



FISH PRINTING WITH NASCO'S GYOTAKU FISH REPLICAS

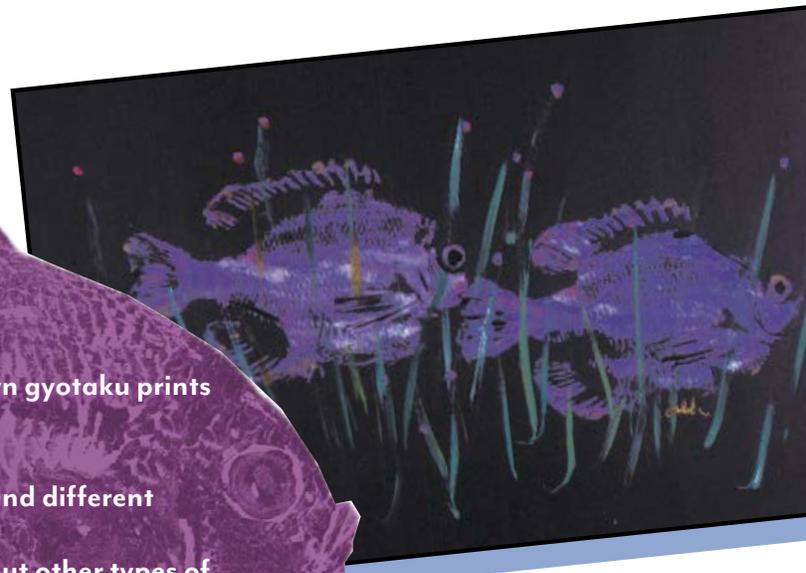
STEAM

Art...Science and History All in One!

Objectives:

Students will...

- Learn how to make their own gyotaku prints using fish replicas
- Discuss Japanese culture
- Learn about fish anatomy and different fish species
- Be encouraged to learn about other types of nature printing
- Increase their awareness of ecological problems and the environment around them



Background Information:

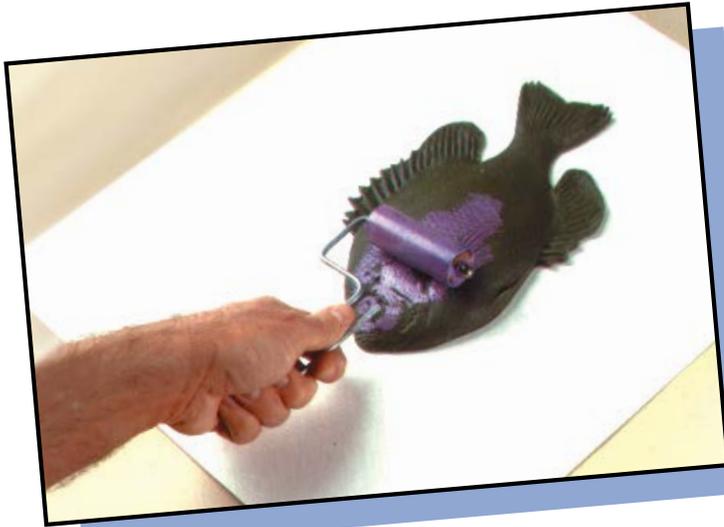
GYOTAKU: “gyo”= fish —“taku”= impression(pronounced guh-yo-tah-koo)

Gyotaku, a fish impression, is a great way to excite your students about everything from Japanese culture to printmaking. A science teacher can use gyotaku to introduce a fish anatomy unit. For a geography teacher, it's a great way to introduce the students to Japanese culture; for the art studio, gyotaku has endless avenues as a printmaking technique.

Gyotaku is a technique used by Japanese fishermen to record the size and species of a trophy fish they have caught. The Japanese fisherman returns from the sea and takes his fish to the market to sell. On the rare occasion that the fisherman catches a large fish worthy of record, he hires an artist to make a print of the fish using water-based inks or paints. Since the paint is water-based, or more importantly nontoxic, the fish can then be rinsed off and sold in the market. Each year the Japanese hold contests and use gyotaku as the proof of a trophy catch.

