

# **Mondays with MoMA**



**MoMA**

## Step 1 Look closely

### Questions

1. What do you notice about the poses and gestures of the figures in this image?
2. What do you notice about how the artist used the word *unite*?
3. How did the artist use words and images together to convey a message?

## Step 2 Learn more

Barbara Jones-Hogu was a co-founder of African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists (AfriCOBRA), a group of African-American artists based in Chicago that came together with the aim of making art for Black audiences that celebrated self-determination and unity. AfriCOBRA members highlighted the beautiful and heroic aspects of the African-American experience, reflecting pride in their heritage and communities.

Jones-Hogu was trained as a printer, which allowed her to make images that were less expensive and thus more broadly available to a wide audience. She combines text and images to make the meaning of the artwork easy to understand. In this artwork, *Unite*, the typography reflects the strength of its underlying message; it is one of the artist's most enduring images. The image was inspired by a sculpture of an upraised fist Jones-Hogu saw in the studio of her mentor, Elizabeth Catlett, "I thought that was a good idea. It was a Black Power stance. I thought we as a people should unite as a people under this concept."



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## Step 3 Activity: Print your message

Materials: printing foam or styrofoam plate, pencil, paintbrush or roller, printing ink, scissors, ink tray, and a large sheet of paper.

1. Think of one word that conveys a human right that you feel is worth fighting for in your community.
2. Use a pencil to write your word on printing foam (See Image A). **Be sure to write your word in reverse (mirror image)** and press firmly to create deep grooves. This will eventually appear properly on your completed print. Cut out your word.
3. Spread a small amount of printing ink on a tray. Using a roller or brush in the ink, transfer an even layer onto the foam (See Image B). Be careful not to use too much ink so as not to fill in the grooves.
4. Place printing foam, ink-side-down, on a sheet of paper and press down firmly and evenly with your hand (or clean roller or a printmaking baren). Carefully lift the foam plate to avoid smudging your word image (See Image C).
5. Repeat steps 3 and 4 to print the word multiple times in whatever arrangement you think best highlights its meaning (See Image D).

## Step 4 Share!

Share your print with a classmate and tell them about your choice of word. Or you can email a photograph of it to us at MoMA: [schoolprograms@moma.org](mailto:schoolprograms@moma.org).

Image: Barbara Jones-Hogu. *Unite*. 1969. Screenprint. Publisher: Barbara Jones-Hogu, Chicago. Printer: Barbara Jones-Hogu, Chicago. 10 printed in 1969 before the edition of 100 (published in 1971). The Deborah Wye Endowment Fund. © Barbara Jones-Hogu. Courtesy of the Estate of Barbara Jones-Hogu



