



SANTA BARBARA
MUSEUM OF
ART

Three-Plate Landscapes Inspired by the Woodblock
Prints of Katsushika Hokusai and Henri Rivière



Using Line, Shape, Color, Texture, Proportion, and Perspective to Create A Composition:
Printmaking Inspired by Katsushika Hokusai and Henri Rivière





Note to Viewers:



This presentation includes several terms from the lexicon of artists – words they use frequently when thinking or talking about art.

These words are **color-coded** in the presentation, and described in the glossary at the end of the lesson.



Grades: K-12

Subject: Visual Arts

Time required: Three sessions

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will learn about the artists Katsushika Hokusai and Henri Rivière (what influenced them, their bodies of work, and their use of various art techniques and media) by viewing the SBMA provided presentation (PDF).
- Students will explore **composition** (foreground, middle ground, background), color, shape, line, texture, and perspective.
- Students will create their own three-plate **monoprints** using printmaking techniques.
- Students will engage in a creative process that includes inspiration, improvisation, experimentation, and revision, refinement, exhibition, and self-reflection.



First grade student's monoprint

This lesson sequence invites students to explore line, shape, color, texture, composition, proportion, and perspective, inspired by the artwork of master printmakers Hokusai and Henri Rivière.

This PDF presentation provides a suggested open-ended sequence. The goal is for each student to create his or her own composition: a monoprint of a landscape in a natural setting.

The images of the artists' woodblock prints and SBMA Teaching Artists' prototypes are provided as multiple sources of inspiration for students to consider before they begin their own process of experimentation and improvisation. From initial sketches to the final product, each student's process and completed monoprint will be unique.

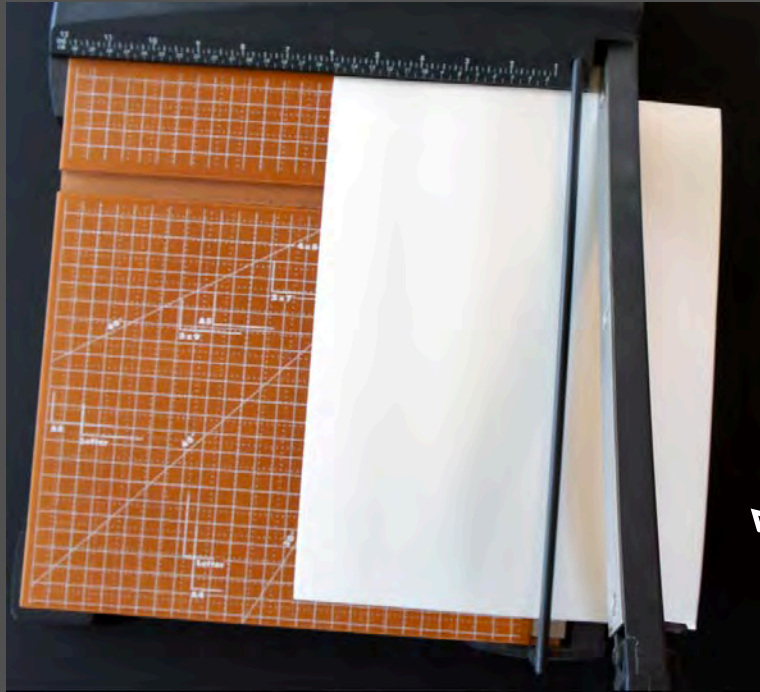


Materials for Printmaking Project

- SBMA provided Hokusai and Rivière presentations (PDFs) or SBMA provided jpeg images of inspiration artwork
- Sheets of Scratch-Foam (9" x 12" purchased size, cut to 6" x 12" panels – one for each student)
- Tracing paper (use a pad of 14" x 17" paper)
- Pencils for sketching
- Blunt pencils for transferring images to the Scratch Foam panel (color pencils are a option for this step)
- Water-soluble block printing ink in a variety of colors
- Paint brushes for applying ink to the foam panel
- Painter's masking tape
- Black construction paper
- White construction paper
- Copies of the provided master for initial series of sketches
- 12" x 24" piece of newsprint for each student
- A paint palette for each student or pair of students
- Water containers and paper towels

Teacher Preparation

- Gather all materials
- Create your own prototype (optional)

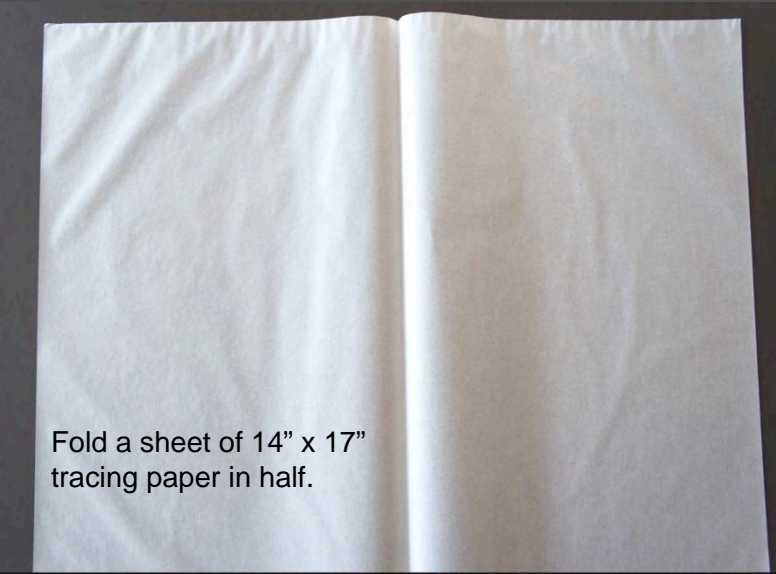


Cut sheets of Scratch Foam into 6" x 12" plates for printing




Water soluble printing ink





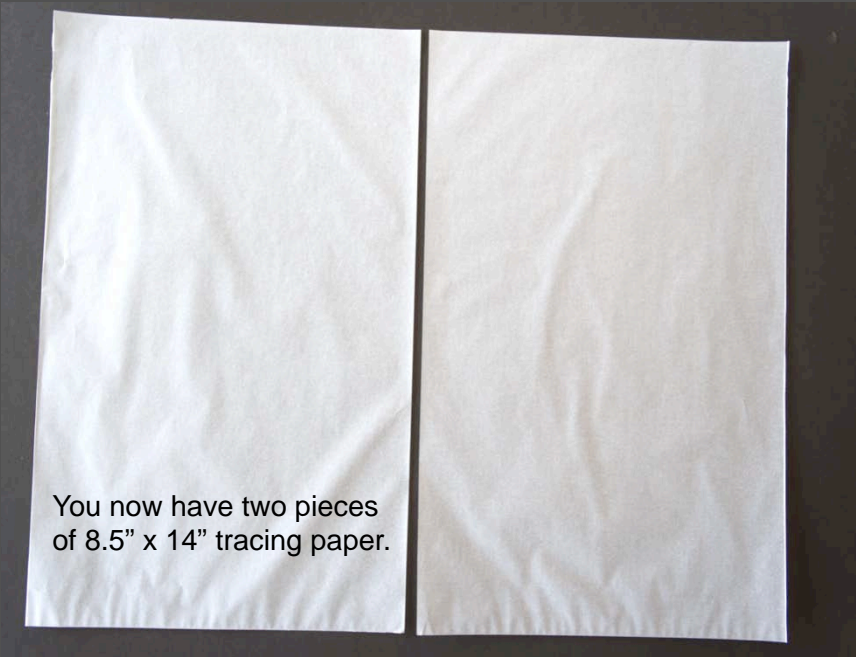
Fold a sheet of 14" x 17" tracing paper in half.



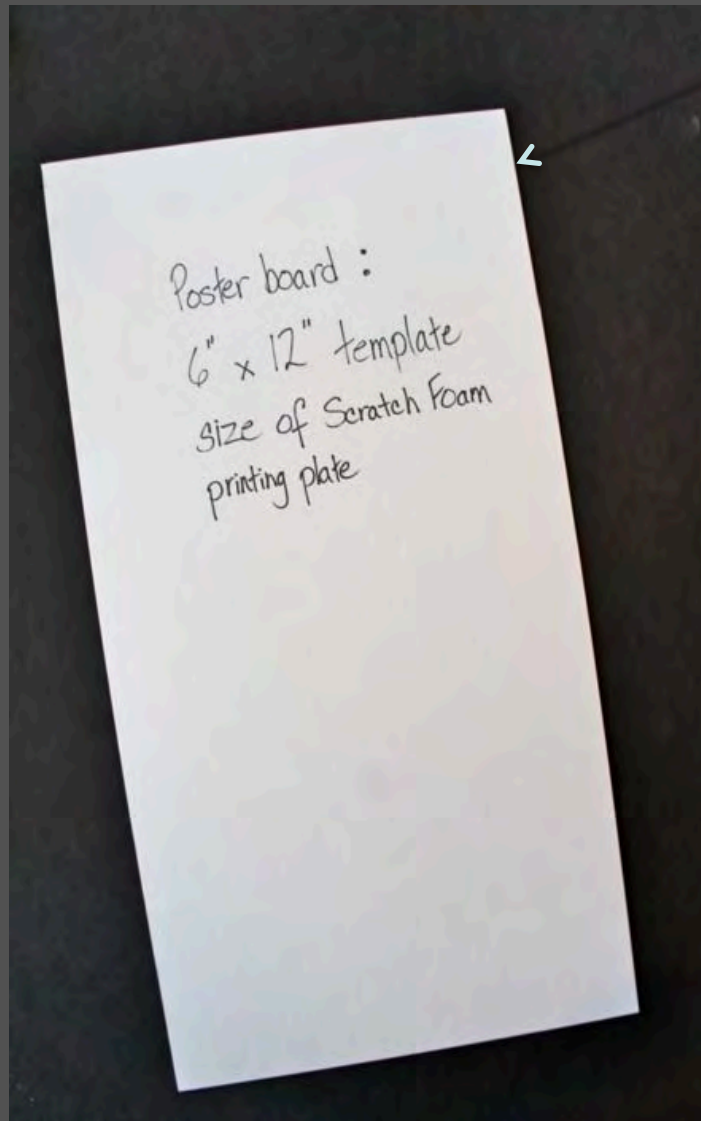
Cut on the fold line.

Additionally:

- Prepare a piece of 8.5" x 14" tracing paper for each student. (Cut sheets of 14" x 17" tracing paper in half for two pieces.)

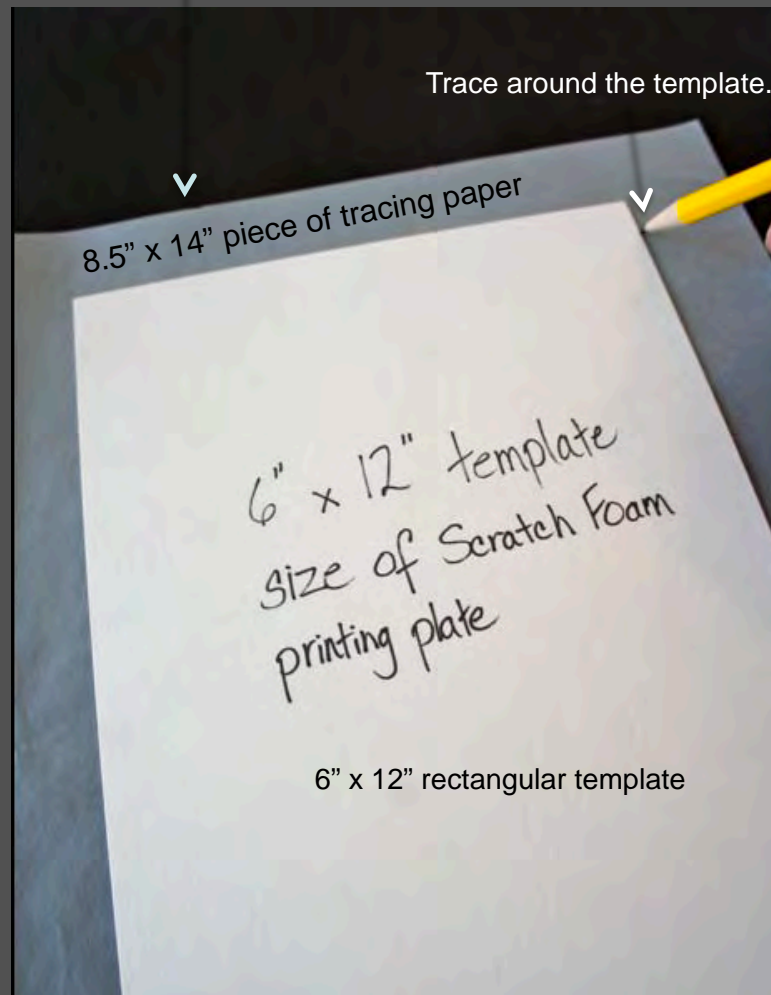


You now have two pieces of 8.5" x 14" tracing paper.

