
Art Masterpiece: *The CIRCUS*, 1859-1891 by Georges Seurat

Keywords: Pointillism, Into of Primary/Secondary Colors

Grade: Kinder – First

Activity: Painting with Pointillism



Meet the Artist:

- Born in France in 1859 to a family that supported his desire to be an artist. Georges Seurat received art schooling in Paris.
- Initially rejected by the impressionist artists of the day, he decided to associate with other artists and created a new art style that was the “new” form of impressionism. Impressionists painted in a manner that the painting was the image you see if you just took a quick look at it. Neo Impressionists painted so that it was more orderly, more scientific.
- Eventually, his artwork was titled pointillism (although he never cared for this title). In pointillism, the artist uses dots or dashes to complete a picture. The paintings tend to look grainy, up close one would only see “points” or small dashes, from farther away, a picture emerges.
- His paintings were very large and he painted only a handful of complete paintings in his lifetime and 60 smaller paintings. He did sketch many others, though. This was in part due to his captivation with the neoimpressionism style. He sought to make every inch of the canvas perfect. He sometimes took years to finish a single painting.

- He died at an early age in 1891 from what many believed to be diphtheria, a disease of the respiratory system that no longer affects us due to vaccinations.
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Color Theory: Two ways to CREATE COLOR

Quickly give a brief lesson on how colors mixed together create new colors. RED, YELLOW, BLUE are known as the PRIMARY COLORS. As an artist if you have these three colors you can create the rest of the rainbow.

Red + Blue = PURPLE

Red + Yellow = ORANGE

Yellow + Blue = GREEN

The recipe above creates three new colors. In art these are called the SECONDARY COLORS. They come second!

Pointillism is a method of painting to create color. White ground (paper) is covered with tiny dots of color. When viewed at a distance, the colors blend together to produce new colors, a luminous effect. The viewer's eyes do the mixing of color instead of the artist mixing the colors with his/her brush.

Today we will be creating color by painting in the style of Pointillism.

Write out the color combinations onto the whiteboard for reference later.

Discussion Questions:

- What do you see in this painting?
- Have you ever been to a circus? Share a memory. Have students describe their experience using their senses ... Imagine what you hear, smell, taste, (you should go first to help them understand how to tell about their circus experience)
- This painting was done over 100 years ago. How can you tell? (the way the people are dressed)
- Do the people look like they are enjoying themselves?
- Who else is in the Background? (Orchestra)
- Explore the different jobs that people do at the circus. Animal trainers, feeders, acrobats, concession worker, ticket seller, etc.
- What colors do you see?

- How does the painting look up close in comparison to when sitting at your desk? (colors blend from a distance creating new color, up close colors are separate)
- How did Seurat put the paint on the canvas? (tiny dots)
- Do you think he did this painting quickly? (often took over a year)

Activity: Painting Using Pointillism

Materials needed: Circus clip art copied onto white construction or card stock paper, tempera paints, Q-tips, plates for the paint, newspaper to cover desks. Paper towel.

