

Family Art Saturday

Express Yourself!

Artists use color to express how they feel. You can, too!

Begin by visiting a paint or home improvement store. Respectfully select 7-10 paint swatches. After doing so, consider the following questions...

- What colors are you drawn to?
- What emotions do the colors represent to you?
- What is your favorite color and why?
- If colors had first names, what would they be?
- Write your responses on each corresponding paint swatch.
- *Remember, colors may not represent the same emotions for everyone!**



Now create a “mood ring” using your color swatches.

The next time you feel overwhelmed or sad, get out your “mood ring” and think about which one would describe your emotions. You can explain your color and emotion to a parent or someone who loves you.

Mood Ring Activities...

- Listen to your favorite song as you look at your color wheel or “mood ring.” Which colors do you feel match the song?
- Think of someone you love or someone close to you, what color(s) do you think of when think about them?
- Go outside! Look around you. What colors do you notice? How do the colors outside change from season to season?
- Find a colorful advertisement in a magazine, online, on TV, or on a billboard. What colors are used? Why do you think the company chose those colors for their advertisement? Do these colors tell you anything about the product?

Color Theory

Color is created as different wavelengths of light reflect off different surfaces. Wavelengths are then picked up by our eyes and the information is communicated to our brains and interpreted as color. Color theory is the art and science of using color. Color theory includes the use of the color wheel, how colors interact, the messages colors communicate, how humans perceive color, and methods of creating color.

Interior designers may use color theory to make a room more comfortable or exciting. The science of color theory helps them reinforce a room's function. For example, different colors may differentiate a doctor's office from a restaurant. Companies use color theory to make their products appealing. Artists use color theory to express emotions and ideas. The first color wheel was created by Sir Isaac Newton in 1666. The color wheel arranges colors based on the primary colors. The primary colors are red, blue, and yellow. When these are mixed, they create the secondary colors—orange, purple, and green. Finally, the primary and secondary colors are mixed to create what are called the tertiary colors. These are colors like blue-violet or yellow-green. So, when you look at the color wheel, you will see orange located between red and yellow. This is because when yellow and red are mixed, orange is created.

Color harmony refers to the ways in which different colors interact. Some color combinations are more appealing than others. Red and green are often paired together because they are complementary colors. Complementary colors are opposite each other on the color wheel. Look at your color wheel, which colors are complementary colors? Where have you seen these two colors used together? Colors can also be analogous, meaning they are next to each other on the color wheel. Think yellow, orange, and red. There are many more ways colors can interact and be mixed. Color theory helps explain what colors are most harmonious together and why.

Finally, color theory looks at the message colors can communicate. Think of a red stop sign, red marks on your test, or a red fire truck--red can communicate urgency or importance. Yellow often communicates joy or warmth. Other colors have calming affects, like blue. In addition, the messages communicated by colors can be influenced by our cultural background, personal experiences, and personality. This is why one artist may use a color to communicate one emotion, whereas another artist might use the same color to communicate the opposite. There are no "right" answers when it comes to color symbolism.

Look at the color wheel on the following page. Google the artworks inside each color. Carefully analyze the artist's use of color. Think about your own color mood ring, as well as color theory. What do the colors in the artwork communicate?

Our final invitation is to connect colors and emotions to empathy. Empathy is the ability to think and feel about someone else's experience. Being empathetic helps us to be good friends and kind individuals. Each person is unique and at any given time, can be feeling a wide range of emotions—just like all the shades and hues on a color wheel. Be patient with others, especially when they feel sad or lonely. Think about the times you felt the same way and do for them what you wish others did for you. This action is sometimes called "The Golden Rule." Gold is a pretty awesome color, and The Golden Rule is a really great way to help those around you!

