

# Learn Every Day About **COLORS**

100 BEST  
IDEAS  
from  
TEACHERS



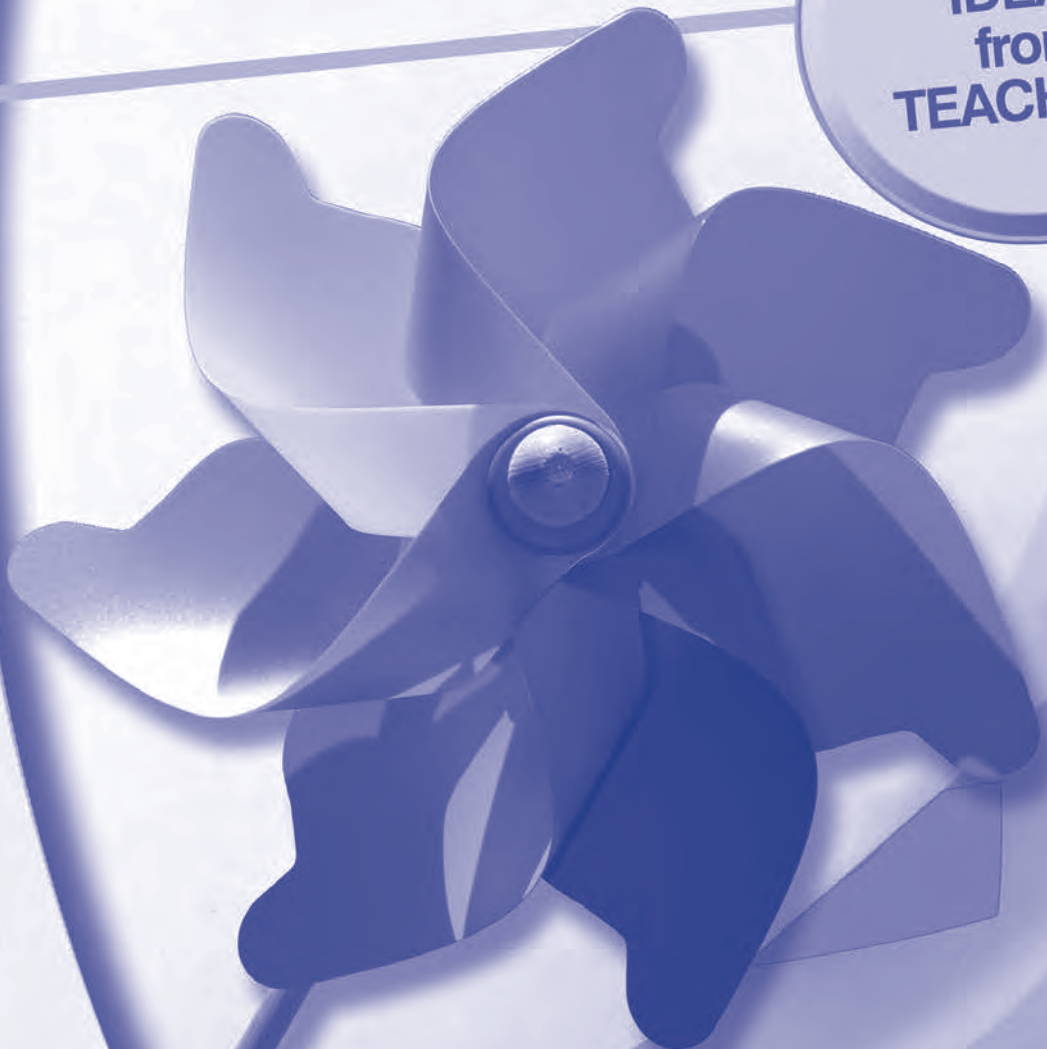
EDITED BY  
**Kathy Charner**

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**LEARN EVERY DAY ABOUT COLORS**

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**Note:** The books listed in the Related Children’s Books section of each activity may occasionally include books that are only available used or through your local library.

# Introduction

You have in your hands a great teacher resource! This book, which is part of the *Learn Every Day* series, contains 100 activities you can use with children ages 3–6 to help them develop a lifelong love of learning, as well as the knowledge and skills all children need to become successful students in kindergarten and beyond. The activities in this book are written by teachers and professionals from the field of early childhood education—educators and professionals who use these activities in their classrooms every day.