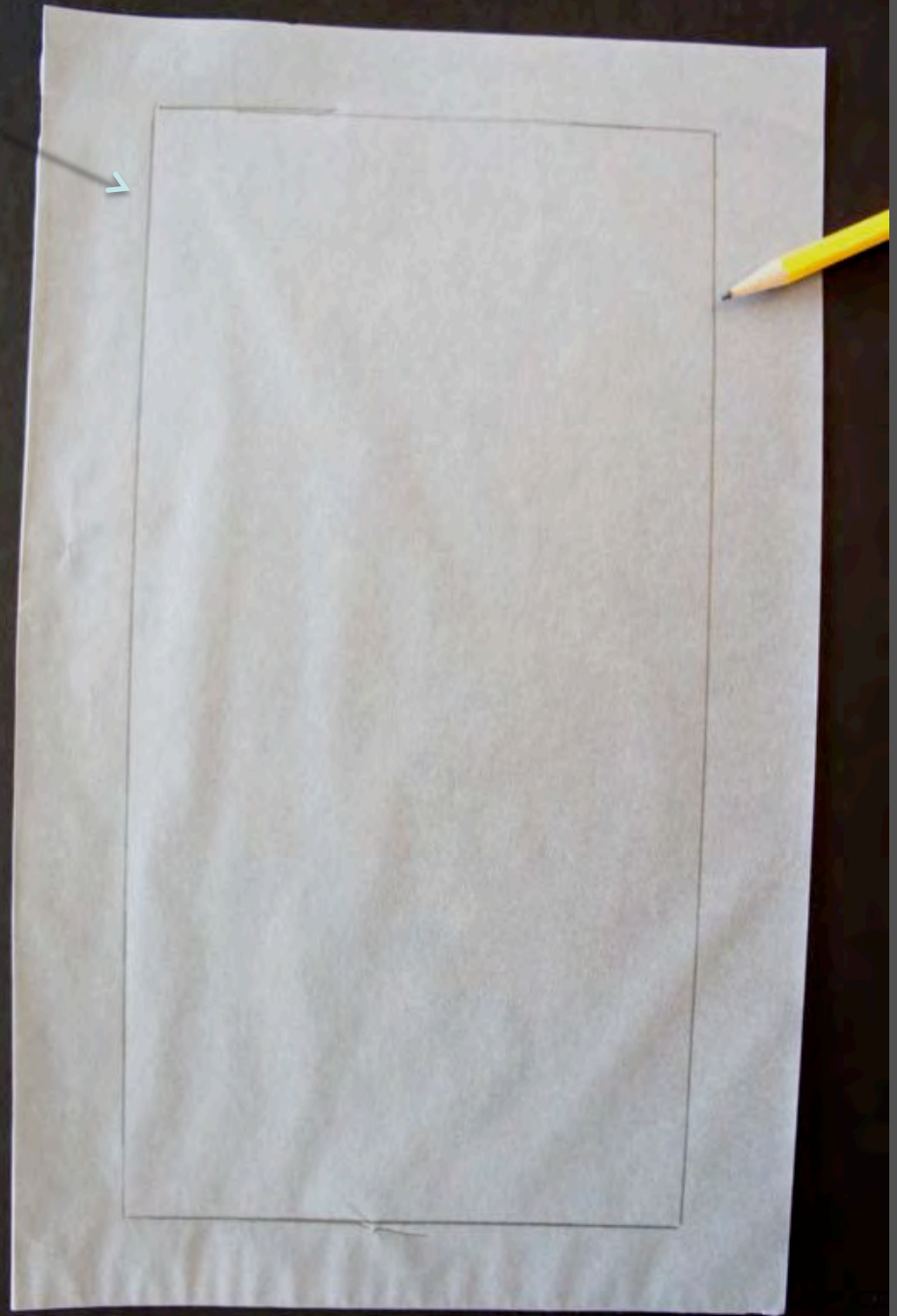


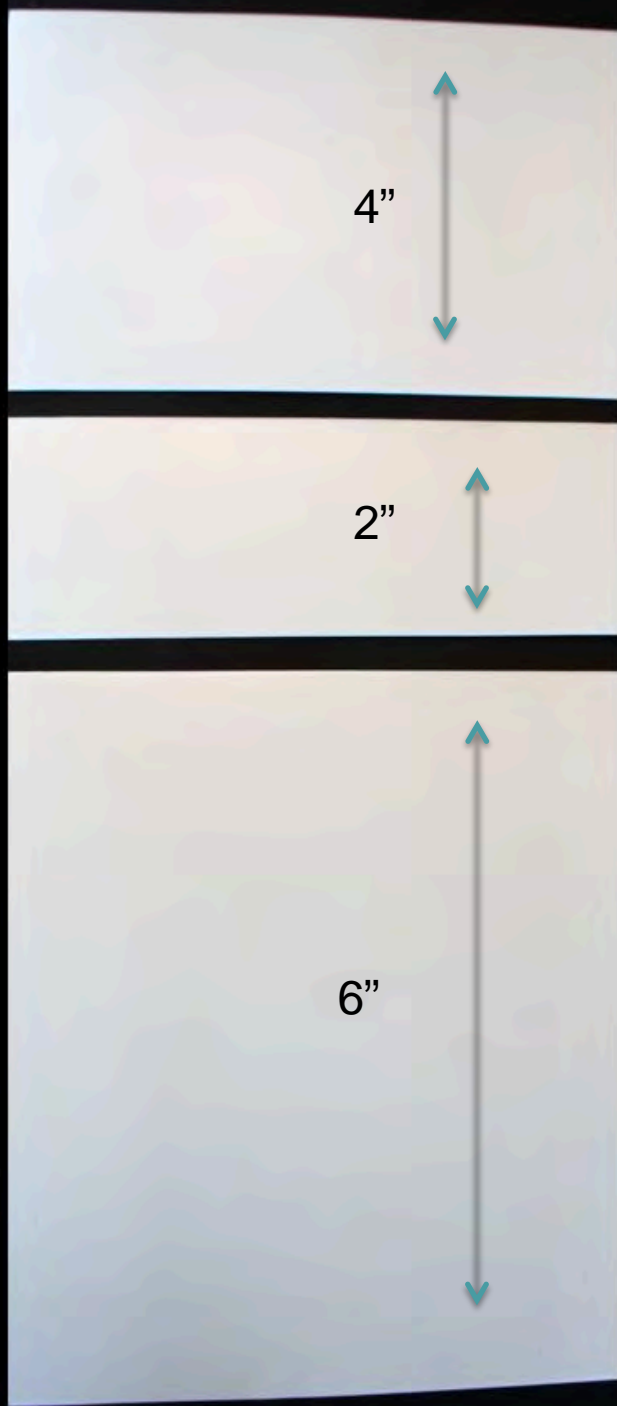
Create a 6" x 12" template from a piece of poster board.

Trace around the template to create a rectangular frame (the size of the Scratch Foam plate) on each piece of tracing paper. (Older students can trace the template themselves.)



The rectangular frame on the tracing paper

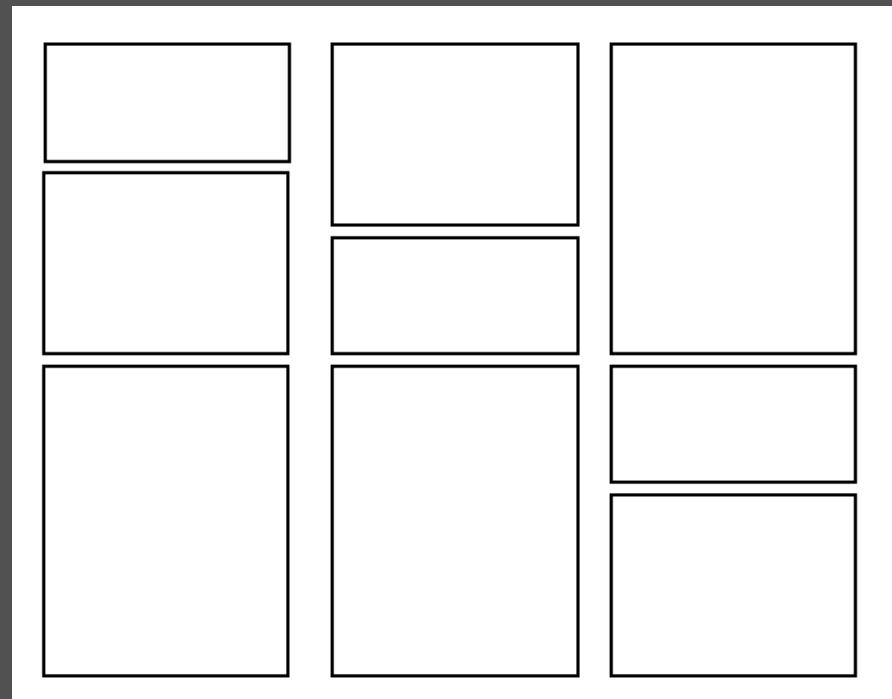




Precut each 6" x 12" piece of Scratch Foam into three sections (2", 4", and 6").

Each student will decide which section he/she will use for the foreground, middle ground, and background during the sketching part of the lesson.

Use the provided sketching sheet master (Word Doc in the folder for the three PDFs for this lesson series) and make two copies for each student. The sheet can be used as shown, or turned upside down for additional proportional choices.





Why does this project feature three separate rectangular plates rather than one long plate?

- Creating three plates invites students to carefully consider the **foreground, middle ground, and background** of the composition, and to make decisions about the proportions of each section.
- Students will not be making a heavy application of ink with a brayer. Instead, they will paint the ink onto the plate with a paintbrush, using a **dry brush technique** in some areas. Printing each plate separately prevents the ink from drying out too quickly during the printing process.

You have prepared all the materials you will need for this lesson.

Next, review the images provided in this lesson series (within the PDF). The following slides will help you facilitate discussions with your students about the artwork of Katsushika Hokusai and Henri Rivière. These discussions will “frontload” student artists with ideas and considerations that they will apply to their own creative art-making process.



