

Lesson Plan: What Color is your Mood?: How Artists Use Color

Submitted by Tori Hamilton, Children's Associate, Glenpool Library

- Overview

In *Bernice Gets Carried Away*, Hannah E. Harrison uses colors to set the mood of the story. In this lesson, your students will learn how artists use color to communicate feelings and make their pictures tell a story even without texts.

- Resources & Preparation

- Materials and Technology

- The book *Bernice Gets Carried Away*
- Regular paper
- Crayons, markers, or colored pencils

- Printouts

- Sample paintings by artists famous for their use of color. These can be printed out for the children or made into a PowerPoint. (A list of examples is attached.)

- Instructional Plan

- Student Objectives:

- Identify ways color can portray mood in art.

1. This lesson should take place after you read *Bernice Gets Carried Away*.
2. After reading the book to the class, go over it again to point out how mood is portrayed through the prose (words like "dreary", "lousy", "surly"), and through the pictures (Bernice's expressions, the surly squirrel).
3. Compare and contrast the pictures on the first and last pages of the book, paying special attention to the colors. Notice how the colors grow richer and brighter as Bernice's mood improves.
4. Show students examples of color in famous art pieces such as Mondrian's *Evening: Red Tree* or Frankenthaler's *Mountains and Sea*. These artists were trying to express an idea rather than make their pictures realistic. Ask students what they think that idea was. What do the colors tell us about these pictures? What mood is the artist trying to convey?
5. Write emotion words such as "joy", "sadness", "anger", and "surprise" on the board in different sections. Ask students to choose one emotion and illustrate it, but tell them they only have a few minutes to do so. Explain that their pictures don't have to look realistic but can focus on colors and shapes. Tell them not to tell their classmates which emotion they are illustrating.
6. Divide the students into groups to share their pictures. Have the students guess which emotions their group members illustrated.
7. As a class, discuss the results. Was it easy to guess the emotions?
8. Collect a few examples of each emotion and tape them to the appropriate section of the board. Are there any common themes between the pictures (i.e., is anger always red? Is sadness blue?)?

- Additional Resources

"Charing Cross Bridge" by Andre Derain



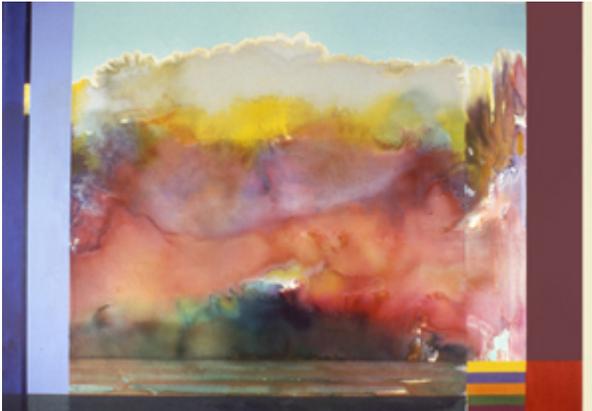
"Mountains and Sea" by Helen Frankenthaler



"Evening; Red Tree" by Piet Mondrian



"Rite of Spring" by Ronnie Landfield



"Willow Grove" by Piet Mondrian

