

Monochromatic Colors

Grade 5 – Lesson 4

(*Art Connections*, Level 5, pgs. 46-49)

Big Idea

Artists can use monochromatic colors – tints and shades of one color – to unify a work of art visually.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target 1: Analyzes monochromatic palette as a way to create unity. (Arts EALR 1.1 *Elements of art: Monochromatic colors*; 2.3 *Applies a responding process to the arts – art analysis*)

Criteria 1: Describes the ways that tints and shades of one color can unify a work of art visually.

Target 2: Creates a monochromatic color scheme. (Arts EALR 1.2 *Skills and Techniques: Color mixing*)

Criteria 2: Mixes tints (color + white) and shades (color + black) of one color.

Target 3: Uses color symbolically. (Arts EALR 3.1 *Art as Communication: Symbolism*)

Criteria 3: Selects a monochromatic color scheme to represent an aspect of self (explains in writing).

Local Art References



Summer in Kyoto, 1958

Paul Horiuchi

58.124



Kannon Rescuing Lost Souls (self-portrait), 1849

Katsushika Hokusai

67.13

(NOTE to Teacher: See **Art Background** section at end of lesson for more information about these works of art.)

Looking at Art Questions

(Note to Teacher: Show the two images from *Art Connections*, Level 5, pgs. 46-47 and the two images above when facilitating the following discussion.)

1. What one color is used most often in each work of art?
2. When you add white to a color it is called a **tint**. When you add black to a color it is called a **shade**. Where do you see tints and shades of the main color in each composition?

3. When an artist uses mostly tints and shades of one color in a composition, we describe the work as having a **monochromatic color scheme**. Monochromatic means “one color.” What affect do the monochromatic color schemes have on these compositions?
4. When an artist repeats something like color in a composition, it can make the work hold together visually. This is called **visual unity**. What makes these compositions look visually unified?
5. What feeling is expressed in each work of art? How did the artists evoke these feelings?
6. We are going to create monochromatic self-portraits today in which the colors we choose express something symbolic about who we are.

Art Making Activity

Monochromatic You: Collage Self-Portraits

How can you use a monochromatic color scheme to express something about who you are?

1. Since we are going to use monochromatic color schemes, first we'll practice mixing tints and shades of a single color with gouache (goo-ahsh). Gouache is a translucent medium, like watercolor, so you can also lighten or darken the color by adding more or less water to the color.
2. We're going to create drawn and then painted self-portraits today. Your self-portrait could contain other images or text if you choose that say something about you. You can start in several different ways. You could:
 - a. Do a realistic sketch of your own face, using a mirror
 - b. Sketch other images that express something about who you are in your sketchbook
 - c. Write down descriptive words, or quotes, or other text that says something about you
 - d. Paint a few different tints and shades of various colors to determine which one you think best represents something about you
3. Steps for Teacher:
 - a. Demonstrate and facilitate students mixing tints and shades of a single color with gouache.
 - b. Facilitate the students' conceptualization process, Remember that different artists need different starting points for inspiration – experimenting with

the materials, sketching, journaling, etc. – are all good ways to start.

- c. Circulate while students are working, engaging them in discussion about what the various elements of their drawing express about themselves and how they are going to unify their compositions with a monochromatic color scheme.

Each Student Needs

- Sketchbook
- One 11x17 piece of watercolor paper
- Drawing pencils (2H – 4B)
- A Staedtler eraser
- A paint palette
- A paper towel
- Blue tape to tape down the four edges of their paper
- Mirror for doing a realistic self-portrait

Each pair of students need

- A set of gouache paints
- Water container

Vocabulary

Monochromatic color scheme
Tints
Shades
Visual unity
Gouache

Tips for Teachers

During Class

- Remind students before they start to paint that they must restrict their palette to one monochromatic color scheme. They are not using color realistically, but symbolically/expressively.
- As you circulate while the students are working, engage them in discussions about why they chose the images, text and monochromatic color scheme they did, and how they are using them to express the something about themselves.

Self-Assessment

Name _____

After you finish your monochromatic self-portrait, in your sketchbook describe the various elements of your composition and what they express about you. Explain why you chose the monochromatic color scheme that you did, and what it says about you. Create a label for your work with a title, your name, the date and a list of the media you used.