Teacher Preparation for Discussion/Inspiration

Print or project the SBMA provided jpeg images of Hokusai's woodblocks:



Katsushika Hokusai, *Fuji Seen from the Senju Pleasure Quarter, Edo*, from the series "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji," Color woodblock



Detail from Henri Rivière, *The First Star at Landiris*, Lithograph

Henri Rivière, *The Last Ray*, Lithograph





Katsushika Hokusai, *Fuji from Tsukuda-jima, Sumida River*, from the series "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji," 1823- 1829 Color woodblock



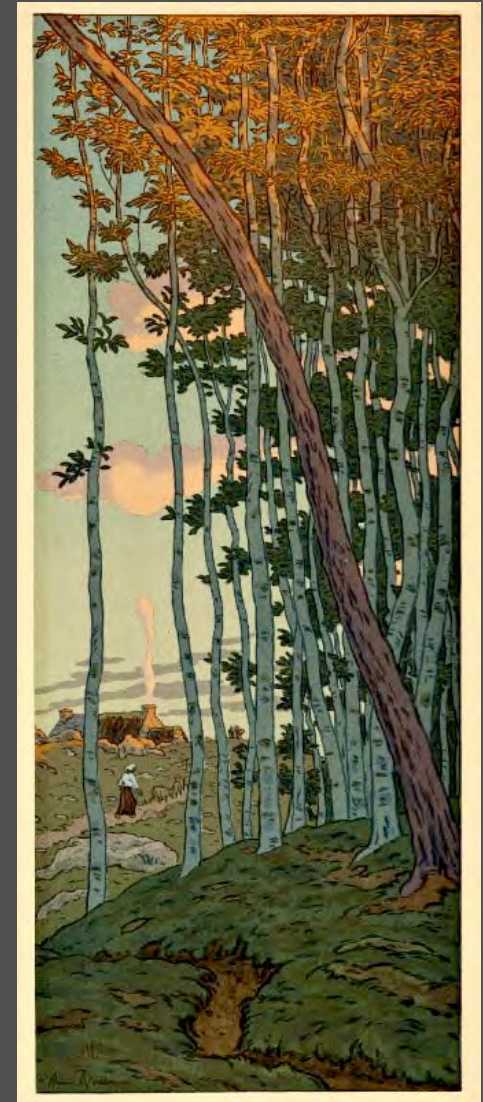
Katsushika Hokusai, *Dawn at Isawa in the Kai Province*, from the series "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji," 1823- 1829 Color woodblock

Discussion Points: Look Closely, Think Deeply

Project the SBMA provided jpeg images for this lesson (woodblock prints by Katsushika Hokusai and Henri Rivière).

While viewing each work of art, ask the students:

- **What's going on in this landscape?** Invite the students to find the **narrative** in the work of art. If there are people in the print, who are they? Where are they? What are the people doing? What natural elements are represented? What is the weather like? What season of the year do you think this is?
- For all of the above, ask:
What do you see that makes you say that?
- **What different kinds of lines do you see?** How would you describe them? Did the artist repeat **lines**? Where? How did the artist use different **lines** to create different **textures**?
- **What about colors?** How many do you see? How many places in the painting do these colors appear? Are they **warm** or **cool** colors?
- **Where do you see different values:** lights, mediums, and darks in this image? How does this affect the artwork?
- **How has the artist used perspective?** What appears to be close to the viewer? Far away? How has the artist achieved this effect?



Begin by projecting these images. Ask students how the prints are similar and different. What elements of nature can be found in both of the images?

Explain to students that they will create their own **monoprints** of a **landscape**. They will depict a scene from nature that features a particular setting and season of the year.

The details they include and the **colors** they select will help the viewer determine both the natural location and the season.



Next, invite students to think about the foreground, middle ground, and background of each image. What is happening in each of these three sections of the prints? Which section looks closest to the viewer? Which section did the artist make most important? Sometimes the mountain (background) is the smallest section of a print. Most of the “action” or narrative is taking place in the foreground.



The Great Wave off Kanagawa, from the Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji, Hokusai

What is going on in this woodblock print? Can you find Mt. Fuji, the sacred mountain of Japan? Which is larger, the wave or the mountain? How has Hokusai used proportion and perspective to add drama and emotion to the print?

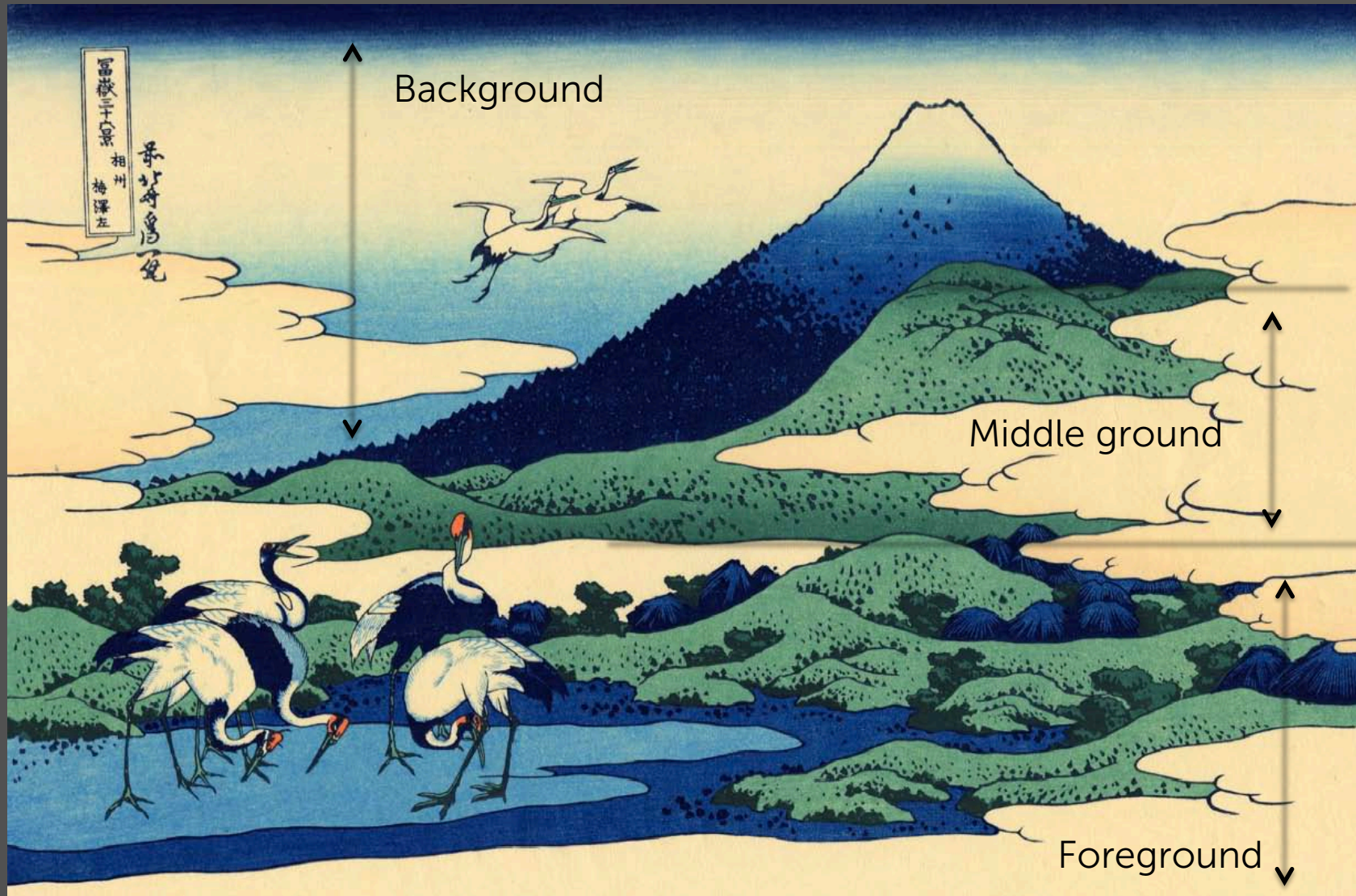
As the students look at this woodblock print by Hokusai, invite them to think about the **foreground**, **middle ground**, and **background** of each image. What is happening in each of these three sections of the prints? Which section looks closest to the viewer? Which section did the artist make most important? Sometimes the mountain (**background**) is the smallest section of a print. All of the "action" or narrative is taking place in the **foreground or middle ground**.



What is going on in this woodblock print? Can you find Mt. Fuji, the sacred mountain of Japan? Which is larger, the wave or the mountain? How has Hokusai used **proportion and perspective** to add drama and emotion to the print?

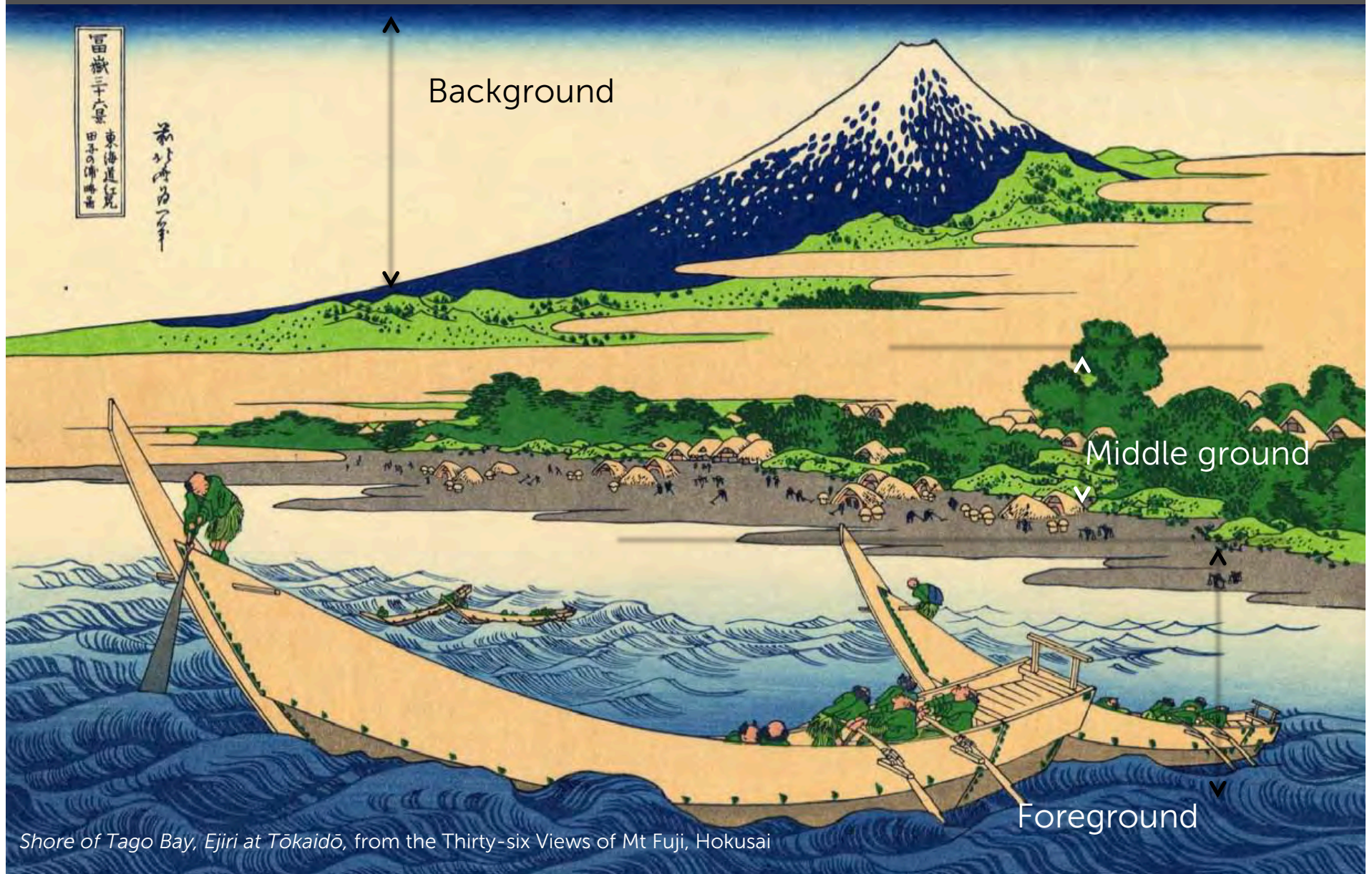
From Kanaya on the Tokaido, from the Thirty-six Views of Mt Fuji, Hokusai

In other prints, the sky and highest mountains are the focal points, and they are given a greater or equal amount of space as the foreground and middle ground.



