

## Key Stage 2

Children at Key Stage 2 may be beginning to feel more self-conscious about drawing and visual art activities. They be concerned about producing a concrete outcome or be developing the notion that work can either be 'right' or 'wrong'.

Drawing games like the Shape Game provide an effective way to retain children's ability to play and experiment freely, as well as to allow them to develop their individuality. Drawing is a fun and accessible way to help even the least confident children to express their own ideas, to communicate and to try new approaches, and to demonstrate that imagination does not have to abide by rules!

Children at this age will be developing higher levels of visual literacy. Support the development of a more sophisticated visual

vocabulary by talking about how images can express feelings, emotions and abstract ideas.





Try looking together at images in picture books (try Anthony Browne's *Gorilla* as a starting point) and talk about what makes a picture convey happiness, sadness, loneliness, anger or fear. Discuss how different shapes, textures and colours can illustrate and communicate ideas and feelings.

Introduce famous artworks, or look at photographs and advertisements from newspapers and magazines to prompt discussion and help build children's visual awareness.

**"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!" - Dr. Seuss**



# Starting points

-  **Explore collage:** children cut images from magazines to stick on blank sheets of paper, and then use them as the basis to develop imaginative pictures. Collage two or three unrelated images randomly together on a sheet of paper and then connect them by drawing in between and around them. Alternatively, make fantasy creatures by cutting up magazine pictures of people and animals, and reassembling them in unexpected ways; then draw an imaginary world for them to inhabit.
-  **Try out an online version of the Shape Game:** play at the Children's Laureate website [www.childrenslaureate.org.uk](http://www.childrenslaureate.org.uk), or try drawing tools at [www.zefrank.com/scribbler](http://www.zefrank.com/scribbler) or [artpad.art.com/gallery](http://artpad.art.com/gallery). Print out your images to make a display, or use as the starting point for drawing and painting.
-  **Play a surrealist drawing game:** like Anthony Browne, many artists use drawing games as a starting point for their artwork. Famously, the Surrealists played a game they called *Exquisite Corpse*, which children may already know as 'heads, bodies and legs'. To play, each child draws the head of a person or creature on a piece of paper, then folds it over so their drawing cannot be seen, and passes to the next child, who draws a body. Fold and pass on again, with the next child drawing the legs. Now unfold the papers and look at your finished creatures. You could make these surreal characters the starting point for a series of artworks, a story or even a comic strip.
-  **Investigate different drawing techniques:** try doing a series of quick drawings of the same object (such as a pine cone, a shell, a plant, a musical instrument, a hat, an apple, a shoe), varying the method and materials each time. For example: draw without looking at the paper; draw with the wrong hand; draw with both hands at once; draw with unusual drawing devices by attaching a pen or a piece of chalk to a long stick or cane, or tying several pens together to make a giant pen cluster; draw in a continuous line without taking the pen off the paper; draw the object from different points of view, layering one image on top of the other.



# Activities

## 1. Accidental Drawing and Action Painting

The Abstract Expressionists and artists such as Jackson Pollock explored non-representational ways of expressing feelings in their work by using experimental methods and accidental effects of splashing and dripping paint on canvas to develop images.

Try some 'action' painting with your class. Working outdoors, spread large sheets of heavy duty paper or card on the floor, and then add colour with big brushes, decorators' rollers, sticks or even fingers, hands and feet. Try squeezing, splattering and dripping paint onto the paper, or printing into paint using found objects such as feathers, plastic bottle tops, bubble wrap, pieces of textured card cut into shapes, or even old bicycle tyres, building layers of texture and colour.

When dry, these can be developed with further drawing or painting,

used as backgrounds for illustration or design projects, or cut up and rearranged into new artworks.

## 2. Draw to music

Many artists, including Wassily Kandinsky and Paul Klee, have been inspired by classical and contemporary music. With your class, listen to an inspiring piece of music such as Holst's *The Planets* or Saint-Saens' *The Carnival of the Animals*. Talk about how it makes children feel. What shapes, textures and colours does it make them think of? What stories do they think the music is telling?

Play the music while children draw, working in groups of 3-4 each with a large sheet of paper. Take it in turns to add doodles, shapes, colours and patterns that respond to the sounds and changing rhythms of the music.

Provide a wide range of coloured drawing materials to work with: chalks, felt pens, oil crayons, pencil

crayons and paint. Encourage children to make choices, explore different scales, mix media and be inventive.

## 3. Explore your environment

Develop children's memory and observation skills by asking them to "remember" a walk in the woods, your local park or around your school buildings. During the walk, stop at key points to talk about what you see.

Encourage children to look at the environment with new eyes: consider colours, shapes, textures, patterns, light and dark, weather effects. Take crayons with you so you can make rubbings of textual surfaces you encounter, and collect objects you find such as leaves and flowers.

Back in the classroom, children make drawings and paintings from memory to express their own experiences of the journey.

Alternatively, work together to create a group map to represent the journey, with each child adding their own visual 'memories', and marking key locations. Make up your own imaginative names for favourite places; and make drawings of your collected objects to show where they were found. Look at Sara Fanelli's *My Map Book* for more creative map ideas, or visit the British Library website [www.bl.uk/magnificentmaps/index.html](http://www.bl.uk/magnificentmaps/index.html) to find out about their exhibition *Magnificent Maps*, which includes imaginative maps created by contemporary artists such as Grayson Perry.

**'Drawing helps children link life experiences through the senses ... with the internal life lived through memory and imagination' - Start Drawing!**