

Works on Paper: Drawing, Printmaking, Photography

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

All around us are drawings, prints, photographs, and other two-dimensional works of art made on paper. In this lesson, you will learn in detail about the three main types of works on paper:

1. Drawing

Drawing is one of the simplest types of artwork. Children learn to draw long before they learn to write; therefore, it is arguably very intuitive for us. It is the easiest to begin. Pen, ink, charcoal, pastel, and graphite are just a few of the common methods of drawing, or rendering, **works on paper**.

IN CONTEXT

Below is a chalk drawing of St. Anne by Leonardo da Vinci. It is an example of a less common medium for drawing, chalk.



Chalk drawing of St. Anne by Leonardo da Vinci

Here is an example of a drawing using pastels:



Pastel drawing of On the Cliff by Theodore Robinson

Below is one more example of a drawing, this time using charcoal.





Charcoal drawing of Young Girl by John Vanderpoel



TERMS TO KNOW

Drawing

A work of art made by marking lines, usually with a pen, pencil, or other instrument, on a sheet of paper

Works on Paper

Drawings, prints, photographs, and other two-dimensional works of art made on paper

2. Printmaking

Printmaking refers to the art of making multiple impressions, usually ink impressions, on paper or a piece of artwork from one physical, original plate made of a solid material, such as wood or metal. These impressions are not considered copies. Instead they are considered original works of art due to the fact that all the impressions originate from the same source.



DID YOU KNOW

For some time printmaking has been a popular form of artwork, and this still holds true today. One major benefit of printmaking is that a single master plate can, in theory, produce an endless number of original impressions.

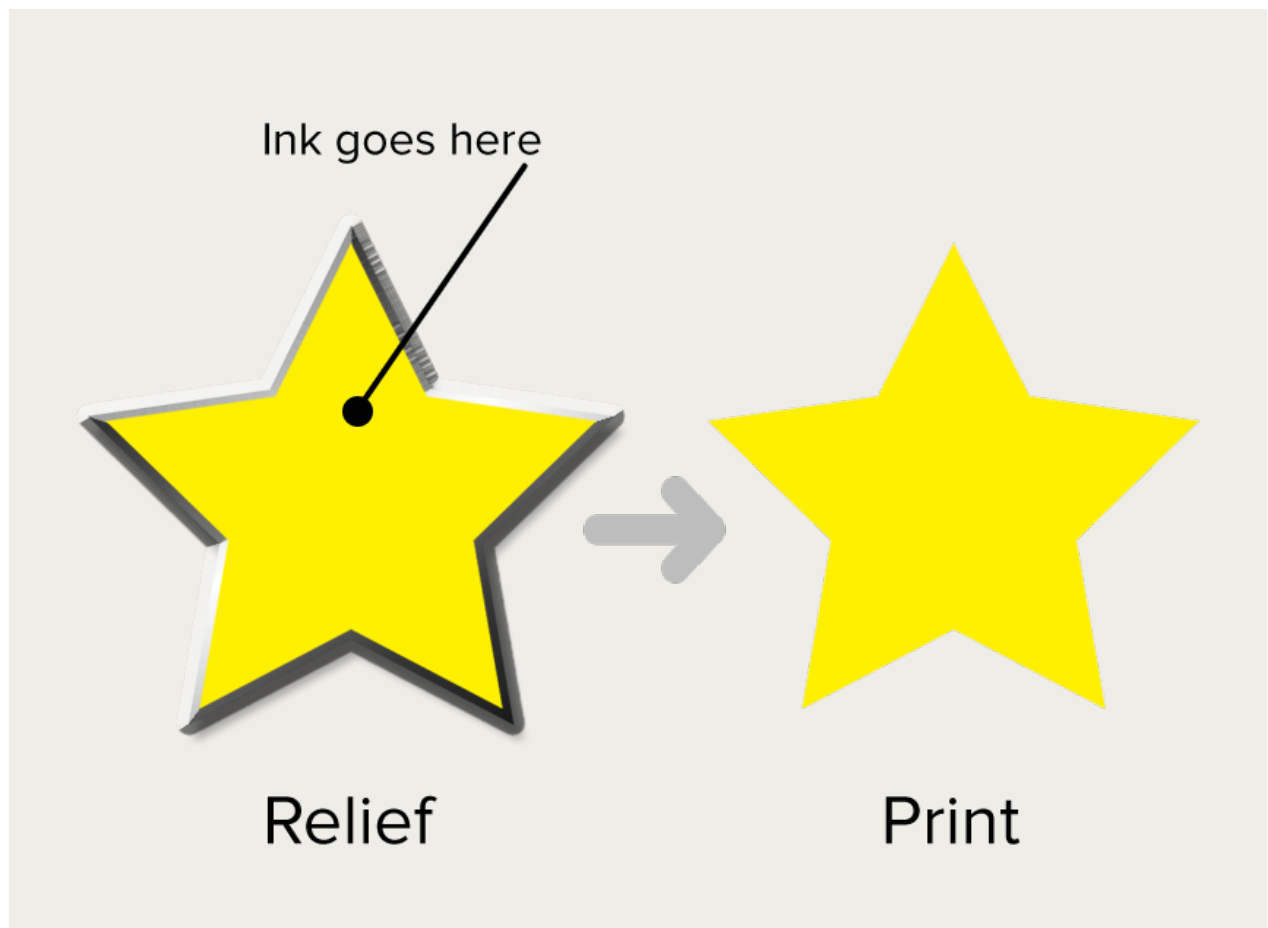
There are two different types of producing prints: relief and intaglio. **Relief** involves an image being carved out of a solid medium, such as wood (a woodblock) or metal. Like an ink stamp, the image rises above the medium. The ink is spread over the raised image and pressed onto a surface, most commonly a sheet of paper, to create the impression of the image.