Umegawa in Sagami Province, from the Thirty-six Views of Mt Fuji, Hokusai

Which section looks closest to the viewer in this print? Look at the size of the boat, the houses, and the mountain. How does Hokusai depict the trees that are at the base of the mountains? Students will remember these techniques when they experiment in their sketches.



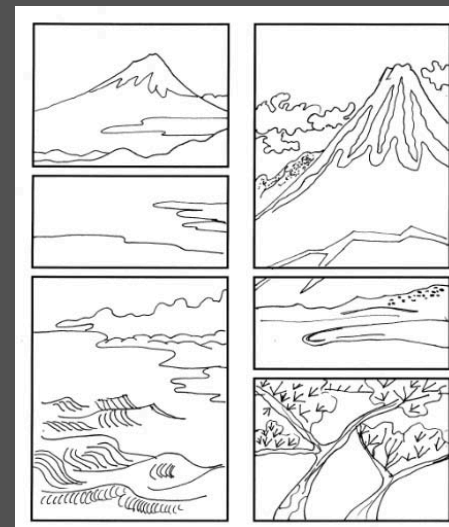
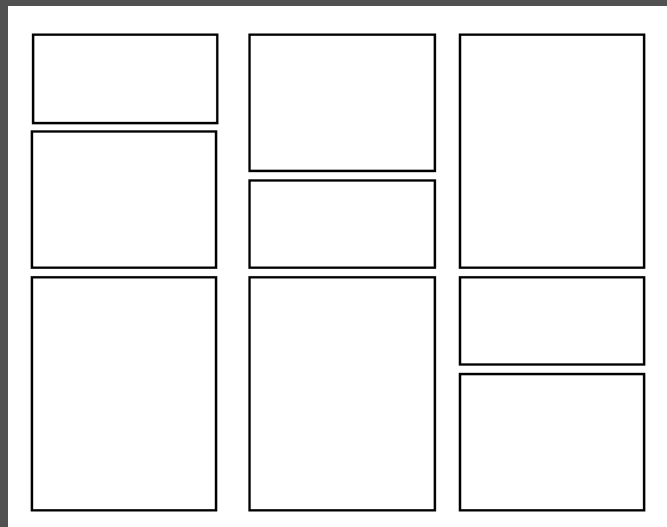
Before they begin to sketch, ask students to look closely at these details found in Hokusai's [woodblock prints](#). What techniques did he use? How did he use [line](#), [pattern](#), and [repetition](#)? What kind of lines depict movement? How did Hokusai use [shape](#) and [color](#)? How did he depict clouds? How did he create [textures](#)? Indicate foliage?

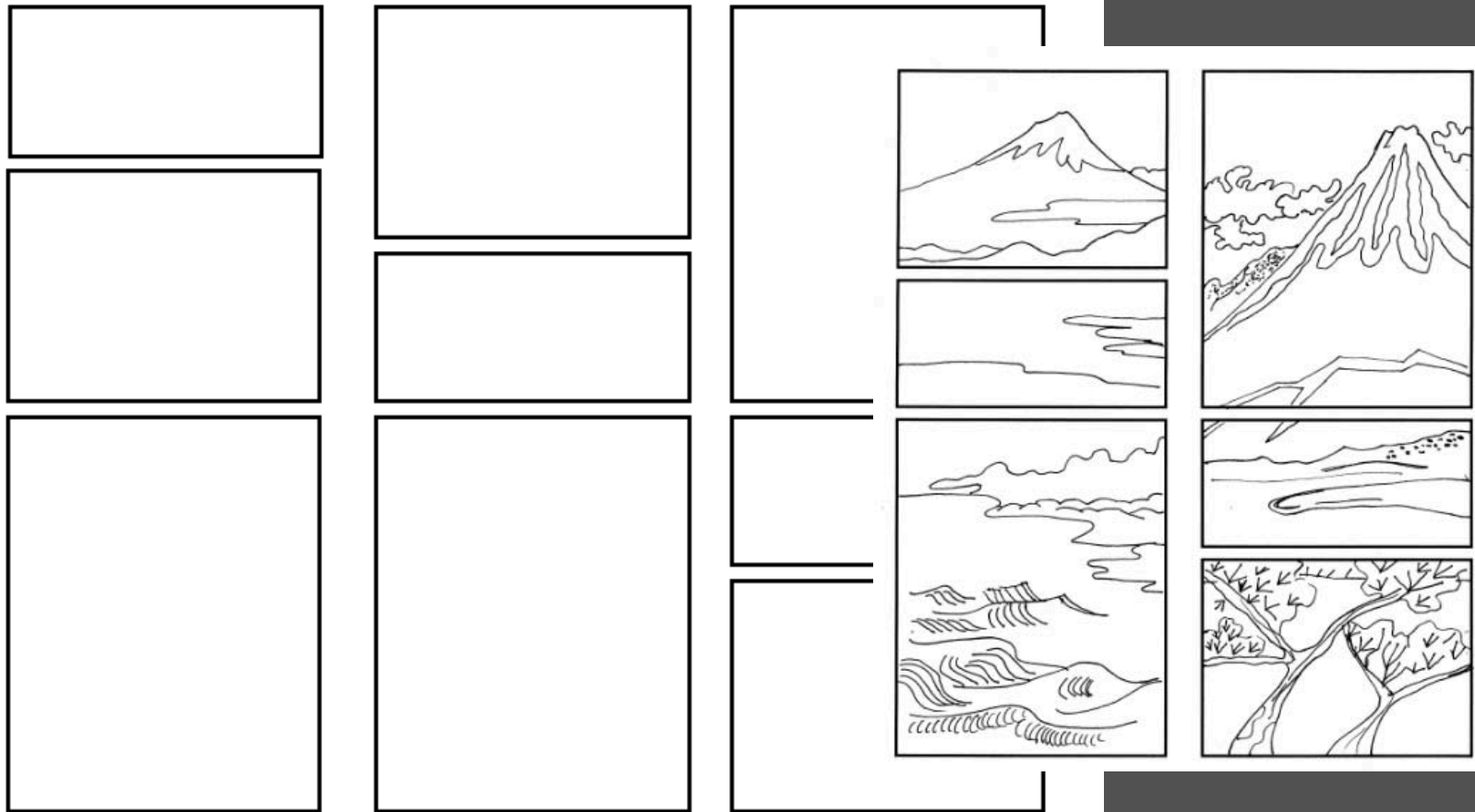


Print two copies of this master for each student (document is included in the folder for this lesson sequence).

Invite students to experiment with different sketches in the three oblong rectangles on the practice sheet. Note that each rectangle features a different combination of possible proportions for the foreground, middle ground, and background of the sketch. Students can make several experimental sketches using two or more practice sketch papers. Encourage them to work quickly, and to enjoy this improvisational phase. They should try out several ideas and make different choices in terms of:

- natural landscape elements (trees, bushes, land, water, mountains, hills, fields, bodies of water, clouds, foliage, rocks, etc.)
- optional people and/or man-made objects (boats, houses, carts, etc.)
- narrative elements (weather and its effect on the landscape, actions of people, etc.)
- the proportional size of the foreground, middle ground, and background, and the perspective of the sketch (what is closer to the viewer and further away)
- various lines (thick or thin, straight or curved, repeated lines, lines that create textures, etc.)





This part of the lesson is very important, and encourages students to experiment and try out the techniques they observed during the discussions. Will the **foreground** be the **focal point**? The **background**? What actions might be taking place in the sketch? What different natural elements will be included? After students have experimented with several sketches, ask them to choose one to refine during the next lesson.

This will be the final sketch for the **monoprint**.

This completes the first session
of the lesson sequence.

Collect the practice sketches.

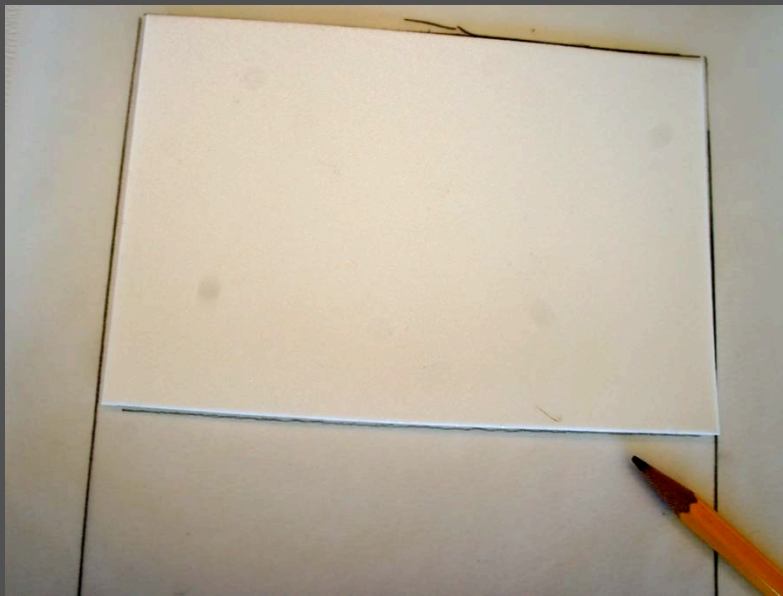
Session Two:

Transferring a refined full-size drawing to the Scratch Foam plates.

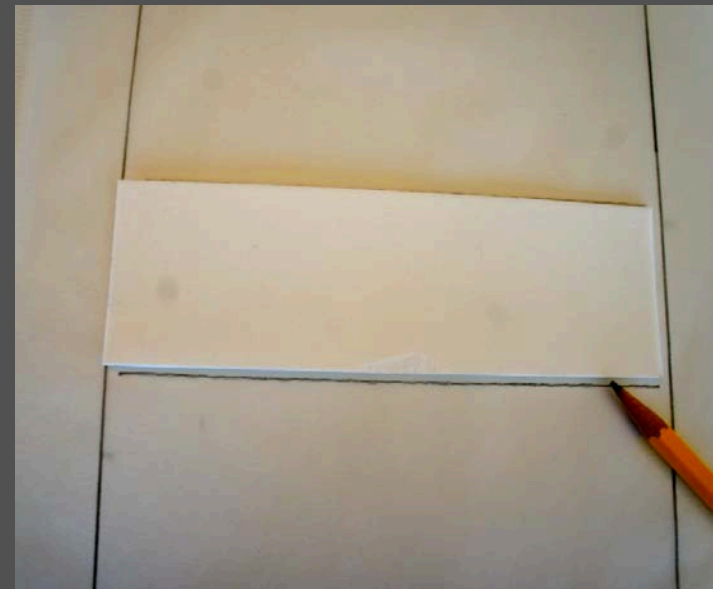


Begin the second session of the lesson sequence by passing out the prepared 8.5" x 14" pieces of tracing paper and the practice sketches from the previous lesson. To guide students in the process of recreating their chosen practice sketches on the tracing paper panels, instruct them to make indicator lines on the tracing paper that separate the foreground, middle ground, and background sections. The sequence of these sections should match the design of the practice sketch chosen for the **monoprint**.

