

Alphabet Soup



Lesson developed by artist, Victoria Fu
Artwork created by Celine Marks, age 6

Objective

Students will review the letters of the alphabet through an abstract drawing that incorporates all letters of the alphabet. They will also express their emotions through the colors, sizes, and shapes that they draw.

Age Kindergarten and up

Time 50-55 mins

Focus Language, Visual Arts (Color, Shape, Line, Space), Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Self-awareness,

Material

- Paper
- Crayons

Core Standards

- Common Core Standards: Reading - Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet
- Visual Arts Standards: Creative Expression - Use lines, shapes/forms, and colors to make patterns
- Social Emotional Competency: Self-awareness - Ability to recognize one's own feelings and describe and understand their own emotions

(See below for a full list of standards.)

Opening (5 mins)

Practice the ABCs with students.

- *Turn to your neighbor and sing the ABCs together. Ready, set, go!*

Instruction and Guided Practice (10-15 mins)

Introduce the activity and show the picture example from the resource page to the class.

- *Look at this example of a completed drawing. The letters of the alphabet are written all over the page. But each letter is a different size and is written in a different direction. Also, you'll notice that the letters are drawn in different colors. Additionally, you'll see that the lines of the letters create new shapes.*
- *Today, we will make our own Alphabet Soup, but in our drawings we will use the colors and shapes to express how we are feeling. I'll show you an example. I am going to close my eyes, take a few breaths and observe how I am feeling right now.*
- Model closing your eyes and taking a few breaths for students. Then open your eyes and announce to the class how you are feeling (i.e. excited, overwhelmed, happy, nervous, focused, silly etc.).
- *I am feeling excited and happy! Considering this, I am going to draw my letters really big in bright colors to express how excited and happy I am feeling. I may even add smiley faces to some of my letters as a way to express my emotions.*
- Model drawing a few letters drawn in a way that expresses excitement. Make sure to draw your letters in different colors, sizes and directions for the students. Feel free to add special design accents to clearly express your emotion.
- Alright, now let's try this together. Everyone please close your eyes and take three deep breaths. With your eyes closed, identify how you are feeling. Maybe it's calm, excited, annoyed, tired, happy, nervous...however you are feeling is okay -- please remember how you are feeling and open your eyes. Now think about how you would express your feelings in the letters and shapes that you draw while creating your Alphabet Soup.

Step 1: *Take your piece of paper and one crayon. Choose a color that represents how you are feeling. Begin by drawing the letter A. It can be as big or as small as you want. It can be capitalized or little. It can go in any direction. Remember to express your emotion (how you are feeling) while you are drawing.*

Step 2: *Next draw the letter B. Make it a different color and a different size than A. What are other ways you can express your emotions while drawing B?*

Step 3: Next draw the letter C. Make it a different color and draw it in a different direction than the other letters.

Step 4: Keep drawing each letter in the alphabet while expressing your emotions. Try to make each letter different from one another: different colors, sizes, write them upside down, or sideways, make some capital letters and some lower case letters. Overlap the letters, the more the better!

Reference the example from the resource page as needed.

Work Time (30 mins)

Circulate the room and support students.

Once students finish drawing all the letters of the alphabet, they should color in the letters and the shapes surrounding them. The entire page will be colored in. Continue to encourage them to color the letters and shapes in a way that expresses the emotion they are feeling.

Closing (5 mins)

In pairs, have students search for letters within their partner's artwork.

- *Share your drawing with your partner.*
- *What is the first letter you see on their page? Point at it and show your partner what you found. Show them a few more letters you see in their drawing.*
- *Turn to your partner and tell them the emotion you were feeling when you were drawing and how you used different colors, shapes, and sizes to express those emotions on the page.*
- *If students would rather not share their emotions, they can continue to observe their partner's drawings and point out different letters and shapes they can identify.*

Extension

2nd-5th Grade: Students can choose one letter in their partner's artwork and have them write a list of all of the words they can think of that begin with this letter. For example, if the student chooses A, they will write as many words that begin with the letter A as possible (apple, August, animal). Challenge them to think of other emotions that start with the letter they chose and write those down.

Philosophy

Art is an essential tool for early childhood development. Studies have shown that art education helps to increase comprehension of STEM and literacy concepts as well as offering students an outlet to process trauma, develop self-discipline and self-management, and interpersonal relationship skills. Active engagement in the arts can yield positive benefits in social and emotional growth. The art lessons developed by Crayon Collection are meant to support this growth.

Standards



Common Core Standards

Language

1A. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. Print many upper- and lowercase letters

Reading

1D. Recognize and name all upper- and lowercase letters of the alphabet

Visual Arts Standards

Artistic Perception

- Develop perceptual skills and visual arts vocabulary
 - 1.1 - Recognize and describe simple patterns found in the environment and works of art

Creative Expression

- Skills, Processes, Materials, and Tools
 - 2.1 - Use lines, shapes/forms, and colors to make patterns
- Communication and Expression Through Original Works of Art
 - 2.6 - Use geometric shapes/forms (circle, triangle, square) in a work of art

Aesthetic Value

- Derive Meaning
 - 4.1 - Discuss their own works of art, using appropriate art vocabulary (e.g., color, shape/form, texture).
 - 4.2 - Describe what is seen (including both literal and expressive content) in selected works of art.

Social Emotional Learning

Self-awareness

- The ability to recognize one's own feelings, interests, and strengths, in addition to maintaining an accurate level of self-efficacy. Students who are self-aware are capable of describing and understanding their own emotions.

About the Artist

Victoria Fu (b. Santa Monica, California, USA) is a visual artist who received her MFA from CalArts, MA in Art History/Museum Studies from University of Southern California, and BA from Stanford University. She attended the Whitney Independent Study Program and was in residence at Skowhegan School of Painting & Sculpture in 2006. Her art installations have been exhibited in recent solos at Honor Fraser Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; The Contemporary, Baltimore, MD; Simon Preston Gallery, New York, NY; and University Art Gallery at UC Irvine, CA. Recent group venues include the 2014 Whitney Biennial at the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, NY; Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, La Jolla, CA; 52nd New York Film Festival, New York, NY; IX Nicaragua Biennial, Managua, Nicaragua; among others. Fu is a 2013-14 Art Matters Foundation Grantee and 2015 Guggenheim Fellow. Fu lives and works in Los Angeles, and is Assistant Professor of Art at the University of San Diego. She is represented by Simon Preston Gallery and Honor Fraser.

Additional Resources

Use this picture to show an example of the project. Notice that the letters are all different sizes and written in different directions, creating unique shapes. Ask students to color in the shapes using different colored crayons.

