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# O'Keeffe Flower



**Grade:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Medium:** Oil Pastels

**Learning Objective:** Students will: observe the flower paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe, become familiar with the design principle of emphasis (focal point) and find evidence of it in her paintings, use elements of art to create a similar composition, working with oil pastels in a variety of ways.

**Author:** Cameron C. Kim

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## Elements of Art

**Color:** the visible range of reflected light. Color has three properties: hue, value, and intensity. In this lesson, colors which are opposite on the color wheel (complimentary) are used to create contrast.

**Shape:** a two-dimensional (flat) area enclosed by a line. Shapes can be geometric or organic. They are flat and have length and width.

**Space:** the area above, below, around, and within (negative space) an object (positive space).

## Principles of Design

**Balance:** the visual weight of the elements of a composition. In this lesson, asymmetry (not a mirror image) is used to create interest.

**Contrast:** using difference between the elements of art in a composition can create emphasis and interest.

**Emphasis (Focal Point):** The area of a composition which is visually dominant.

## Materials & Supplies

- Drawing Paper (9" x 12" or similar sized; white)
- Oil Pastels (variety of colors)
- Paper Towels
- Pencil – class set
- Spray Fixative
- Close-up flower images
- Examples of Georgia O'Keeffe's artwork

### **Context (History and/or Artists)**

Georgia O'Keeffe was one of the first American artists to practice pure abstraction with work varying between portraits, abstractions and landscapes but she is best known for her iconic flower paintings. In 2014, the Georgia O'Keeffe Museum sold a floral painting (Jimson Weed/White Flower No.1, painted in 1932) for \$44 million dollars at auction setting the record for artwork sold by a female artist. She used the principles of contrast, value and organic shapes to create interest and bring attention to the natural world.

### **Advanced Preparation**

Gather several samples of O'Keeffe's flower paintings to show students the wide range of petal shapes and center details they can create in their own artwork.

### **Tips & Tricks**

- Petals can be drawn by drawing a 'V' where the petal begins at the inner circle. This helps the student draw a widening curved line on either side.
- Oil pastels can be applied by using the point or the side. The point delivers a more solid line while the side leaves a texture, which could contrast well with the flower by using the technique in the negative space (background).
- The colors applied in the center can be smudged out across the petal with a paper towel or warm finger. This allows the white of the paper to show through the color.
- Suggest that students use one color at a time and blend before the next color.
- It may be easier for some students to create basic lines, shapes, and patterns inside and around their circle (the flower's center) during their initial drawing if they feel that it may be difficult to come up with these using the oil pastels later on.

### **Discussion Points**

- Prior to the lesson, discuss with students the definition of focal point and remind them that they are to utilize the entire surface of their paper when drawing their flower.
- As students begin to color with their pastels, point out that by adding different value of color in specific areas of the petals, it makes the petals look 3-dimensional and creates form. (Value can be created by smudging out across the petal with a warm finger or adding white to the color.)
- Warm colors are used for the positive space (the flowers).
- As they begin start to work on the details in the middle area of the focal point, discuss with students that the more variety of lines, colors, patterns, and designs, it will make the drawing more interesting and bring attention to that area.

### **Reflection Point (Assessment of Learning Objectives)**

Students will:

Observe O'Keeffe flower paintings, looking for evidence of the elements and principles listed above. Use these elements and principles of art to create their own composition similar to O'Keeffe's. Use oil pastels to create contrast of color and texture.

