

Paint It

P
Preschool



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Take a break from the usual summer games and gimmicks and bring out your child's inner artist with a little paint and a lot of great ideas. Forget the standard painting fare, this collection of creative project ideas is sure to add quite a bit of color to your summer routine.



It might seem like all this messy, colorful amusement is just frivolous fun. However, these painting activities actually offer academic benefits. Painting

helps develop your child's fine motor skills and as your little one paints, all important hand-eye and visual coordination skills will quickly develop. In fact, all this painting will help your preschooler build the skills needed to tackle the complex job of writing that will be introduced in kindergarten.



Painting also fosters creativity that will serve your child both in and beyond the classroom. So this summer, break out the tempera, watercolors, and even some homemade paint and let your little one paint away!

Painting Tips:

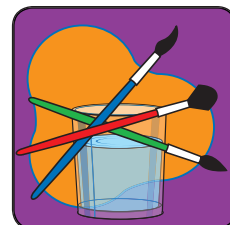
The type of paint you'll need for each activity will be indicated by these icons located to the right of the title on each page:



Homemade Paint



Tempera



Watercolors

The first of the painting activities is a recipe with instructions for how to make your very own paint. For several of the activities featured in the workbook, homemade paint is suggested as the paint of choice. However, if you decide not to make your own paint, for any activity that calls for homemade paint you can easily use watered down tempera instead.



Homemade Paint

By Samantha Harpring



Homemade Paint

This recipe works well with preschoolers because it is somewhat runny, which means it doesn't stain so easily, and completely edible, in case of accidental ingestion. Not that we recommend tasting it! The best part is that it's easily made from things you've likely got in your cupboard.

What Do You Need?

- Cornstarch
- Water
- Food coloring
- Small plastic bowls or containers

Let's Get Started!

1. Combine equal parts of cornstarch and water (1/4 cup of each does well for 1-2 children).
2. Add 6-8 drops of food coloring and stir until blended.
3. Repeat to make as many different colors as you'd like.

This paint will work great for the following activities featured in this workbook:

- Make a Blow Painting
- Paint a Mural
- Create Line Design Prints

I'm sure you can come up with many other great paint project ideas where you could use this delightful homemade paint!



Kitchen Utensil Art

By Sarah Lipoff



Tempera

Instead of using more conventional painting tools, your child can enjoy experimenting with a bunch of fun kitchen gadgets to see what types of prints they make! Many of those flippers, whisks, and tongs create some unique graphic prints. Just round up some paint and a sheet of paper for tons of fun!

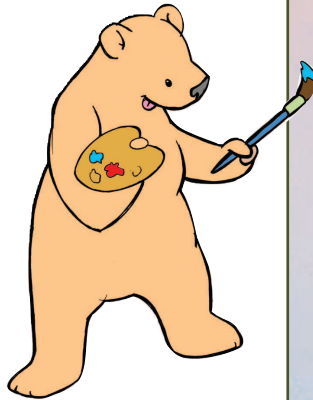


What Else Do You Need?

- Variety of kitchen gadgets such as a whisk, potato masher, or slotted spatula
- White construction paper
- Paper plates

Let's Get Started!

1. Help your child look through your kitchen drawers to find cooking tools that might make interesting marks and prints. Look for things with unusual shapes or textures, like slotted spoons, cookie cutters, or meat tenderizers.



2. Invite your child to select his three favorite colors from the paint provided, and then help him squeeze a small amount of paint on the paper plates.
3. Now it's time to get printing! Have your child select a kitchen tool to use for the first print. Help him press it into the paint, making sure it's evenly coated, and then make a print on the paper. What type of design is left behind?
4. Encourage him to experiment with creating patterns and designs on his paper, boosting his hand-eye coordination and budding math skills!

Display his finished kitchen surprise artwork in the kitchen for others to see!

