principles of Design – The way artists arrange their compositions.

- **Balance.** Balance can be symmetrical, asymmetrical or radial.
- **Contrast.** Contrasting elements, such as color, value, scale, etc., create interest in a composition.
- **Emphasis** Artists create a focal point by placing the emphasis on one area of the composition.

Historical and Cultural Context

The second of seven children, Georgia O’Keeffe was born on November 15, 1887 in Sun Prairie, Wisconsin. Farm life in the Midwest was isolating, especially during long winter months. During this time, Georgia and her siblings enjoyed taking art lessons. By the age of twelve she had already decided that she would become an artist.

After pursuing a teaching career, O’Keeffe moved to New York City in 1907 and returned to a serious pursuit of art. Internationally known photographer and gallery owner, Alfred Stieglitz exhibited her art in his famous Gallery 291, and began a personal relationship with the artist that would launch her career. 23 years her senior, Stieglitz married O’Keeffe in 1924 and until his death in 1946, he worked tirelessly to promote O’Keeffe and her work, organizing annual exhibitions of her art.

O’Keeffe’s art was always an immediate response to her environment. When she became aware of European Modernism, she began to paint large-scale close-ups of flowers with a combination of American realism and Cubist abstraction. In a period between 1918 and 1932, she produced more than 200 flower paintings, but the calla lily became her “emblem” in the eyes of the public. Of these flower compositions she said, *“I’ll paint it big and they will be surprised into taking time to look at it – I will make even busy New Yorkers take time to see what I see of flowers.”*

In the summer of 1929, O'Keeffe made a fateful visit to Taos, New Mexico. O'Keeffe was drawn to the desert and dedicated the rest of her life to documenting the remote landscape of New Mexico where she made her home. Her goal was *"to fill space in a beautiful way."* She died on March 6, 1986 at the age of 98 in her beloved Santa Fe, New Mexico.

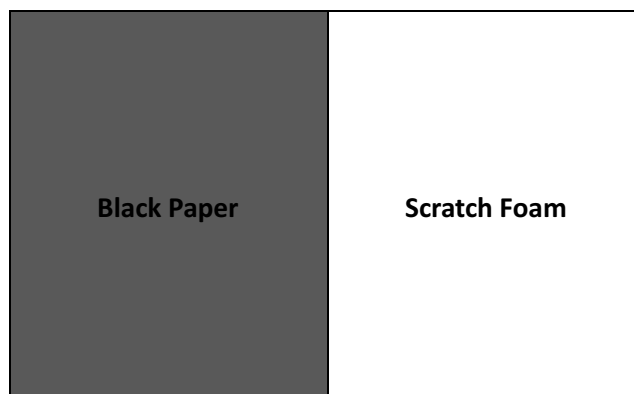
Monoprint Method

Monoprint is the most direct type of printmaking method. It is as simple as a footprint or handprint. It is a print created by transferring to paper an image that has been painted on a plate made on metal, glass, plexiglas, etc. Scratch foams are used in this project. The process of transfer is done by either hand rubbing or using an etching or lithography press.

Monoprint is the most painterly method among all printmaking techniques. The characteristic of this method is that no two prints are alike; although images can be similar - editioning is not possible. The beauty of this media is in its spontaneity and its combination of printmaking, painting and drawing mediums. Layers of paint with variations in colors and values can be applied and printed on the paper to create a surface texture that is unlike any other art.

Pre-Preparation

- Tape black paper and scratch foam side-by-side from the back, like an open book. (Affix labels to the back of the black paper.)
- Distribute tempera paint.
- Each student should have a mixing plate with white paint in the middle of the plate. They can add the paint colors they need on their plate when it's time to paint. A little color paint goes a long way. They will mix white in each color they use.



Vertical (Portrait) Format

Procedure

Use slides to prepare students using the following steps:

