

Printing with Nature

Designed for grades K - 8

Nature gives us awesome textures, patterns, and shapes that make fun and easy prints!!

Learn more! Here are the three elements of art you'll need to know for this activity:

Texture: Texture is how something feels when you touch it. Is it bumpy, smooth, soft, scratchy?

Pattern: A pattern is something that repeats itself. Does your object have a pattern? Do you see repeating lines, bumps, shapes, etc.? For example, leaf veins are a pattern.

Shape: Shape is how you describe the object's form. Some shapes are easy to describe like squares, circles, and triangles, others are harder to describe like the shapes of leaves. Some shapes are rounded, some have sharp edges, and some have both!



READY Grab your art journal or blank pieces of white paper, colored pencils, and one or all of the following: Crayons, markers, paint (watercolor, acrylic, etc.)

GET SET Put on some sunscreen and a hat, grab a water bottle, and a snack. Choose an inspiring outdoor location for a nature walk.

GO! Collect the following:

- **One natural object that has an interesting texture**
- **One natural object that has an interesting pattern**
- **One natural object that has an interesting shape**

Take the time to inspect each object carefully. Notice the colors, textures, patterns, and shapes of each.



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To make a print: Color the surface of the object you want to print. Paint and markers work best. After you're done coloring, place your object, colored side down, just above a blank page on your art journal or white paper. Now, gently press it firmly down on the paper with your hands for at least 10 seconds. Finally, lift the object slowly off your paper and you'll have your print! If the entire surface didn't print, that's ok! It's fun to experiment with different types of coloring tools and different objects.

If you have a 3-dimensional object like an acorn or pinecone, try rolling it across your paper to make the print. (see above image for an example of this).



To make a rubbing: Place your object underneath a blank page in your art journal or a white piece of paper. Next, use a crayon or colored pencil and color directly over the object. Try different pressures - hard and soft. Keep coloring until you can see the shape, texture, and patterns of your object. It's like magic!

Want more? Use your colored pencils to trace the entire outline of your object if it didn't print all the way.

Try printing with fruits and vegetables, like corn and carrots! Leave them as they are or carve shapes out of them, paint them, and roll them across your paper. What interesting patterns, textures, and shapes do you get?

