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# Circles, Circles Everywhere!



**Grade:** Kindergarten

**Medium:** Tempera or Watercolor

**Learning Objective:** Students will use a single shape to create an artistic composition.

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## Elements of Art/Principles of Design

**Shape:** a flat figure created within joined lines.

## Vocabulary Words

**Circle:** a round figure with all sides the same distance from the center.

## Materials & Supplies

- Heavy White Paper
- Oil Pastels (or crayons if oil pastels are not available)
- Lids and Cups (various sizes)
- Tempera Cakes or Watercolors
- Brushes
- Water Bowls
- Piece of Yarn or String
- Scrap Paper or Newsprint to Cover Desks (optional)

## Context (History and/or Artists)

**Robert Delauney:** (1885-1941) Robert Delauney was a French painter. Raised by his uncle and aunt for most of his childhood, he apprenticed two years to a theatrical designer and painted sets for the theater. After that time, he began to paint. He loved brilliant colors and geometric designs. In school, Robert would often put the lid up on his desk and paint with watercolors instead of listening to his teacher.

**Sonia Delauney:** (1885-1979) Sonia Delauney was a Russian-born multi-disciplined artist. At her first one-person show she was introduced to several artists. One of them was Robert Delaunay who she later married. Both Robert and Sonia were very interested in color and how colors reacted when placed next to each other. Sonia made a patchwork quilt for her son, Charlie, and was fascinated by how the strips of colors worked together. She began to experiment with this idea

using many creative outlets. She designed her own textiles, made costumes and designed furniture using this concept. She even had her own boutique and her designs were sold worldwide.

**Wassily Kandinsky:** (1866-1944) Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian Painter. His parents were musicians and he played the piano and cello. He went to law school and became a teacher of law. At age 30 he decided to become an artist and went to art school. A pioneer of abstract modern art and influenced many future artists, he loved to use shapes in his artwork, especially squares, triangles and circles. Kandinsky felt that he could convey feelings and music through his paintings. He was a synesthete which means that he could hear colors and see sounds. He named many of his artworks like they were songs or musical works using such names as “Composition” and “Improvisation.”

### **Advanced Preparation**

- Collect several lids and/or cups (for tracing circles).
- Locate images and/or prints needed by artists mentioned above.
- If using tempera paint cakes, make sure the colors/textures are light enough that they will resist and not cover the oil pastel when painted over. It will depend on the combination of oil pastels and paints to be used so try it out beforehand.

### **Tips & Tricks**

Collect lids and cups of various sizes before this lesson (kids love bringing in usable items like this from home for special projects).

Use stencils cut from heavy cardstock or tag board if lids are not available.

Cover the desks with newspaper or scrap paper so the students can paint to the edge of their page.

### **Discussion Points**

- A shape is a line that is connected and closed
- A circle has no corners or straight sides
- What makes an interesting composition (picture)?

### **Instructions for Lesson**

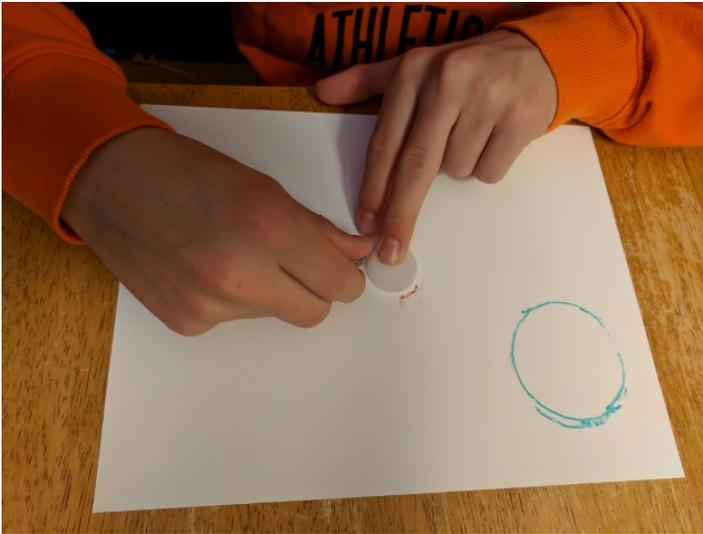
1. Show how a circle is a line that is curved and connected by taking a piece of string or yarn and curling it into a circle. There are no edges or corners.



2. Ask students to point to circles around the room. What else can they think of that is a circle?
3. Show several abstract compositions that include circles. Examples could include:  
Delaunay, Robert. *Le Premier Disque*, *Rythme n°1* or *Circular Forms*.  
Delaunay, Sonia. *Prismes électriques* or *Rythme*.

