

Tsunamis and Printmaking (Part 2)

*As seen on Deep Sea Learning
with Georgia Aquarium*

Key terms:

- **Printmaking:** The process of making artworks by printing, normally on paper.
 - **Print:** Art created in multiples by transferring ink or paint through a matrix onto paper or other material.
 - **Ukiyo-e:** Meaning “floating world”. A genre of Japanese woodblock prints where lines and areas to be colored are raised in **relief**.
 - **Relief:** A print made from a raised surface.
 - **Oshiokuribune:** Fast boats, generally 39 to 49 feet (12 to 15m) long, that are used to transport live fish and dried sardines between markets and villages.
- This woodblock **print** is Hokusai’s most famous **ukiyo-e** work, and one of the most recognizable works of Japanese art in the world.
 - The image depicts an enormous wave threatening boats off the coast of the town of Kanagawa (the present-day Yokohama Prefecture).
 - The picture is made up of three main elements:
 - The mountain with a snow capped peak is Mount Fuji. In Japan, Mount Fuji is considered sacred and a symbol of national identity and beauty.
 - The sea dominates the picture as an extending wave about to break.
 - In the scene there are three **oshiokuribune**.
 - Each boat includes eight rowers clinging to their oars plus two passengers in front .
 - Using the boats as reference, the wave is approximately 32 to 39 feet (10 to 12m) tall.

The Great Wave off Kanagawa

by Katsushika Hokusai

Activity: Create a relief interpretation of a tsunami.

1. Use the sharpened pencil to sketch a tsunami scene on the paper.
2. Place the sketch on top of Styrofoam and use the dull pencil to carve the picture into it by tracing the sketch marks. Press down hard enough to see the picture clearly but not so hard that the pencil goes through the paper.
3. Select a paint color and apply a thin layer with a paint brush to cover the carving on the styrofoam without filling in the creases.
4. Carefully flip over the carving onto a blank piece of paper without rubbing it around and then pull it up to reveal the print.
5. Repeat steps 2, 3 and 4 until the entire scene is completed.
6. Present your art to the class and explain your choices in shapes and colors.

Materials:

- two pencils - one dull, one sharpened
- paper cut into 4”x6” pieces
- recycled Styrofoam cut in 4”x6” pieces or smaller
- paint (multiple color options)
- paint brushes
- paint palette

Tsunamis and Printmaking (Part 2)

The Great Wave off Kanagawa by Katsushika Hokusai



Image courtesy of metmuseum.org