

Ben Uri Gallery  
Art Skills for Teachers

# Painting



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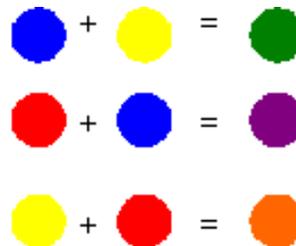
# Ideas for Painting in the Classroom

## Colour

Colour mixing is something that should be explored by pupils and ideally pupils will arrive at the discovery of new colours through their own experiments with paint. Activity suggestions for this are given shortly. However, in addition to this, the basics of colour theory can be taught to pupils in order to develop an understanding of primary and secondary colours and colour opposites.

### An explanation of complementary colours

- The three primary colours are red, yellow and blue.
- Two primaries can be mixed to make secondary colours:
  - yellow + blue = green
  - red + yellow = orange
  - red + blue = purple
- The complementary colour of each primary is the mix of the other two:
  - red's complementary is green (blue + yellow);
  - yellow's complementary is violet (red + blue)
  - blue's complementary is orange (yellow + red)
- Placed next to one another, complementary colours look stronger and stand out more.



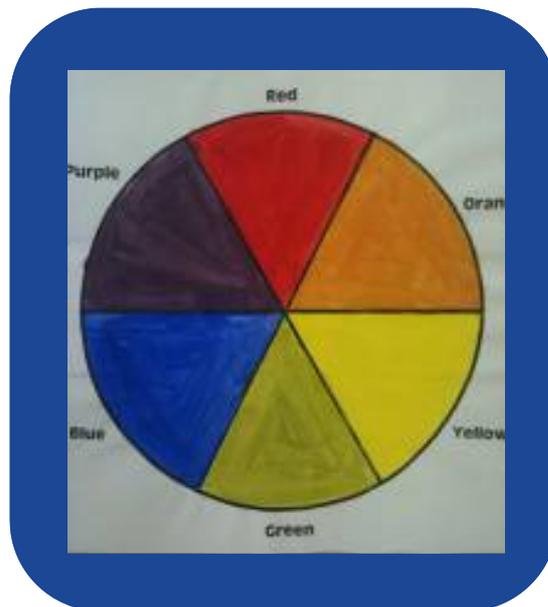
secondary colours



complementary colours

## The Colour Wheel

The colour wheel above can be used to introduce the basics of Colour Theory. Provide each child with a blank Colour Wheel sheet. The template can be photocopied and enlarged to A3 size. It is best to use cartridge or sugar paper for this activity, as usual photocopier paper will not be thick enough to hold the paint and it will crinkle up. Sugar paper and thin cartridge paper can go through the photocopier!



Begin the discussion by talking about colour in the world. As a group you can try to list as many red things as you can, then as many green things etc. Are they all exactly the same colour? Show some examples of different types of reds for example, using real objects. Fruits and vegetables are usually very good for this. For example, look at the difference in red between a red tomato and a red pepper.

Next give every pupil a blank colour wheel and begin painting. Fill in all of the primary colours first. Then each child can add the secondary colours. It is best if pupils can have their own palette for colour mixing- if this cannot be provided then thick paper can be used to mix colours on.

Once pupils have mixed their secondary colours the rest of the session can be spent mixing up their own colours.

## The Colour Challenge!



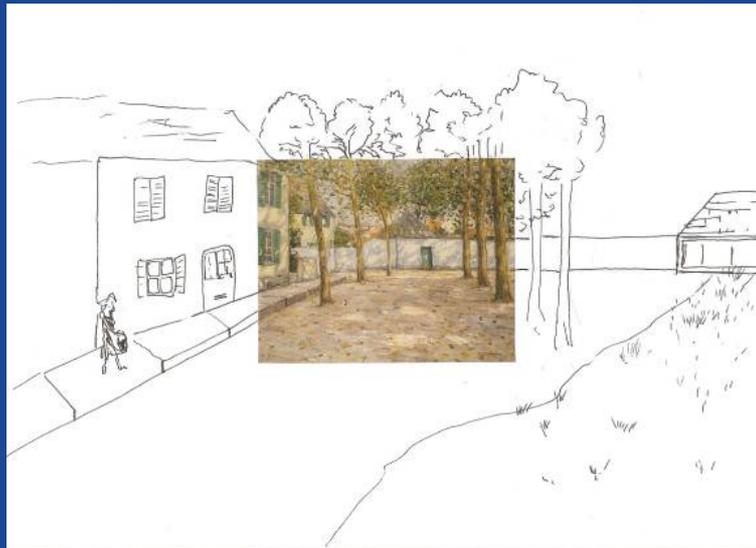
Colour mixing activity by a Year 4 pupil

*How many different colours  
can you make?*

Ask pupils to draw some lines on to their paper that reach from one side to the other. These can be wiggly or straight. The lines should cross and should start to form shapes on their paper.