Reflecting on Our Art

- **Describe:** Describe the various elements of your composition.
- **Analyze:** What affect does your monochromatic color scheme have on your composition?
- **Interpret:** What does your self-portrait express about you?
- **Decide:** Do you think someone could get a sense of who you are from your self-portrait, even if they didn't know you?

Art Background (for *Summer in Kyoto* by Paul Horiuchi)

Horiuchi, Paul (1906-1999): Master of Collage – HistoryLink.org Essay 3829

The Northwest Artist Paul Horiuchi is renowned for the Zen-like spontaneity of his collage paintings, along with an abstract expressionist command of flat space. The layered paintings carry overtones of fragmented messages, of memories eroded by time. Torn edges suggest wounding and loss. Yet the word most frequently applied to Horiuchi's work was "elegance." The artist traveled from a cultured family in Japan to hard times in America working on the railroad and at other jobs. He married and moved to Seattle and eventually achieved high honor and wide recognition. This biography of Paul Horiuchi is reprinted from Deloris Tarzan Ament's *Iridescent Light: The Emergence of Northwest Art* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002). **Note:** All quotations from Bernadette Horiuchi and Paul Horiuchi Jr., unless otherwise noted, are from Deloris Tarzan Ament's interviews with them on November 7, 1999.



Paul Horiuchi painting, 1960s

Photo by George Uchida, Courtesy Paul M. Horiuchi

Excerpted from:

http://www.historylink.org/index.cfm?DisplayPage=output.cfm&File_Id=3829

Art Background (for *Kannon Rescuing Lost Souls (self-portrait)* by Katsushika Hokusai)

Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), Japanese painter and wood engraver, born in Edo (now Tokyo). He is considered one of the outstanding figures of the Ukiyo-e, or "pictures of the floating world" (everyday life), school of printmaking.

Hokusai entered the studio of his countryman Katsukawa Shunsho in 1775 and there learned the new, popular technique of woodcut printmaking. Between 1796 and 1802 he produced a vast number of book illustrations and color prints, perhaps as many as 30,000, that drew their inspiration from the traditions, legends, and lives of the Japanese people. Hokusai's most typical wood-block prints, silkscreens, and landscape paintings were done between 1830 and 1840. The free curved lines characteristic of his style gradually developed into a series of spirals that imparted the utmost freedom and grace to his work, as in *Raiden, the Spirit of Thunder*.

In his late works Hokusai used large, broken strokes and a method of coloring that imparted a more somber mood to his work, as in his massive *Group of Workmen Building a Boat*. Among his best-known works are the 13-volume sketchbook *Hokusai manga* (begun 1814) and the series of block prints known as the *Thirty-Six Views of Mount Fuji* (circa 1826-33).



The Great Wave Off Kanagawa

From "Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji"; 1823-29 (140 Kb); Color woodcut, 10 x 15 in; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Hokusai is generally more appreciated in the West than in Japan. His prints, as well as those by other Japanese printmakers, were imported to Paris in the mid-19th century. They were enthusiastically collected, especially by such impressionist artists as Claude Monet, Edgar Degas, and Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, whose work was profoundly influenced by them.

Excerpted from: <http://www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth/hokusai/>

Cross-Curricular Connections

Writing – Autobiography

Assessment Checklist

Student	Describes the ways that tints and shades of one color can unify a work of art visually	Mixes tints (color + white) and shades (color + black) of one color (1 point for tints, 1 point for shades)	Selects a monochromatic color scheme to represent an aspect of self (explains in writing).	TOTAL 4
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Total Points				
Percent Comprehension				

Teacher Notes:

Letter Home

Dear Family,

*Today we learned that artist can use a **monochromatic color scheme** (tints and shades of one color) both to **visually unify** a composition. We looked at monochromatic **collages** by two 20th century American artists, Ben Jones and Jasper Johns, and 20th century Japanese American artist Paul Horiuchi. We also looked at a monochromatic self-portrait by 19th century Japanese artist, Katsushika Hokusai. All four artists used strong monochromatic color schemes to visually unify the diverse elements of their compositions.*

We made our own monochromatic self-portrait compositions in which we expressed something about who we are through images, text and tints and shades of one color.