1. Introduce Georgia O'Keeffe and her flower paintings.
2. Review vocabulary words with students
3. Discuss how Georgia looked at flowers.
4. Show examples of O'Keeffe's flower paintings, images of real flowers and docent-created examples of the project.
5. Have students create a basic contour drawing of one or two flowers on sketch paper. Have some flower petals extend beyond the edge of the paper. If there is a large blank area on the paper, add leaves to keep the design in balance. If they decide to draw two flowers on the paper, try to make one larger than the other to create a focal point.
NOTE: See Adaptation for K and 1st Grade.
6. Distribute the black paper and the scratch foam already taped side by side from the back. (Do not give them the foam in advance. They may inadvertently sketch on the foam.)
7. Using a small piece of tape, attach the sketch paper with finished contour drawing on the top or side edge of the scratch foam.
8. Work directly on the paper. Have students trace lines with a pencil. Pencil line will be scratched into foam. It's OK if the paper is torn. Check foam regularly to make sure lines show on foam.
9. Remove the sketch paper. Use the pencil to trace the line deep into the foam. (Try not to punch through the foam. If it happens, tape the foam from the back to make sure pieces of foam won't fall out.)
10. Discuss color theory: complementary colors, secondary colors, warm and cool colors. Reinforce color mixing: red+yellow=orange; red+blue=purple; yellow+blue=green; red+green=brown.
11. Have students choose their paint colors. Add white paint to all colors, making them opaque in order to cover the back paper. This is called "tinting." Without white, tempera paint is somewhat translucent and the black background will show through. Fluorescent colors are optional. Use sparingly for contrast and emphasis only.
12. Start painting the flowers and leaves (i.e. the positive space.) Students should aim for good dimension and texture, realistic colors are not necessarily important.
 - a. Paint in the direction of the flower petals to show the texture of petals.
 - b. "LESS IS MORE." Paint brushes need to be relatively dry. DO NOT ADD WATER. Brush marks create nice texture. Do not load the brush with too much paint because the paint will get into the grooves, the paper will slide and won't print well. They end up with gooey paint on the paper. Multiple layers of thin paint work better. (For older students, add lighter colors to emphasize highlight and darker colors to show shadow on the flower petals to create three-dimensional effects.)

- c. Don't paint into the lines. If the paint gets into lines, run the pencil through the groove to carve out the excess paint before printing. The contour drawing will show as black lines, which is the unpainted area of the paper.
- d. Flip the black paper on top of the foam and rub your hand on it to pull a partial print. (Banging on the table won't work.) Paint and print one small area at a time before it dries. If the images appear too dark, paint another layer on the foam and print. Layers of paint build nice texture on the images.

Note: If the paint tends to bead up due to slippery foam, add a drop of liquid soap in the plate for students to mix in the paint. The soap breaks the water surface tension and helps the paint spread.

Do not paint directly on the black paper. You will get a regular painting and lose the printing effects.

13. Color the background (i.e., the negative space) if time allows. If the flower is in warm colors, use cool colors for the background or visa-versa to show the contrast. Make sure all areas of the foam board (both positive and negative space) was painted so that the intricate line work will show. Any unpainted area will show as black.
14. Separate the finished art from the foam board when the paint is dry. (The board can be used repeatedly to create more prints in future dates.)

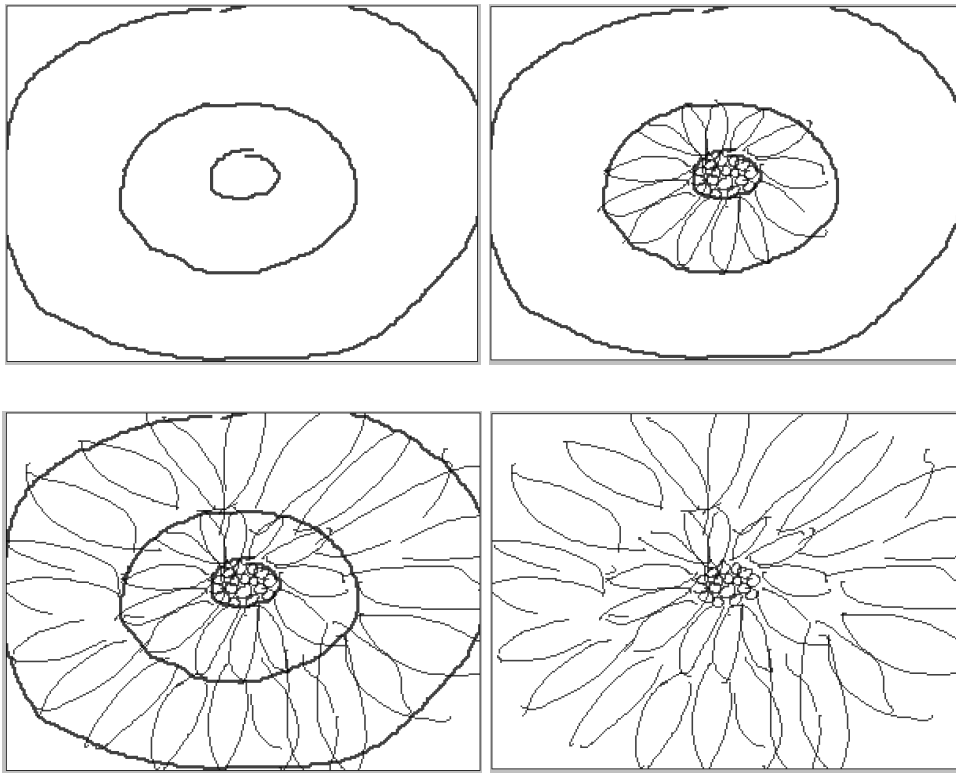
For more help (Recommended for K to Grade 1):

1. Draw three concentric circles (smaller circles inside the larger circle) or ovals, which serve as a guide for layers of the petals. The smallest circle is about the size of an egg. The 2nd circle is about the size of a small flour tortilla. The largest circle can partially go off the page.
2. Inside the small circle, draw many smaller circles, which represents the stamen.
3. Draw flower petals in the area between the small and the mid-size circles. (Each petal is formed by two curves, not a loop)
4. Draw flower petals outside the mid-size circle and let some petals extend beyond the page
5. Erase the mid and large size circles. (Otherwise, they may trace the circles on the scratch foam.)