The activities in this book are separated by curriculum areas, such as Art, Dramatic Play, Outdoor Play, Transitions, and so on. The activities are organized according to their age appropriateness, therefore activities for children age three and older come first, then activities for children age four and older, and finally, activities for children five and older. Each activity has the following components—learning objectives, a list of related vocabulary words, a list of thematically related books, a list of the materials (if any) you need to complete the activity, directions for preparation and the activity itself. Also included as part of each activity is an assessment component to help you observe how well the children are meeting the learning objectives. Given the emphasis on accountability in early childhood education, these assessment strategies are essential.

Many activities also contain teacher-to-teacher tips that provide smart and useful ideas, including how to expand the central idea of an activity in a new way or where to find the materials necessary to complete a given activity. Some activities also include related fingerplays, poems, or songs that you can sing and chant with the children. Children love singing, dancing, and chanting. These actions help expand the children’s understanding of an activity’s learning objectives.

This book, and the other books in this series, give early childhood educators 100 great activities that require few materials, little if any preparation, and are sure to make learning fun and engaging for children.

# Class Color Mural

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Work with a variety of materials and art media in a given color.
2. Develop their small motor skills.

## Materials

marker  
poster board  
long white paper  
small red collage items  
(feathers, leaves,  
colored tape, glitter,  
sequins, torn paper,  
stickers, ribbon,  
yarn, elastic bands,  
pompoms)  
red art materials  
(crayons, colored  
pencils, markers,  
pastels, paints)

## VOCABULARY

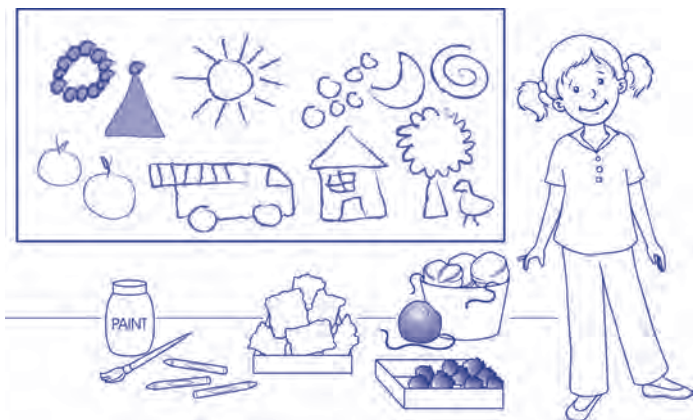
black	green	purple	yellow
blue	gray	red	
brown	orange	silver	
gold	pink	white	

## PREPARATION

- Attach long white paper to the wall or floor. Place various small materials in appropriate containers.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Tell the children, "We are making a red picture today! What are things that are red?"
2. Write their ideas on a piece of poster board and then show the children the selection of red materials you have gathered.
3. Let them work together to create a red mural on the paper and then display the work in the classroom or school. Before taking it down, review what the children have learned by asking them to identify the materials they contributed.



## Children's Books

*How Is a Crayon Made?*  
by Oz Charles  
*Polar Bear, Polar Bear,*  
*What Do You Hear?* by  
Bill Martin, Jr.

Patrick Mitchell, Yagoto, Nagoya, Japan



# Green Fun

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Identify and name the primary colors.
2. Recognize what happens when one primary color is mixed together with another primary color.

## Materials

*Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni  
 blue and yellow felt circles  
 flannel board  
 blue and yellow fingerpaint  
 plastic spoon  
 sandwich-size resealable bags  
 strong, clear tape  
 fingerpaint paper

## VOCABULARY

hue                      primary color                      secondary color                      tint

## PREPARATION

- Write each child's name with a permanent marker on a resealable bag.
- Provide blue and yellow fingerpaint and a plastic spoon.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Read *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni.
2. Invite the children to retell the story using blue and yellow felt circles and a flannel board.
3. Have each child open up his bag and put one spoonful of both blue and yellow fingerpaint into it. Zip the bags closed and help the children tape the tops of their bags using strong clear tape, such as library tape.
4. The children will enjoy gently "squishing" the two colored paints together and watching what happens to the blue and yellow paint.
5. When they are finished mixing the paint, ask the children if they would like to paint with their new color (green). Provide fingerpaint paper for them to paint with the new color they created!

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Can the children identify colors? (Record their answers.)
- Can the children explain what happens when you mix two primary colors together?
- Can the children predict the secondary color that will come from mixing two primary colors?
- Can the children follow verbal directions?

