

GREAT ART IDEAS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

MAKE YOUR MARK: DESIGN YOUR OWN JAPANESE INSPIRED EMBLEM

YEAR 5–6

OVERVIEW

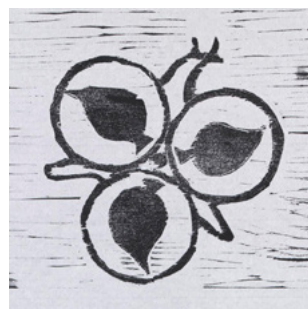
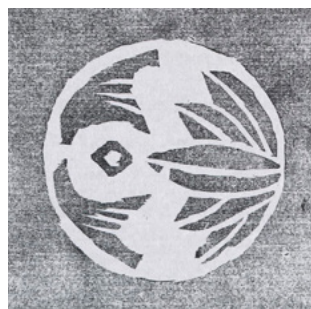
In this project students will develop their understanding of the role of symbols in representing identity across different cultures and reflect on their own identities. They will develop their expressive art-making skills by designing and printing an emblem which represents themselves or a group to which they belong.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify and describe how ideas of belonging and identity are expressed in emblems and crests by comparing artworks from the different historical and cultural contexts of Japan and Europe.
- Create a personal symbol or motif that explores and represents their own individual identity using a variety of materials.
- Create a printing block for their design and print multiple prints.
- Analyse how symbolic meanings are constructed in their own artworks and the artworks of their peers and reflect on how effectively their ideas have been expressed.

STUDENT EXAMPLE



Woodblock prints created by Emmanuel College students at the NGV

RELATED ARTWORKS



Japanese

Sword guard with chrysanthemum design Edo period (1600–15)–1868

(*Kikuka zu tsuba* 菊花図鐔)

iron

0.6 x 7.1 cm diameter

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Felton Bequest, 1916



England

Sir John and Lady de Hardreshull, panel 14th century

stained glass, lead

72.8 × 59.9 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Felton Bequest, 1922



Japanese

Box for horse trappings with chrysanthemum crests Edo period (1600–15)–1868

(*Kikumon iri umakazari bako* 菊紋入馬飾箱)

lacquer and gold leaf on wood and leather,

paper, metal, (other materials)

(a-c) 29.6 x 67.0 x 42.0 cm (overall)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Accessioned, 1888

DISCUSS

Mon is the Japanese word for an emblem. Comprising of bold, symbolic elements, *mon* are used in Japan to identify a group, an individual or an institution. *Kamon* is the Japanese word for a family emblem or symbol which identifies ancestry. *Kamon* are thought to have been first used by noble families at the end of the Heian Period (794–1185) to mark possessions. They appeared on flags, clothes, furniture, buildings and personal items. Today, there are many thousands of distinct *kamon*, for example the chrysanthemum seal is used by the Imperial family of Japan and can also be found on the Japanese passport.

In European countries, many noble families had a coat of arms and crest as a symbol of identity. In *Sir John and Lady de Hardreshull, panel*, 14th century, the Lord and Lady hold up their family coat of arms, which features birds on the shield (martlets).

Introduce your students to the related works of art and use the following discussion prompts to explore the formation and expression of family identity:

- Find a chart of *mon* on the internet and look at the example of Japanese *kamon*. What qualities do they have in common?
They are often circular and use a single flat colour, with positive and negative shapes rather than tone. They use a single motif, like a plant, flower or an abstract design that holds symbolic meaning.
- Compare examples of emblems from Japan with the European example. How are they different and what do they have in common?
- Work in groups of two or three:
 - List all the different groups you belong to, for example, family, clubs, school, and cultural groups.
 - Draw symbols or signs that might represent those groups.
 - Share what each group has discovered with the class.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- A4 sketching paper
- Grey lead pencils
- Lino carving tools
- Ink rollers (for inking the printing block)
- Bamboo baren or hard rollers for printing
- Paper
- Acrylic plate or smooth surface for rolling ink
- Carbon paper or tracing paper for transferring the design
- Soft cut carving blocks (printing rubber), Japanese woodblocks (plywood) or lino tile
- Water-based block printing ink (black or red)

CREATE

Students design and print their own emblem using the following steps:

1. Sketch ideas for a symbol to represent in a print.
It should represent you or one of the groups you belong to, for example your family, or a sporting group.
2. Refine the symbol into a simple, bold emblem that fits in a circle. The size should fill the whole printing block.
Remember that images print in reverse.
3. Transfer the design to the block using carbon or tracing paper.
4. Using lino carving tools, carve away the areas of the design that will remain white.
5. Spread the printing ink onto a smooth surface with a hard roller and then ink the printing block.
6. Place your paper on to the block and roll across it with a roller to print your emblem.
Alternatively, you could rub it with a bamboo baren or run it through a printing press for the same effect.
7. Re-ink the block and repeat step 6 to create an edition of prints.
You might like to try printing the design onto a different surface such as fabric or wood.

PRESENT & REFLECT

Students can show their emblem to the class and mount them as a display to form a class portrait.

- What artistic choices did you make when creating your design?
- How does your design represent you or the group you have chosen?
- What changes might you make to improve your work?

NGV SCHOOLS PROGRAM PARTNERS



Education
and Training



OFFICIAL SUPPLIER