Make a Blow Painting

By Samantha Harpring



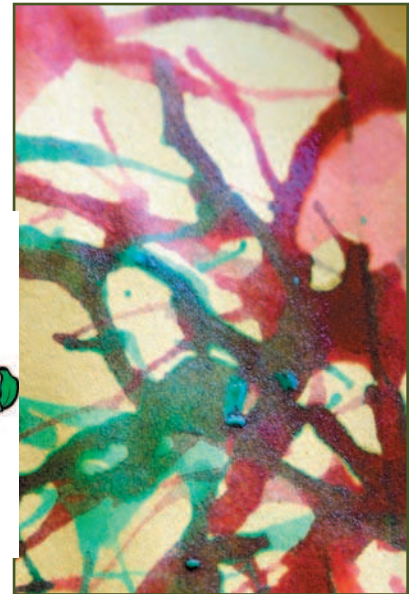
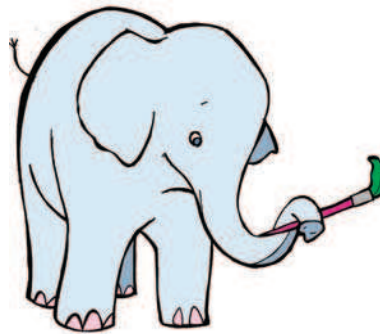
**Homemade
Paint**

There's no denying that preschoolers love to paint. And with painting, there are so many possibilities! Let your little one have fun by blowing the paint around on the paper rather than using a paintbrush. This is a great outside activity, as the power of little lungs can vary and the direction the paint will take can sometimes be quite unpredictable. Whatever happens though, the final result is sure to be a fabulously abstract piece of art.



What Else Do You Need?

- Paper
- Spoon
- Non-breakable container with sides or newspaper to cover work surface
- Straws (bendable straws work best)



Let's Get Started!

1. Trim paper as needed to cover the bottom of the container. Place the paper into the container with sides or on your covered work surface.
2. Have your child choose a paint color and dribble a bit onto her paper.
3. Give her a straw and let her experiment with blowing the paint around on the paper. Caution her against sucking in through the straw.
4. Continue adding colors until your child completes her masterpiece. Talk about what you see in the abstract design. What does the painting make her think of? Does it remind her of anything? Does she see shapes? Help your child give the painting a name, like many famous painters before her.
5. Allow the painting to dry and then encourage your preschooler to sign her name in the bottom corner.

Find a great place to display her creation and praise you preschooler for creating such a unique work of art!

Plastic Lid Play

By Beth Levin



Tempera

Learn about art and texture while having fun with paints. Dig into your recycling bin for plastic lids, and then reuse them for this quick and easy painting project. This creative activity would also be a great opportunity to talk to your child about the importance of recycling. He'll be able to see first-hand how items that we normally just toss out can be used in unexpected ways.

What Else Do You Need?

- Paintbrushes
- Plastic flat covers or lids
- Containers for paint

Let's Get Started!

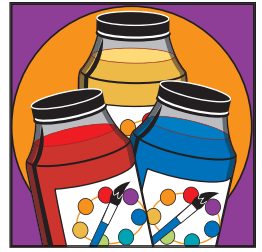
1. Take a look in your recycling bin. Ask your child to do some sorting. Can he put all the plastic lids in a pile? All the metal ones? Clear lids give a better view of the paints below, but non-transparent ones work also. Collect a variety and talk about how they are the same, and how they are different.
2. Pour paints into containers so your child has colors to choose from. Tell him to use paintbrushes to paint patches of colors (or all one color) on the flat side of a lid. He should apply paint thickly.
3. Have him turn the painted lid face down and press it onto a piece of paper. He can smear it around in circles if he wants to vary the design. He may want to slide the lid or twist it.
4. With a different lid, have him paint colors on the thin lid edge. Place that part on the paper. When he lifts it up, he'll notice thinner lines of paint rather than the big patches first created. Talk about the texture created on the paper and how it's different than painting with a paintbrush.
5. Let your child experiment with the thin lines of paint (from using the lid's side edge). For example, have him paint the edge, place it down on the paper, and move the lid in a spiral motion. Then lift the lid and observe his creation!
6. Let him experiment with different shapes from your recycling bin. For example, square or rectangle lids from a cheese container.
7. With paint brushes and paint, he may want to "fill out" patch paintings with other brushstrokes to complete a design. Let him experiment!