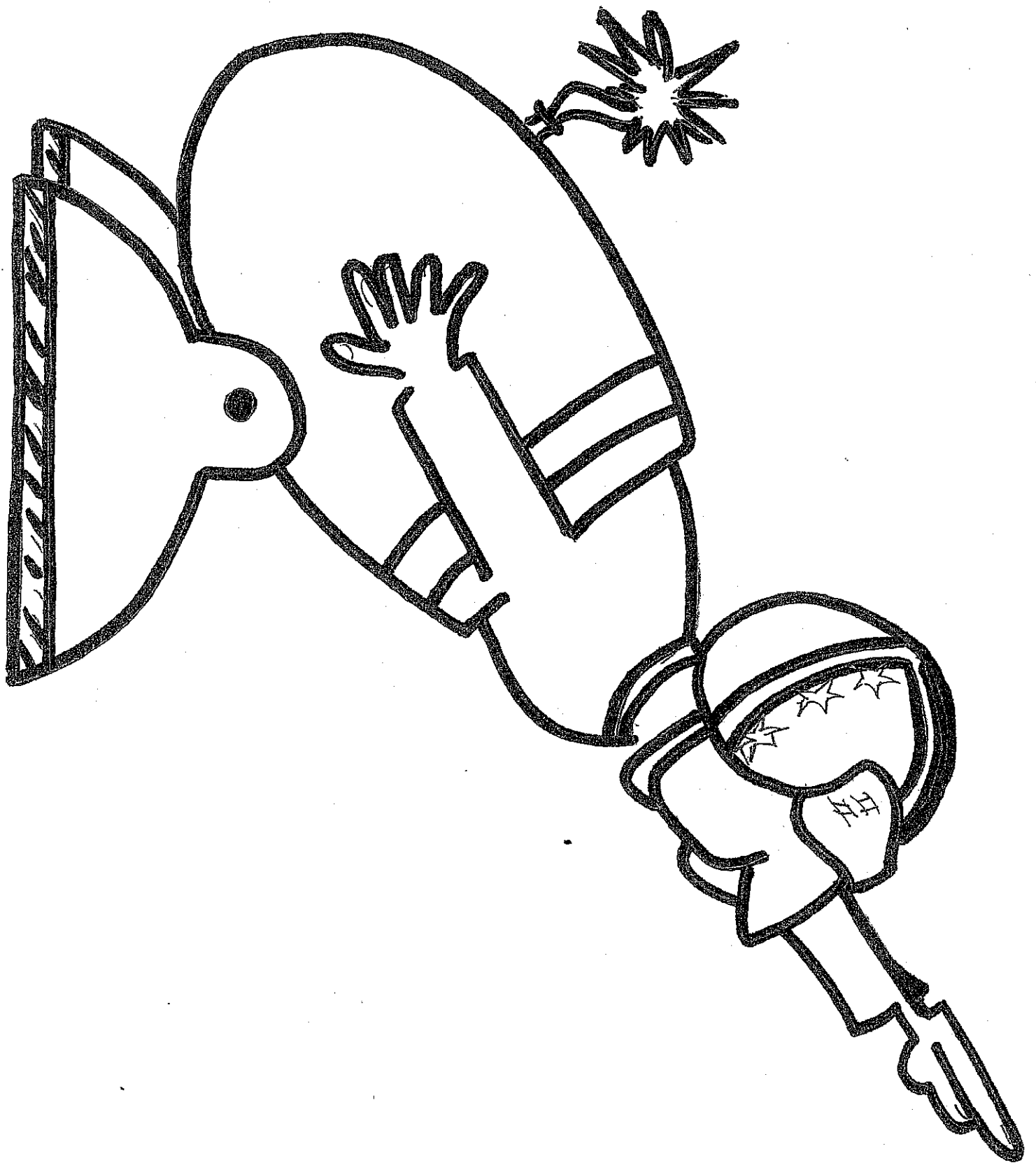
DEMONSTRATE: Under the document camera show the students how they will apply the paint onto the paper. The Q-tips will be used to apply the paint. Show how to dip the tip into the paint and then stamp the dot onto the paper. They can create a different look by how closely they place the dots to each other. Tell them not to use the Q-tip in a scrubbing motion, or like a paint brush. They are to only create dots of color. Demonstrate the difference.

