Engraving Printing Press

History: Before modern printers, printing press had a unique way of printing pictures. While words could be printing using a common set of printing pieces, pictures had to be custom made. A printing shop would have to use a specialist called an engraving who could make custom engraved plates\(^1\). The engraver would carve the image into a metal plate. Then they would use ink and a printing press to print the image onto multiple prints. This process allowed for black and white drawing to be printed. However, if the engraver made any mistakes carving the image, they could not erase it. They either had to cover it up in the drawing or make a new plate\(^2\). An engraving could not be change and each new drawing or picture would require a new special plate\(^3\).

Materials:

- A piece of flat Styrofoam (Styrofoam plates work well)
- Washable markers
- A sponge
- Construction paper
- A pen or anything that can carve an image

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\(^1\) [https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/e/engraving](https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/e/engraving)


\(^3\) [https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15324coll10/id/93813](https://libmma.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15324coll10/id/93813)
Instructions:

1. Using the pen, carve whatever image you like on the Styrofoam. Reverse to real engraving, whatever you carve with the pen will not show up on the paper.

2. Use the washable markers to color in your engraving.

3. Take a lightly damp sponge and rub it on the construction paper.

4. Place the Styrofoam facedown on the paper. Press down hard on the paper.

5. The image could print onto the construction paper and can be reprinted. However, you might have to recolor the Styrofoam to make the print clearer.