

THE ART OF ERIC CARLE – COLLAGE

ART TECHNIQUE

Painting and collage

AGE GROUP

Three to twelve years of age

CONCEPT

This project gives the students the opportunity to prepare their own papers, engaging in painting and decorating paper, cutting, gluing and creating an image involving shapes.

SESSIONS

3 sessions of 1 hour and 30 minutes each

MATERIALS (for a class of 25 students)

- 4 x A4 sheets of copy paper per student
- 4 x sheets of newspaper per student
- 1 x A3 sheet of cartridge paper per student
- 1 x 500ml bottle of **ChromaKidz** paint in the following colours: warm and cool yellow, warm and cool blue, warm and cool red, green, brown, black and white
- 1 litre of **Chroma2** glue per class
- 1 #12 (1 inch) flat hog hair paint brush per student
- 1 #3 hog hair paint brush per student
- 1 pair of classroom scissors per student
- 1 coloured crayon per student
- several classroom erasers to share
- soft plastic table cloths to cover the tables
- 1 x 20 litre bucket to wash the equipment in.

RECYCLABLE MATERIALS

A list of recyclable materials should be sent home with each student in order to include the following:

- 10 small format newspapers
- 1 x old shirt per student to be used as a protective paint shirt
- 12 clean plastic, take away food containers with lids for each group, to contain paint.
- 4 clean plastic milk bottles to make scratching combs
- 5 small pieces of corrugated cardboard per group
- 2 old sheets to cut up into rags
- 1 box of cotton buds for the groups to share
- 5 plastic forks per group
- 5 paddle pop sticks per group

This project has been design to suit normal classroom conditions and illustrates how the classroom can be adapted to create working space required.



THE ART OF ERIC CARLE

This collage project is inspired by the work Eric Carle—author and Illustrator of many children’s picture books. Eric Carle uses paper collage to illustrate his books by painting and decorating his own assortment of cut paper. His most popular book is called “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, which has been translated into many different languages for young children all over the world.

I had the opportunity to present “The Art of Eric Carle” at the 1998 “Out of the Box Children Festival” in Brisbane, Queensland, Australia. The former Director of the Festival Cate Fowler, commissioned me to produce an activity involving collage, inspired by the books of Eric Carle, to be implemented during the week-long Festival.

7000 young children from three to eight years of age participated in the art experience.

After years of successfully teaching this project in my own studio classroom and in primary schools, I have decided to make this tutorial available as Eric Carle’s books are still very popular with teachers to engage young children in reading and art.

OBJECTIVE

Collage is an art activity using coloured papers that children love. This project gives the students the opportunity to prepare their own papers, engaging in painting and decorating, cutting, gluing and creating an image involving shapes.

VISUAL REFERENCES

There will be a number of Eric Carle's books already in the school Library. Should you require additional information please visit the Eric Carle website on: www.eric-carle.com

SOURCING MATERIALS:

Materials for this project will be easy to find. A small list of recyclable materials can go home with the students to collect. Paddle pop sticks, a few clean milk plastic bottles, plastic forks, small pieces of corrugated cardboard, plastic take away food containers with lids, newspapers and others, (see list on art materials and equipment). It is important to invest time to collect materials to ensure a sufficient supply is available on hand.

FIRST SESSION

MOTIVATION

To be done after all the desks have been grouped and covered and all the art materials and equipment are ready on the tables.

Introduce Eric Carle to the students. Show a picture of the artist, read one of his books and briefly talk about his life and his art work. The way he paints his papers—one day he paints all the blues needed for the sky, the ocean and the blue whale. On another day he will paint all the greens needed to create the grass, the leaves on the trees and a variety of plants etc.

Point out how simple his pictures are being composed of large and colourful shapes and the colours he uses to create different characters, for example: a large orange and grey cat.

Discuss the idea of illustration with older students, in a simple way, how to combine words and pictures.

The last segment on the motivation stage is to discuss with the students what they would like to create. It is important to encourage them to create their own "stories" and create their own characters. The characters can then be turned into puppets at a later stage. Refer to tutorial number 8, Textile Puppets.

FIRST SESSION

PAINTING

The first part of the project involves creating "The Paper Bank". Students will paint and decorate paper and when dried, will be shared within the different groups.