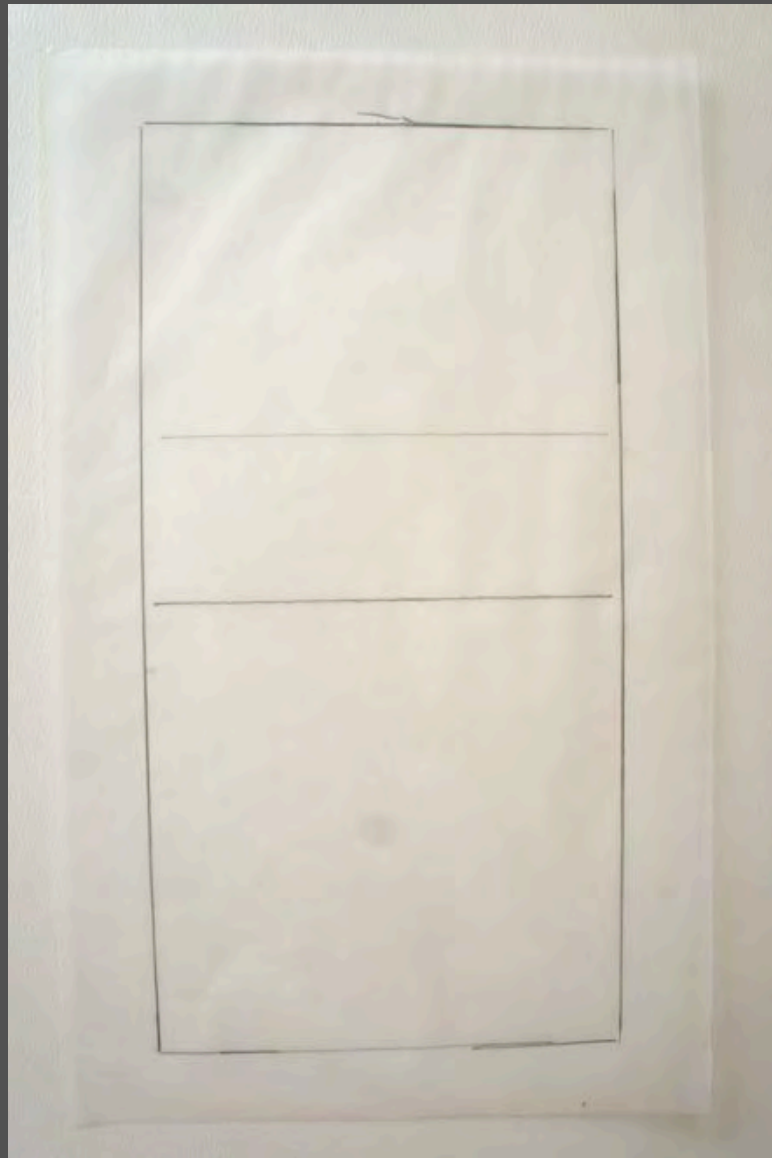
An easy way for the students to indicate the **proportions** of the **composition** is as follows:



Place the background section of Scratch Foam inside of the 6" x 12" rectangle. Position it at the top of the rectangle. Draw a light pencil line under the bottom of this section.



Next, place the middle ground section directly below the line that was just drawn at the base of the background section. Repeat the action, and lightly draw the line that separates the middle ground from the foreground. When a student removes the Scratch Foam piece, the three sections will be visible.



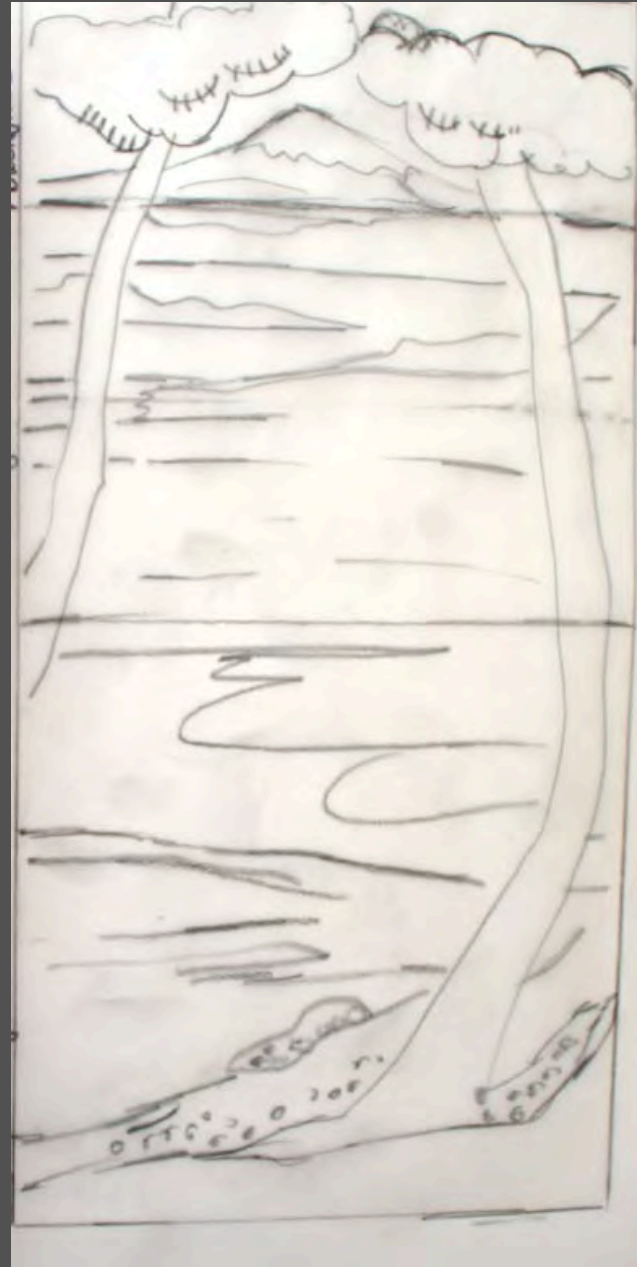
The tracing paper is ready for the sketch. Students should place the tracing paper over white construction paper or newsprint so they can see clearly.

Note: The initial sketch on the practice sheet will inform the student as he/she makes a refined version on the tracing paper. This refined version will be larger than the sketch on the practice sheet.

Students should use light pressure while sketching on the tracing paper.

A completed sketch – ready to be transferred to the three sections of the Scratch Foam plate.

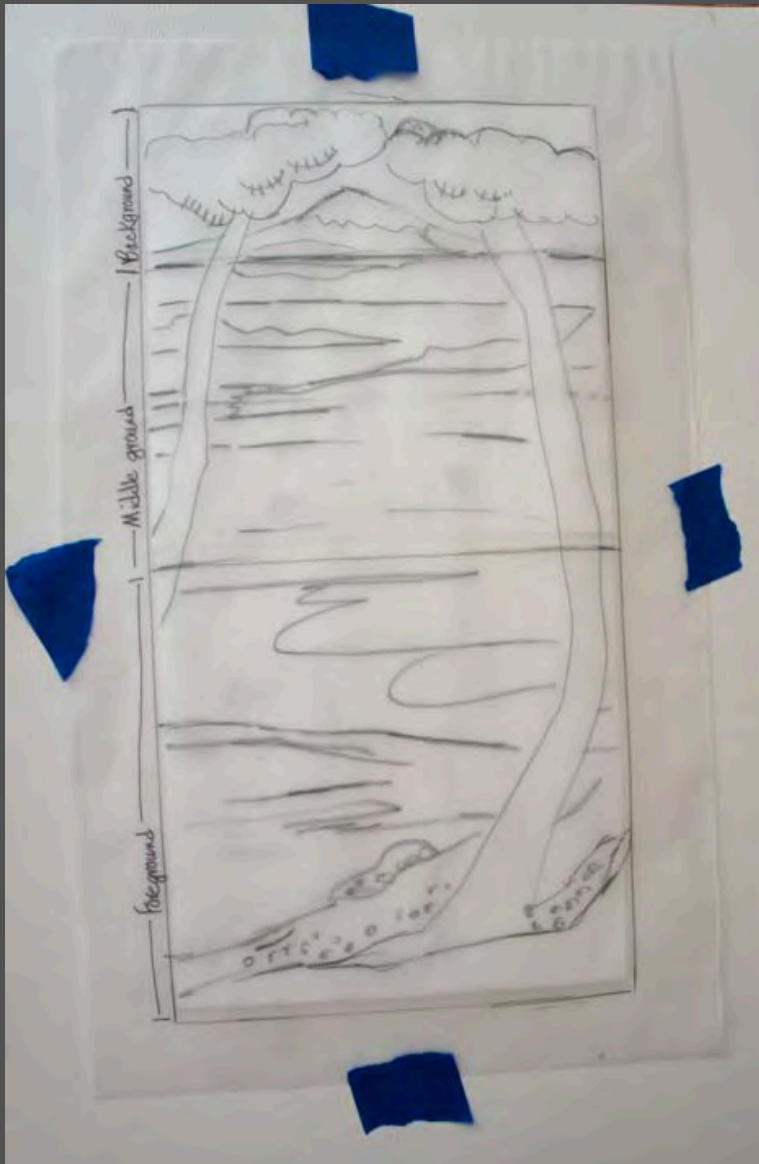
The students will need to flip the sketch over before placing it on top of the Scratch Foam plate. (When printing the image onto the black paper, it will be reversed.)



To facilitate the transfer of the sketch from the tracing paper to the Scratch Foam plate, tape the three sections (background, middle ground, and foreground) together.

Turn the taped sections over, and position the tracing paper sketch over the foam plate. Match up the edges of the plate with the edges of the rectangular frame of the sketch.





Option:

Place a small piece of painter's masking tape on the top, bottom, and sides of the tracing paper to keep it in position over the foam plate.

Next, instruct the students to trace over the lines of the final sketch with a blunt pencil, applying medium pressure. The object is for the pencil to create an indentation in the Scratch Foam plate. (Wherever the indentations are on the plate, the black construction paper will show through on the completed **monoprint**.)

Option: If students use a colored pencil to trace over the original lines of the design, it is easier to determine the lines that have been traced.



Note the black outline on the print that is created by the indention on the foam plate (caused by the pressure of the pencil).

Ask students:

Can you see the lines of indentation? The drawing has been successfully transferred (in most areas) to the three plates.