Kandinsky, Wassily. *Squares with Concentric Circles, Circles in a Circle or Several Circles.*

4. Ask students what they notice about the artwork. How did the artist use circles? Where did they place them? Why do you think they put them there? Does it feel like the circles are still or moving? (There are no right or wrong answers.)
5. Demonstrate tracing one of the lids by holding down the lid with one or two fingers of one hand and tracing around the circle with the other hand.
6. Pass out the paper. The students will trace lids and cups of various sized circles with oil pastels. The circles may overlap, go off the edge of the paper, be inside of another circle (concentric), or be in any composition the student desires.



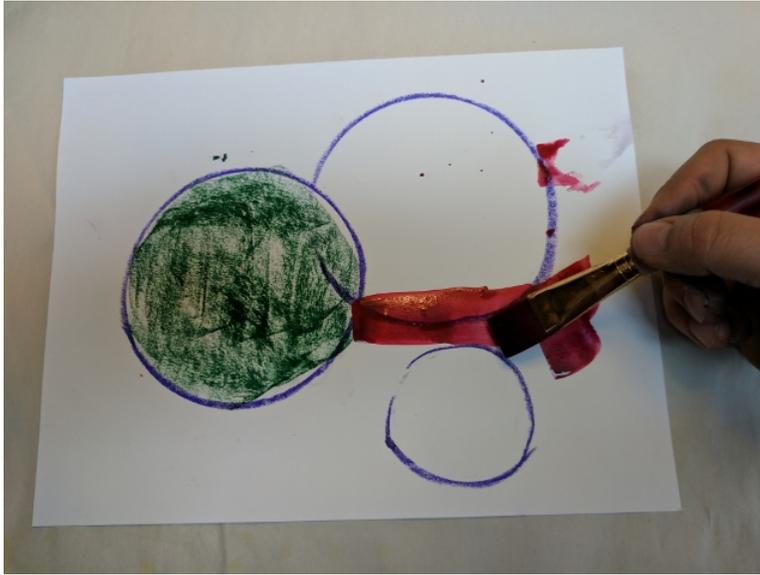
7. The circles can be colored in with desired colors using oil pastels.



8. Demonstrate how to use the tempera cakes or pan (tray) watercolors (disregard if using liquid watercolors). Wet the brush. Choose a color and “tickle” (swirl the wet brush) on the desired color. Add the paint to the paper.
  - To switch colors: wipe any excess paint on the scrap paper covering the desk, a paper towel or a wet sponge. Then dip the brush into the water until it lightly touches the bottom of the water container and wiggle the brush around. Wiggle it in

the water again until clean (or somewhat clean, depending on the state of the water). Repeat with a new color.

9. Have the students paint various tempera colors over the circle composition to create a resist painting.



10. Optional: outline the circles in black oil pastel.



11. Have students sign their names in bottom right corner.

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

Students have created a painting using circles of various shapes and sizes.

**Examples:**



**References and Attributions:**

"Kandinsky, Wassily." *WebMuseum: Kandinsky, Wassily*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.

"Art History and Artists." *Ducksters Educational Site*. N.p., n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.

Alley, Ronald. "Robert Delaunay (1885-1941)." *Tate*. Tate Modern, n.d. Web. 31 Mar. 2017.

"Robert Delaunay Biography, Art, and Analysis of Works." *The Art Story*. The Art Story, Modern Art Insight, n.d. Web. 30 Mar. 2017.

"Who is Sonia Delaunay?" *Tate*. Tate Modern, 9 Apr. 2015. Web. 31 Mar. 2017.

"Sonia Delaunay Biography, Art, and Analysis of Works." *The Art Story*. The Art Story, Modern Art Insight, n.d. Web. 31 Mar. 2017.

<http://www.wassilykandinsky.net/>

**For Educators**

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

**Decision Making:** Choosing from alternatives. In this lesson children choose from a variety of circle sizes to create their own unique piece of art. They also choose a variety of different colors to suite their artistic style.

**Cause and Effect:** Recognizing actions and their reactions. Children will experiment with how hard to press the oil pastel to get a more or less vibrant color. Children will experiment with reloading their paint brush in the paint to get a more or less vibrant color.

**WA State Learning Standards**

**(VA:Cr1.1.K) a.** Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials

**(VA:Cr2.1.K) a.** Through experimentation, build skills in various media and approaches to art-making. Children create an artwork with the theme of circles using oil pastels.

**(VA:Re7.2.K) a.** Describe what an image represents. Students look at artwork by Wassily Kandinsky, Robert Delaunay, and Sonia Delaunay and respond to artwork.

**Arts Integration Opportunities**

**Math:** Counting: students can count the number of circles in their art and write the number.

Subtraction: ask the children to cover up one of their circle, have them re-count their circles and write the new number.