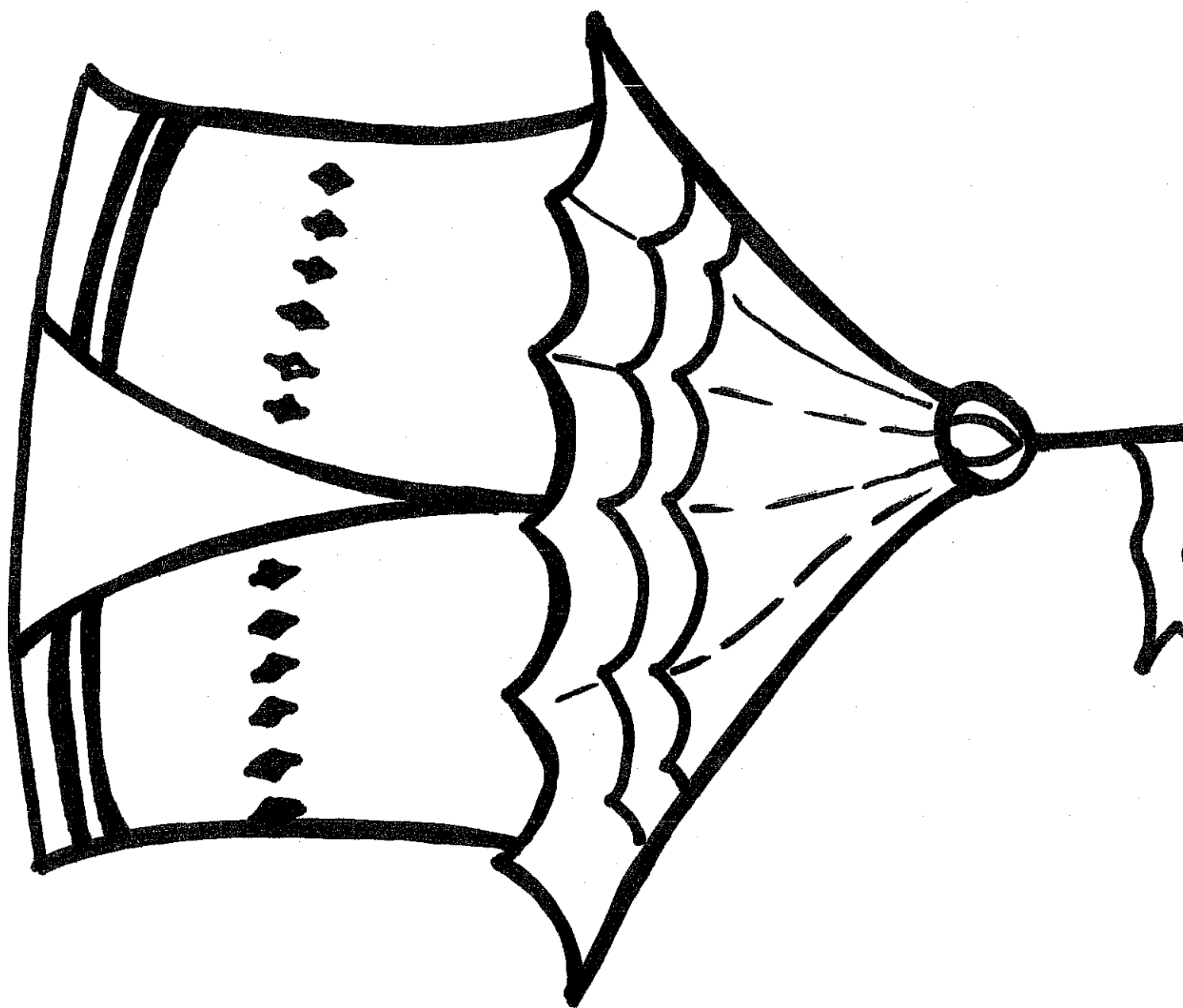
Process:

