Big Idea
Using art to create positive change and raise awareness

Your students will:
• Convey a message on a poster using words and pictures
• Experiment with printmaking
• Explore the potential for art to contribute to change

Explore Printmaking with Freddie
As a class, co-view the clip from the episode “Printmaking & the Lot,” in which Freddie and Ty visit the Cecil B. Moore Library and learn about Dox Thrash and his historic prints. Prompt a discussion about the episode. Conversation starters might include:

1. Freddie and Ty watch artist Rod Jones screen print a poster to promote saving the Dox Thrash house. What did Rod explain was so important and historic about Dox Thrash? Why did he want to help save his home?

2. There’s many different types of printmaking, including some mentioned in this episode like screen printing and intaglio. You might be familiar with printing from a computer or maybe even 3D printing. Why might printing be such an important form of art?

3. A changemaker is someone who speaks up for what they believe in and tries to make positive changes in our world. Rod uses his printmaking to help promote change in his community. What are some issues that you care about? How can you be a changemaker in your own community?

Materials
• White paper for each student (thicker paper like cardstock works best!)
• Black permanent markers
• Washable markers
• Aluminum foil
• Tape
• Spray bottles of water
• Pencils (optional)
Lesson Activity

Teacher Prep:

1. Demonstrate the project for the class so that they understand the steps.
2. Create two stations for the project: a dry station for using the permanent markers and a wet station for using the foil, washable markers and spray bottles.
3. In the wet station, tape sheets of foil to the tables ahead of time. These will be the students’ printing plates. Foil sheets should be slightly larger than the paper students are drawing on.

Instructions:

1. Ask students to think about an issue in their school or community that they would like to raise awareness about. Brainstorm ideas as a class or in pairs and have students select an idea around which to base their poster.
2. Once each student selects an idea, ask them to create their poster using black permanent marker on white paper. They can sketch their idea in pencil first if they’d like and then trace over it in black. What words or images will they use in their poster to grab attention? Prompt them to think about making some words larger than others and drawing letters in creative ways.
3. Now it’s time to add a printed design on the posters. Students can use washable markers to draw on their foil using as much color as possible. Try to fill every part of the foil with marker for a super colorful print! How does drawing on foil feel different from drawing on paper?
4. Next, spray the foil with water so that the marker starts to dissolve.
5. Place your poster marker-side down on the wet foil and press hard!
6. Carefully peel the poster up from the foil to see the colorful marker leave a print on top of your original design. Explain to students that the permanent marker remained even on the wet surface, while the washable marker dissolved in the water, allowing it to leave a print.
7. Have students hang up their posters and share their work. How was printing with foil similar to the screen printing process that Rod demonstrates in the episode? How was it different?
Tips and Extensions
- Regular paper works fine for this project, but it can get slightly soggy when printed. It will dry! You can also use a thicker paper like cardstock if available.
- Try to use the thick side of the marker when coloring on the foil, which will leave more ink. Demonstrate how markers can make both thin and thick lines depending on how they're held.
- Make sure to only use your marker on dry foil. Coloring on a wet surface can markers.
- Once their print is dry, encourage students to draw on top of their print.

School-to-Home Connection
- Ask students to keep an eye out for signs, slogans and advertisements in their community. What draws our attention to these posters? It might be the colors, the way the words are written or even the shape and size of the sign. Keep track of the many ways that artists communicate messages with words and pictures.
- Encourage students to talk with their families about causes and experiences that have been important to them throughout their lives. Have they ever participated in a protest or raised awareness about something important to them?

Vocabulary
- **Print**: A copy of something like a picture or even the shape of something like a handprint
- **Poster**: A sign with words and pictures that is often printed many times to share a message
- **Permanent marker**: A marker with ink that does not dissolve or go away in water
- **Washable marker**: A marker with ink that spreads and dissolves in water
- **Reverse**: The opposite direction
Dox Thrash was an artist who lived in Philadelphia and specialized in printmaking. He was the first Black artist to work at the Fine Print Workshop of Philadelphia, where he created prints capturing the Black experience in America. He invented a new printmaking technique called carborundum mezzotint, which allowed the printing plate to hold more ink, enabling printmakers to achieve a wider variety of skin tones in their work. As featured in the episode, activists have long fought to preserve Thrash’s home in North Philadelphia as a historic landmark. You can learn more at doxthrashhouse.wordpress.com

More Classroom Activities
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Children’s Books with Related Themes
Check out these children’s books online or at your local library to continue exploring the concepts in this episode.

**Peaceful Fights for Equal Rights** by Rob Sanders
An introduction to protests and peaceful activism, with illustrations filled with signs and posters.

**Sofia Valdez, Future Prez** by Andrea Beaty
Follow one determined girl as she learns how to use her voice and speak up for what she believes is right.