CRAYON COLLECTION

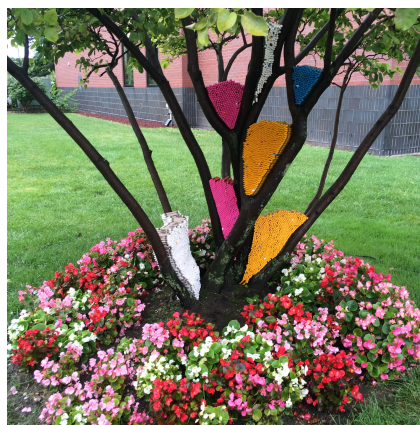**COLLECT -> CONTRIBUTE -> CREATE**

Crayon Nest

Project idea conceived by artist, Herb Williams

Objective
Art in nature! Students use crayons to develop art installations in nature, such as tree branches. Students exercise creativity in their natural surroundings and learn color blocking and practice sorting. This lesson introduces STEM practices.

	Material
Age Kindergarten and up	● Crayons
Time 45 mins or could span two sessions	● Containers to organize crayons by color (can be bags or cardboard boxes)
Focus STEM, Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Visual Arts (Shape, Form, Color, Line), Color Blocking, Imagination	● White paper (optional, see extension) ● Tacks (optional, see extension)

Core Standards
● Common Core: Math - Model shapes in the world by building shapes from components (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes ● Social-Emotional Learning (SEL): Exhibit cooperative learning and working toward group goals ● Visual Arts: Create art that represents natural and constructed environments; Demonstrate increasing coordination and motor control when working with visual arts tools (See below for a full list of standards.)

Opening (5 mins)
Distribute crayons and containers to students. Provide an overview of the lesson objective. ● *Today, we will be going outside and making art installations in nature!* ● *We will be using our crayons to make "crayon nests" in tree branches.* ● *First, we will sort our crayons by color so that our nests are beautiful and bright!*

- *When creating our installations we will use an art technique called "Color Blocking". This is a method of using large blocks of the same color and arranging that color next to another color block. Here is an example of what I mean.* (Show example of Color Blocking made famous by Dutch painter, Piet Mondrian, in the resource page).

(Show picture examples from the resource page as needed.)

Questions:
- *Have you ever seen a bird nest in a tree? What do nests look like?*
- *What material are they made of?*
- *What kind of branch do you think a bird looks for when building her nest for her family?*

Instruction and Guided Practice (35 mins)
Divide students into groups of 2-4 and make sure each group has a bunch of crayons and a few different containers to sort and organize the crayons by color.

Step 1: *Begin sorting the crayons by color and designate one container for each color. For example, make sure the red crayons are organized with the other red crayons and the blue crayons are organized with the other blue crayons. Please do the same with each crayon color.*

Step 2: Once the crayons are sorted by color, bring the class outside to an area where there are trees.

Step 3: Bring students to a tree with branches that are close together (so that the crayons can be stacked between the branches.) This may be at the base of the tree. Demonstrate stacking crayons between the branches in a way that forms a shape. Remember to demonstrate color blocking by using the same colored crayons to make each separate shape. **(See pictures in the resource page as inspiration.)** Ask students to join you in completing your shape. Make sure each student tries stacking the crayons so they grasp understanding.

Questions:
- What shapes do you see?
- How big are the shapes?
- Which colors do you see?

Step 4: Partner students up in groups of 2-4 and ask them to find trees to build their crayon nests. Remind students to create the nests (or shapes) in the same color. They should have multiple nests in the same art installment, each nest a different color to achieve color blocking.

Circulate the area and help students as needed. Make sure students find sturdy branches to create their installations.

Closing (5 mins)

Once students are finished creating their crayon nests, ask students to walk around and observe each other's art installations. Ask students which shapes and colors they see. This should feel like an outside art gallery!