Once the shapes have been drawn pupils can fill the shapes in with as many different colours as they can.

# Continuing the Painting



A further activity which can be used to develop colour mixing skills is a *'Continue the Painting'* activity.

Print out images of art works from the Ben Uri teaching packs. Cut these pictures in half, or into smaller sections, and stick on to a large sheet of cartridge paper (1 image section per sheet). Pupils must then continue the drawing, to complete the picture and fill the whole page. (This is also a great starting point for literacy as pupils must invent the rest of the picture/story)

Once drawn, pupils can paint it in, trying to match colours to the colours in the painting.

# Fruit & Vegetable Colour Opposites

Now that pupils understand the basic colour wheel, they can create paintings using colour opposites. Fruit and Vegetables make excellent starting points for this.

Prepare a variety of brightly coloured cut fruits and vegetables. Choose items that represent the colours on the colour wheel, for example, yellow lemons, red peppers, purple red onions. Pupils must make a painting of their chosen vegetable (only one each).



Colour opposites can be used to create shading on their painting. For example, if you are trying to create darker shades of red in order to paint a red pepper, mixing a small amount of the opposite colour (green) into the red, will create a darker shade. If you are making a painting of a lemon, mixing a small amount of purple into the yellow paint, will create a darker shade. This is one way to use colour opposites in painting and is so much more effective than adding black to darken.



Finally when the pupils have painted their chosen vegetable or fruit, they can then add their opposite colour background. For example if a pupil has painted a lemon, they should paint a purple background, if they have painted an orange, they should create a blue background and so on.

# Painting Pattern & Texture

Pupils can also use their colour mixing skills to experiment with pattern and texture.



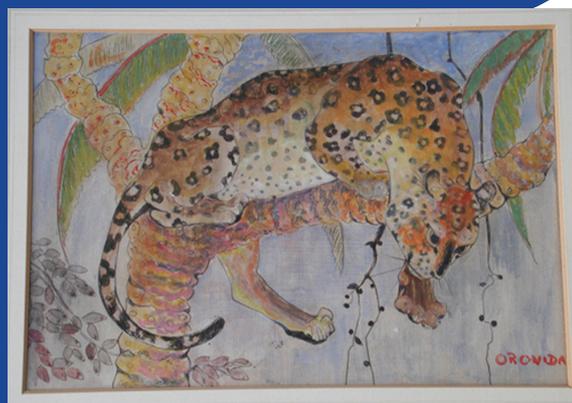
Year 5 pupils explore pattern making in painting using brushes



Tools other than brushes can also be used to explore pattern and texture making techniques in the classroom. Things such as plastic forks and spoons, string, sponges and straws can also be used to experiment with paint.



Using poster colour, a sponge and string - Year 5



Jaguar, Gouache over etching  
Orovida Pissaro (1893—1968)

Orovida Pissaro's Jaguar is an excellent example of the use of pattern and texture in painting.

# Pattern & Texture



*Using poster colour, brushes and string- Year 5*



*Using lolly pop sticks and sponges- Year 5*



*Year 5 pupils explore movement, colour and texture in these paintings inspired by Mane Katz's Stormy Seas (Movement Pack)*

## Painting with glue!

Fantastic paintings can be made using PVA glue mixed with a variety of materials such as sand and glitter. The sand or glitter can be mixed with glue prior to commencing the activity. Don't put too much sand or glitter in however, as the glue needs to be runny- about the consistency of double cream. For this activity it is best to have small squeeze bottles to put the glue mix into, but pupils can also drip the glue using a brush or straw. You can also use the glue mix to paint on to clear acetate sheets (like the ones for the photocopier or overhead projector). The paintings will then be translucent and can be displayed on classroom windows.



*Foundation Stage pupils painting with glue and sand.*

