



R&R with Gustav Klimt

Create a Klimt-esque Serpent Print
using Repetition and Rhythm

Gustav Klimt (1862-1918) was an Austrian born painter/illustrator, and a leading member of the Art Nouveau movement. The style of Art Nouveau can be easily recognized because it is full of decorative patterning, curving lines, and plant motifs. Klimt used pattern in most of his work, often repeating rectangles, scales, spirals, and circles, as well as vining forms. His use of repetition and rhythm by incorporating rich patterning was a major element of his work.

Klimt's subject matter was most often a single woman or a couple embracing. However, in his Sea Serpent series, Klimt painted women floating in water adding a fish-like serpent behind the bodies. He adorned every surface with gold and pattern, using green and gold-leaf thread entangled around the women's bodies.

Compositions similar to Klimt's in visual interest can be made using printmaking techniques to repeat geometric or organic shapes. Various stamping techniques are used to create a complex background, while the "serpent" is made separately and added to the background to complete the composition. The addition of metallic paints adds the final layer of interest.

GRADES 3-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. View artworks by Gustav Klimt.

Materials (required)

Strathmore® 500 Series Charcoal Papers, White, 19" x 25" (10703-1001); one per student

Blick® Block Print Ink, 8 oz (40305-); share at least five colors across class, including metallics

Fiskars® Student Scissors, 7" long, 3" cut (57016-1065); share five across class

Blick® Scholastic Short Handle Golden Taklon Flat Wash, Size 1" (05859-1001); share five across class

For older students:

Soft-Kut Printing Blocks, 9" x 12" (40401-1003); share two blocks across class

Small Wooden Linoleum Cutter, Handle and 6 Cutters (40207-1069); share five across class

Small Wooden Linoleum Cutter, Handle Only (40207-1001); share five across class

Hygloss™ Wooden Blocks, 48 pieces (60452-1048); share one package across class

Aleene's® Quick Dry Tacky Glue, 4 oz (23884-1104); share two across class

For younger students:

Creativity Street® Wonderfoam Foam Rollers and Paint Tray (06039-1049)

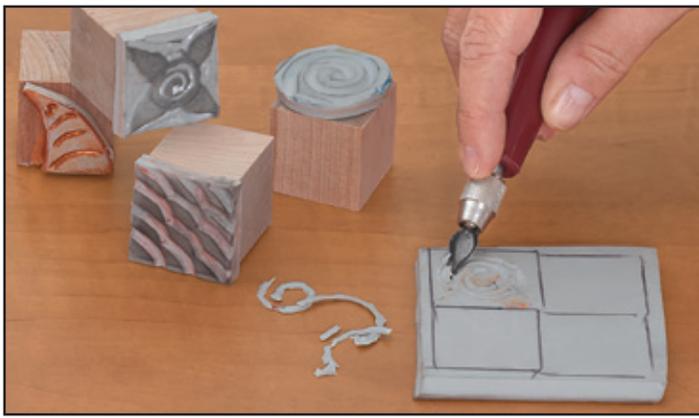
Inovart® Printfoam, package of 30, 6" x 9" (40403-1022); one sheet per student

Optional Materials

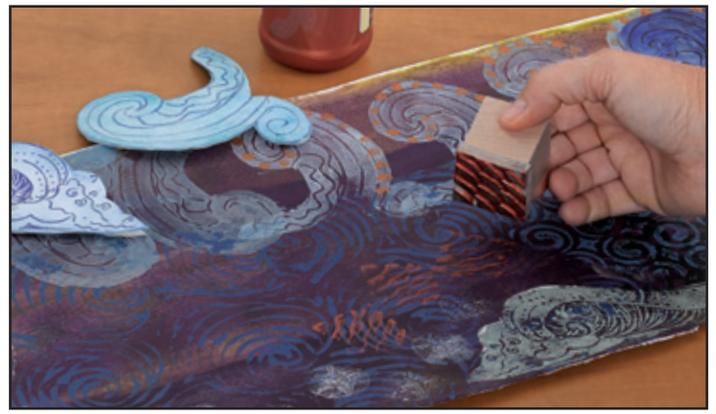
Richeson® Rubbing Plates (62108-)

Amaco® Clay Texture Rollers (30704-)





Step 1: Make stamping blocks by carving Soft-Kut linoleum and gluing it to wooden blocks. (Younger students use Printfoam for making stamps).



Step 2: Create a richly patterned background by stamping, painting, and using texture plates. Accent with metallic ink.

Process

1. Cut the Strathmore charcoal paper in half lengthwise. One half of the sheet will be the background of the print, and the other half will be used for making a serpent.
2. Begin by creating stamps to repeat in the background composition, as well as for patterning on the serpent. Trace around a wooden block onto the piece of Soft-Kut linoleum and, using carving tools, make a stamp by carving a simple design. Cut the linoleum to fit a wooden block and glue it to one side (younger students can emboss on Printfoam and glue this to a block, or cut out the Printfoam and use it as is). Each student should make one or two stamps, and they can be shared across the classroom.
3. For the background: Start by brushing or rolling on a solid, dark background color. On top of this, add repetition and rhythm using stamps, texture plates, rollers, etc., in progressively lighter colors. Accent the top layer with gold or silver metallic ink. Simply brush or roll the ink onto the stamps, plates, etc.
4. For the serpent: Sketch a serpent or fish-like form onto the other half of the paper, using most of the length of the sheet. Using lighter, complementary ink colors and the items above, add patterning to the serpent. Don't forget the metallic accents! Cut the serpent out.



Step 3: Make a heavily patterned "serpent," cut it out, and fit it in slots on the background.

5. Place the serpent onto the background. Using a pencil, mark two or three areas on the bottom or side edges of the serpent. At these marks, make two or three curved cuts in the background paper to allow the serpent to be held in place, and to add additional depth to the composition.



Process, continued

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1:

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.

K-4 Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses.

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas.

9-12 Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use.

Content Standard #4 — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

K-4 Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures.

5-8 Students describe and place a variety of art objects in historical and cultural contexts.

9-12 Students describe the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within varied cultures, times, and places.