Once it's dry, find a good place to put his painting. You might also want to ask your child if he can think of any other fun and unusual things he might want to paint with. If he's not sure, make some suggestions to him.

Squishy Paint Art

By Korey Marquez



Tempera

Kids are naturally drawn to the creative and exploratory aspects of art, especially when it gives them free license to get messy! Parents, on the other hand, can appreciate the opportunity for exploration and hands-on learning that art projects provide but are less thrilled about the cleanup at the end. Featuring plenty of good old fashioned gooey fun without the mess, this art project is sure to please little ones and grown-ups alike. Kids will have fun learning about mixing primary colors by squishing paper onto paint, but the mess stays contained for easy cleanup. Make sure you have red, yellow, and blue paint this time around!

What Else Do You Need?

- Paper
- Flat, non-porous work surface such as a metal baking sheet or acrylic cutting board

Let's Get Started!

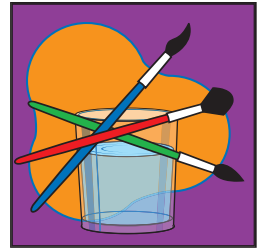
1. In the center of your work surface, help your child squeeze out a dollop of red paint about the size of a fifty-cent piece. Place the same amount of yellow paint about an inch to the right of the red paint. Centered about an inch above the red and yellow paint, pour a dollop of blue paint.
2. Talk with her about the colors and explain how red, yellow, and blue—called primary colors—make other colors when mixed.
3. Help her hold a piece of paper over the paint and set it down gently on top. Have her press, squish, rub, or otherwise manipulate it as she wishes.
4. Now have her carefully pick up the paper straight off the work surface and examine what happened when the primary colors mixed. Talk with her about the different colors that each combination created.



Squishy paint makes beautiful modern art! Let the paint dry, then frame her artwork and display it on the wall to bring a dash of color to the room.

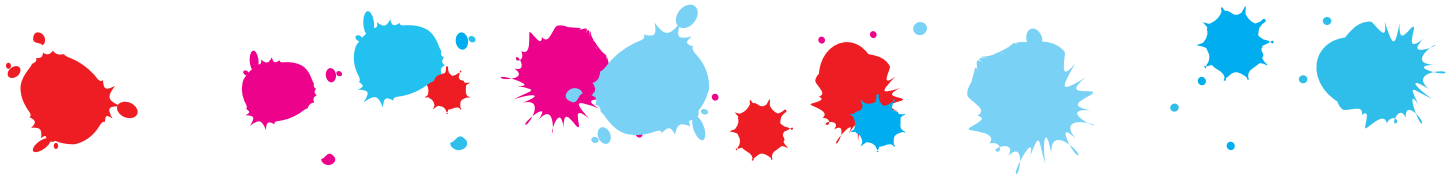
Create a Crayon Shape Painting

By Sarah Lipoff



Watercolors

Once your young child has figured out how to draw shapes, he'll want to make them all the time! Get inspired with this fun art project that encourages your shape-drawing child. He'll make a pattern resist painting while he develops his drawing skills. All it takes are some crayons and watercolor paints for this engaging project that serves to make a long summer day even more enjoyable!



What Else Do You Need?

- White drawing paper
- Crayons
- Paint brushes
- Small container for water

Let's Get Started!

1. Get started by taping a piece of white paper onto a flat surface.
2. Give your child a selection of crayons to use, and encourage him to fill his paper with shapes of all different sizes and colors. This is a great opportunity to introduce him to some new shapes that he may be unfamiliar with, such as stars, moons, and ovals! Show him some examples on a separate piece of paper.
3. Once his paper is filled with shapes, remove the crayons and place a small cup of water, a paintbrush, and watercolor paints within reach. Invite him to paint over the crayon shapes he drew with watercolor paints, and watch the crayon shapes pop through the paint.
4. Next, encourage him to continue dipping his paint brush in water and a color of paint. This fine tunes his color recognition and hand-eye coordination!
5. Urge him to continue painting until his entire paper is covered with paint, without any white paper showing through.
6. Let the shape painting dry.



