

SCHOLASTIC

Instructor

Color Fun

Integrate art, science, and writing with these color-filled activities

By Jodi Mahoney and Rona Iny

Color Graphs

Give younger children a chance to look beyond the crayon box with a class discussion of favorite colors, starting with your own. Talk with students about why you chose this color, then guide them through the thinking process to choose their own favorites. Record responses on a rainbow-colored bar graph, then ask students to find examples of each favorite color around your classroom.

Mixing Colors

Introduce the science of color — and reinforce the scientific method — by trying this exciting-yet-easy color experiment! Create red, blue, and yellow ice cubes by adding food coloring to water before freezing it. Divide the class into pairs, and distribute three clear plastic cups to each. Ask each pair to predict and write down what they think will happen when two different colors are mixed. Then invite the pairs to pick ice cubes in those colors and place in a cup. As the cubes melt, have students record the outcomes: How accurate were their predictions? Next, distribute cups of red, blue, and yellow tempera paint and ask students to predict what will happen when white paint is added. Encourage students to experiment on their own, then discuss the outcomes as a class.

Reading Color

Invite students to choose a poem or song about color each week during your color studies. Distribute a copy to each student to illustrate. Then use the poems as quick and easy read-alouds. Here are a couple of favorites.

Green Giant

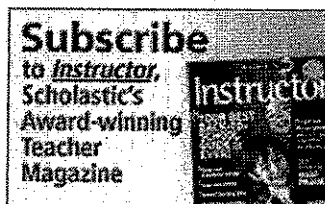
There lived a green giant whose name was Sam.
His hair was the color of strawberry jam.
He had one brown and one blue eye,
And a beard the color of pumpkin pie.
His coat and pants were gay and bright,
Like a peppermint stick, all red and white.
His shoes were as brown as a chocolate drop.
His stockings were yellow as lemon pop.
His hat was the color of ginger bread
With a tall, tall feather of raspberry red.

The Color Song (To the tune of "This Old Man")

Red, red, red, touch your head.
Blue, blue, blue, tie your shoe.
Brown, brown, brown, touch the ground.
White, white, white, take a bite.
Black, black, black, touch your back.
Purple, purple, purple, draw a circle.
Pink, pink, pink, give a wink.
Gray, gray, gray, shout hurray!

There are also number of wonderful books on color with which you can fill your classroom library. See "Color Resources" for our recommendations.

Subject: Literature,
Charts and Graphs,
Science Experiments
and Projects, Arts,
Teacher Tips and
Strategies, Colors
Grade: K-8
Audience: Teachers



Warm and Cool Colors

Introduce the concept of "warm" colors (red, orange, yellows) and "cool" colors (blue, green, purple) by talking about the ways color can be used to express feelings and moods. Ask questions like "What colors remind you of fire?" "What comes to mind when you think of something cold?" Then ask students to create one picture with warm colors only, and one with cool only. Present their pictures side-by-side. What kinds of images did students choose? How does each make them feel? Next, ask students to consider what it would be like if their pictures used the opposite colors. Have them each create a third picture, either by duplicating one of their pictures in the opposite colors, or using both warm and cool in a new scene.

Color Walks

Get children to recognize color in their environment by inviting them on daily color adventures, either around the school or through your neighborhood. As you set out, distribute inexpensive disposable cameras to small groups of students and ask them to take turns photographing objects that are the day's chosen color. Glue the developed photos onto 5" x 8" cards, and use as easy, quick writing prompts. Have students caption the photos with descriptions of the colored objects they noticed on their walks. Display the photos around the room for the class to see and talk about.

Rona Iny taught kindergarten and first grade in New York City. Jodi Weisbart Mahoney, a primary school teacher in NYC, is also the author of several professional books for teachers, including the recent *Introducing Nonfiction Writing in the Early Grades*, (Scholastic, 2002), and the bestseller, *Joyful Ways to Teach Young Children to Write Poetry*, (Scholastic, 2001).



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