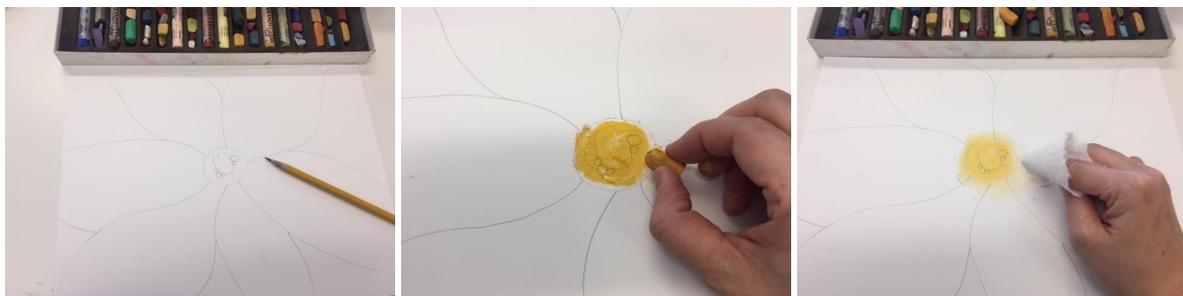
## **Instructions for Lesson**

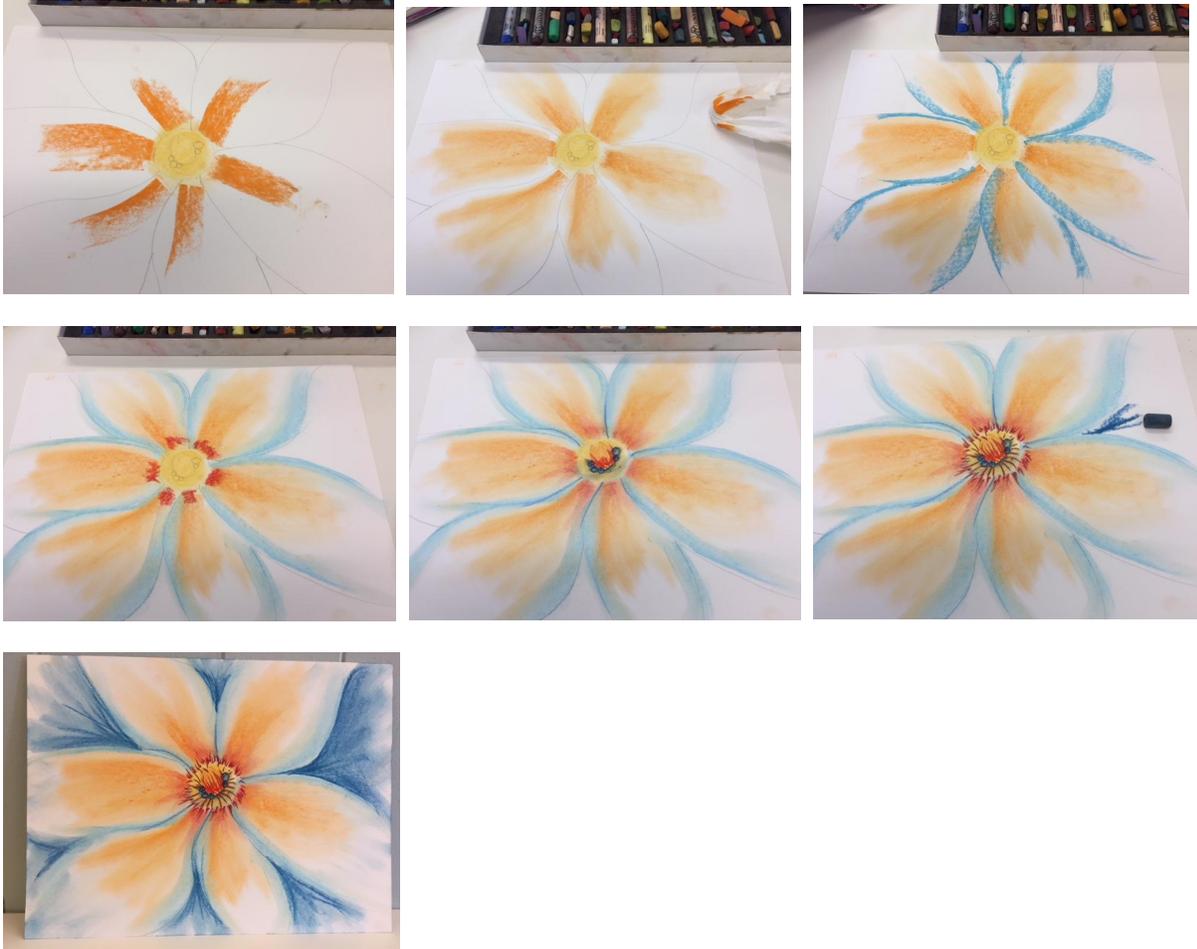
Show the O'Keeffe flower paintings, looking for how she used shape, color, space (the elements) and emphasis, contrast and balance (the principles).

Hand out the supplies.

1. Using a document camera demonstrate making the composition by drawing a quarter sized (or slightly larger) circle off-center on the paper as the focal point.
2. Demonstrate drawing petals using a 'V' shape where the petal begins at the inner circle. This helps the student draw a widening curved line on either side.
3. Ask students to lightly sketch their circle somewhere near (but not exactly in) the middle of their white paper using their pencils.
4. Starting somewhere on the line of the circle, ask students to draw the petals of their flowers. Because it is a close up of the flower, students will have to draw the petals coming off the edges in order to fill up the entire page. The drawing must touch all four sides of the paper.
5. Demonstrate how to use the colored oil pastels lightly in some areas and darker in others. Inside the flower, near the focal point will be darker while the outer areas of the petals will be lighter. Using the different values will create space in their drawings.
6. Show students how to use a bit of paper towel or their finger to lightly blend the colors into their paper.
7. Use warmer colors in the petals since warm colors help bring objects closer and use cool colors in the negative space between the petals which will help contrast the areas and to focus more on the shape of the flower.
8. After finishing colors in their petals, have students work on the focal point or circle of their drawing. Remind them that the goal is to have viewers focus most on this part of their artwork so they need to add interest to this area. Display a variety of close-up flower images to serve as inspiration for the students.
9. Demonstrate how they can add lines and shapes with the point of their pastel to draw attention to the center of the flower. Do not smudge this area.
10. Remind students to make sure that they added color all the way to the edges of their paper.
11. Use contrasting colors/textures in the negative space (back ground).
12. They now have created a beautiful and unique Georgia O'Keeffe inspired oil pastel drawing!

## **Examples:**





### **References and Attributions**

[www.okeeffemuseum.org](http://www.okeeffemuseum.org); How to Teach Art to Children, Evan-Moor, 2001;  
[www.georgiaokeeffe.net](http://www.georgiaokeeffe.net).

### **Notes for Educators**

#### **21<sup>st</sup> Century Thinking Skills**

Thinking Flexibly, persisting, creating, innovating, taking responsible risks, observing, making connections, visualizing, comparing and contrasting, problem solving, decision making, evaluating.

#### **WA State Learning Standards**

(VA:Cr.2.1.3) Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Create personally satisfying artwork, using a variety of artistic processes and materials.

(VA:Cr.2.2.3) a. Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.

#### **Arts Integration Opportunities**

Science: study flowers, after drawing the flower identify the parts.