

Style in Art

Year 5

This unit considers style in art (first studied in year 1, and then referred to in other units throughout the course of study) by first considering how artists can use different techniques to alter their style. Children compare different styles of brushwork demonstrated by Stubbs in *Whistlejacket* and by Munch in *The Scream of Nature* (which they are familiar with from year 4). They draw pears using contrasting techniques, creating visible marks in oil pastels in the manner of Van Gogh and smooth modelling using soft pastels in the manner of Stubbs. They go on to compare two radically different styles, rococo and modernism, analysing the differences they see in painting and chair design. This leads to a more detailed analysis of modernism, looking at abstract art of the 20th century and using their developing knowledge of colour theory to design and create their own abstract work using acrylic on canvas. They conclude the unit by studying the work of Rachel Jones, a contemporary artist, who produces large-scale abstract works in oil pastel.

Lesson Sequencing

In lesson 1 the children consider how style in art can refer to the technique an artist has used to make a painting, comparing different styles of brushwork and echoing these in their own drawings using oil pastels and soft pastels. In lesson 2 and 3 they compare two highly contrasting styles from different periods of history, rococo and modernism. They sketch rococo designs and create their own designs for modernist chairs. In lessons 4-6 they go on to consider abstract art and how this style has been connected to music and used to show emotion. They consider early artists who developed an abstract style, Mondrian, Kandinsky and Delaunay before looking at later paintings by Rothko and Pollock. They conclude by looking at abstract work being made today by Rachel Jones. As their study of abstraction progresses through lessons 4-6 they plan and execute their own abstract painting using acrylic on canvas and implementing their developing knowledge of colour theory.

Key concepts covered in this unit are style, technique, colour (including colour theory) and abstraction.

Key skills

Drawing skills using oil pastels and soft pastels covered in this unit include:

- Using short, defined marks in oil pastels to add dark and light tones to show form.
- Layering colours in oil pastel.
- Pressing lightly with oil pastels.
- Using oil pastels on their side as well as drawing with the end.
- Using the side of a soft pastel to add large areas of dark and light tones to show form.
- Blending the edges of soft pastels together with the fingers.

Drawing skills using pencil covered in this unit include:

- Holding the pencil in a firm but relaxed grip.
- Just using lines.
- Drawing light lines, not pressing too hard.
- Considering what is the appropriate scale for a drawing.
- Adding small details.

Painting skills using acrylics developed in this unit include exercising choice about how they wish to paint to produce the effect they want. In their mixing/brush technique they need to consider the following:

- Will they hold the brush like a pencil to give control or hold it roughly to create a more unpredictable effect?
- Will they control the amount of water/paint that is loaded onto the brush/sponge or apply large blobs of paint or water to the canvas?
- Will they mix colours thoroughly in a mixing palette to create defined colours or experiment with a combination of unmixed colours on the brush/ sponge?
- Will they pull the brush smoothly for a smooth effect, dab it for short marks or push it to make rough marks?

Children also develop the important skills of looking (or observing) in this unit screwing up their eyes to identify the light/dark tones on an object. They also carefully observe shapes to enable them to draw the outside shape of a still life object and its cast shadow, as well as drawing intricate rococo designs. They will also need to exercise choice about the design of their abstract painting considering line, shape, space, colour, and texture.

Key processes covered by the children in this unit are analysing other artists' work; using observation to create their own work; planning and designing their own work; evaluating their own work.

Key disciplinary concepts covered in this unit include the idea that style in art means how a piece of art looks. Style is often divided into a period of time in history, a country, a group of artists, art which is about a particular idea or the technique an artist uses to create a work of art. The unit also consider how art has different purposes. Rather than seeking to show what we can see before our eyes, art can convey the visually intangible: abstract art has been connected to music as well as reflecting and stimulating emotion and the imagination. The unit also touches on the different processes artists use to create the art that they make, whether by using careful consideration, sketching and planning or by creating art impulsively in the moment.

Outcomes

Children carry out a separate task in the first three lessons of this unit and take three further lessons to complete one task. The first two tasks can be described as 'convergent' tasks (following guided instructions so that pupils reach broadly similar outcomes as each other). These are:

- Drawing two pears, one in a rough style using oil pastels, one in a smooth style using smooth pastels.
- Sketching rococo designs using pencil.

The task in lesson 3 and extended task which the children undertake during lessons 4-6 can be described as 'divergent' (using specified techniques but with an unspecified endpoint). These are:

- Designing a chair(s) in a modernist style.
- Making an abstract painting using acrylic on canvas.