GO BACK TO STEP 6 OF THE GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS.

Notes:

- Bigger is better. Young kids tend to draw very small flowers. Make sure that you check their drawing before they scratch the foam.
- Paint each layer of petals in a different color on the foam, starting from the center and move to the outer layers. Be sure to paint a small area at a time and print. It does not print well when the paint becomes too dry. However, you can always paint and print the same area over and over to build layers of paint.



Aesthetic Valuing:

Take time at the end of the project to have students reflect on their project by asking these grade level questions. The conversation can be facilitated by docents or classroom teachers:

TK-1

Is your flower bigger or smaller than Georgia O'Keeffe's flowers?

What colors did you use?

What textures do you feel?

2-3

How is your flower similar to Georgia O'Keeffe's? How is it different?

What colors did you mix and what did you get?

What is a monoprint and what makes it special?

4-5

What did you learn about Georgia O'Keeffe's life and art?

What is unique about Georgia O'Keeffe's style of painting? Have you ever seen one in real life?

How are monoprints different from other kinds of prints?

If time is short, the following questions are appropriate for all grade levels:

Are you happy with your project? What do you like best about your project? What might you change?

AAYF Artist Bio

Lee-Jean Lin is the founder of Art Experience. She uses art to guide children through the creative process so that they have the tools to empower their own lives. She also runs Art Experience Night to provide a casual and fun environment for adults to create their own works of art.

She is a frequent presenter of school based art programs such as Art at Your Fingertip, Adventures in Art, and South Bay Hands on Art. In the past, she served as a docent in Torrance's Adventures in Art program for 10 years. When her children aged out of the program, she crossed the bridge and became the presenting artist for several South Bay art programs.

She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Masters in Engineering. Her extensive psychology background, experience from raising a child with special needs, and more than 20 years corporate experience as a designer give her a unique perspective on children's art education. She believes in making art part of life, and enjoys creating art projects with materials readily available in our daily lives.

Lee-Jean is the recent recipient of Certificate of Congressional Recognition from Congressman Ted Lieu and an award from South Bay Chinese Women's Association for her involvement in art education and community service.

Art At Your Fingertips is a Palos Verdes Art Center school-based outreach program that brings visual arts education to elementary school classrooms from transitional kindergarten through fifth grade.

Established in 1976, this program reaches 6,000 students annually on the Palos Verdes Peninsula. Run completely by parent volunteers, AAYF's paramount objective is to make every child feel comfortable using art as a means of expression. We thank PTA, PTO, and Booster Club for their support.

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PALOS VERDES ART CENTER
Beverly G. Alpay Center for Arts Education

GEORGIA O'KEEFFE: LARGER THAN LIFE

Learn more about the legendary artist often referred to as the
Mother of American Modernism.

You can find these materials in one of the Palos Verdes Library District libraries

A Song of Sun and Sky

An exploration of color, lighting, and the magic of art and nature, filtered through the lens of a fictional interaction with the artist Georgia O'Keeffe. Learn about the colors you bring along everywhere you go.

J Picture COCKCROFT

Through Georgia's Eyes

Lyrical and vivid, this is a portrait of an exceptional artist, a woman whose eyes were open to the wideness and wonder of the world.

J Biographies O'KEEFFE, G. RODRIGUEZ

My Name is Georgia: A Portrait

Georgia followed her love of art from the steel canyons of New York City to the vast plains of New Mexico. There she painted all day, and slept beneath the stars at night. Throughout her life Georgia O'Keeffe followed her dreams--and so found her way to become a great American artist.

J Biographies O'KEEFFE, G. WINTER

Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Collections

This lavishly illustrated volume presents a magnificent selection of O'Keeffe's paintings, drawings, and sculptures, all reproduced in faithful color. It also offers a generous portfolio of photographs--some previously unpublished--by O'Keeffe.

Adult Nonfiction 759.13 O'KEEFFE LYNES

Georgia O'Keeffe Works on Paper

This groundbreaking volume, the first to consider Georgia O'Keeffe's works on paper, explores the media of watercolor, charcoal, pencil, and pastel. O'Keeffe, an artist of immense stature in twentieth-century art, is known primarily as a painter. However, her earliest mature works, which led to her first New York exhibitions and initial acclaim, were works on paper as well.

Adult Nonfiction 741.973 O'KEEFFE O'KEEFFE

More About Georgia O'Keeffe

Georgia O'Keeffe Museum Online Collection

<https://bit.ly/3A7izYB>

Georgia O'Keeffe @ the Museum of Modern Art

<https://bit.ly/3rZsvAE>



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