Extension:
2nd-5th Grade: Once students have competed making their crayon nests in the trees, ask students to either draw their installations on paper OR put paper over the tree bark and rub crayons over the paper to create a textured imprint of the tree bark. Once completed, they could hang their drawings on the trees (using a tack) next to their crayon nest.

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

Math
Identify and Describe Shapes
- Describe objects in the environment using names of shapes, and describe the relative positions of these objects using terms such as *above*, *below*, *beside*, *in front of*, *behind*, and *next to*.
- Correctly name shapes regardless of their orientations or overall size.

Analyze, Compare, Create, and Compose Shapes
- Model shapes in the world by building shapes from components (e.g., sticks and clay balls) and drawing shapes.
- Compose simple shapes to form larger shapes. *For example, "Can you join these two triangles with full sides touching to make a rectangle?"*

Social Emotional Competency

Relationship Management
- Exhibit cooperative learning and working toward group goals
- Communicate effectively
- Provide help to those who need it

Visual Art

Notice, Respond, and Engage
1.1 Communicate about elements appearing in art (such as line, texture, or perspective), and describe how objects are positioned in the artwork.

Develop Skills in Visual Art
2.6 Demonstrate increasing coordination and motor control when working with visual arts tools.

Create, Invent, and Express Through Visual Art
3.1 Intentionally create content in a work of art.

Creating
2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
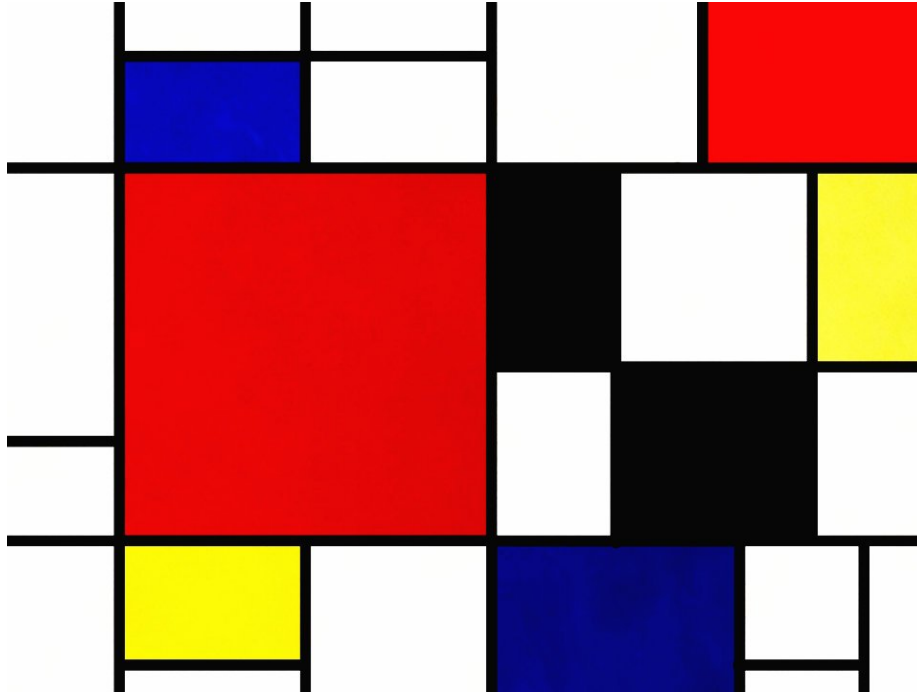   o   Create art that represents natural and constructed environments.

About the Artist

One of the only artists in the world to boast an account with Crayola, Herb Williams got his BFA from Birmingham-Southern College. His works have been featured in the White House and internationally at various festivals. Williams is the recipient of the The Joan Mitchell Foundation Museum Purchase Grant in 2005, the Next Star Artist Award in 2008, and was sponsored by a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts in 2011.

Additional Resources

1. Color Blocking example (technique made famous by Dutch painter, Piet Mondrian)

2. "Crayon nest" example using color blocking.

3. "Crayon nest" example using color blocking.