

Colourful Flower Compositions

Grades 1-4

Overview

Students will create an artwork using a wax-resist technique in which they will use two materials in their drawings or paintings. They will explore the concept of composition as they consider size, placement and cropping of objects to create visual interest and produce a unique image from an ordinary object. Students will focus on how to draw and present something, rather than what to draw.

What you will need:

- paper
- pencil
- eraser
- wax crayons, oil pastels or markers

What you can also use:

- paint
- brushes
- watercolour/painting paper
- coloured chalk
- pencil crayons
- real flowers to draw from or pictures of flowers



What is a composition?

In art, a composition is all the parts and elements that make up your artwork. Composition also refers to how the objects and elements are put together in an artwork. When we think about the composition of an artwork, we think not only about the objects we see, but where the objects are and how they are depicted.

This painting is part of the Helson Gallery's exhibition, The Collector's Eye. The exhibition features artwork by Canadian artists. This flower composition is titled Copper Pot and was painted by Beatrice Dumbreck. We will be creating our own flower compositions.



Did the artist paint one type of flower or many types? How are the flowers different?

Where are the flowers placed in the composition?

Describe the background of the painting.

Step 1: Plan out your composition

Take some time to think about and plan out your composition. Decide what type of flowers you want to draw. Your artwork can consist of only sunflowers or tulips, or it can be made up of a variety of different flowers. Think about where you want to place the flowers on the page, how many flowers you want to include, and what size the flowers will be. They can be growing from the ground, sitting in a vase, or floating around throughout the page. Create a few different sketches of possible ways you can draw the flowers. Choose the composition you like best and draw your flowers using pencil.

Step 2: Outline your drawings

Using either black crayon or oil pastel, outline your flower drawing with thick, bold lines. If you do not have crayons or oil pastels, you can use a black marker for the outlines.

Step 3: Add colour

Now we are going to add colour using crayons or oil pastels, but we are not going to just fill in our drawings. We are going to use small marks that will look like repeated lines. Think of it like filling in your drawing with dotted lines instead. You can use one colour in each area, such as green in the leaves and red in the petals. You can also use more than one colour, such as light green and dark green in the leaves, and red and purple in the petals. Try to keep your mark making tight so that the gaps between your marks are not too big. You will also fill in your background with the same dotted line mark making technique. Your background can be all one colour, or a combination of colours. If you don't have crayons or oil pastels, you can use markers to fill in your drawing with dotted lines.



Step 4: Fill in the white space

Now we will fill in the white space of our compositions. Using watercolours, or watered down paint, paint your picture. You can paint right over the crayon or oil pastel. Oil pastels or crayons create a wax-resist technique where the watery paint doesn't stick to the wax or oil in the crayons or oil pastels. Even when you paint over your marks, the marks will show through. Make sure you are mixing enough water with your paint by trying it out over a small area of your artwork. If the paint covers your crayon or oil pastel marks it needs more water. Complete your artwork by painting everything in, including the background.

If you don't have paint, you can use chalk to fill in the white space. You can either lightly fill in the gaps with chalk or use the side of the chalk right over your lines. You can also use your fingers or tissue to blend the chalk around your marks.



If you used markers for your lines, you can use pencil crayons to fill in your drawing. If you press lightly, you will be able to draw over your marker lines and still be able to see them.

If your mark making was very intricate, you can choose to leave your artwork as is, without filling in the background.