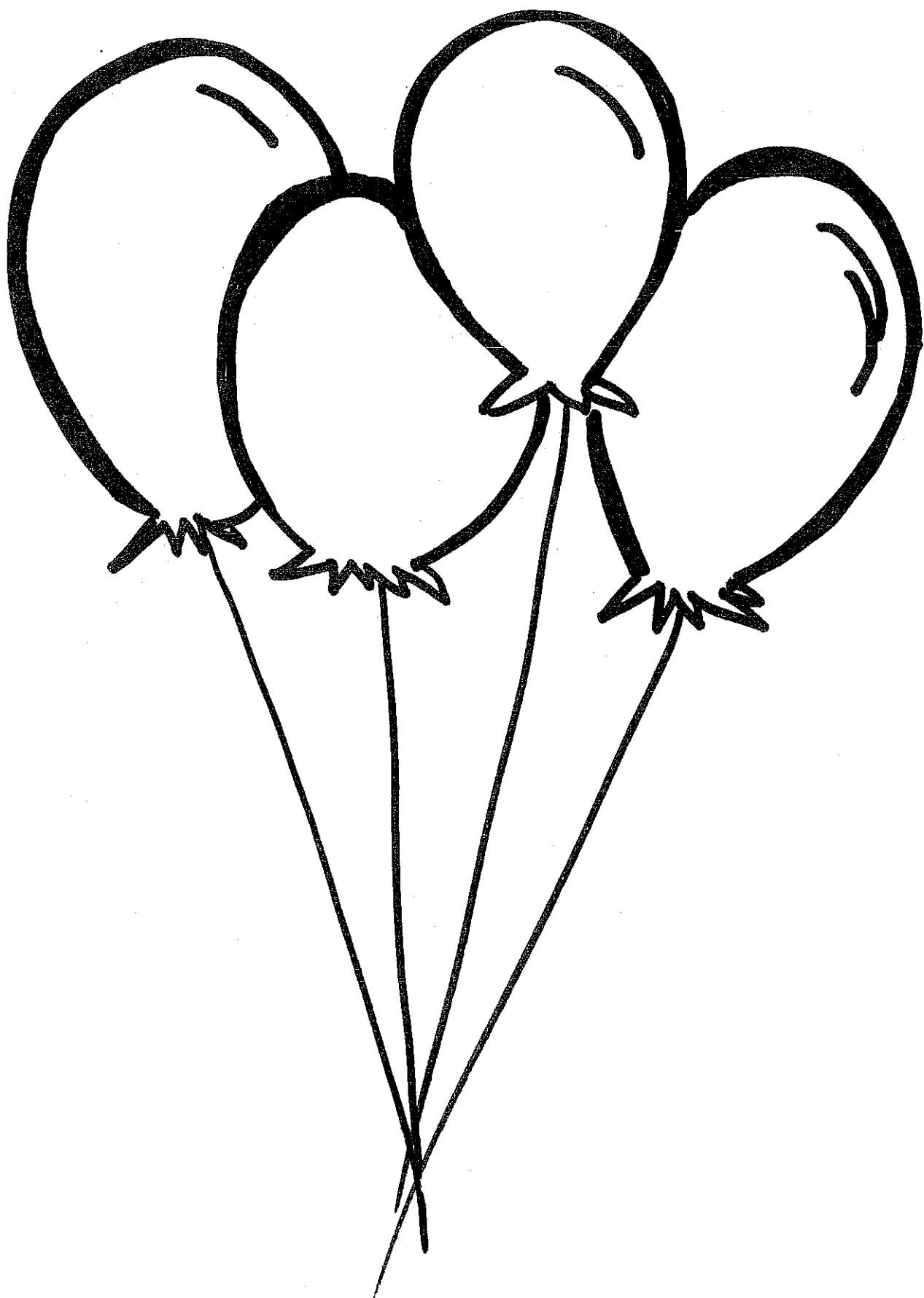
1. Have students select one of the clip art circus images.
2. Using only the Q-tips dipped LIGHTLY into the paint begin to fill the clip art design. Blot the Q-tips on paper towels, if necessary to get rid of excess paint. Give students multiple Q-tips so they can keep colors separate.
3. Remind them that they should be able to see individual dots on their work of art from up close, but from far away, their eyes will melt the colored dots together to create new color. Students can get up periodically and look at their artwork from a few feet away.
4. Students should refer to the whiteboard to see what combinations of primary colors can be used to create a secondary color. Yellow and red to create orange seems to have the best result.
5. Encourage students to see how much of the artwork they can get filled in with closely placed dots.
6. Have them title and sign their masterpiece.