Kaethe Lewandowski, Centreville, VA

## Children's Books

*Color Dance* by Ann Jonas  
*Colors/Los Colores* by Clare Beaton  
*Red, Blue, Yellow Shoe* by Tana Hoban  
*White Rabbit's Color Book* by Alan Baker

# Junk Flowers

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. See and learn to recognize different colors.
2. See and learn to recognize color words (blue or red, for example).
3. Sort and use different colors and materials.

## Materials

thick paper or card  
stock  
paints  
variety of materials in  
each color you want  
to study  
bits of colored/silver  
paper  
scissors (adult only)  
tape  
glue  
pens  
index cards

## VOCABULARY

color names	descriptive words	flower
collage	for materials	
combination	(shiny, soft)	

## PREPARATION

- Collect a variety of scrap materials. Choose a different type of material for each color you want to study. The children will be making a wall display of collage flowers, each from a different color and from a different type of material (for example, bits of yellow fabric for a yellow flower or red cellophane candy wrappers for a red flower).
- Cut the materials into small pieces.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Ask the children to paint a background for the flowers on thick paper. Let dry.
2. Encourage the children to draw interesting original flower shapes on paper or card stock. Cut out the shapes.
3. Have the children paint or color with pens (in the chosen color) the shapes you cut out.
4. Invite the children to glue the colored materials to each flower shape.
5. When the flowers are dry, have the children tape them onto the big display.
6. Write the color names used on the board. Ask the children to copy the color names onto the index cards and add them to the display.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Can the children sort materials and make decisions about why to use certain colors of certain materials?
- Can the children recognize colors and label them with the correct names?

## Children's Books

*Elmer's Colors* by  
David McKee

*The Rainbow Fish* by  
Marcus Pfister

*What Color Is Your  
Underwear?* by  
Sam Lloyd

Jane Moran, Stockport, England, United Kingdom

# My Favorite Color Collage

3+

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Create a collage using shades and tints of a single color of their choosing.
2. Utilize small motor skills to glue materials on the collage.
3. Recognize and classify colors.

## Materials

paper in various colors  
 magazine clippings  
 paint in various colors  
 glue sticks  
 pompoms in various colors  
 collage materials

## VOCABULARY

collage	favorite	shade	tint
darker	lighter		

## PREPARATION

- Arrange materials on a table for the children to choose from.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Ask the children what their favorite color is.
2. Show the children the materials and tell them they can make a collage using their favorite color.
3. Explain to the children that they can choose only one color to use in their collage, but they can use darker and lighter shades of that color. Talk about different shades and tints of colors.
4. While they are working, ask the children questions about their collages.
5. Have the children help clean up and wash their hands (if necessary).

## TEACHER-TO-TEACHER TIP

- Ask the children guided questions as they work to help them extend their learning and to check their understanding: "Tell me about your collage." "Why is \_\_\_\_\_ your favorite color?" "Other than on your collage, where are places you see your favorite color?"

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Are the children able to select and use materials that are in various shades and tints of their favorite color?
- Are the children displaying an age-appropriate level of small motor function while working with the materials?

## Children's Books

*Cat's Colors* by  
 Jane Cabrera  
*Chidi Only Likes Blue:  
 An African Book  
 of Colors* by  
 Ifeoma Onyefulu

Angela Rathbun, Centennial, CO

# Rain Painting

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Identify colors when they are mixed in different ways.
2. Imagine what might happen to paint when rain or water hits it.
3. Learn to create a hypothesis on what will happen to the paint colors.
4. Accept that what one predicts is not what always happens.

## Materials

painting paper  
electrical or strong  
tape  
paint  
paintbrushes  
writing paper and  
pencils  
rain or watering can  
and water

## VOCABULARY

combination	mix	predict	soak
hypothesis/ hypotheses	moisten	prism	

## PREPARATION

- Put out paper with paint and brushes.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Try this activity on a rainy day. If it is not a rainy day, substitute a watering can filled with water.
2. Each child will paint a picture using any colors he chooses.
3. Before putting the children's paintings outside in the rain, ask each child to dictate to you or write down what he thinks will happen to the colors on his painting. Will the children be happy with the outcome? What colors will mix well and what colors will not?
4. Using strong electrical or duct tape, tape the paintings on the pavement outside and see what happens to them when the rain (or water from the watering can) hits them. Were their hypotheses correct?

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- After reading each child's hypothesis on what he thinks will happen when his painting gets wet, ask the children questions about what they think will happen to their paintings and why. Listen to the children talk to each other about their paintings.
- Are the children able to identify the colors?

