READING COMPREHENSION: AT THE PRINT SHOP

Read the dialogues, then answer the questionnaire.

Dialogue 1

Helen:	Mr Wallace? I'm Helen Wright. Mr Blake asked me to give you this.
Albert:	Hello, Helen. It's for the wedding invitations, isn't it?
Helen:	Yes, it's the photopolymer plate with the text.
Albert:	Perfect. I've got the letterpress ready and some invitation cards without text. We can use them.
Helen:	Really?
Albert:	They have embossed patterns, and some have colour embellishments.
Helen:	What colour are they?
Albert:	The embellishments are a shade of pink. The text will be dark grey. Embossing counts as white colour, too.
Helen:	Are they spot colours?
Albert:	Yes, they are. We need one print plate for each colour, and we print them separately.
Helen:	Do you mix the ink by hand?
Albert:	It depends on the design. We use the Colour bridge as a guide to ensure that spot colours match the design specifications.
Helen:	Can I see the cards?
Albert:	Yes, of course. And you can watch while I print the text.
Helen:	Thank you!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Dialogue 2:

Albert: This is our letterpress. It is almost a century old. We have vintage type and graphics, but I prefer to use photopolymer and magnesium printing plates.

Helen: Why?

Albert: With vintage type and graphics, we must use a steel frame, the chase, and fill the gaps with leading, 'furniture', and more things.

Helen: Furniture?

Albert: Yes, small pieces of wood. The chase looks like a puzzle. The steel frame and metal wedges keep everything in place.

If we use a photopolymer plate, we can use a flat surface, the chase-base. It's easier.

Look… These are the cards I've prepared.

Helen: They are very stylish.

Albert: This is cotton paper. It is soft and it has a nice texture. However, we must be careful when we print. If we put too much pressure, we'll damage the paper.

Dialogue 3:

Albert: Well, the letterpress is clean, oiled, it works properly and it is safe to use. We can print now.

First, we put the printing plate on the chase-base. We use removable adhesive.

Be careful there are no bubbles between the printing plate and the chase-base, or we'll have uneven inking.

Helen: What do we do if there are bubbles?

Albert: We push them with our finger or we prick them with an exacto knife and push the air out from the hole we've just made.

Now we feed a sheet of paper and make an uninked impression of the printing plate. This will help attach the printing plate to the base.

Helen: I see.

Albert: Let's prepare the ink. This is the colour swatch. I'll mix rubber-based inks, black and white. We can use oil-based inks, too.

Helen: It's a very small quantity. Will it be enough?

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Albert: You only need a very thin layer of ink on the ink plate. It's that disk. We use the rollers to distribute the ink. We can adjust the roller height, if necessary.

Helen: What's next?

Albert: We check the guides and the gauge pins that hold the paper in place. They should be OK as they are. It's the same card size, we'll just print a different colour. And we check the packing, too.

Helen: What's the packing?

Albert: It's padding we put under the paper we want to print. The indentation will be more or less deep depending on it.

Dialogue 4:

Helen: Is it ready now?

Albert: Yes, we can begin printing. We feed the sheets of paper individually. Every time we pull the handle down, the paper presses against the inked type and it leaves an impression.

It's a slow printing process, but it makes elegant prints. Very nice to the touch.

Helen: And, combined with digital technology, it could print sophisticated bespoke designs.

Albert: That's true, although there are some limitations.

Now… When we finish printing, we remove the printing plate from the chase-base. We can reuse it or recycle it.

We also remove the guides, the gauge pins and the packing before cleaning the press.

The rubber rollers are stored on a rack. It's important that they are kept in good condition. They deteriorate when exposed to extremes of temperatures, high humidity and sunlight.

Helen: Thank you Mr Wallace for teaching me about the letterpress process.

Albert: It's a dying Art, but I love it. These are the invitation cards. Give them to James, will you?

Helen: Yes, of course. Goodbye!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Activity 1. Say if the sentences are True or False.

a) Albert Wallace works at a bookshop.

- ○ True
- ○ False

b) He is printing invitations for a Birthday celebration.

- ○ True
- ○ False

c) The invitations are printed on cotton paper.

- ○ True
- ○ False

d) The colours are obtained with the CMYK halftone process.

- ○ True
- ○ False

e) He is using an old letterpress and vintage metal type and graphics.

- ○ True
- ○ False

f) Albert likes this printing technique, despite it is time-consuming.

- ○ True
- ○ False

g) With this technique, you can print elegant designs.

- ○ True
- ○ False

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Activity 2. Fill in the gaps with the words below.

Ago, Letterpress, Relief, Sorts, Surface, Type

The _____ printing technique is very old; it was invented more than five hundred years _____. It uses metal movable _____ (also known as _____) and _____ to leave a mark on the printing _____. It is an example of _____ printing.

Activity 3. Match the words with the definitions

Bespoke design

Colour bridge

Colour swatch

Embossing

Spot colour

a) It's when you press into paper or card stock from underneath; the finished design stands out from the paper, giving it a 3D effect.

b) It's a method of specifying and printing colors in which each colour is printed with its own ink. It becomes very expensive if more than 3 colours are used.

c) It is a professional colour reference system. Designers use it to identify their desired colour with a number; when they give it to the manufacturer or printer, they can reproduce the colour consistently and accurately.

d) A small piece of material with the name and identification number for a specific colour on it. In painting, it is a sample of colour designed to show the actual dried result of applying certain paint(s).

e) It's a product or service that has been specially made or designed for a particular person or type of customer.

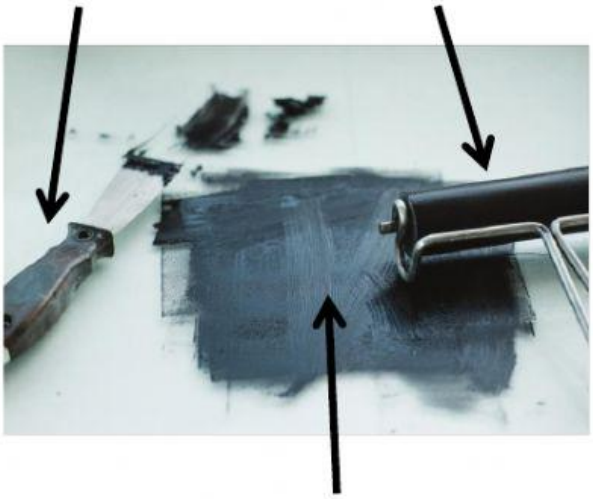
LIVEWORKSHEETS

Activity 4. Drag and drop: match the names with the pictures.











Colour swatch **Embossing (relief printing)** **Exacto knife**

Ink **Ink roller** **Ink spatula** **Colour Bridge**

LIVEWORKSHEETS