



MORSE
MUSEUM

PRACTICING COLOR SCHEMES



Pair of color wheels, c. 1904–10
Fountain, reception hall, Laurelton Hall
Lead, brass, glass
Tiffany Studios, New York City, 1902–32 (U-102:1, 2)

GRADES/LEVEL:

6th–12th grade/Middle and High School

TIME REQUIRED:

Two class periods

LESSON OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- learn about basic color theory.
- create original artwork that uses the elements of art and principles of design.
- create original artwork that incorporates four specific color schemes.

MATERIALS:

- Colored pencils (for color scheme practice worksheet)
- Color scheme practice worksheet (see end of lesson)
- Pastels, water-based paint, or digital coloring program (like Microsoft Paint 3D)
- Drawing paper or canvases (any size)
- Graphite drawing pencils
- Paintbrushes and water (for color scheme artwork)
- Rulers
- Color wheel worksheet (see end of lesson)

VOCABULARY:

Analogous: color scheme made of colors that sit adjacent to each other on the color wheel; examples include red, orange, and red-orange.

Color: the reflection or absorption of light from a given surface.

Color scheme: color combinations consisting of two or more colors (including hues, tints, and shades) that have been established as agreeable to the viewer.

Color theory: the use of color in art as it relates to the color wheel, color value, and color schemes.

Color wheel: a visual organization of color hues that follows a logical, circular order.

Complementary colors: colors on opposite sides of the color wheel; examples include yellow and purple, red and green, and orange and blue.

Hue: the family to which a color belongs. For example: rose, burgundy, and magenta are part of the red hue family.

Monochromatic: color scheme that uses the hues, tints, and shades of a single color.

Neutrals: colors that contain equal parts of each of the three primary colors and have a very low saturation; examples include grays, browns, blacks, and whites.

Primary colors: red, yellow, and blue. With these three colors (and black and white), all other colors can be made; the primary colors themselves cannot be made by mixing other colors.

Secondary colors: green, purple, and orange. These colors are derived by mixing equal parts of two primary colors.

Split complementary: color scheme that uses a color and the two colors adjacent to its complement; examples include red and yellow-green or blue-green.

Tertiary colors: colors between adjacent primary and secondary colors; examples include red-orange, yellow-green, blue-violet, and red-violet.

Value: the dark and light sections of works of art; a specific color's lightness or darkness.

ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION:

Color schemes are combinations of colors that have been established as “agreeable” or harmonious to the eye. They are not necessarily rules, but a set of guidelines an artist may use to create a visually pleasing work.

Color schemes are best seen on a color wheel. Seeing where a color is placed allows an artist to decide what color scheme might work best to convey a particular mood or statement. Analogous colors, or colors that are next to each other on the color wheel, create simple yet elegant visuals, while complementary colors, those that are directly opposite each other on the color wheel, create the strongest contrast and evoke a bolder energy.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- 1) Begin by introducing or reintroducing students to the color wheel. Introduce or review primary, secondary, and tertiary colors. Then introduce the concept of color schemes. Explain to students that, for this lesson, they will be focusing on five color schemes—monochromatic, complementary, split complementary, analogous, and neutral.
- 2) Give each student a copy of the color scheme practice worksheet (see end of lesson). Have students visit the Collection Highlights page on the Morse Museum's website:
 - <http://www.morsemuseum.org/collection-highlights>

Have students find one example for each of the five color schemes listed and complete the worksheet with the required information. Leave time for students to explain why they chose their specific examples as pieces may have more than one color scheme represented. As a class, allow students to discuss and defend their choices.

- 3) Give students scrap paper to “warm-up.” Explain to students that they will be creating an artwork that will incorporate four of the five color schemes from the worksheet, and that they will begin with a drawing to be colored. Color schemes and coloring media may be chosen for students ahead of time, or students may choose their own. For the purpose of this lesson, students will be creating an abstract design using three geometric shapes, three organic shapes, and red, blue, yellow, black, and white acrylic paint.

- 4) Give each student a sheet of drawing paper (any size), or canvas. Have students re-draw or copy their chosen design onto the drawing paper or canvas.
- 5) Give each student a ruler. Have students draw lines to divide their drawing into four equal sections. Explain that each section will be colored using a specific color scheme. It may help to label each section with its color scheme as a visual reference.
- 6) Have students add color to their drawing. Color should be added according to the color scheme assigned to the section. Review the principles of design. Have students keep the principles of design in mind as they strive to create a unified piece of art.
- 7) Allow to dry (if needed) and display.

ASSESSMENT:

Students should:

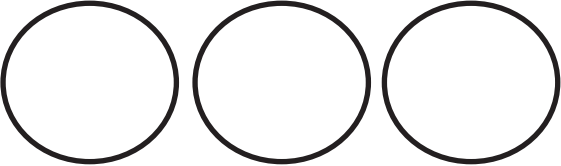
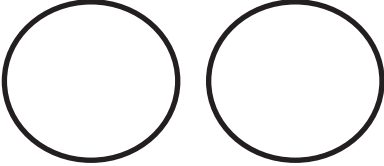
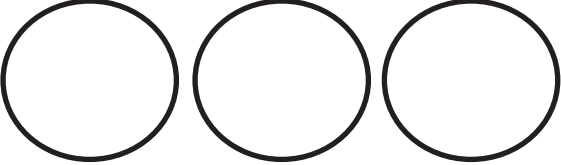
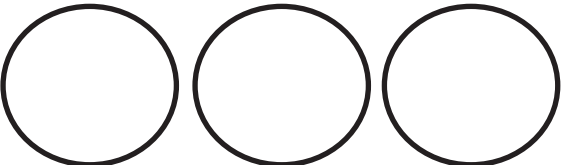
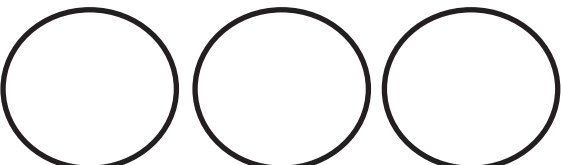
- be able to name and identify the five color schemes presented in the lesson.
- use the structural elements of art and the organizational principles of design in works of art to establish an interpretive and technical foundation for visual coherence.
- have a better understanding of how color influences perception.

COLOR SCHEME PRACTICE WORKSHEET:

Go to the Collection Highlights page on the Morse Museum website:

- <http://www.morsemuseum.org/collection-highlights>

Using the Collection Highlights images, find examples for each color scheme. Fill in information about the selected work. Fill in the circles with the colors represented in the color scheme.

Monochromatic Title of work: _____ Medium: _____	
Complementary Title of work: _____ Medium: _____	
Split Complementary Title of work: _____ Medium: _____	
Analogous Title of work: _____ Medium: _____	
Neutral Title of work: _____ Medium: _____	

EXAMPLE OF A COLOR WHEEL AND VARIOUS COLOR SCHEMES