## Children's Books

*Mouse Paint* by  
Ellen Stoll Walsh  
*Red with Other Colors*  
by Victoria Parker  
*White with Other  
Colors* by  
Victoria Parker  
*Yellow with Other  
Colors* by  
Victoria Parker

Annette Rivlin-Gutman, Seattle, WA

# Same-on-Same Painting

3+

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Explore with various shades of colors.
2. Create a picture using a monochromatic painting technique.
3. Learn about dark and light shades of a color.

## Materials

paper and paint of the same (or similar) color  
 paintbrushes  
 white and black paint  
 spoons and paper cups  
 paint shirts

## VOCABULARY

artist	color	shades (light, lighter, dark, darker)	technique
base	monochromatic		
	original		

## PREPARATION

- For younger children, premix paint shades, one with a few drops of white and one with a drop or two of black.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Provide cups of various colors of paint, as well as cups (or bowls) of white paint and black paint. Provide spoons for the children to use to scoop drops of the shade paints (black and white) into the colored paint.
2. Help the children create containers of lighter and darker shades of paint by adding white and black paint to each paint color. Older children can mix their own shades. When mixing the paint, keep in mind that a little bit of black goes a long way. Older children may want to chart the numbers of drops they mix in to make different shades of colors.
3. Ask the children to talk about the paint colors, and then ask what happens as they add white and black paint. Use the words *light*, *lighter*, *dark*, and *darker*.
4. Hang the pictures on a drying rack or clothesline to dry. Be sure to place a cloth or paper under the area to catch paint drips.
5. Consider playing classical music or quiet instrumental music while the children paint.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Talk with the children about the concept of a monochromatic painting. Can they name the original colors of their paintings?
- Can the children describe how they made new shades of colors for their paintings?

## Children's Books

*Looking at Paintings: An Introduction to Fine Art for Young People* by Erika Langmuir  
*Warthogs Paint: A Messy Color Book* by Pamela Duncan Edwards

Sandra Nagel, White Lake, MI

# Stained-Glass Doors

3+

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Learn to recognize colors.
2. Develop their small motor skills by gluing shapes to paper.

## Materials

9" x 12" black construction paper  
 construction paper in assorted colors  
 scissors (adult only)  
 glue  
 pictures of stained-glass windows from cathedrals

## VOCABULARY

Gothic arch	lead	shape names (circle, square, triangle, rectangle)	stained glass
-------------	------	--	---------------

## PREPARATION

- Fold 9" x 12" black construction paper in half vertically and trim the top third edge to resemble a Gothic (pointed) arch, similar to a stained glass window in a cathedral.
- Cut 1" construction paper squares, triangles, and rectangles in assorted colors.

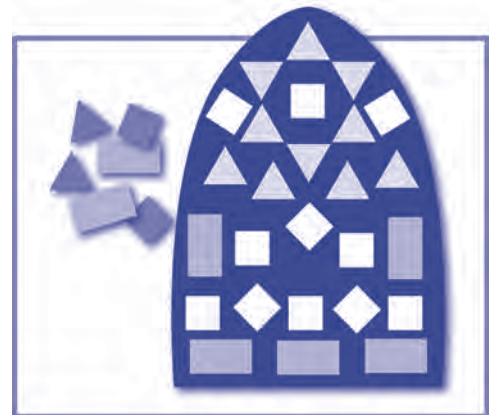
## WHAT TO DO

1. Show the children the pictures of stained glass windows. Tell them that when the workers made the windows, they put lead between the small pieces of glass to make the picture.
2. Give each child a piece of black paper cut to resemble a Gothic window.
3. Encourage the children to glue the small shapes to the black paper. Explain that they can make their own pictures look like the ones you showed them if they leave a space between the shapes when they glue them on.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Ask the children to describe the images they have made.
- Can the children name the colors of the small shapes?



Susan Oldham Hill, Lakeland, FL

## Children's Books

*Of Colors and Things* by  
 Tana Hoban  
*What Makes a  
 Rainbow?* by Betty Ann  
 Schwartz

# Blue, Blue Sky

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Learn to match the colors of the rainbow.
2. Develop their small motor skills by blotting and painting.

