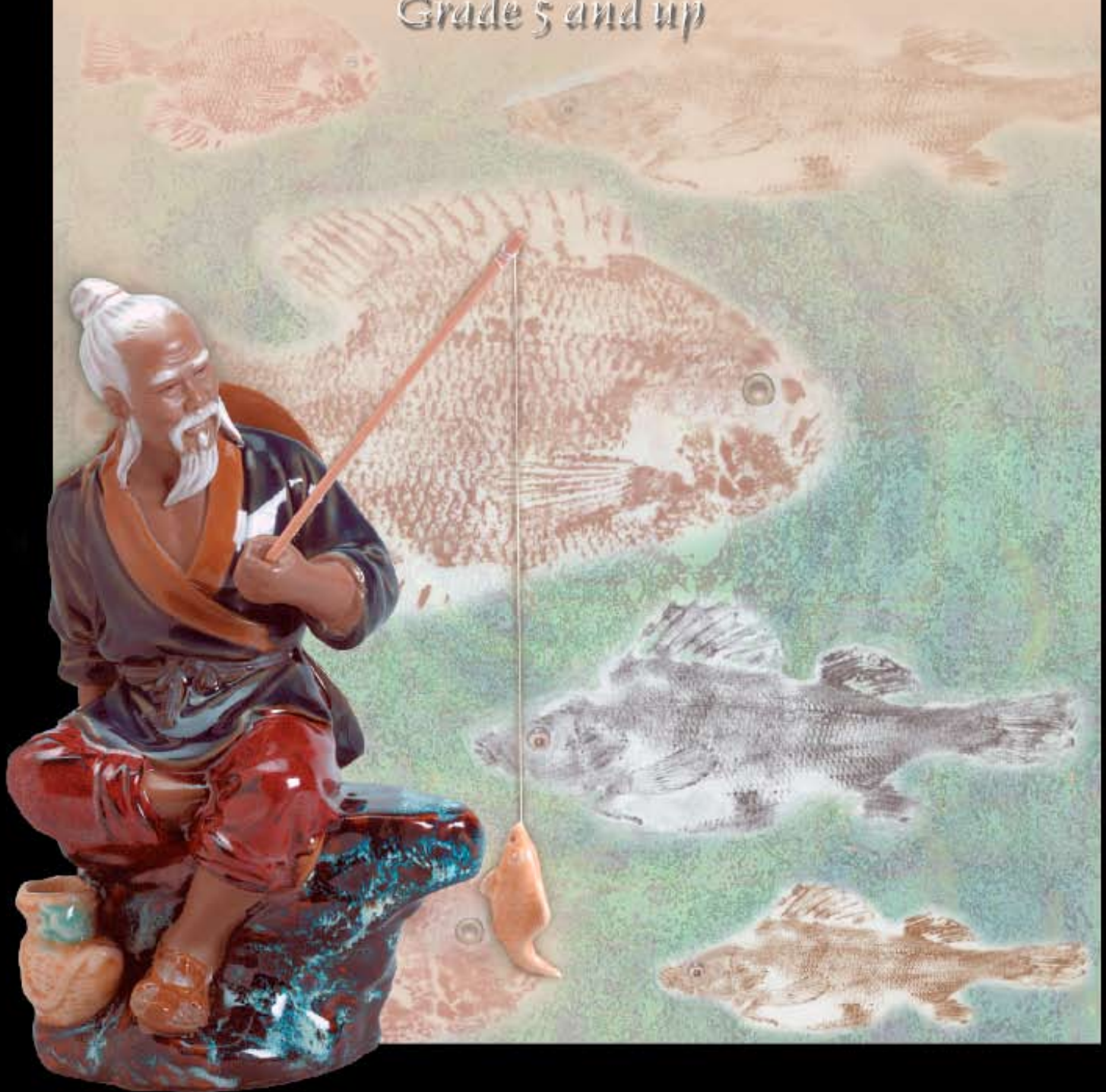


Nasco ARTWORKS

Indirect Printing on Fabric

A Lesson Using **Life/form®** Gyotaku Fish Replicas

Grade 5 and up



Background Information:

Indirect printing is the perfect way to excite students about nature and the environment. Use this cross-curricular lesson to teach students about anatomy, ecology, Japanese culture, and how to create beautiful prints on fabric.

In the indirect printing method, ink is not applied directly onto the fish. Instead, fabric is stretched over the fish and ink is applied to the fabric by gently dabbing with an inked tampo (an applicator made of silk fabric gathered tightly around a cotton ball).

Many artists prefer making fish prints using NASCO's *Life/form*® Gyotaku fish replicas. This eliminates finding a source for real fish, as well as the smell and mess associated with using a real fish specimen. Nasco's replicas are molded from actual specimens and are accurately detailed, anatomically correct, and easy to use. *Life/form*® Gyotaku fish replicas can be used over and over for years.

Gyotaku is a technique that originated over 100 years ago by Japanese fishermen to record the size and species of trophy fish they caught. The Japanese word gyotaku (pronounced guy-yo-tah-koo) translates to "fish impression" (gyo = fish; taku = impression). Today, many tourists returning with a trophy catch to the docks in San Francisco and other parts of the U.S., choose to have a print made of their fish, rather than having it mounted by a taxidermist.

Objectives:

Students will...

