ART ACTIVITY

PRINTS + SHAPES

Create playful patterns and tessellations from shapes through printmaking!

Age/Grade: All

Materials:
- Scratch foam sheets
  - Purchase from Amazon
  - Recycled foam plate
  - DIY cardboard printmaking plate
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Printmaking ink or paint
- Brayer, paint brush, or empty toilet paper roll
- Plexi or washable surface
- Paper
- Baren or the back of a large spoon

Activity Ideas:
- **K–2**: Printed Patterns
  Cut out a variety of shapes from the foam. Create different patterns by alternating shapes and changing colors. Explore using both geometric and organic shapes.
- **3–5**: Radial Symmetry Prints
  Radial symmetry is a type of balance in which the parts of an object or picture are regularly arranged and radiate from a central point. Snowflakes are natural examples of radial symmetry.
- **6–12**: Tessellation Prints
  A tessellation is a shape repeated many times to create a design without gaps or overlapping. View the work of M.C. Escher in this online gallery for inspiration.
- **Extra:**
  - Create a painted backdrop on the paper you intend to print on for an added element of texture and color. *Let paper dry before printing*
  - Add additional details and color once your prints have dried using pens, markers, or colored pencils.

Resources:
- View images of Artspace Studio Artist, Becky Joye’s artwork on her website for shape and pattern inspiration.
- Surrealist artist M.C. Escher is known for his mathematical artwork that explored tessellations and symmetry. View this online gallery for examples of his work.
K–2: Printed Patterns
Artmaking Directions

1. Draw different shapes into the foam.

2. Cut out shapes.

3. Apply printmaking ink or paint to the shapes.

4. Stamp the shapes onto paper.

5. Alternate colors and shapes to create fun patterns.

Share your creations with us! Tag us: @artspacenc #ArtspaceAtHome
3–5: **Radial Symmetry Prints**

**Artmaking Directions**

1. Cut a 3 x 3” square out of paper.

2. Fold into 2 triangles by folding at a diagonal.

3. Unfold and draw a design into a triangle on one side.

4. Trace the design with sharpies.

5. Refold the paper and trace over the design onto the other triangle.

6. Unfold and tape square to a 3x3” foam square.

7. Trace over your design pressing it into the foam.

8. Remove the paper from the foam - you have created a tile to print.

9. Apply an even layer of ink to the tile with the brayer or paint brush.

10. Place your tile face down and apply pressure with your hand to print the image.

   **TIP:** Draw an arrow on the back of your tile pointing to the center of the page, this will be a guide.

11. Remove the tile.

12. Repeat steps 9-10 three times. Each time, rotate the tile, lining it up with the last square you printed. Be sure the arrow is pointing to the center of the page each time.

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6–12: Tessellation Prints
Artmaking Directions

1. Draw your design lightly into the foam.  
   TIP: Start in one corner and end in adjacent corner.

2. Cut out the shape - do not flip or rotate it.

3. Slide the cut out shape to the opposite edge of the original square. Attach the shapes with tape on the back. This is your tile.

4. Draw in any additional details.

5. Apply an even layer of ink to the tile with the brayer or paint brush.

6. Place your tile face down and apply pressure with your hand to print the image.

7. Remove the tile.

8. Line the tile up with the printed design like a puzzle piece and continue printing.

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