## Materials

drawing of a rainbow with the colors in the correct order: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet  
 drawing of a rainbow with the uncolored bands marked in pencil  
 fingerprint paper  
 blue fingerprint  
 tagboard  
 tissues  
 glue  
 smocks  
 scissors (adult only)  
 pencil

## VOCABULARY

clouds	color names (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, violet)	crumple fingerprint	rainbow
--------	--	------------------------	---------

## PREPARATION

- Make a drawing of a rainbow with the bands of color in the typical color-wheel order.
- Cut 5" x 10" rectangles from tagboard. Pencil in a rainbow with six ½" bands. Cut away excess tagboard so that only the rainbow shape remains.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Put a sprinkle of water on the tables to hold the fingerprint paper in place. Ask the children to put on smocks. Set out blue fingerprint for the children.
2. Ask the children to move the paint around across the whole page with their fingers and hands. Encourage them to swirl the paint around to look like clouds.
3. Give each child a tissue and ask him to crumple it up. Show them how to blot areas of the paper while the paint is still wet to make clouds.
4. While the paint dries, give each child a blank tagboard rainbow. Show them the drawing of the rainbow with the colors in the correct order. Ask the children to color their own rainbow.
5. The next day, when the paintings are dry, return the rainbows to the children to glue onto their cloud paintings.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Can each child match the cut-apart bands of the rainbow to the correct bands on the drawing?
- Can the children name the colors in the rainbow?

## Children's Books

*Rainbow Fish* by  
 Marcus Pfister  
*Rain Drop Splash* by  
 Alvin Tresselt  
*What Makes a  
 Rainbow?* by  
 Betty Ann Schwartz

Susan Oldham Hill, Lakeland, FL

# Color Blending

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Experiment with color.
2. Discover how colors mix to form new colors.
3. Describe their findings to other children.

## Materials

red, yellow, blue,  
black, and white  
paint  
white paper  
cotton swabs or  
paintbrushes

## VOCABULARY

blend	palette	secondary color	shade
mix	primary color		

## PREPARATION

- Create a “palette page” to photocopy for each child. Trace three medium circles in separate corners on the horizontal page. Label these “Red,” “Yellow,” and “Blue.” Trace two small circles on opposite sides of the page. Label these “Black” and “White.” Trace seven to nine small circles for paint mixing.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Explain to the children that colors blend with others to make new colors. Tell them that adding white to a color will make it lighter and black will darken it.
2. Give each child a palette page and place a dollop of each paint color in the appropriate circle. Let them combine bits of colors in the blank circles to see what results.
3. Encourage the children to share what they see happening as they mix. Talk with them about the colors they create, using color names.
4. Allow plenty of time for experimentation. Let the papers dry thoroughly.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children’s learning, consider the following:

- Ask children what they think about the transformation of colors. Can the children use color names to define the colors they create? (For example, “That looks purple-y.”)
- Can the children describe the results of combinations they make? (“What do red and yellow make?” “Red and yellow make orange.”)

## Children’s Books

*The Colors of Us* by  
Karen Katz  
*Purple, Green, and  
Yellow* by Robert  
Munsch

Jaclyn Miller, Mishawaka, IN



# Let's Cut Some Colors!

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The children will:

1. Recognize and name colors.
2. Practice making choices of pictures to cut or tear from magazines.
3. Follow directions.
4. Develop their small motor coordination.
5. Discuss their collage with their friends.

## Materials

a variety of magazines  
(fashion, sports,  
fitness, family)  
construction paper  
child-safe scissors  
glue or paste  
markers

## VOCABULARY

collage	glue	names of unfamiliar
color names	magazine	objects children
cut	paste	choose for their
	tear	collage

## PREPARATION

- Assemble and arrange magazines in an area where children can select pictures that appeal to them.
- Place child-safe scissors and glue in a convenient location.

## WHAT TO DO

1. Review colors with the children.
2. Select a color of the day or week to feature in the activity.
3. Invite the children to choose a magazine and find pictures of objects that are the color of the day.
4. Allow the children to cut or tear the pictures from the magazine and paste them on the construction paper.
5. When everyone is finished, invite them to come together in a large group. Ask for volunteers to name and discuss the pictures they chose.

## ASSESSMENT

To assess the children's learning, consider the following:

- Can the children identify objects according to the chosen color? (Note each child's ability to follow directions and his comfort with discussing his collage with others.)
- Are the children displaying an age-appropriate development of small motor skills as they cut or tear pictures from magazines?

## Children's Books

*Blue Hat, Green Hat* by  
Sandra Boynton  
*What Color Is It?/¿Qué  
color es éste?* by the  
editors of the American  
Heritage Dictionary

## Song

"De Colores" from  
*Songs of Our World* by  
Raffi

Margery Kranyik Fermino, West Roxbury, MA