- learn how to make their own indirect prints on fabric
- learn about anatomy and different animal species
- be encouraged to learn about other types of nature printing
- increase their awareness of ecological problems and the environment around them



Materials:

- NASCO *Life/form*® Gyotaku fish replica(s) — see listing on back of lesson plan.
- 3 squares of silk fabric (5", 4", 3")
- Circle of paper (cut larger than the fish eye)
- Rubber bands
- Temporary spray adhesive (nonstaining)
- Cotton/polyester fabric pieces (cut 6" larger than replica on all sides)
- Cotton wadding or 6-10 cotton balls
- Plastic, styrofoam or glass palette or tray
- Water-based block printing ink or textile screen printing ink
- Edge protectors, cut from blotter paper or other stiff paper to match shape of replicas.
- Rubber brayer
- Detail paintbrush
- Newspaper

Procedure:

1. Construct three different sized tampos: small, medium, and large. The size of the tampo you use will depend on the size and shape of the fish or replica to which you are applying ink. Shape a piece of cotton wadding into a smooth ball (or use cotton balls) and place the cotton onto the center of a silk square. The 5" x 5" piece of silk will create a tampo with a surface of approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ " to 1" in diameter; the 4" x 4" and 3" x 3" squares will yield smaller tampos. Gather and twist the excess silk into a "handle," smoothing out any wrinkles that are on the ball's surface. Wrap a rubber band tightly around the handle, working from the base up. NOTE: if you are using more than one ink color to create your print, you will need to make a separate tampo for each color being used.

2. Using a nonstaining, temporary spray adhesive, spray the back side of the cotton/polyester fabric, lay the adhesive side over the fish or replica, and press firmly in place. Cover the fish eye with a circle of paper cut large enough to completely cover the eye — the eye does not print well and will be painted in later by hand.

3. Roll out the water-based block printing ink or textile screen printing ink evenly onto the palette using a rubber brayer.

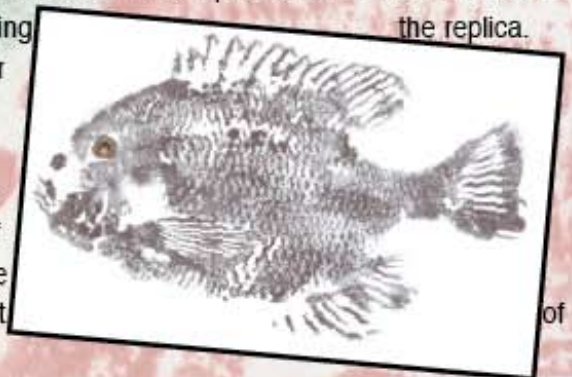
4. Select a tampo of appropriate size for the fish or replica you are using. Dab the tampo into the ink on the palette and gently tap on a piece of scrap cloth or paper until the imprint is light and even.

5. Grasping the tampo toward the top of the handle, apply the ink to the fabric using a gentle dabbing action. Use edge protectors to keep the ink within the fish's shape.

6. The lightness or darkness of the print is determined by the number of dabs made with the tampo, not the amount of ink that is on the tampo surface. Be sure to use a small tampo when inking smaller, more detailed areas on the fabric covering the replica.

7. When you have finished dabbing ink onto the fabric covering the fish or replica, remove the fabric and allow it to dry completely.

8. Once the printed fabric has dried, you may add details to your print using a fine paintbrush to apply ink. Adding eyes or outlining fins and gills will help to bring your print to life! Practice painting fish eyes on a piece of scrap paper until satisfied with the result. Use the fine paintbrush to create a colored iris with a large black pupil — and don't forget to add a glint of white on the pupil to give the illusion of reflected light.



Nasco *Life/form*® Fish Printing Replicas:

Freshwater Drum. 10" L x 4½" W (right side) (9711405)

Freshwater Drum. 10" L x 4½" W (left side) (9712005)

Starfish. 7" L x 7" W (9712121)

Blue Gill. 9½" L x 6¼" W (9712120)

Perch. 10" L x 4¼" W (9712122)

Carp. 12½" L x 5" W (9713262)

Flounder. 13½" L x 6½" W (9714343)

Trout. 12" L x 4½" W (9714344)

Large Mouth Bass. 10½" L x 4¼" W (9716673)

Grey Perch. 13" L x 5" W (9716674)

Salmon. 12½" L x 5" W (9719198)

Walleye. 17" L x 5½" W (9720624)

Mini Bluegill. 5½" L x 3½" W (9719399)



This lesson plan was inspired by the book *Natural Impressions* by Carolyn Dahl. Indirect printing is only one of the many beautiful nature printing techniques covered in this innovative book. The book "offers a unique way to cultivate creativity by making prints directly from natural objects....(leaves, flowers, fish, butterfly wings) and features a dazzling array of artwork and projects...[in] a wide range of mediums and techniques, including photocopying and computer manipulation."

"Carolyn Dahl [also] mesmerizes readers with enchanting, emotional stories and observations about nature. She helps them realize the myriad ways nature impacts the creative spirit, and inspires them with dozens of inventive paper and fabric projects....the techniques in *Natural Impressions* can be done successfully by anyone — and are sure to foster a deeper, more intimate relationship with nature." This beautifully-illustrated, 112-page book is available through NASCO (item number 9720976).



You can view additional Nasco ArtWorks Lesson Plans on our website at www.eNASCO.com.

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