


4th of July lesson involving making a simulated fireworks display

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Title – 4th of July Art Project

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Subject – Social Studies, Art

Grade Level – K-5

M333 Art Lesson Plan

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FOURTH OF JULY FIREWORKS DISPLAY

Materials Needed:

1. 12 x 18 sheets of construction paper, light (in hue) sky-colored paper would be best.
2. 12 x 18 sheets of black construction paper.
3. Tempera paints, both warm and cool colors are needed.
4. Small containers (lids, Styrofoam plates, etc.) to hold paint if needed.
5. Straws, one straw for every color at every station plus one per student.
6. Paper towels or rags.

GradeAppropriateness: 3rd

Time Frame: 30-45 min.

Directions for Implementing Lesson:

Students should have previous knowledge of this holiday and what the fireworks display. A book or videotape of a fireworks display might be a good lead-in to this lesson. Begin by gathering the students around the largest table in the room (if available, otherwise have the children sit on the floor with you) so that you may discuss what they will be doing.

1. Take the light colored paper and begin by placing a drop or two of any color (use a straw) on the upper half of the paper. Paper can be horizontal or vertical.
2. Explain to the children that they will then take their straw and blow the paint into a circle-like shape. Demonstrate. Tell them that they should take a breath in before placing their lips on the straw to avoid any "paint eaters."
3. Show the children how they can use the end of their straw to make the "dangling arms" of the fireworks. Show them how some fireworks can stretch way down while still being skinny, while other fireworks are fat and explode in many different directions. The paper may be turned as the students are working so that they can get the best angle to work from. Demonstrate. Encourage them to think of other designs or pattern that they have seen.
4. After showing them a couple of designs, encourage the children to use more than one color on some of their fireworks. Do this by placing dots of different colors right by each other and then repeat step 2-3. Demonstrate. Briefly mention that when cool colors are mixed with warm colors, you sometimes get a brownish color. Mention that they may want one or two of these, but most fireworks tend to be bright and bold in their colors, kind of like the sun.
5. While you are demonstrating steps 3 and 4, show them how to overlap. Do this by letting one firework dry for a minute or two while you work on the other side of the paper. Then go back and making another firework fairly close to the first, letting the arms of the new one overlap the first.
6. Ask them the question, "Who sets off one of the largest firework displays in the country." New York or any big city will do. Show them how to make a city by drawing one on the black paper. Use a pencil and show them how to press lightly. Show them how some buildings are tall and rectangular, while others have curves or wiggles.

Encourage them to think of other designs. They will want to make their city the same size as they have their fireworks display. For example, if they lay their fireworks paper horizontal, then the black paper should also be horizontal and they should use all of the paper from one side to the other. Cut out the city and paste it onto the fireworks display. It should dry in the time it takes them to make their city. If not, tell them that they will have time to finish it later in the day.

7. Have children get into groups of 4 and group their desks accordingly (so that they are together and make a square). Place several containers (or one large one) at each table and put some tempera in each one. Lay newspapers over the desks before they begin.

8. Have the steps written out and summarized so that the children can refer to these (on the board or on a posterboard).

Variations:

Kindergarten: Follow steps 1-5. Then have children use crayons to draw their family at the bottom of the page (when picture has dried). Do this activity in centers, where each student can be assisted and monitored.

1st – 2nd grade: Follow steps 1-5. Then let the children paint a background using the tempera. Demonstrate one of the following and mention the rest of the following: mountain, farm, house, ocean, or anything else they can think of.

4th – 5th grade: Show magazines of different cities and let their pictures develop in diversity. Show them how some might have windows, lights, doors, or even smoke. There might be an airplane in the sky or just a lonely bird. Use oil pastels to make the additions to the cities and skyline. You might also want to demonstrate how to use different tools to make their fireworks such as their fingers, old pencils or pens, a paper clip, a tissue, or let them come up with some ideas. It might be a good idea to have them ask you if their tool is ok to use.

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