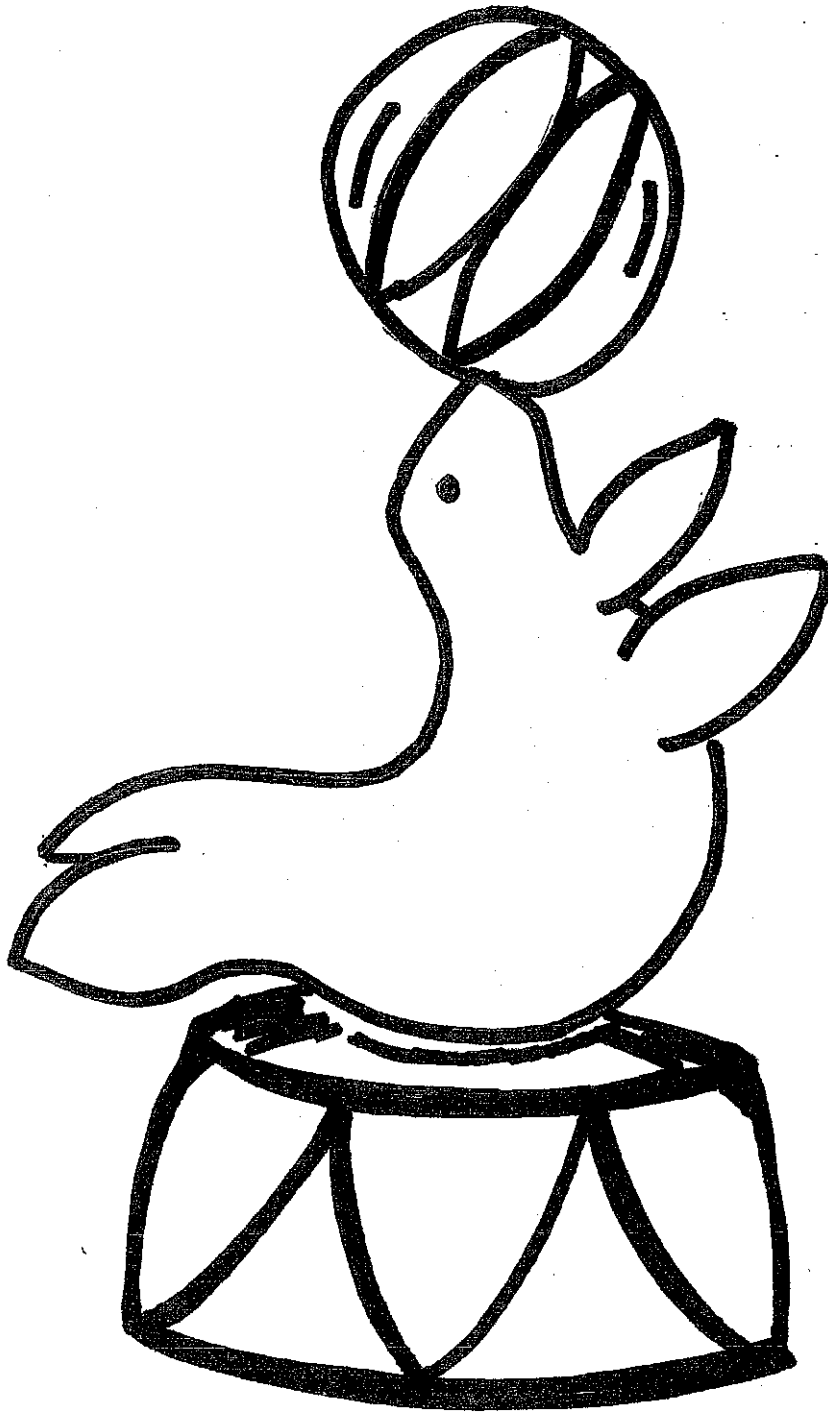
See samples below.

