

GRADE LEVEL:

9-12

LESSON PLAN OBJECTIVES:

The goal of this exercise is for students to develop a well balanced and visually interesting composition that focuses on line quality and colour.

MATERIAL INTRODUCTION:

What are pastels used for? Pastels are used to make drawings but through layering and blending they can be used to resemble a painting.

What are colour crayons? Colour Crayons, also referred to as Conté à Paris carrés, are harder than pastels or charcoals. This hardness creates crisp, tight lines rather than the more smudged look of pastel and charcoal. They are produced from a highly rigorous choice of pigments, clay and a binder. They are then baked after being extruded and dried.

How do crayons differ from pastel pencils? Conté à Paris crayons can be held in many ways, which allows for a multitude of different angles. An example is using the “flat edge” of the crayon and varying the pressure (the greater the pressure on the crayon, the denser the colour that will be obtained). By holding the crayon upright or slightly slanted, fine and accurate lines can be created. Pastel pencils are the perfect pencil companion to crayons, because they are slightly softer and can offer more control when fine detail is required. Both materials blend easily.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT



"A STUDY OF A DANCER",
EDGAR DEGAS

What artists do we most associate with pastel use in the late 19th century?

Edgar Degas and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec

Edgar Degas and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec both placed a great deal of importance on drawing from life. For instance, get this; Toulouse-Lautrec created more than 5,000 drawings in his lifetime! Both artists dealt with behind-the-scenes subjects as they prepared for larger events, as well as subjects in their everyday surroundings. The gestural line quality that Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec employed in their drawings and paintings creates a sense of movement. Both artists also utilized a great deal of tints and shades of various colours to build their drawings, which creates the illusion of depth. Degas' drawing, "A Study of a Dancer", employs the use of contrasting values, exaggerated colour and expressive lines to add movement

in an otherwise mundane subject. Compositions of both Degas and Toulouse-Lautrec are visually interesting and make what could be an ordinary scene into something intriguing and extraordinary.

THE PROJECT

Have students bring in five still life objects. Start a class discussion about which objects are the most visually interesting. Students choose three. Remember, we are taking ordinary objects and making them extraordinary!



STEP 1: Using the corner edge of the colour crayon (choose a color that the still life object is made of), start by creating one 8" x 10" contour drawing of each object. Pay attention to contours as well as line quality i.e.: thickness/thinness of line and the darkness/lightness of line. Using the corner of the crayon will provide thin lines while the sides can be used for thicker lines.

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SUPPLY LIST

- Conté à Paris
 - Colour Crayons
 - Pastel Pencils (Colour and Black)
- Paper / Coloured paper (size can vary based on space and student level)
 - 3 - 8" x 10" sheets of drawing paper
 - Sketch paper for thumbnail sketches
 - 1 - 18" x 24" sheet of drawing paper
- Kneaded eraser
- Stump/tortillon

TIPS & TECHNIQUES

Tip: Always work light to dark as it's easier to erase light marks.

Tip: Apply basic drawing techniques for added texture. Use pastel pencils to hatch, cross hatch and stipple.

Tip: Create edges by placing colour against colour and shape against shape, rather than outlining everything. Outlining can have the effect of flattening objects, unless the lines are used with a purpose to create dynamic movement throughout the composition.

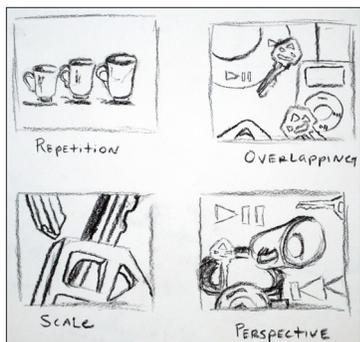
Tip: As pastels and crayons are prone to smear, it is highly recommended that a fixative is used to secure the drawing once complete.

NATIONAL STANDARDS:

- 1a. Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
- 2c. Using knowledge of structures and functions
- 3a. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
- 5c. Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

THE PROJECT (CONTINUED)

STEP 2: Once line quality is explored and focused on, students can then start to lay in values to render the object more realistically. A stump or tortillion can be used for blending tones. Complete the drawings to represent the local colour of each object as realistically as possible.



STEP 3: Organize a student critique to help students choose elements of each drawing that are most interesting to them that can be combined for the final drawing.

STEP 4: The students will then work to create a larger drawing that combines the most interesting elements of the first 3 drawings. After choosing which parts of the first 3 drawings to combine and enlarge, students will create 3 to 5 thumbnail sketches with a black pastel pencil to work out the composition and the relationship between objects. The black pastel pencil is used for the thumbnail sketches so students can focus on composition first, and can address colour during the later stages of the project. Key elements that students can utilize but are not limited to include: repetition of objects, overlapping, scale, perspective and movement. Remember, a creative and unique composition is what will take the ordinary objects and make them into a drawing that is interesting and intriguing!

STEP 5: Students choose the most successful and dynamic thumbnail sketch to enlarge to a final 18" x 24" colour drawing.

STEP 6: Students can now experiment with colours beyond the local colour used in their first 3 drawings. Students can be given the option to work on coloured paper for the final image if they want the colour of the paper to shine through especially when hatching and cross hatching with the pastel pencils. Use the sides of the colour crayons to cover large areas with colour. The corners of the crayons and pastel pencils are excellent for finer detail work on top.



GLOSSARY

- Tint
- Shade
- Local Colour
- Thumbnail
- Gestural
- Values
- Stump
- Tortillion

CONTÉ À PARIS

Over the decades, the quality of its products and the extent of its ranges have enabled Conté à Paris to establish itself as a true reference for artists world-wide. Used by professional artists and art students, Conté à Paris offers the widest variety of techniques and effects possible for drawing, sketching and pastel work.

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