Although gyotaku originated in Japan over 100 years ago, it has more recently become popular in the United States. Along the docks in San Francisco, and also in other parts of the country, artists wait for the sport fishing boats to bring their catch back from the ocean. Many tourists on these fishing boats choose to have prints made of their fish, rather than having it stuffed and mounted by a taxidermist.

Easy Step-by-Step Printing:



1. Select a few iridescent acrylic paints or inks and place a small bit of each of them onto an old plastic lid (great time to recycle those old margarine or whipped topping lids). Make sure to add some white to your colors. Besides having a shiny quality, the white seems to lighten up all the other colors and make them more dynamic on black paper. Set the plastic lids with paints or inks around the room like stations and let students move from one station to another, depending on the colors they wish to use. For black paper, you can use anything from ordinary black construction paper to the finest of Japanese rice paper.
HINT: Keep the paper at least as thin as construction paper so it can be easily molded around the fish without creasing.
2. Place your fish replica on a clean surface — flat side down.
3. Coat your brayer lightly with paint or ink and roll evenly onto the fish. This may also be done with a brush, which makes it easier to vary the colors of paint/ink directly on the fish. If using a brush, be sure to brush from the head to the tail. A brush may also be used to accent the gills, fins, or the eyes. Make sure you only apply a thin layer of paint on the fish, otherwise the detail of the scales won't show up.
4. Move your fish to a clean area to avoid any paint that may have gotten on your work surface.
5. Take a sheet of paper and lay it on top of the fish. Be sure to hold the paper still with one hand so it doesn't move and cause a double image or smudging. Holding the paper in place with one hand, use the other hand to transfer the image to paper by rubbing the entire fish surface. Remember to rub all the areas — head, tail, and fins.
6. If you are printing on fabric, do the opposite. Lay the fish paint-side-down on the shirt and use a gentle rolling motion to transfer the print of the fish onto the shirt. Be sure to rub down on the tail, fins, and head. Also, lift up the dorsal fin and pull down on the anal fin to make sure their images print.
NOTE: It's a good idea to do a couple of practice prints using this method before printing on the actual piece of fabric or T-shirt.
7. Now embellish. Take black and accent the details of your fish, like the fins, tail, and eyes. Try a little yellow and blue paint or ink on a tray and see how many different colors of green you can create to add seaweed to your print. Run the seaweed both behind and in front of the fish for a more realistic underwater scene. Add rocks and even a fish hook hanging down from the top with a big, juicy worm dangling from it.

Nasco Nature Stamp Sets

Nasco's Gyotaku Group Kit – 9727137

Set of 25 mini gyotaku tropical fish, 50 Nasco Sketchables™ Art Activity Postcards, and six 8-color sets each of Crayola® classic colors and bold colors conical-tip markers.



Flying Insect Set – 9717986

Set of 6 stamps includes Tiger Swallowtail butterfly, Promethea moth, dragonfly, Monarch butterfly, Blomfield's Beauty butterfly, and Julia butterfly. Average size: 3" x 2½".

Leaf Stamp Set – 9714351

Set of 6 stamps includes sugar maple, white oak, red oak, elm, tulip tree, and ginkgo. Sizes vary, with stamps approximately 4".

Giant-Size Leaf Stamp Set – 9722535

Set of 6 stamps includes Basswood (8¾" x 5¾"), Fern (9" x 5"), Grape Vine (7½" x 5¾"), Catalpa (8½" x 4¼"), Giant Sequoia (7½" x 4½"), and Northern Red Oak (8½" x 5").

Scaling the Heights of Fashion!

There's nothing "fishy" about these fabric printing ideas. Create colorful, realistic images of fish with Nasco's gyotaku replicas. Molded from actual specimens, these replicas are accurately detailed and easy to use. Print on T-shirts, backpacks, placemats, curtains, jeans — you decide.

An excellent interdisciplinary project, these replicas are sure to cause excitement in the classroom.



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