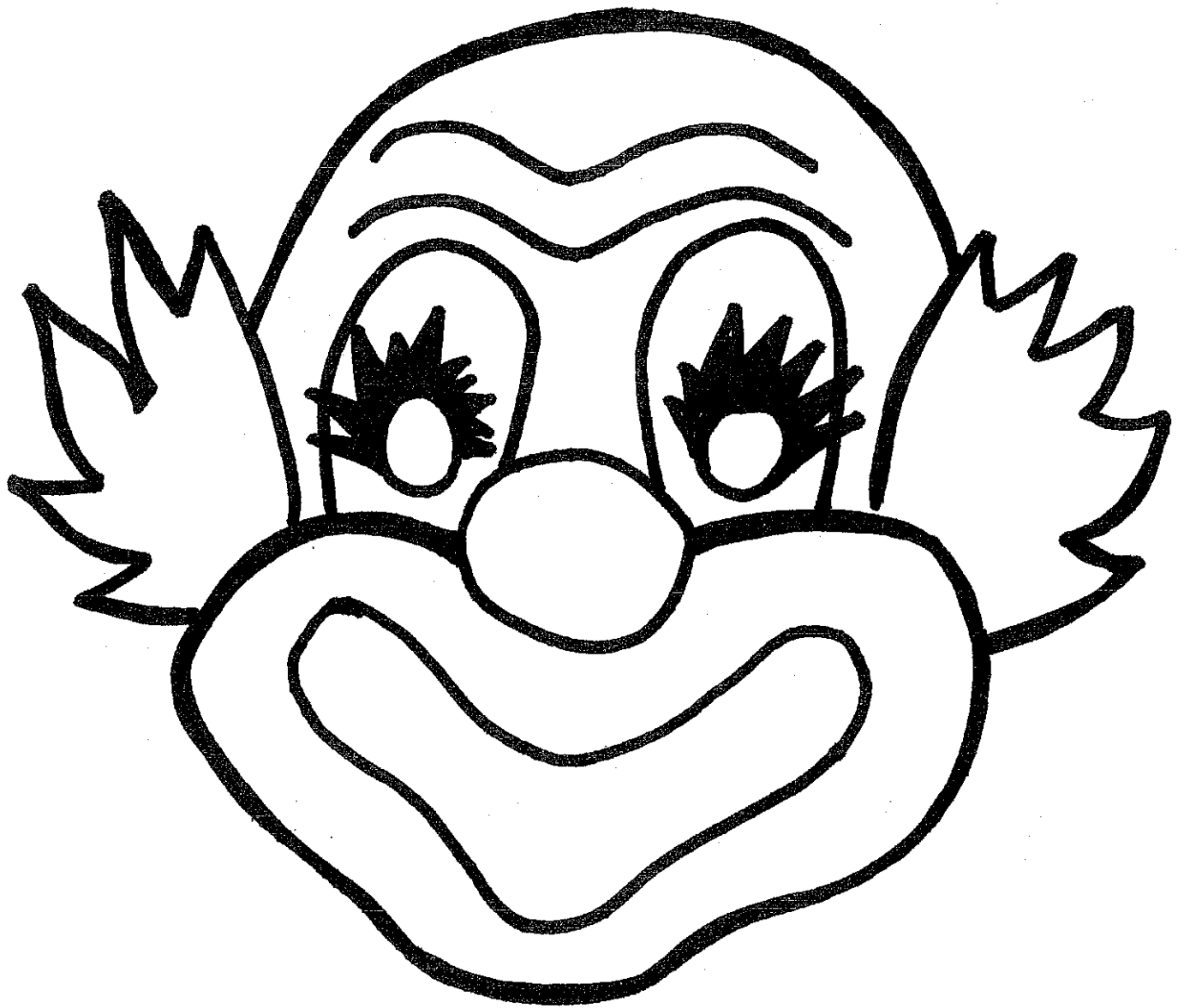














Parent Letter

Brief info about the artist: Georges-Pierre Seurat (December 1859 –March 1891) was a French Post-Impressionist painter and draftsman.

He is noted for his innovative use of drawing media and for devising the painting techniques known as pointillism.

Brief info about the project: Today we painted in the style of Pointillism using tiny dots of color. Introduction of blending of Primary colors –red-yellow- blue to make new colors was explored.



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