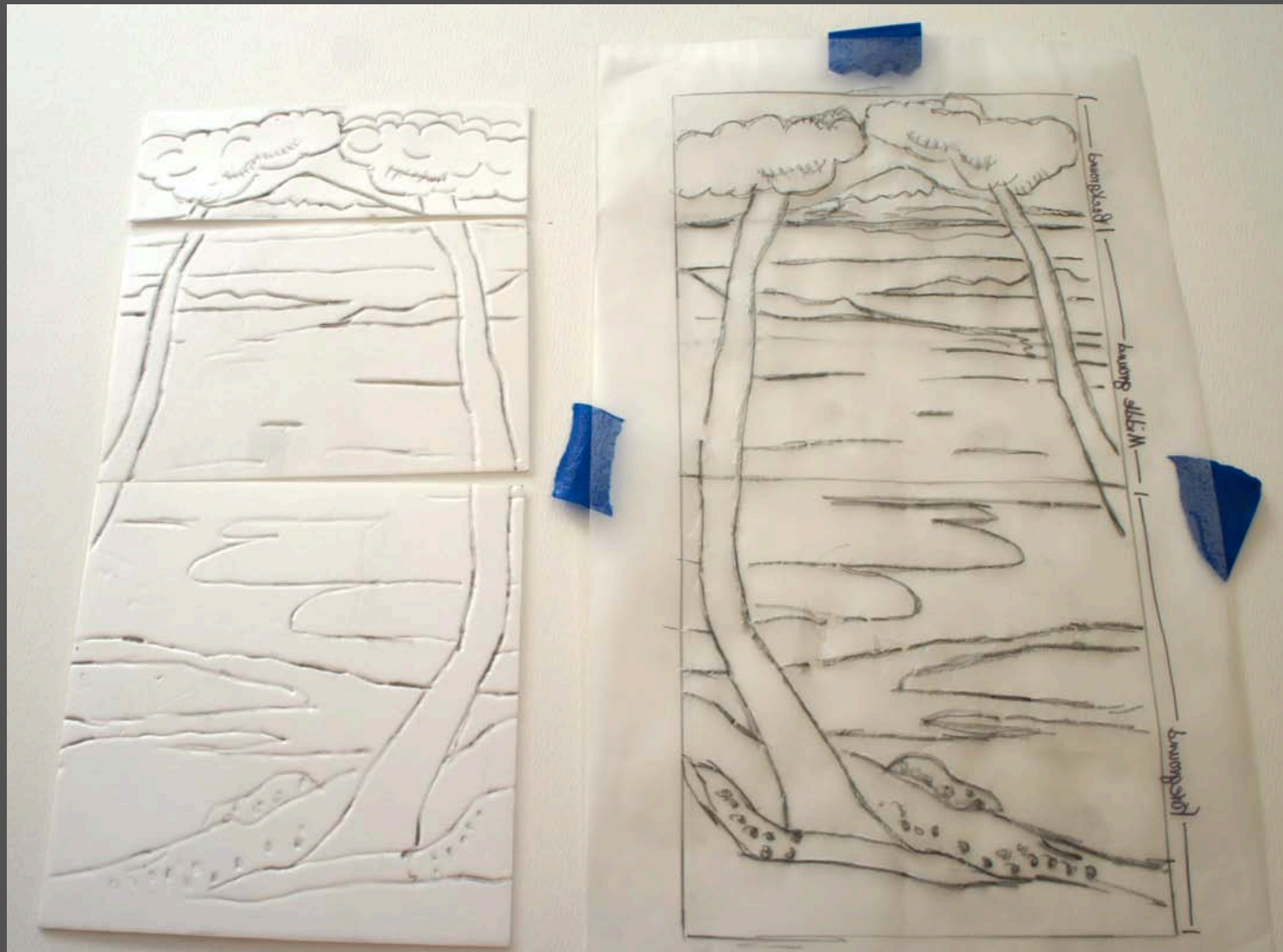


When the transfer of the design is completed, students can remove the tracing paper from the foam plate, and separate the three sections of foam (remove the tape).

Students should look at the lines in the foam. If some are not deep enough, they can carefully draw directly over the lines with the pencil until the indentation is clearly visible. Caution: The foam is sensitive. If too much pressure is applied, the pencil will cut through the foam plate.



Before and After:
The tracing paper design has been successfully transferred to the plates.





Artist Tina Villadolid's three plates, which she used three times to create three prints (above), each representing a different season of the year.

This completes the second session of the lesson sequence.

Collect each student's three Scratch Foam plates and tracing paper design. Make sure the students have written their initials on the back of the three sections of foam, and on the bottom of the tracing paper sketch.



Session Three: Printmaking

Pass out paper plate “palettes” (or plastic palettes) to students. They will also need paint brushes – flat and round brushes if possible. Because students will be changing colors as they apply ink to the plates, they will need to clean their brushes before dipping them into a different color of ink. Have water containers and paper towels available at the tables.

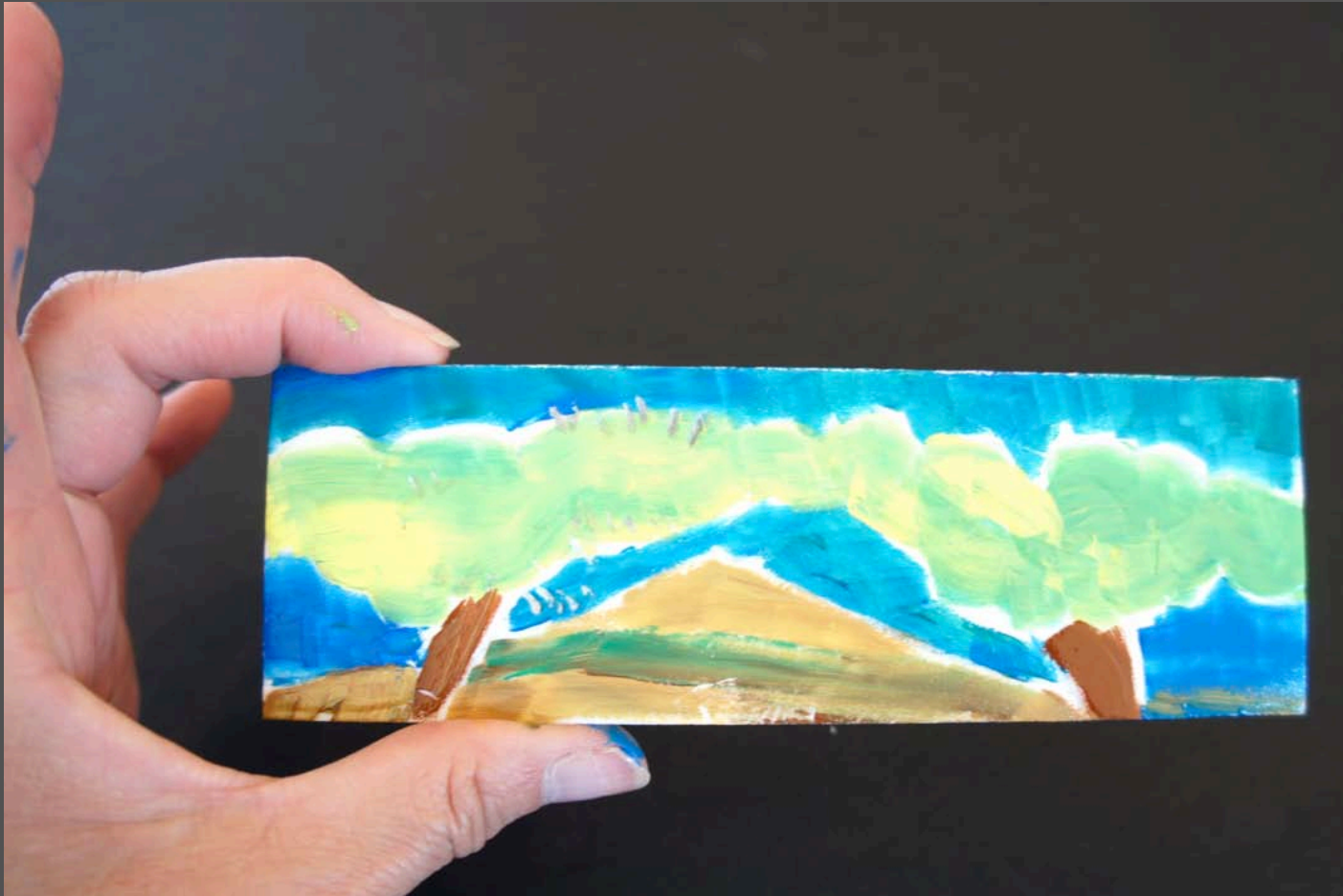
Pass back each student’s three foam plate sections and tracing paper sketch.

Before students begin inking the plates, facilitate a discussion and provide a demonstration on various techniques used when applying the ink to the foam plates. The images on the following slides can be used for visual reference.





With just a few basic colors of ink, students can mix several new colors. Adding green to blue creates teal, and adding yellow to green creates bright, spring green.



Before students apply ink to the plates, carefully review the next several slides. This stage of the project offers students multiple opportunities for experimentation, as well as an excellent opportunity to explore color mixing and color theory.



Discussion:

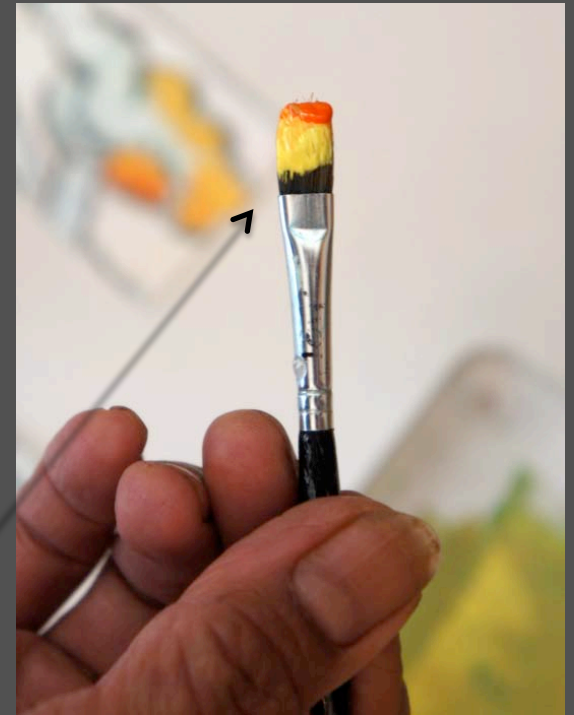
Look at the areas where color has been applied in this [monoprint](#) detail. Ask students: What do you notice? Is it solid color, or does some of the black paper show through?



This effect is created by using a **dry brush** technique. The brush should be fairly dry after applying ink to the brush. Test the ink on scratch paper. Is the background paper visible beneath the ink in some places? The **dry brush** effect adds **texture** to the print.



↳ Discussion: Look at the areas of color one more time. ✓
What is visible? A solid color, or several values, tints, and shades of color?



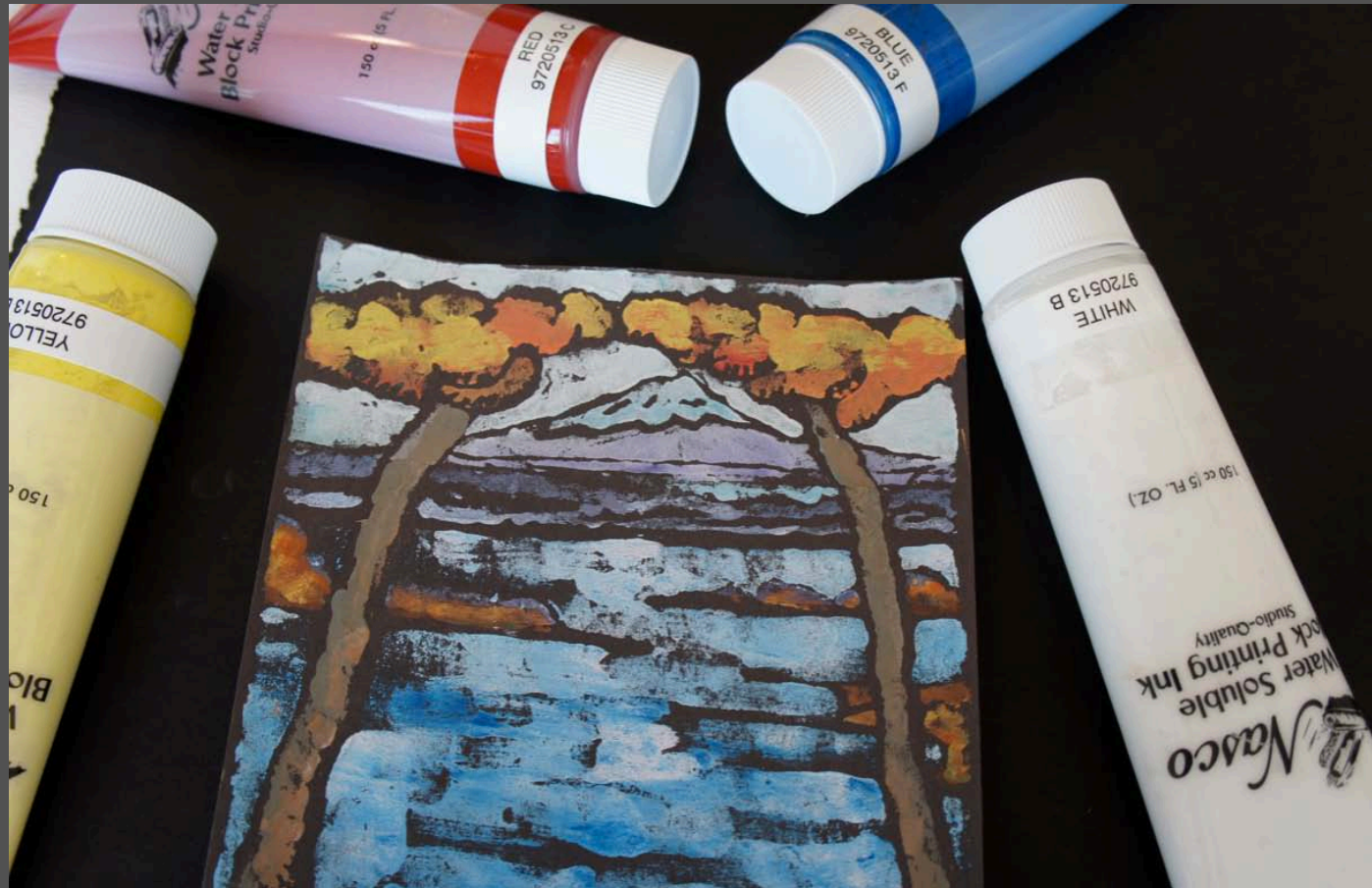
Discussion: To achieve this effect, demonstrate to students how to **load the brush** with a base color, and then lightly dip the tip of the bristles into another color (for example, yellow ink dipped into orange ink).



