

## Insect Prints

*Students will explore printmaking techniques while creating an insect print on a prepared background.*



**Target Grade:** 6

**Goal (Terminal Objective):** Students will explore printmaking techniques while studying balance in nature.

**Objective:** Students will demonstrate the ability to organize knowledge and ideas for the expression and production of artworks. Students will define symmetry and asymmetry as types of balance seen in nature and in artworks. The student will identify a variety of lines, shapes, and patterns found in nature.

### **National Standards:**

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines. **Science Cross Curriculum Connection**

**Purpose:** Students will become aware of variations of media, techniques, and processes to communicate ideas. Students will discuss the importance of nature as an influence to artists. Students will distinguish between symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships in space. Students will identify symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in nature and in human-made objects. Students will create an insect print on a prepared background.

**New Vocabulary:** printmaking, pattern, symmetrical balance, asymmetrical balance, relief, print block, brayer, carving tools, repeat design, texture, view

### **Materials:**



#24-2499 Acrylic Paint



#22-8426 Premium Watercolor Oval Set



#22-60xx Liquid Watercolor - Watercolor Magic



#17-3999 Art-Time Glitter Washable Tempera



#56-3101 40 ct. Flat Jumbo Brush Best-Buy Set

Matt board, Printmaking tools, E-Z Cut printmaking block, sponges

**Time:** This lesson may be modified from one to three hours, depending upon the size and complexity of expectations.

**Introduction and Motivation (Set):**

Discuss the beauty of nature; identify instances where symmetrical and asymmetrical balance is observed. View artworks illustrating the beauty of nature, specifically artworks dealing with insects.

Discuss how artists are influenced by the lines, shapes, colors, and textures observed in natural objects.

View illustrations of insects. Discuss details such as wing shapes and positions, patterns, lines as observed the insect bodies.

Generate a discussion of types of insects and their characteristics. Identify the body parts of insects.

Identify symmetrical and asymmetrical balance observed in overall body design and on insect bodies as a form of natural design.

Discuss the visual characteristics in terms of art elements such as line, shape, colors, and texture.

Observe artworks and illustrations of insects to identify the view portrayed, such as side view or top view.

Discuss printmaking as an art form. Identify block printmaking as a relief process.

Define printmaking as the process of transferring an image from an inked surface to another surface.

**Instruction:**

- 1) Demonstrate rendering sketches of insects while students refer to insect illustrations.
- 2) Review the concept of balance and provide instances of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance while demonstrating sketching techniques.
- 3) Demonstrate how symmetrical body shapes can be drawn by folding a sketch paper and drawing half and insect body, cutting on the lines (not the fold) and opening to illustrate a symmetrical body form.
- 4) Demonstrate the translation of a pencil rendering to a simplified plan for a block print.

**Activities:**

**(1) Guided Practice:**

1. Students create sketches of real and imaginary insects.\*  
Using pencil make a series of preliminary sketches with a variety of view points.  
(To facilitate planning, cut sketch paper to the size of the print block).  
Identify specific illustration to be transferred into a block print. Simplify lines and shapes and go over lines in thick dark pencil. Lay sketch face down on the block and go over lines visible thru back of paper onto block with a ball point pen.



2. Students will provide a variety of views in their preliminary sketches.\*
3. Students will use wide dark lines and strong positive and negative shapes in their final design in preparation for their block print.
4. Students will prepare a background. To prepare background, sponge stamp



onto surface of tag or matt board using watercolor and/or glitter paint.

5. Use carving techniques to carve block.



6. Apply paint to print block. Turn print block down and stamp onto prepared background.



(2) Independent Practice and Check for Understanding: Teacher circulates among working students visually recording students demonstrating understanding of objectives and providing reinforcement.

(3) Closure: Students record either by checklist or writing prompt, the symbols used and the connection to the exemplar and the innovations they provided to the piece.\*

**Evaluation:**

Level One -- The finished print very successfully demonstrates the student's understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in nature and in human-made objects. The student has shown strong technical skills in printmaking techniques as well as creativity and use of color on the prepared background. The student has demonstrated outstanding craftsmanship and originality in the design, carving, and printing of the insect print.

Level Two -- The finished print shows a good understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in nature and in human-made objects. The student has shown a good understanding of printmaking techniques and color selection. The completed print demonstrates creativity and good craftsmanship.

Level Three --The finished print shows a limited understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in nature and in human-made objects. The print shows limited technical skill in printmaking techniques. Creativity and craftsmanship is minimal.

Level Four -- The finished print shows no conscious understanding of symmetrical and asymmetrical balance in nature and in human-made objects. Technical skill and craftsmanship is poor.

**Extension:** Discuss the similarities and differences between artist illustrations and scientific illustrations of insects. Students may generate scientific illustrations of insects.

**Resources:**

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Insect>

<http://www.insects.org/>

<http://www.livescience.com/insects/>

<http://www.fi.edu/learn/hotlists/insects.php>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria\\_Sibylla\\_Merian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maria_Sibylla_Merian)

[http://naturalhistory.mse.jhu.edu/ChronologicalTour/ChT\\_Merian.html](http://naturalhistory.mse.jhu.edu/ChronologicalTour/ChT_Merian.html)

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