

Teaching Painting: Getting Started

Learning to paint with water-based paints is all about controlling the wetness of the paper to get different painting effects.

Wetness can be controlled by:

- Using different kinds/sizes of brush, which apply varying amounts of water applied at any one time.
- Learning to load the brush with paint in different ways.
- Blotting paper with tissues or paper towels (tissues work best-keep them on hand).
- Using papers with varying absorbencies as a support (for instance: rice paper vs. water color paper).
- Controlling Bleeding: If one patch of wet color touches another wet area, they will bleed together and blend. Careful control of wet areas, and planning which colors will combine and where they will touch is important in using this technique.
- Applying materials to the surface of the painting to seal off areas/mix with or absorb paint, such as coarse salt, clear wax crayons, rubber cement, etc.

All of these are examples of ‘techniques’ artists use to achieve different visual effects. Technique is directly related to an artist’s style or characteristic way of working. Artists choose to create different visual effects for expressive purposes, and the techniques they use are a direct outgrowth of their artistic/expressive purpose.

Steps in Creating a Painting:

1. Decide the direction of the paper (horizontal or vertical).
2. Lay-out basic shapes and composition with a light color of paint using a #10 or #12 brush.
3. Lay in large areas of color.
4. Add details, patterns, and textures by over-painting.
5. Use a #1 or #2 detail brush to add highlights and small details.

Teaching Painting:

Color Mixing and Color Theory

Always check to see if you have color blind students, or partially color blind students (red/green color blindness is the most common) in your class before doing color mixing exercises. Assign these students sympathetic partners who can help them to identify and mix colors.

- **Supports:** Always use white paper as a background when student are learning to mix their colors and making color wheels. The colors will show truer on a white background.
- **Brushes:** Use a #6 or #7 round brush for these exercises.
- **Using Tempera:** Using tempera paint for color mixing exercises has advantages over watercolor paint. With tempera, students can easily correct mistakes by re-mixing the color and painting over the mistake. When using tempera, use the primary colors that designers use for color mixing, rather than the traditional red, blue and yellow to get clearer, brighter secondary and intermediate colors. Designer primary colors are: magenta for red, cyan (labeled as turquoise) for blue, and the traditional yellow.

Recommended Procedures for Teaching Color Mixing:

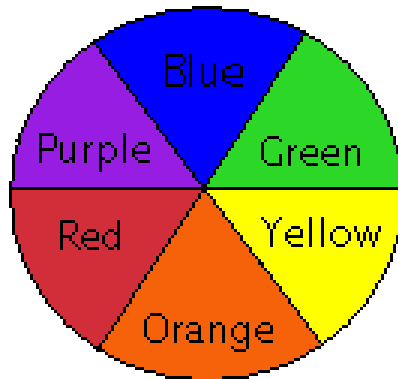
- Provide a color wheel or color examples so students can visually match the colors they are mixing.
- Partner students to conserve materials and ease clean-up. Use one paint palette per pair of students while allowing every student to have their own brush, paper and rinse container.
- If students are creating color wheels, have the label the wheel with the color name in each section before starting to mix the paints.
- Teach students to mix their lightest colors first (such as yellow) and add darker colors to the lighter color in little 'dabs' until the correct color is achieved. For instance, when mixing tints by adding white, have students add the color to the white. When mixing shades by adding black, have students add the black to the color.
- Provide generously sized water containers for rinsing brushes between colors. One quart plastic yogurt or cheese containers work well for this. Change rinse water often so that colors stay clear and bright.

Color Theory:

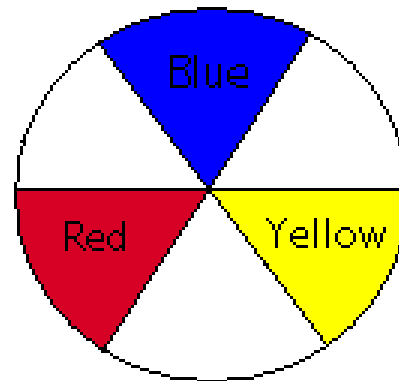
- Primary Colors – basic required colors (red, yellow and blue).
- Secondary Colors – two primary colors mixed (orange, green, and purple).
- Neutral Colors – black, grey and white
- Value – light and dark of color.
 - Tint when white is added.
 - Tone when grey is added.
 - Shade when black is added.