Your little shape artist is sure to want to repeat this one. Once he's done, your child's finished pattern resist can be proudly displayed in a colorful frame for everyone to see!

Symmetry Art

By Erica Loop



Tempera

Symmetry is a basic math concept that even young children can master. Your child can learn about symmetry by making a simple squished paint print. Get ready to get messy! This imaginative art activity will help your child to better understand this important mathematical idea, explore color and shape, experiment with paint and print making as an artistic process.

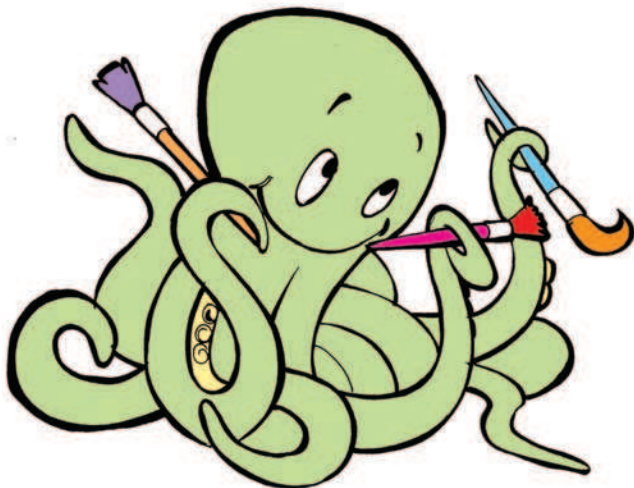


What Else Do You Need?

- Construction or drawing paper

Let's Get Started!

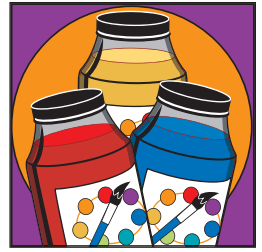
1. Ask your child to choose a light color of paper (the lighter the paper, the better the painted design will show up). Help her fold the paper in half. Point out how the paper is a rectangle, but that it is now divided into two rectangles—this is a great opportunity to discuss fractions.
2. Pour a golf ball-sized glob of paint into your child's hand.
3. Have your child gently press the paint onto one half of the paper only. Make sure that some of the paint touches the folded line in the center.
4. Press the two halves together like a book. Rub the outside firmly to transfer the paint.
5. Open to reveal a symmetrical print!
6. Add in a color mixing lesson and give your child the three primaries (yellow, red, and blue) to work with. You could also have her squish the paint colors in her hands prior to applying them to the paper.



This one may require a little cleanup, but it was worth it considering all the fun your preschooler had as well as the math concepts learned in the process.

Paint with Feathers

By Sarah Lipoff



Tempera

Give your child a feather instead of a paintbrush and watch his creativity take flight! Using a feather for a brush strengthens his fine motor muscles and hand eye coordination, both of which are important for writing later on. And let's face it, feathers are way more fun to use than a boring old paintbrush!



What Else Do You Need?

- Craft feathers
- Paper plates
- White paper

Let's Get Started

1. Start by getting the materials ready. Have your child pick which colors he wants to use, and pour a small amount of each color onto individual paper plates.
2. Now, get your piece of paper and let your child select a feather to use. Show him how to slide the feather through the paint and use the feather like a paintbrush on his paper.



3. Encourage him to use as many colors as he likes and make whatever designs he wants. Ask him how painting with a feather is different than painting with a regular paintbrush. Is it easier or harder? Do the designs made with the feather look different than they would with a paintbrush?
4. When he's all done, set the painting aside to dry.

Let him pick a good spot to display his art, and have everyone guess what he used to create his unique painting.

