

CREATIVE LEARNING  
NERAM

## Creating a Collagraph, by artist Emily Simson



### YOU WILL NEED

- PVA glue (woodwork glue)
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Small Paint brush, 1cm wide
- Paper, eg cartridge or photocopy paper or art papers
- Firm cardboard, eg back of notebook or part of a shoe box
- Collage materials can be anything fairly flat from fabric scraps to ribbed card and dried leaves, more examples of collage materials, string, wool, lace, feathers, cardboard from cereal boxes.
- A flat washable surface, eg plastic tray or glass cutting board or baking tray
- A spatula or paddle pop stick to mix the ink/paint
- Wooden spoon or bamboo baren

## **STEP #1 Gather your materials to make a collage...**

Many 'easy to find' materials can be used to make a Collagraph in the same way a collage is made, by gluing onto a base board to create an artwork.

Things to look for when collecting items to make a Collagraph are textured card and paper, dried grass or leaves, fabric scraps, lace, cotton wool, string, wool, lace, feathers, cardboard from cereal boxes and bubble wrap.

It is important to keep these found materials fairly flat without sharp points or high areas that could tear the paper when the print is made.

The final image will be made by the areas that are sitting above the base board- this is called relief.



## **STEP #2 Create an art-making surface and gather materials from the kitchen...**

A flat washable surface, eg plastic tray or glass cutting board or baking tray

From the kitchen, a spatula or paddle pop stick to mix the ink/paint and a wooden spoon

### STEP #3 Create a base or 'plate'

The following instructions will let you see how 2 colours can be printed to make the artwork but making a single colour plate works just as well.

Cut 2 rectangles from a firm cardboard- these are cut from the back of a sketch book. (These are 16x12cm)

PVA or woodwork glue a paintbrush and scissors are needed too.



#### STEP #4 Get creative and start drawing/cutting some shapes to make your first base or 'plate'...

Here are some shapes drawn onto a cardboard biscuit box, with the idea of making a leafy background. The leaf shapes are then arranged onto the base cardboard along with some textured card. The dots were made using a hole punch.

Some string pieces and dried grass stems have been added to make a grassy area.



## STEP #5 Get creative and start drawing/cutting some shapes to make your second base or 'plate'...

The second plate uses cotton wool, string, cardboard from a pasta box and some hessian. Once you are happy with the placement of the collage materials glue it down with the full strength PVA/Woodwork glue, and a brush.

\*Leave these too dry for a while to make sure everything is stuck down well.



## STEP #6 Seal the Collagraph...

The next step is to seal the Collagraph with half/half mixture of the glue and water. This glue mixture helps to stick everything down firmly to the cardboard base and makes it more waterproof.

Using the brush and glue mix cover all of the collage shapes and the base board. When the front is dry give the back of the cardboard a coat of glue mix to seal it too.

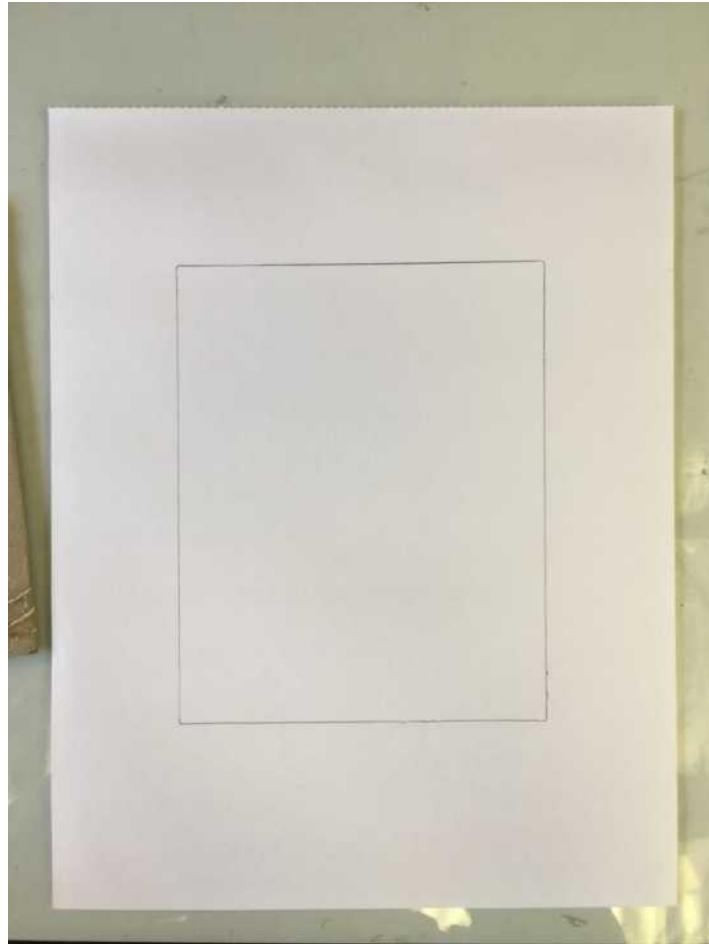


### **STEP #7 Create a template...**

A Template is a good idea to keep the paper straight especially when printing 2 colours.

This is made by using a piece of paper the same size as the paper you will be printing onto.

Place the cardboard plate in the centre and draw around the edge.



## STEP #8 Prepare your paint...

**Acrylic or Printing ink? The first demonstration uses printing inks, the second uses acrylic paint...**

### Using Printing Inks You will need

2 colours of Relief printing Ink, oil based or water soluble  
Hard rubbers Rollers

### Using Acrylic Paint You will need

Firm foam rollers 10-15cm wide, found in hardware stores or craft supplies  
Acrylic paint, craft or student quality  
A water spray bottle

The first demonstration below is using printing inks and hard rollers.

