FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / K–2 / 16

Small Wonders Print Lab

TEACHER GUIDE • lesson design & facilitation

Grade band: K–2 | 3–4 sessions, 35–45 minutes

Media: washable art media and cut-paper supplies

The artistic problem

Build a set of original prints from classroom-safe found textures.

Essential question: How can one texture become a new visual pattern?

Place-based cultural lens: Study textures of sidewalks, fabric, tree bark, and school materials.

Learning targets

- Investigate the question: How can one texture become a new visual pattern?
- Apply relief printing, repeated units, ink control, rotation in a deliberate original composition.
- Use critique evidence to improve relief printing and name one next step.

Student-visible success criteria

- The final artwork solves this problem: Build a set of original prints from classroom-safe found textures.
- Artwork includes two distinct textures and a revised print after testing.
- Process evidence shows two different options before selection.
- Visual decisions demonstrate relief printing and support the intended audience.
- Feedback results in at least one visible revision that the student can explain.

Standards & studio habits

Louisiana K–4 cluster: VA-CE-E1, VA-CE-E3, VA-CE-E5, VA-AP-E6

Studio Habits of Mind: Observe, Envision, Express, Reflect. These habits are developed interactively, not in a fixed rank or sequence.

Instructional alignment: Louisiana benchmark codes are official broad grade-cluster benchmarks; specific expectations are developed locally. The ten instructional stages come from the supplied Artistic Investigations framework.

Preparation & materials

- Drawing paper or sketchbook for idea studies
- washable art media and cut-paper supplies
- Samples and images from reliable sources, with attribution
- Tools appropriate to local safety rules and grade level
- Choice of visual, oral, or written reflection tools

10-stage teaching sequence

01 / Engage Present the artistic question: How can one texture become a new visual pattern? Give students two contrasting examples that do not dictate a finished product.

02 / Investigate Study textures of sidewalks, fabric, tree bark, and school materials. Gather visual evidence and note what is observed rather than assumed.

03 / Skill Studio Demonstrate relief printing, repeated units, ink control, rotation. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.

04 / Generate Develop two possibilities for the challenge: Build a set of original prints from classroom-safe found textures. Change the focal point, material, arrangement or viewer perspective between drafts.

05 / Plan Compare sketches to the success check (two distinct textures and a revised print after testing); choose a direction and state why it better communicates the intention.

06 / Produce Produce an original visual response using relief printing, repeated units, ink control, rotation; conference on one technical choice and one contextual question.

07 / Critique Partners identify where the artwork communicates the intended idea and locate evidence of relief printing in the work.

08 / Revise Revisit the specific checkpoint: Two distinct textures and a revised print after testing. Make one visible change after critique and preserve the initial view for comparison.

09 / Present Present with a title, medium, one key artistic decision and any needed credit or contextual limitation.

10 / Reflect Reflect: What evidence proves you improved relief printing? What will you try or investigate next?

Studio sessions & evidence checkpoints

Session	Teaching move	Capture evidence
Day 1	**Notice + explore** Study textures of sidewalks, fabric, tree bark, and school materials.	Record one noticing and a quick mark-making sample.
Day 2	**Skill studio + choices** Demonstrate relief printing, repeated units, ink control, rotation. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates. Children develop two possibilities.	Photo or scan of two studies, with a selected idea.
Day 3	**Make + conference** Create the artwork; show one decision at a time.	Teacher notes use of relief printing.
Day 4	**Critique + revise + share** Peer observation, visible change and oral/visual reflection.	Save before/after samples and next goal.

Key technique to model

relief printing, repeated units, ink control, rotation

Access without lowering the artistic goal

Include sensory-friendly alternatives to ink and tactile exploration. Offer physical samples, captioned images, accessible demonstrations, flexible planning modes, and alternate materials while retaining the common visual learning target.

Teacher coaching questions

- What is the visual problem you are solving?
- Which decision communicates your intended meaning most clearly?
- What does your reference prove, and what are you still imagining?
- What could a viewer misunderstand?
- What visible revision will strengthen your next version?

Cultural care

Do not print from living trees, historic surfaces, or another artist's design without permission.

Stretch & explore

Use the same stamp to create three different rhythms.

Design provenance: Original Studio Fieldnotes investigation developed for the 50-lesson library; informed by the teacher-supplied ten-stage Artistic Investigations architecture and reflective Studio Habits framework.