Ask:

How are these three prints similar and different?

They were all created using the same foam plate, but the ink was applied differently in each print.



Adding white ink to a base color creates **tints** that offer more **contrast** when printing on black paper. The next two slides demonstrate the effect.



➤ Some white mixed into blue ink

➤ White ink added to tip of mountain



Pure blue ink appears dark
when printed onto the black paper



More white added to ink /
greater contrast



Notice the dry brush technique this artist (SBMA Teaching Artist Tina Villadolid) used.

Ask students: Do you see the black paper underneath the areas of color?

How has the artist used lines, circles, and dots to create more **textures**, and to represent landscape elements?



Notice the application of the ink on this plate. Is it “globby” and thick, or evenly applied? Are there areas where ink colors are mixed? Are the indentations in the foam obvious? Is the white of the foam plate visible in some places? These are important considerations. Avoid a heavy application of ink. When the ink is applied more lightly, or a [dry brush technique](#) is used, details stand out.



Consider the season of the year
when making color choices.

Ask students:

Which colors represent spring?
Winter? Summer? Fall?

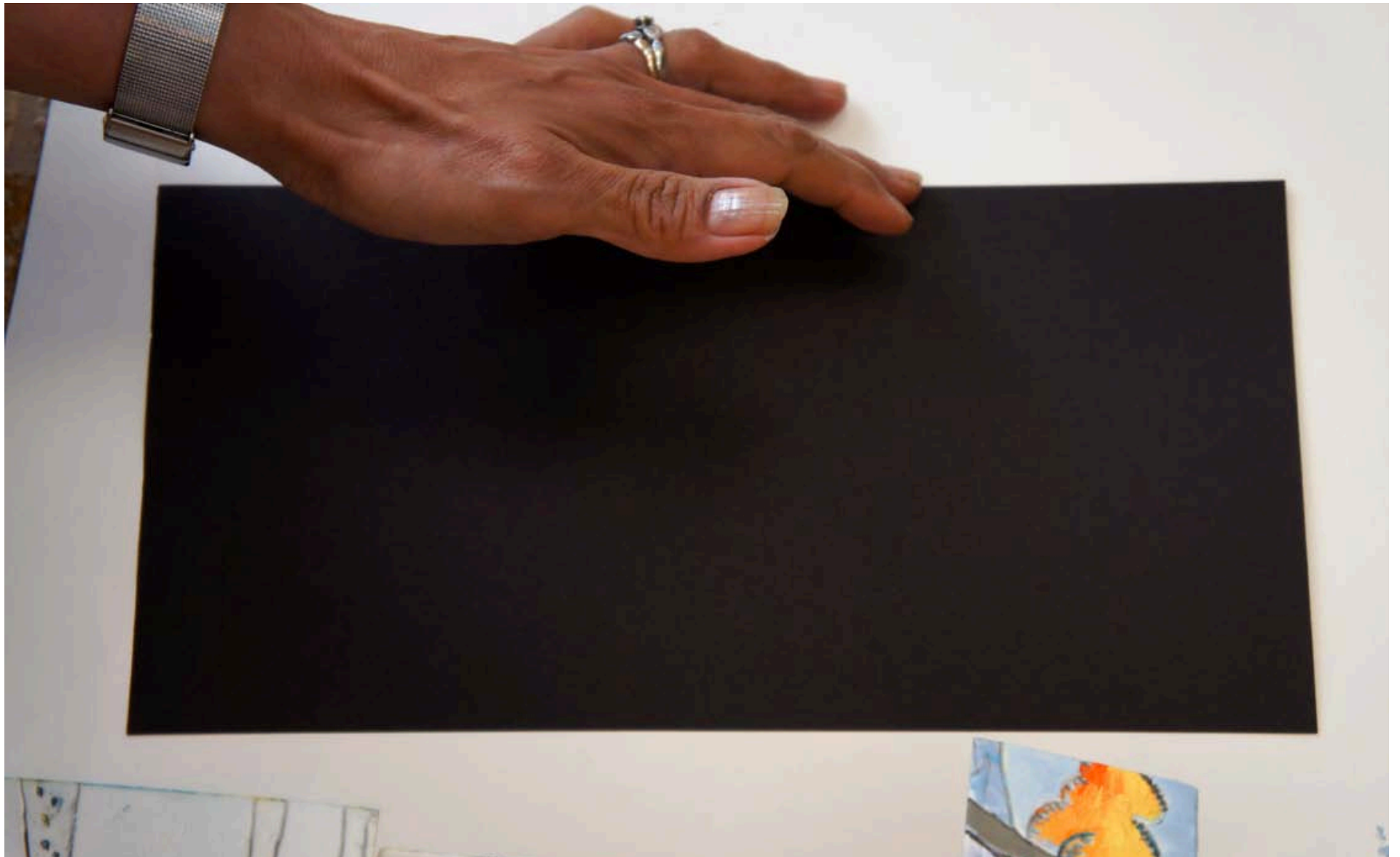
Which season is represented in
this print? What do you see that
makes you say that?



Which season is represented in each of these prints?



Which season is represented in each of these prints?



Have the black background paper ready, as the ink will soon begin to dry.



Pick up the painted plate that will go at the top of the print, and carefully position it (ink side down) at the top of the black background paper.



Demonstrate to students how to carefully position both hands over the plate. Using a smooth, even motion and consistent pressure, they will rub the plate with their fingers, and/or use the palm of one hand for the largest plate.



Carefully "pull the print" (remove it from the right to the left side.)



The top plate has been successfully printed, and now the artist will ink the middle plate and print it in the same way.

The final step is to print the bottom plate.



When all three plates have been printed, the division between the three plates is barely perceptible.



When one print is completed, students can re-ink the plates in different colors to represent different seasons.



A final option is to create a small signature "chop" from scrap foam. It can be as simple as this one that Tina created. Remind students to reverse the letters. The easiest way to do this is to write the name on an oblong piece of tracing paper (cut to the size of the chop), flip it over, then trace over the letters onto the small rectangle of Scratch Foam. As an alternative, students could use symbols they create for themselves. The chop is printed OVER the selected section of the print.



Experimental sketching, transferring the refined sketch to the foam plates, adding a painterly application of ink, and finally printing the image – it's a creative process.



This lesson sequence was developed by Tina Villadolid, SBMA Teaching Artist.

A message from Tina:

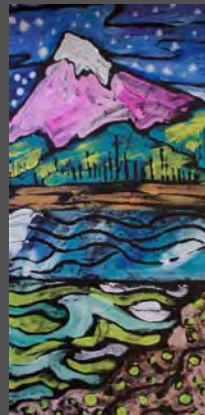
"I'm happy to bring this art project to other teachers - that's how I started, by learning from colleagues who generously offered their ideas, knowledge, and experience- so it's my pleasure to bring my own discoveries to the table. We all have the same objective: to help make art accessible to students as a means to express oneself and hopefully to nurture a sense of wonder about the world."



Prototypes created by Tina Villadolid

SBMA Teaching Artist Kendall Pata worked with Tina and adapted this lesson for grades K, 1, and 2. The student samples that follow this slide feature the work of the young artists Kendall worked with during the SBMA ArtVentures Spring Camp.

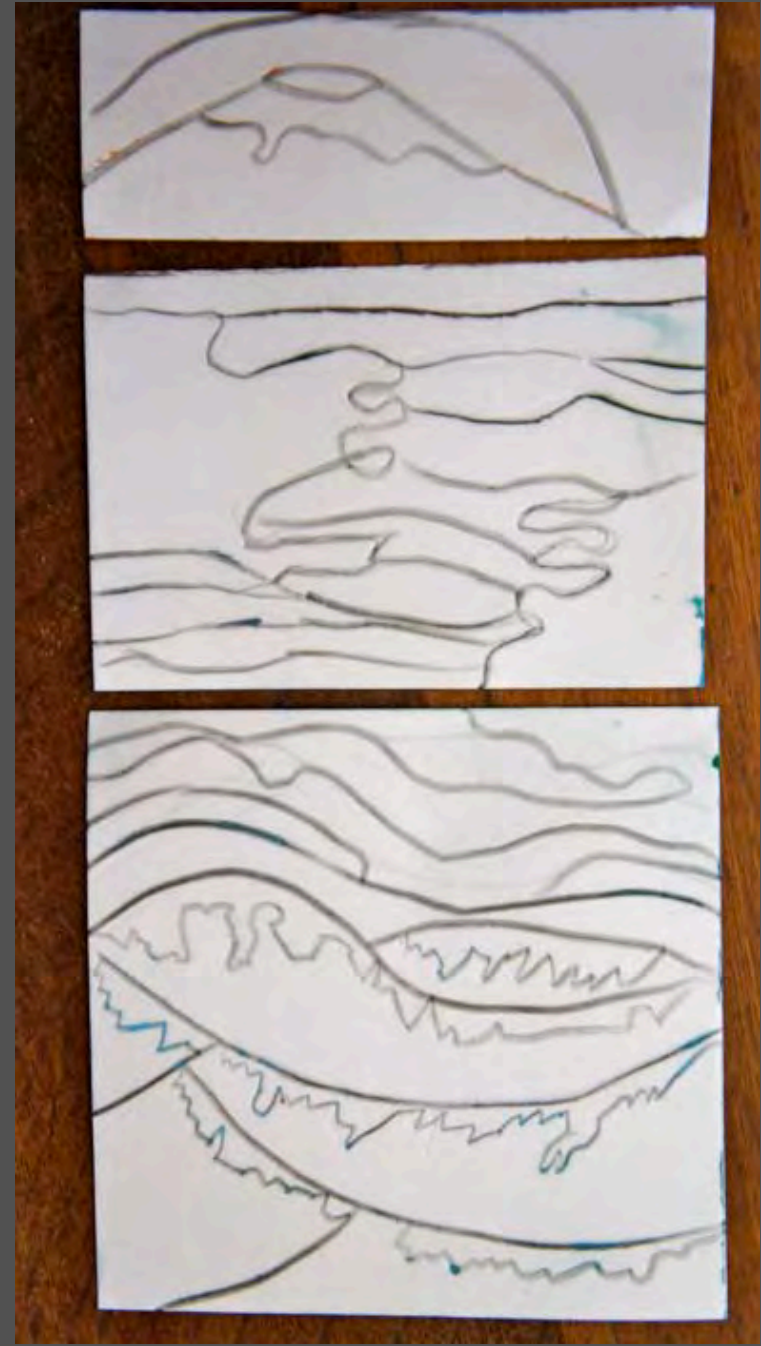
Here are Kendall's prototypes that she created during demonstrations with her students:



Self-Portrait, Kendall Pata
(see Rico Lebrun Lesson PDF for creating self-portraits in this style)

