

Zara's Printmaking Workshop: Exploring Relief Patterns

Learning objective: To understand the process of relief printmaking by designing a repeating pattern inspired by nature.

Today, we are going to explore how printmakers create images by carving into a surface. Follow the steps below to design your own 'relief block' pattern. Remember, anything you carve away will stay white, and anything left raised will hold the ink!

Draw: Imagine you are Zara the zebra. Create a design for a square printing block (10cm x 10cm). Draw a nature-inspired pattern, such as leaves or waves. Use thick, bold lines for the parts you intend to leave raised (the parts that will hold the ink). Use shading or hatching to show the areas you would carve away (the negative space). Ensure your design is symmetrical so it looks balanced when printed.



Label words: Relief · Block · Brayer · Ink · Impression · Pattern · Negative Space

Steps:

1. What is the name of the tool used to spread ink onto the printing block?
2. Explain why your print will appear as a 'mirror image' of the block you carved.
3. If you carve a star into your block, will the star be white or colourful on your final print? Explain your answer.

4. Draw a small sketch of a simple geometric shape inside the box below that would be easy to carve for a beginner.
5. Label your sketch with two words from the word bank to show the 'raised' area and the 'negative space'.