
Paul Klee Castles



Grade: 1st Grade

Medium: Colored Construction Paper
Collage

Learning Objective: After observing art by Paul Klee that creates a similar abstract castle landscape, students will use the elements of shape & color and the principles of pattern, emphasis and rhythm to create unity and variety to make an interesting composition.

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Elements of Art/ Principles of Design

Color: the element in art that is produced when light, striking an object, is reflected to the eye. In this lesson, we will use bright colored shapes to build our castle in the foreground and use a darker color background for contrast. There are three properties of color:

Hue (name given to a color)

Intensity (the strength or vividness of a color)

Value (the lightness or darkness of a color)

Pattern: a combination of elements or shapes repeated in a recurring and regular arrangement

Repetition: one object, shape, or line repeated

Rhythm: visual movement created by repeating elements of art in a non-uniform but organized way. Rhythm can create a sense of movement and establish pattern and texture. In this lesson we will use the different heights of the castle towers as well as the alternating shapes and color to establish rhythm.

Shape: a two-dimensional closed line, it can be geometric or organic. In this lesson, we will be using triangles to make squares and rectangles and using a circle for the moon.

Space: the area within, around, above, or below an object. We will be building the colorful castle towers which will make up positive space while paying close attention leaving enough negative space for the sky (background).

Variation (Variety): using a range of different qualities or instances of an art element to create interest. This lesson uses variations in color and shapes which can add to a more interesting composition.

Materials & Supplies

- Image of "The Castle and the Sun" by Klee
- Additional examples of Klee's work
- Construction Paper (8"x 11" black or dark blue, one per student)
- Yellow Construction Paper (cut into approximately 2 inches by 2-inch squares, one per student)
- Construction Paper Cut into 1.5 Inch Squares (5-6 different colors, enough for 15-20 squares per student)
- Glue Sticks
- Scissors
- White Colored Pencils
- Black Markers to share

Context (History and/or Artists)

Paul Klee (1879-1940), was a Swiss born, German artist who explored ideas in color and design. He used many methods and techniques in making his art, combining different materials to make one piece. Klee often used colorful geometric shapes in making playful, fantastic and childlike abstract paintings. His 1928 painting "The Castle and the Sun" is the inspiration for this project.

Advanced Preparation

- Precut 1.5-inch squares of at least 5-6 different colored construction paper (enough for 15-20 squares for each student).
- Precut an approximate 2-inch by 2-inch yellow square, one for each student to use for the moon.
- Find multiple images of Klee's work which support this lesson (specifically "The Castle in the Sun," but others such as "Nocturnal Festivity" and "Red/Green Architecture are also relevant).

Tips & Tricks

- Group precut colored squares by color in separate containers to be passed around the class to make it easy for students to choose their colors. Remind students that they will choose 15-20 squares.
- It will be easier for students to create their towers on their paper without gluing them down first. Once they like their composition, they can start gluing down the shapes.
- Remind students that they can leave space between their castle towers.
- Draw examples of differently shaped windows on the board that will give students ideas.
- Suggest that students who are not able to draw out stars, to instead draw in white dots in their sky to represent stars.
- Draw an example of a firework on the board for students to follow.

Discussion Points

- Discuss how Klee used rhythm: repeating colors and shapes but not in a true pattern. The slight randomness adds interest. And while the shapes are the same he builds different sized castles.

- During the lesson, remind students about what a pattern is, and encourage students to create an alternating color pattern in at least one of their towers.
- Discuss cool and warm colors and encourage students to use a combination of both to create a more interesting composition.
- Bring to their attention that although the heights of their towers are all different, the shape of each of their towers is being repeated.

Reflection Point (Assessment of Learning Objectives)

- Students will observe art by Paul Klee that supports this lesson and create a similar abstract castle landscape as a collage.
- Students will use the elements of shape & color and the principles of pattern, emphasis and rhythm to create unity and variety to make an interesting composition.

Instructions for Lesson

1. Pass out a stack of the blue or black 8"x11" construction paper, one sheet per student. Ask the students to write their names on the back of the sheet with the white colored pencil.
2. Demonstrate how students will build their towers of their castles by stacking colored triangles into squares or using the full uncut squares in varying heights.
3. Talk about the repeating shapes in random placement (rhythm & variation)
4. Then at the top of some (or all) of the towers, Students will add a triangle for the roofs.
5. Suggest that students be creative using alternating patterns of colors and can add bridges with triangles to build their castle.
6. Help students pick out at least 15 different colored precut squares and suggest they cut some diagonally in half and to leave some uncut.
7. Students can now start building the towers of their castles by stacking colored triangles into squares or using the full uncut squares in varying heights and at the top of some or all of the towers, have them add a triangle for the roofs. Remind them that the repeated colors also create rhythm.
8. When students finish gluing down all castle pieces, show them how to cut out a circle moon by taking a square and cutting off its corners repeatedly or half circle crescent moon with the yellow paper and glue it in their sky. Give students time to cut this out and glue it down to the paper.
9. Show students how to add windows to several of the squares using their black markers.
10. They can now use a white colored pencil to draw stars or fireworks into the sky.

Examples:



Notes for Educators

21st Century Thinking Habits & Skills

Creating, taking responsible risks, reflecting, observing, making connections, visualizing, comparing/contrasting, determining main idea, decision making, evaluating.

WA State 2017 Learning Standards

(VA:Cr1.1.1) a. Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with materials.

(VA:Cr1.2.1) a. Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.

(VA:Cr2.1.1) a. Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.

(VA:Cr2.2.1) a. Demonstrate safe and proper procedures for using materials, tools, and equipment while making art.

(VA:Cr3.1.1) a. Use art vocabulary to describe choices while creating art.

(VA:Pr4.1.1) a. Explain why some objects, artifacts, and artwork are valued over others.

(VA:Re7.2.1) a. Compare images that represent the same subject.

(VA:Re8.1.1) a. Interpret art by categorizing subject matter and identifying the characteristics of form.

(VA:Cn11.1.1) a. Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.

Arts Integration Opportunities

Math & Art: if the shapes are given a value, the student can multiply that value by the number of shapes used in the collage.

Writing: Students can write a story or poem about who lives in the castle, or activities taking place inside.