Once all the required materials and equipment is ready, the next task is to create the table/work space required to paint and decorate the paper. To achieve this, arrange the desks in groups of 4 or 5 room set up (1) covered with small sheets of newspaper or soft plastic tablecloths.

Set up the tables with the paint in food containers, the paint brushes, 1 big # 12 (2) brush to apply paint all over and a small # 3 brush to paint small patterns. Supply rags, water containers, paper and tools to scratch and make marks with.

Every student should paint four pieces of A4 paper in different colours. The paper should be placed on a piece of newspaper for easy handling (3).



1. Room set up



2. Paint brushes



3. Painted paper set on a piece of newspaper

First step is to paint a colour all over using the big paint brushes, then while the paint is still wet scratch textures using the plastic tools made of milk bottles, cardboard, plastic forks or simple using erasers.

The scratching of textures is very effective and works well as the paints **CHROMAKIDZ** and **CHROMA 2** have been specially formulated for this kind of project. Once the textures have been scratched, students can add more patterns/colours using the small paint brush, sticks, cotton buds etc.

After the first piece is painted and decorated it should be taken out to dry. Provide a new piece of A4 paper until the students complete all four pieces.

When the paper has dried separate the painted paper from the newspaper, insert a flat hand between the two pieces of paper and gently separate them..

When working with very young children, it will be fine for them to paint less sheets and also, they will tend to paint different colours on the same paper. This is OK as long as they can scratch some textures on the wet paint using the milk bottle combs and other tools.

For kindergarten aged children they can use their fingers, as the **CHROMAKIDZ** paint has been specifically formulated for finger painting and mark making.

SECOND SESSION

COLLAGE

Once the papers have been painted and decorated, now is time to create the collage.

To set the room and tables follow instructions given for the first session.

Have the A4 size painted papers ready, cut up in half and sorted in four or five bunches, according to the number of

groups. Distribute the papers in such way that every group gets a variety of the different colours to use in their collage.

Before starting this session, remind the students how Eric Carle creates his pictures. Show pictures of his illustrations and point out the large simple shapes cut out of paper and the white background. The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle (7).

Students can choose their own theme or everybody can work on the same idea as suggested by the teacher, like the circus for example. Another option is to illustrate their own stories they have previously written. The pictures the students create will depend on their age group.

ON THE TABLES: set up the tables with one A3 sheet of white paper (cartridge paper), a pair of scissors, one crayon in any colour, one short handled cheap brush and a piece of rag per student for cleaning. Centrally place 2 or 3 containers of glue and the “paper bank”, for the students to share.

Students will start drawing their shapes on the BACK of the coloured paper using their crayon. Before they start gluing, all or most of the shapes should be pre-cut so they can plan how they will arrange and glue the shapes to create the pictures.

This project has been designed to be done over two sessions, but if needed, it can be extended to three sessions depending on the age group of the students and the complexity of the collage themes.

For very young children, instead of using scissors, the shapes can be torn by hand (8).



4. Example of scratching tools



5. Carefully separate the painted sheets from the newspaper



6. Paper bank



7. Eric Carle's book, The Very Hungry Caterpillar



8. Torn paper collage

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Raquel Redmond has more than 25 years extensive experience in researching, developing and teaching art programs aimed at primary school students and also conducts in-service programs for primary school teachers. She directed the Visual Art activities, Children's Art exhibitions and Artists in Residence programs for the 'Out of the Box' children's festival from 1992 to 2000. Since 1998 Raquel has been working with students at Queensland University of Technology School of Early Childhood's art studio. She is an active practising visual artist exhibiting her lino and wood cuts throughout Australia.

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NOTES:

- **CHROMAKIDZ** paint or **CHROMA2** paint can be used for this project. One set of 2 litres of the colours mentioned in the art materials section on page one, will last for a year.
- **CHROMAKIDZ** comes in 500ml and 2 litre bottles and is recommended for the early childhood years and **CHROMA2** comes in 2 litre bottles recommended for older primary school children.
- **THIS PROJECT IS AVAILABLE AS A VIDEO ON YOUTUBE, BRAVA ART PRESS CHANNEL.**

STUDENT

gallery



The Circus



Bird in a Magic Garden