IN CONTEXT

Below are two images that depict the process of relief. The first image shows the solid block on the left (wood or metal). Note how the block is raised.



This next image shows the process that takes place. The solid block on the left is covered in ink and stamped or pressed onto the piece of paper, leaving the image there.



The second type of printmaking is **intaglio**. Even though intaglio produces a similar result as relief, it's a much different process. Instead of being a raised block in relief, the image is carved, or sunken, into a solid medium such as metal or wood. The recesses of the carving are filled with ink, and then the piece of paper is pressed onto the image.

IN CONTEXT

With intaglio, the image is carved, or engraved into, a block, as in the image below.



Intaglio

The reservoir is filled with ink, and the piece of paper is then pressed on to the metal block, leaving the image on the paper.



TERMS TO KNOW

Printmaking

The production of works of art by pressing a sheet of paper against some sort of printing block, often with the help of a printing press

Relief

A type of printmaking, such as woodblock, in which the paper comes into contact with the highest parts of the surface of the printing plate

Intaglio

The opposite of relief, in which the lowest parts of the printing plate receive ink and the paper is pressed into them. Engraving is a form of intaglio printing

3. Photography

The third type of work of art on paper is **photography**. The process of producing a photograph looks very different today with digital cameras than it did originally with traditional cameras. **Photosensitive** chemicals, such as silver chloride, which was used originally in this process, react with light to capture an image. The image is then transferred to paper.



DID YOU KNOW

The invention of photography meant that people were able to finally capture actual, real-life images. As you can imagine, this was a pretty big deal!

If you are wondering why photography is considered art, remember that even in photography the image is manipulated by the artist in some way. An example of this is a photographer asking for the subjects to smile before taking the photograph. The subject matter is left to interpretation by the viewer.



TERMS TO KNOW

Photography

Production of images using photosensitive materials on a sheet of paper or metal

Photosensitive

Sensitive to light



BIG IDEA

Works of art on paper include drawing, printmaking, and photography.



SUMMARY

In this lesson you explored the three main types of artworks on paper. **Drawing** is a very simple type of artwork, intuitive to us all. Pen, ink, charcoal, pastel, and graphite can be used when drawing. Relief and intaglio are two types of **printmaking**, which is another type of artwork on paper. The third type is **photography**, which has changed drastically over time. Photosensitive chemicals react with light to capture an image that is transferred to paper.

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ATTRIBUTIONS

- [Charcoal Drawing of Young Girl on Toned Paper](#) | Author: John Vanderpoel | License: Public domain



TERMS TO KNOW

Drawing

A work of art made by marking lines, usually with a pen, pencil, or other instrument, on a sheet of paper.

Intaglio

The opposite of relief, in which the lowest parts of the printing plate receive ink and the paper is pressed into them. Engraving is a form of intaglio printing.

Photography

The production of images using photosensitive materials on a sheet of paper or metal.

Photosensitive

Sensitive to light.

Print Making

The production of works of art by pressing a sheet of paper against some sort of printing block, often with the help of a printing press.

Relief

A type of printmaking, such as woodblock, in which the paper comes into contact with the highest parts of the surface of the printing plate.

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