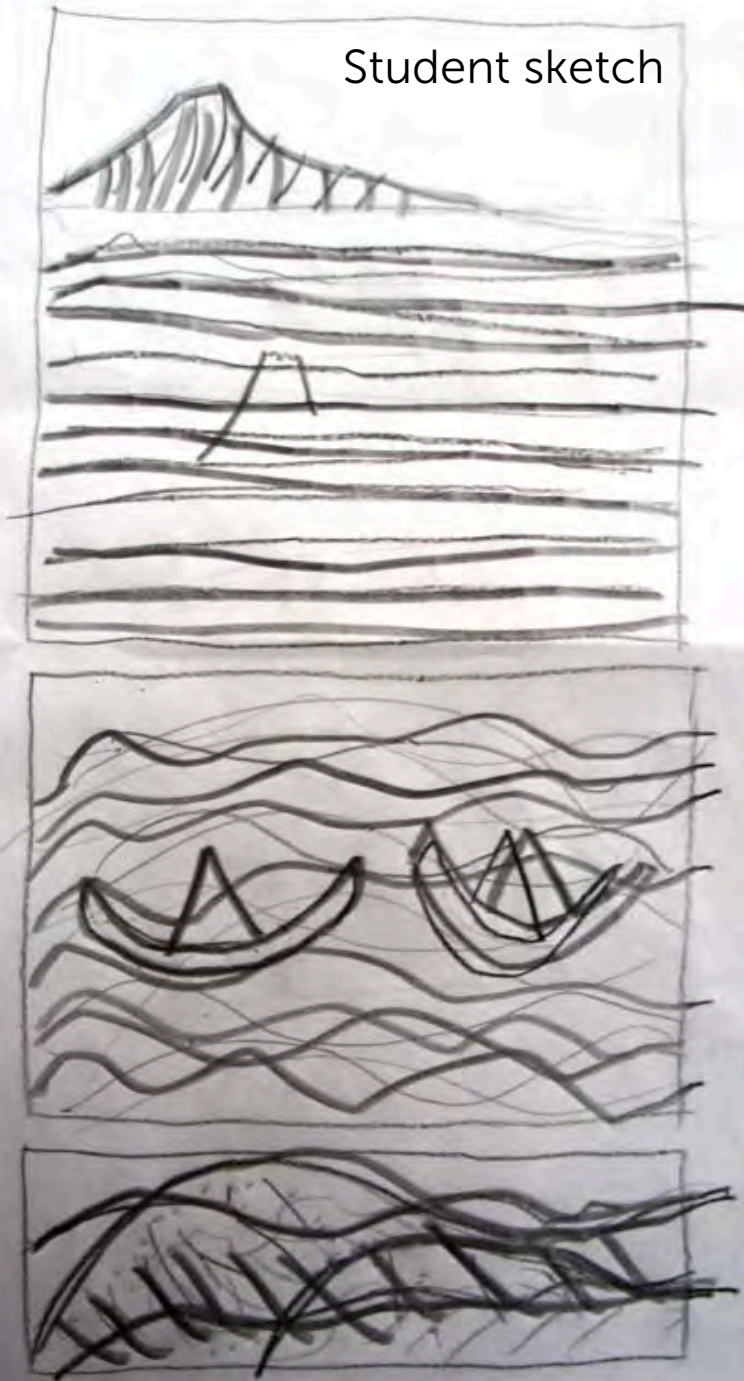


Student samples, grades K, 1, 2

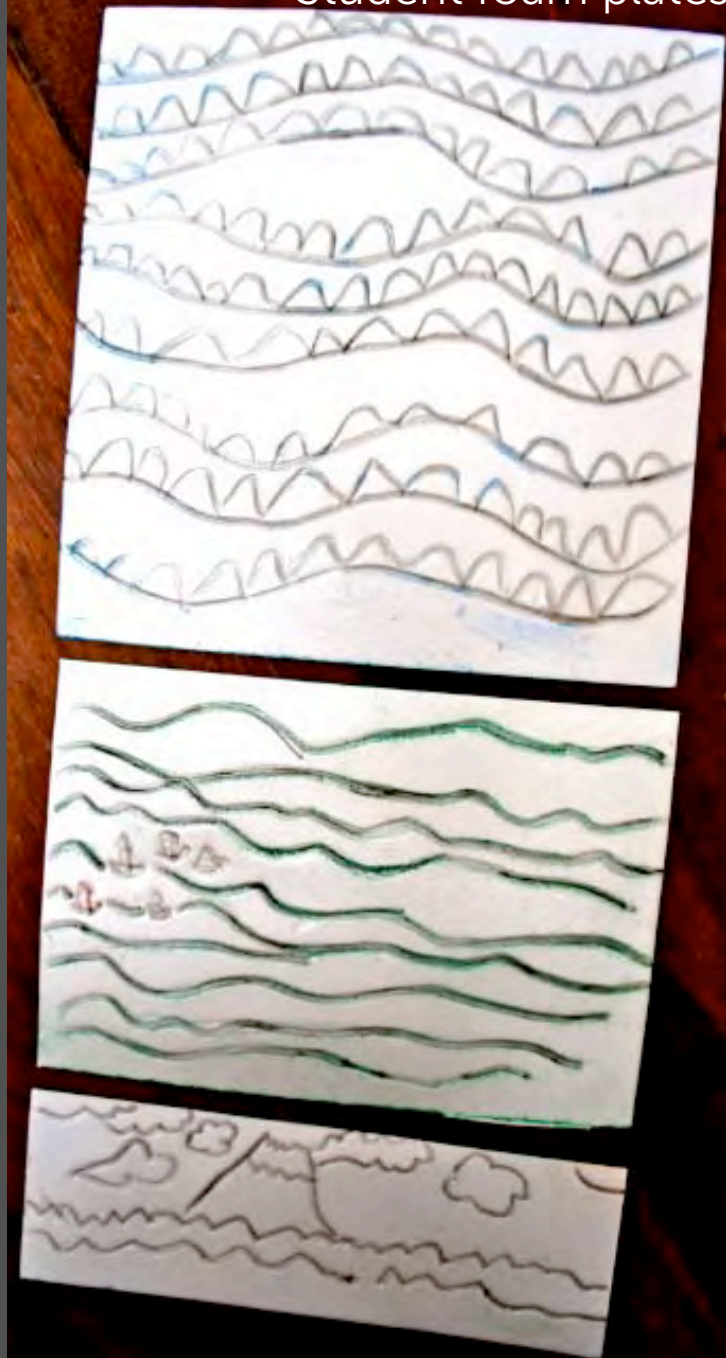




Student sketch

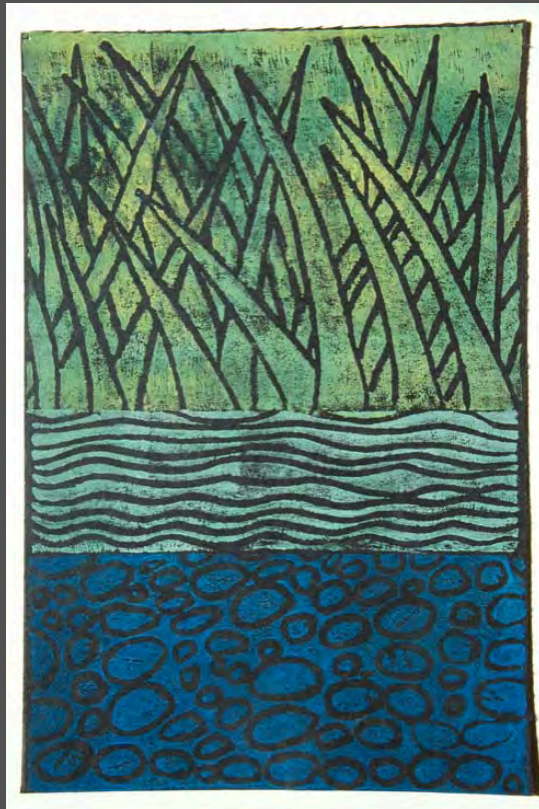


Student foam plates



Artists improvise as well as their students, and lesson design is also a creative process. This next series of slides demonstrates Tina's adaptation of this project.

In this version of the lesson, the prints have a more geometric aspect, and feature a simplified abstraction of realistic landscapes.



In this student sample, notice that the three plates focus on three basic natural landscape elements: tall grass, water, and rocks.

Shapes and lines are juxtaposed for visual interest.



Here is another sample that emphasizes more organic shapes in the top and bottom plates, and geometric, repeated shapes in the middle ground.



This is a print created with the three plates on the preceding slide. Note the **contrast** of the **cool** and **warm colors**.



This was printed on
brown cardstock.



Student self-reflection is an important conclusion to all lesson sequences. Encourage students to think about their process and final products. What did they learn? What new techniques did they attempt? What are they satisfied with in the piece? What would they do differently next time?

Invite students to look carefully at the work of their peers, noting different approaches and varied applications of the same techniques.

Glossary of Terms

Background: the part of a picture or pattern that appears to be in the distance or behind the most important part.

Color: the visual sensation dependent on the reflection or absorption of light from a given surface. The three characteristics of color are hue, value, and intensity.

Composition: the organization of elements in a work of art.

Contrast: difference between two or more elements (e.g., value, color, texture) in a composition; juxtaposition of dissimilar elements in a work of art; also, the degree of difference between the lightest and darkest parts of a picture.

Depth and Dimension: the richness and strength of a color, and/or the artistic quality of appearing to be convincing and lifelike.

Dry Brush: a painting technique in which a paint brush that is relatively dry, but still holds paint, is used.

Foreground: part of a two-dimensional artwork that appears to be nearer the viewer or in the front. Middle ground and background are the parts of the picture that appear to be farther and farthest away.

Focal point: *The place in a work of art on which attention becomes centered because of an element emphasized in some way.*

Highlights: a very light area in a painting or image that provides contrast, illumination, or the appearance of illumination.

Landscape: a depiction of natural scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers, and forests, and especially art where the main subject is a wide view, with its elements arranged into a coherent composition.

Glossary of Terms (continued)

Line: a point moving in space. Line can vary in width, length, curvature, color, or direction.

Line Weights: different thicknesses of lines.

Loading the Brush: Filling the brush with water or liquid pigment so the brushstroke will flow easily and evenly across the paper.

Middle ground: Area of a two-dimensional work of art between foreground and background.

Monoprint: a single impression of an image made from a reprintable block, such as a metal plate used for etching, a litho stone, or wood block.

One-point perspective: A way to show three-dimensional objects on a two-dimensional surface. Lines appear to go away from the viewer and meet at a single point on the horizon known as the *vanishing point*.

Organic: refers to shapes or forms having irregular edges or to surfaces or objects resembling things existing in nature.

Pattern: anything repeated in a predictable combination.

Perspective: a system for representing three-dimensional objects viewed in spatial recession on a two-dimensional surface.

Printmaking: the transferring of an inked image from one surface (from the plate or block) to another (usually paper).

Proportion: the size relationships of one part to the whole and of one part to another.

Rhythm: Intentional, regular repetition of lines or shapes to achieve a specific repetitious effect or pattern.

Glossary of Terms (continued)

Self-Portrait: a painting, drawing, photograph, sculpture or other representation created by an artist of him/herself, especially of his/her face.

Shade: color with black added to it.

Shading: darkened areas in a picture.

Texture: the surface quality of materials, either actual (tactile) or implied (visual). It is one of the elements of art.

Tint: color lightened with white added to it.

Value: the lightness or darkness of a color. Values often include light, medium, and dark tones.

Vanishing point: in perspective drawing, a point at which receding lines seem to converge.

Woodcut printing: Woodcut is a relief printing artistic technique in printmaking in which an image is carved into the surface of a block of wood, with the printing parts remaining level with the surface while the non-printing parts are removed, typically with gouges. The areas to show uncolored are cut away with a knife or chisel, leaving the characters or image to show in 'black' at the original surface level.

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