

Ashley Kierce, grade 9.

A Color Study through Design

by Annita Shaw

Color. We live with it and expect it to be there. It makes our life safer, more exciting, more pleasant. But, where does it come from? How do we get so many colors?

We begin our study by observing the colors around the room. We look at everything: our clothing, plants, walls and so on. I then turn off the lights; the colors dull, maybe change completely. Why? We talk about the difference between light and pigment and our eyes' optical capability.

With the lights back on, we then look at the color wheel and find out



how to use it like a road map, only this map is for color.

We begin with the primary colors and tempera paint. I ask for a student volunteer who would be willing to "wash" their hands with paint. I then put a dab of yellow in one hand and a smaller dab of blue in the other and ask the



< Tyler McFarland, grade 9.

student rub his or her hands together.

Everyone is surprised as the volunteer's hands turn green. Even those who knew yellow + blue = green are amazed. Now is the perfect time to talk about tints: add a drop of white, rub together and see the "tint." We repeat with other students and other combi-



Josh Orcutt, grade 9. ▲
 Gwen Schulze, grade 8. >
 Marc Thompson, grade 9. ▼



nations, also adding black to create a “shade.” This becomes a very meaningful experience that most will not forget, and we discuss the vocabulary of color: monochromatic, analogous, warm and cool and so on.

Since classes are a semester in length, I try to combine elements—in this instance, line and color. I find this

more interesting and challenging for my students. The results are exciting for all of us.

Even a color study became a work of art and made a beautiful show-stopper wherever displayed—the mall, a hallway, in the classroom or in the cafeteria showcase.

Because of budget constraints, we use plastic-foam trays to put paint on and plastic cottage cheese and butter containers for water. We covered our tables with newspapers or magazine sheets when painting to make clean up easier.

Now that students have a better understanding of color, it is time to apply their knowledge and give them some practice. They each are given a 12" x 18" sheet of drawing paper.

With the paper situated vertically, they will fold the paper a total of three times to create eight sections. First, fold the paper in half, from bottom to top, then in half again, also bottom to top. One last fold, left to right widthwise, completes the folding. When opened, there should be eight sections.

Design now comes into play with lines and geometric shapes. Following a set of directions, they use a pencil and a ruler to draw these in block #1. Once satisfied, they learn to transfer through folding and rubbing, thus creating a repeated pattern with reflected images. They write the painting directions for each block on the back.

Once I go over the directions for this color study and show examples by former students, I then hand out the

worksheet and review it with the students. I also post one in the room in case someone misplaces theirs and they need to check out some of the directions.

They then begin the painting process. This assignment takes about two weeks to complete. I follow it with “Fabulous

Fauvist Art”—an artist study integrating research, poetry and these painting skills. *(Project to appear soon in a future issue of Arts & Activities.—Editor)* ■

Retired in 2003, Annita L. Shaw was involved in art education for 39 years at every grade level in Nebraska, Connecticut, California and Washington. During the last two decades of her teaching career, Ms. Shaw served as an art educator, a curriculum specialist and a junior- and senior-high visual arts teacher for the Central Kitsap School District in Silverdale, Washington.

Please see page 26 for reproducible student worksheet

A Color Study Through Design

Enlarge by 160%

COLOR STUDY

DRAWING/DESIGN/PAINTING (8th–9th Grade)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- be able to transfer information to a quality design.
- learn how to mix values.
- apply knowledge to other art projects or problems.

Students will ...

- learn about the color wheel.
- create a repeat pattern.
- become familiar with the vocabulary of color.

MATERIALS/TOOLS

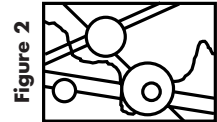
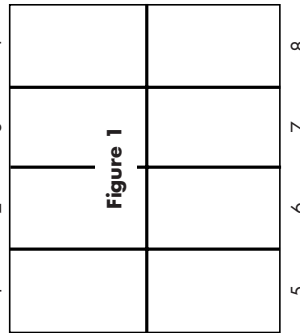
- Pencils (6B)
- 12" x 18" white drawing paper or lightweight watercolor paper
- Tempera paint
- Brushes, various sizes
- Palette
- Black felt-tip permanent marker (optional)
- Ruler or straight edge

VOCABULARY

1. Analogous
2. Color wheel
3. Complementary
4. Cool colors
5. Light
6. Mirror image
7. Monochromatic
8. Neutral
9. Opaque
10. Palette
11. Pattern
12. Pigment
14. Primary
15. Principles of Design
16. Reflection
17. Rubbing
18. Ruler
19. Secondary
20. Shade
21. Straight edge
22. Tempera
23. Tint
24. Tracing light
25. Transfer
26. Value
27. Warm colors

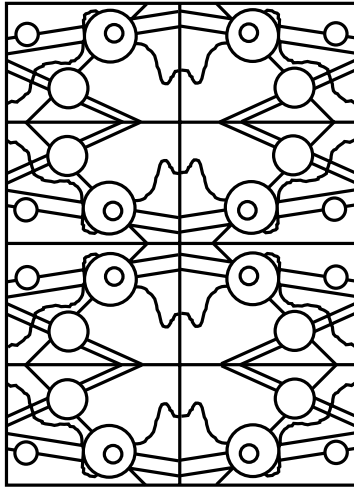
PROCEDURE

1. Using the 12" x 18" sheet of white drawing paper or lightweight watercolor paper, fold into eight equal parts (Fig. 1).
2. Using a 6B drawing pencil in one rectangle (upper left-hand corner #1), do the following (see Fig. 2):
 - Place three geometric shapes, one or a variety, in rectangle #1.
 - One geometric shape must have a hole in it.
 - Draw a curvy line from top to bottom going under one geometric shape.
 - Draw three lines of three different thicknesses vertically, diagonally and/or horizontally—breaking up the remaining space (use at least one diagonal line).
3. Fold the drawn rectangle over face-down on the second rectangle (#2). Rub hard enough to transfer the



Design Example

Figure 3



Front side of 12" x 18" paper with example design

4 3 2 1

Figure 4

Choice	Monochromatic Use a secondary color plus white	Analogous Warm	Neutrals Black and White
Complementary	Secondary color plus black	Cool	Primary

8 7 6 5

Reverse side of 12" x 18" paper.

design. Open up, redraw the transfer.

4. Fold the paper so that #1 and #2 fold down over #5 and #6. Repeat the transfer method in instruction #3.
5. Last step: Fold paper in half so that #1 and #2 cover #3 and #4; #5 and #6 cover #7 and #8. Repeat the transfer method in instruction #3.
6. Once the drawing and transferring is done, you should have a repeated reflected drawing ready to paint (Fig. 3).
7. Painting instructions: Write the instructions on the back of your transferred design. Example: #1 is Neutral—black and white paint (this results in greys) (Fig. 4).
8. Mix at least seven values for each section plus one each of the pure color used. You may repeat values for emphasis.
9. Avoid streaks by thoroughly mixing each color value before painting on the palette.
10. Line design can be emphasized by tracing each line edge with a permanent marker, once paint is dry.
11. Graded on the following:
 - following directions
 - design quality
 - color values
 - quality of color mixing

REQUIREMENTS

1. Take part in a discussion of color, color wheel, etc.
2. View different works done in various color categories: analogous, monochromatic, etc.
3. Take part in a discussion on tempera paint and its opaque qualities, as well as care of equipment and cleanup.
4. View a demonstration on color mixing.
5. Color study must result in an eight-part repeated pattern with reflected images and each section painted according to the directions given in the procedural section.
6. Evaluation.

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