Alternative Processes

Cyanotypes

Materials:

1. Black and white photograph (high contrast works best)
2. Transparency paper (These papers are specifically manufactured either for inkjet printers or laser printers. If you use the inkjet transparency in the laser printer, it will melt and it will damage the printer. If you use the laser transparency in the inkjet printer, the ink will not adhere. The inkjet transparency paper has one side that is treated to take on the ink. Make sure that it is loaded correctly so that the treated side will be facing the ink jets.)
3. Printmaking paper, specifically etching/intaglio hot press 100% rag paper (good quality brands are: BFK Rives, Canson, Fabriano, and Arches) or fabric (preferably fine weave cotton, silk, or linen)
4. Foam core (enough to support your substrate)
5. Glass (the same size as your foam core)
6. Bulldog clips
7. Broad nylon brush

Cyanotype chemicals (either make from scratch or buy as a kit from Bostick & Sullivan: https://www.bostick-sullivan.com/cart/product.php?productid=501&cat=51&page=1 or Adorama: http://www.adorama.com/PYNCK.html
The cost of this kit can be shared with your classmates and you will be able to all print many of your photos. The Bostick & Sullivan kit will make 200 8”x10” prints and the Adorama kit will make 50 8”x10” prints.

Process:

1. Convert your photograph into a high contrast negative (you can do this in photoshop: image>adjustments>invert) and print it out on a transparency. Two identical transparencies sandwiched together work best.
2. Paint your substrate (paper or fabric) in a low light environment with the cyanotype mixture, applying it with a broad cheap nylon brush. It just needs one coat.
3. Wait for you substrate to dry in a light-free environment. It may take about an hour or more.
4. Once the substrate is dry, place it face up on the foam core. Place your negative on top of the substrate. Then on top of the negative, place the glass. Use the bulldog clips to clamp the whole sandwich together and place it in the sun.
5. It is best to make a test strip, so you know how long to leave it in the sun.
6. The cyanotypes vary between about 8 minutes and 30 minutes.
7. Once they are exposed to your satisfaction, you must wash them thoroughly under cold water and then soak them for about 10-20 minutes and then dry.