

Lesson: "Cool In School" Printmaking (Dry Point Etching) using acetate plates.

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Pre-activity Motivation: Explain that print making is like dating in sixth grade. Tell them that it is an indirect process. It takes steps. The first step is making the image or drawing. The second step is making the plate and third is making the print. This is like dating in sixth grade because first you see the girl or boy; then ask someone to ask them out; then find out if you are going out. This is a little stretch but the kids enjoy the analogy and are always surprised I know this.

Activity: During the activity students listen to Cool In School. In this way, they concentrate more on their drawing and etching. They also "get" the difference between a direct process (drawing or directly asking someone out) and an indirect process (going through the steps or having someone ask someone out for you.)

To be cool you have to have a good self image. Students use mirrors. They draw self portraits in three different moods. The pictures are in pencil on 5 X 7 paper. After selecting a picture, they tape the acetate plate on top and then etch with a scratching tool so that the lines from the drawing are raised up on the acetate plate. Simple line images are best. □

To ink the plate, remove it from the drawing. Use watercolor based black print ink. Q Tips are used to dab the ink onto the etched lines. A soft cloth or paper towel will remove the excess ink from the plate leaving only the etched lines. It should look like an ink drawing at this point. □

It is best to print using an etching press. Use white construction paper. Fill one of the sinks or a large square pan so water just covers the bottom. Students float their 7 X 9 " paper on top of the water. Then place the wet side down on the bed of the press. The plate is placed, ink side down, in the middle of the receiving paper. □

Prints are matted and signed by the students. Prints are displayed so all can see that we are "cool in school".