



HOW TO MAKE SUN PRINTS

If you've got a hot second, try this fun activity that uses the sun to create art!

Here comes the sun! And it's going to help you make some beautiful works of art with your kids that'll give new meaning to "hot off the press."

Using special sun print paper and gathered objects like sticks and leaves, your budding artists can create one-of-a-kind masterpieces while learning about chemical processes aided by the sun. Don't forget the sunscreen! (For you and your child, not the artwork.)

GATHER THIS:

- Objects from nature with intricate shapes and silhouettes (leaves, flower petals, sticks, rocks, shells, etc.)
- Sun print paper (available for purchase from CuriOdyssey)
- Tray large enough to hold paper
- Cool water
- Cardboard
- Binder clips
- Sunscreen

THEN DO THIS:

1. Find a shady spot. You want very little ambient light until the design is finished.
2. Place the sun print paper (blue side up) on top of your cardboard.
3. Artfully place your objects on top of the paper. Be creative!
4. Cover with a piece of acrylic or glass.
5. Clip it all together. You can smush it down a bit if you wish to hold it all in place.
6. Move it to a sunny spot for one to five minutes until you see the paper turn white and the shadows remain blue.
7. Remove it from the sun and remove clips and cardboard.
8. Gently rinse the sun print paper in cold water. Watch the white turn to blue and the blue turn to white. The longer you rinse it the darker the blue.
9. Let it dry in the shade.

ASK THIS:

- What do you predict will happen?
- What if you draw on the paper with sunscreen?
- What did you notice?

WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The original blue compound on the paper is water soluble. When you rinse it in the water, the water carries it away and leaves only the white paper base in those areas. The colorless compound whose formation was caused by the sun's energy (the area around your objects) is not water soluble and cannot be washed away by water. The water causes an oxidation reaction that turns the colorless compound into the deep blue of a finished sun print. The sunlight stimulated a chemical change in the first step and the water stimulated another chemical change in the second step.

WHAT THIS TEACHES:

Scientific process, observation skills, chemistry

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