This picture shows oil based and water soluble ink, a spatula for mixing, a wooden spoon and barren for rubbing.

A flat surface like a glass cutting board or old baking dish is needed to roll out the ink.

Choose the colours for your print and roll out on a flat surface so it is evenly covering the roller.





### STEP #9 Start to roll the ink onto the Collagraph...

Roll ink onto the Collagraph, here it will become clear how the raised areas become the image. Make sure everything gets the ink that you want to show up in the end artwork. The first colour is ready and now placed onto the Template lining up with the pencil outline we made before.



### STEP #10 Make your print...

Place the art paper directly in line with the template paper and use a wooden or kitchen spoon or bamboo baren to rub over the back of the paper. This transfers the ink to the paper. Once you have rubbed over the entire print thoroughly, gently lift the paper upwards and put aside.



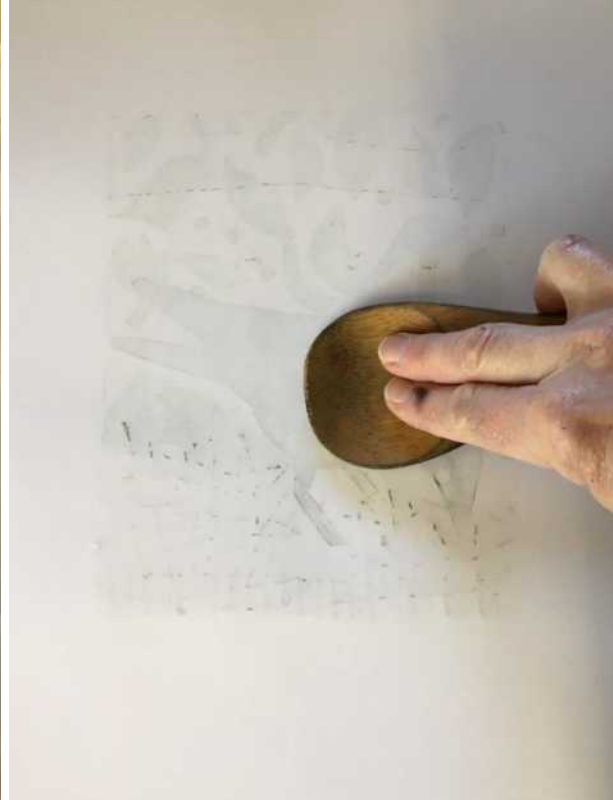
### STEP #11 Roll ink onto the second base or 'plate'...

Roll the second colour onto the next Collage, covering all of the shapes and textures. Some ink can end up in places you were not expecting so now is the time to wipe it off with a rag.



**STEP #12 Repeat the printing process...**

Now place this on the Template paper as before. Place the already printed paper directly over the Template paper and rub all over to transfer the ink.



### STEP #13 The big reveal...

Now the paper can be gently pulled off to reveal a printed Collagraph. This



**A Collagraph can be printed many times. If you want to try in different colours, clean with vegetable oil for oil based inks soap and water for water soluble ink.**

Below is an alternative method using acrylic paint.

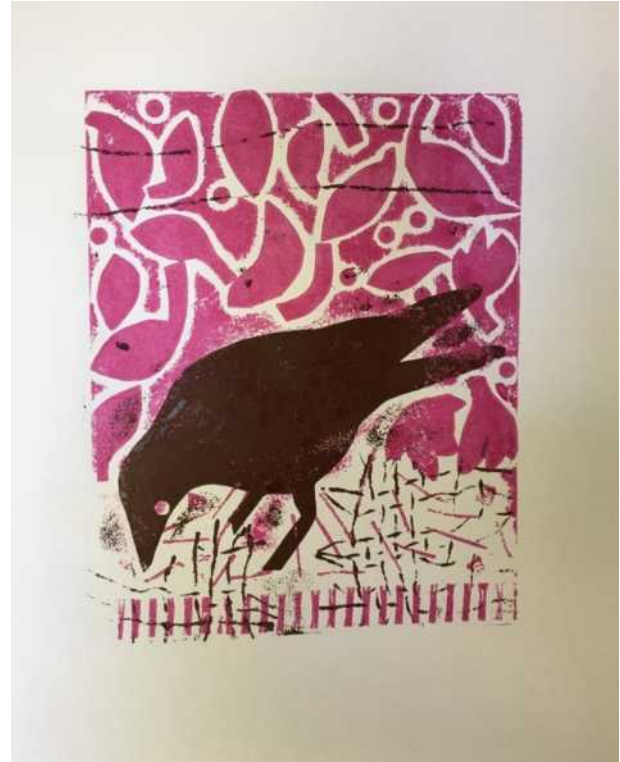
A collagraph using acrylic paint is an alternative if you don't have printing inks on hand. The only thing to be aware of is that acrylic paint dries quickly.

- Choose 2 colours in acrylic paint, firm foam rollers (found in the hardware shop or craft shop), plastic tray or flat washable surface and a water
- Spray bottle to apply a fine mist over the paint so it doesn't dry out too quickly on the roller.
- Choose your colours and using the tray, roll out the paint to cover the foam roller evenly.
- Do one colour at a time so the paint doesn't dry too quickly or use the spray water mist slow the drying process.



The same instructions apply as before, rolling colours onto the Collagraph, using the Template to line up the paper and a spoon or baren to transfer the paint to paper.

You can get different results which makes experimenting with this printing technique fun. The first print was transferred using a wooden spoon on the back of the paper and the second print shown below was rubbed with palm of my hand which picked up more paint.



**ENJOY!**