
Composition: Storm– Wassily Kandinsky 1866–1944



Keywords: Abstract, Line, Mood, Color, Shape

Lesson: Composition, Color and Lines can create Mood – Watercolor Crayon Resist

Meet The Artist:

- Wassily Kandinsky was born in Moscow, Russia in 1866. As a boy, he was a good student and took drawing lessons. He loved to draw, but eventually became a lawyer.
- When he was 30 he went to see an art show by Claude Monet. Monet was a famous artist who used a large amount of color in his work. Kandinsky was so taken by the art-and the power of the color he quit his job to become an artist himself.
- Kandinsky is known as the father of abstract painting. He discovered he liked abstract art by observing a painting one day –he noticed “its’ extraordinary beauty and glowing inner radiance”, only to realize it was one of his paintings that had been turned upside-down!
- After that, Kandinsky believed that true artists could express their inner feelings through lines, shapes and especially color. He felt all colors and forms had meaning and carefully planned each painting to express the feelings he wanted to communicate. He did not feel the need to put recognizable objects in his work. In fact, he liked to title his works with words like Composition or Improvisation so viewers would not read too much into the meaning of the titles.
- Kandinsky retired in Paris and died in 1944 at the age of 78.

Questions and Discussion:

Describe this painting?

What colors do you see? Are they light or dark?

Do you think colors can make you feel a certain way?

Did the color in this picture create a certain mood? **Mood** is the way artwork makes you feel?

What kinds of lines do you see? **All art begins with a line.** How can lines create a mood? Example happy lines, cute lines, angry lines.

What directions do the lines go-how does that make you feel?

He called this painting, *Composition Storm*. In a storm the wind blows all directions-does anything in this painting remind you of being in a storm? Explain.

What would it feel like to be standing in the middle of this painting? Is there a place where you would feel restful? **Composition** is how the painting is put together – balanced or unbalanced

Keywords Defined:

- Abstract – a style of art in which shapes, designs, textures and colors represented in a way that may look unrealistic but that emphasizes moods or feelings. It is characterized by the use of geometric lines, shapes, and bright, bold colors
- Line – an element of art; a continuous path of a point as it moves across a surface. A line can vary in length, width, direction, curvature or color.
- Mood – the feeling or emotion suggested or created in the viewer by a work of art

- Color – an element of art. The hue, value and intensity of an object.
- Shape – an element of art. The outline, edge or flat surface of a form as a circle or a square.

Activity: Composition, Color and Line: Watercolor Crayon Resist

Supplies:

Watercolor Paper	Papertowels
Water Colors	Crayons
Brushes	Water Dishes
Objects to Trace (cans, tools, shoes, rocks, hands, pencils, etc...)	

Instructions:

Tell the students we are making our own Compositions by tracing objects and putting lines and patterns inside of the objects. Where we place the objects on the paper will create the composition. The lines we draw will create the patterns. Then the color we choose to use will also create the mood.

1. Names on paper
2. Trace objects on paper with a crayon to create composition. (hand, ruler, glue bottle, marker etc.) Have them press hard with the crayons. They may use different colors of crayons, and project looks best if their shapes overlap one another.
3. With crayon, add lines inside the traced object of different moods-happy, angry-use dots, lines or striped but do not color in solid.
4. Choose the watercolor colors that help you create a feeling and lightly wash the paint over your composition. The Crayon will "resist" the watercolors and show through the areas painted (point out this technique to the children). No white should be showing and you should use more than one color. Encourage them to paint at random on their designs; they do not have to paint "within the lines"!! – encourage them to be CREATIVE & Have fun!
5. Attach parent letters to the back and display as desired by the teacher.
6. Sign off of on the "Lesson Completed" section of the Binder.
7. Blot out the Watercolors and ensure that they and the paint brushes are all inside the shoebox sized bins in the storage bins – so they don't get the watercolor papers wet when you put it all away – thank you!

*Remind students that more water on their brushes will make the paint more transparent and lighter-the less water will make the paint more intense and darker.