- Intensity – brightness or dullness of color

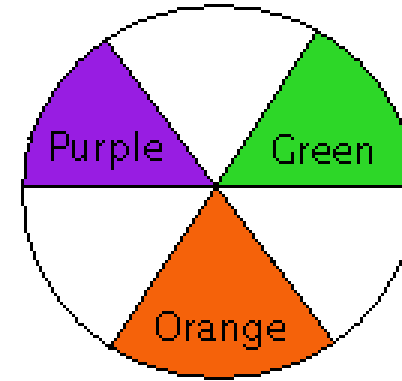
The Color Wheel



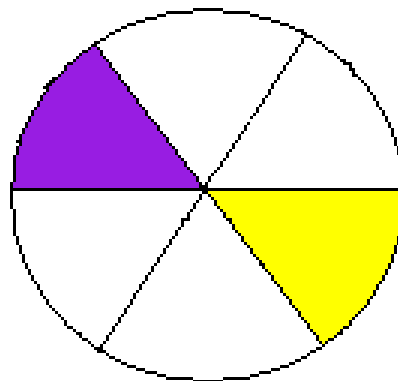
The Color Wheel



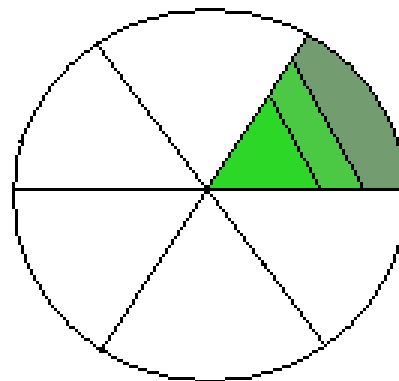
Primary Colors



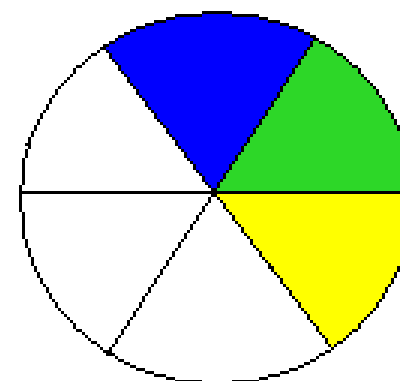
Secondary Colors



Complimentary Colors
(opposite each other)



Mono-Chromatic Colors
(one color plus white,
grey and black)



Analogous Colors
(next to each other)

Painting Materials and Recommended Uses

Tool	Types	Uses	Tips
Paint	Tempera (poster paint) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opaque Watercolor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparent Both are water based.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tempera - Can paint over mistake with addition layer of paint. • Watercolor - Each layer of paint will show through the one on top of it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to clean up.
Palettes	Always use white palettes.	Used to mix colors before applying them to a painting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Styrofoam butcher trays make great palettes. • Styrofoam egg cartons cut in half make great paint dispensers.
Brushes	The basic brush is a #7 round brush.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #10 round brushes for basic work. • 0-#2 round brushes for detail work. • Flat brushes for washes and covering large areas. 	
Supports	The surface an artist paints on (paper, canvas, board, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White drawing paper is most common. • Heavier (80#) weight is recommended. • Watercolor paper is very expensive and should be reserved for special project only if used at all. 		

Teaching Painting:

Classroom Management and Clean-up Strategies

Organizing Your Classroom for Painting:

To avoid long and chaotic clean-ups, be proactive in organizing your class for 'paint days.'

- Think about the traffic patterns in your classroom and figure out the best way for students to access supplies, water for hand-washing and desk clean-up, and trash cans.
- Be sure you have enough trash cans and towels available in strategic areas for faster and easier clean-up.
- Cover surface areas with butcher paper or newspaper in areas where paint will be distributed or used.
- Paint bottles should stay in a designated area rather than passed around the classroom. Plan to give out paint to a small group of students at a time.
- Assign designated 'helpers' to pass out paper, brushes, etc.
- Assign designated 'helpers' who will take used palettes, brushes and water containers to the sinks for cleaning at the end of the lesson.
- Create a designated area for students to get brushes, palettes and water.
- Determine what kinds of clean-up jobs will be needed, and assign them to students on a rotating basis before painting starts.

Supplies:

For painting lessons, have two students share a container (like an egg carton cut in half) of the basic paint colors you are using. In addition, each student will need:

- A brush or brushes.
- A palette for mixing their colors.
- A water container (preferably 16 oz. or more)
- Paper

Cleaning up:

The teacher's role during clean-up is to supervise students doing the clean-up. Organize your classroom so students have clear roles and responsibilities during clean-up, and then monitor procedures to make sure they are done efficiently and students are on task. A well organized clean-up procedure can be done in 5-10 minutes.

Clothing and Paint Stains:

To avoid paint stains on clothing, always have students wear paint shirts and have their sleeves rolled up. Paint will sometimes stain, but usually not, if stain remover is applied to the stain immediately. It is recommended to have a 'stain stick' handy to apply to paint stains before the students leave class.

Drying Student Work:

To avoid paint running and dripping, student work should be stored flat until dry. The most efficient way to deal with 30 wet paintings is to put them on a drying rack. A drying rack is a wheeled wire rack with 30-60 shelves an inch or so apart for drying wet papers. They are space efficient, and can be wheeled out of the way when projects are finished. Ideally, every school should have a drying rack to share among classrooms. If you don't have a drying rack, placing projects on newspaper along the walls in hallways or in the classroom is also a good way to get paintings out of the way while drying.

Keeping surfaces clean to minimize clean-up:

Cover surfaces where paint will be used with butcher paper or newspapers. Have a large trash can handy in strategic areas for papers to be thrown out during clean-up. Teachers who do art projects often can create re-usable desk covers by laminating sheets of heavy paper.

One Sink (or no sink at all) & 30 Students...How to Cope???

An organized painting set-up and clear clean-up procedures can make this situation workable. The trick to an organized clean-up is to avoid the chaos of having multiple students crowding the sink areas all at once. Some organizational suggestions:

- When working without a sink, you will need one or two extra empty buckets available to dump waste water from wash rinse containers.
- **Assign Sink Clean-up Helpers.** Only designated sink clean-up helpers are allowed in the 'sink' area during clean-up. The sink helpers' job is to clean dirty dishes (palettes/water containers) at the sinks, and to wash/rinse them clean. A thrift store dish rack is helpful so that containers can be stacked to air-dry. If you don't have a sink, use buckets on a cart that can be wheeled to a sink area for final clean-up.
- **Hand-Washing Station.** Designate a place for hand-washing. Most kids will want to use the sink to wash their hands. You can either send them to the bathrooms, or have a 'hand-washing bucket/tub' set up, with soap, towels and waste basket at one station in the classroom.
- **Surface Clean-up Helpers and Cleaning Station.** Have another station set up with a bucket and sponges for wiping off tables and cleaning floors. Before painting, demonstrate how to use a sponge (rinse and squeeze out excess water before wiping). Designate one student responsible for surface clean-up in each area of the classroom on a rotating basis.