Eel Printing

In this activity you will learn how to create a unique print using recycled tetra packs in the style of Julia Manning, a local Somerset artist.

What you will need

1. Clean, empty tetra packs
2. Water-based printing ink or paint
3. Paintbrushes/rollers
4. Thick paper
5. Sharp pencils
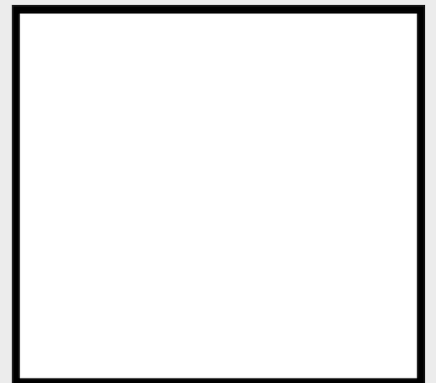6. Scissors
7. Optional: paper plates for rolling ink

THE SOMERSET EEL
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Step 1

PREPARE YOUR WORKSPACE

Cover the table to protect it from ink or paint spills.

Step 2

PREPARE YOUR TETRA PACK

Make sure it is clean and dry. Cut along one seam and lay it flat.

Trim off excess flaps to create a smooth printing surface.

Step 3

CREATE YOUR PRINTING PLATE

With a pencil, draw a design on the inside of the tetra pack.

Then, press firmly to create an indented line, which will hold the ink during printing.

Step 4

PREPARE THE PAINT/INK

Pour a small amount of paint onto your surface. Spread it evenly.

Step 5

INK YOUR PLATE

Use a roller or paintbrush to apply a thin, even layer of ink onto the raised areas of your tetra pack design.

Be careful not to fill the indented lines.

Step 6

MAKE YOUR PRINT

Place a sheet of paper on a flat surface. Carefully, press the inked side of the tetra pack onto the paper.

Gently but firmly press down on the tetra pack, making sure to apply even pressure across the entire surface. This is called burnishing.

Step 7

REVEAL YOUR PRINT

Lift the tetra pack slowly to reveal the print on the paper.

Step 8

CLEAN UP AND DISPLAY

Set your print aside to dry.
Wash up all materials using soapy water and put them away carefully.

JULIA MANNING

Julia has been an artist for over 40 years. Her studio is on the Somerset Levels and she finds inspiration for her printing in the nature nearby. She has created a set of prints about the decline of eels, using similar methods to your eel print!

You can find a video of Julia printing in her studio here

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FIND OUT MORE...
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WWW.SOMERSETEELRECOVERYPROJECT.CO.UK