Paint and Peel

By Sarah Lipoff



Tempera

This easy painting activity feels magical, especially when you use it for a secret message. Your child can hone her writing skills by using tape to spell out something special like her name, and then hide it with paint until it's ready for the special moment of reveal. Afterwards, she'll have a colorful sign or tag that comes to life thanks to negative space!



What Else Do You Need?

- White cardstock, or relatively thick white paper
- Pencil
- Scrap paper
- Masking tape
- Scissors
- Paintbrush
- Eraser



Let's Get Started!

1. Have your child practice writing her name, or whatever else she wants to write as large as she can on a sheet of scrap paper before starting on the sheet of white paper.
2. Once your child is feeling comfortable making large letters, she can do it on the sheet of paper, filling the entire sheet with the letters of her name and leaving space between each letter.
3. Now your child can use strips of tape to write out the letters of her name over the penciled letters.
4. With her favorite colors of tempera paint, she can paint all over the paper, creating a tie-dye look by mixing the colors!
5. Once the paper has dried, she can slowly and carefully peel away the tape, revealing what she has written. Offer your child an eraser to remove any of the pencil marks.

If your preschooler wants, this activity can be turned into a fun guessing game. Have her come up with a word and help her use tape to spell it out. Then she can give clues and have someone guess what she's written before she reveals her word.

Pasta Noodle Painting

By Beth Levin



Tempera

Your child might say “that’s amore” when creating art with one of the best Italian foods, pasta noodles!

What Else Do You Need?

- Variety of cooked pasta noodles (some ideas: linguini, wagon wheel, farfalle, and fusilli)
- White construction paper
- Paintbrushes
- Paper plates
- Newspaper

Let's Get Started!

1. Put newspaper down under white construction paper. This project could get a little messy! Lay out a few colors of paint on paper plates while you cook the pasta.
2. Once the pasta is cooked and has cooled, drain it on a paper towel for a minute or two so it's not too slimy!
3. Once the paper towel has absorbed some of the excess water, let your child take a noodle, dip it in the paint on the paper plate, and then apply it to the construction paper to create patterns. Your child may either lay the noodle flat to create a line of color, or roll it around to make a more varied pattern.
4. Repeat step #3 with different noodles and different paint colors. Put noodles in the trash after use so no one is tempted to eat one!
5. Another fun way to create pasta art is to use paintbrushes to paint colors on the construction paper first. Then give him the spaghetti noodles to place around the painting to create imprints on the painting. Let him experiment and have fun!
6. Once you've explored the shapes of spaghetti, you can try using other types of pasta in different shapes and thicknesses, like linguini, wagon wheel, farfalle, fusilli and ziti!

After the paint dries, you may want to frame your child's art with uncooked pasta noodle glued around the border. Go ahead and display it in the kitchen -- bravissimo!



Mix and Paint Different Color Shades

By Christina Richardson



Tempera

Have you ever tried painting a picture using colors of your own creation? In this art activity, kids do just that. They get a taste of science as they mix paint to create their very own shades. Then, they use their unique colors to paint their own special picture. As far as the paint goes, the primary colors will work just fine, but go ahead and include a few more if you want to create some more exotic colors.



What Else Do You Need?

- Plastic cups
- Assorted paintbrushes

Let's Get Started!

1. Place the materials in front of your child and tell her that today you're going to be experimenting with color mixing. She's going to mix up her own paint, then use her creations to paint a special picture.
2. Ask her if she can guess what color she'll make if she mixes red and blue together. Help her pour equal amounts of each color into the same cup, and then have her use the paintbrush to mix them together. What color is she making?
3. Split the new purple paint between three plastic cups, and set two aside. Tell her she can change the shade by adding in more red or blue. Have her pick which color she wants to add, then use another paintbrush to mix the paint together. Which shade does she like better?
4. Have her take another cup and adjust the shade as she pleases. Out of all three, which one is her favorite? Allow her to add more red or blue as she chooses.
5. If she wants to make more shades, give her more plastic cups, and let her experiment. She can use mostly red with just a drop of blue and see what happens, or the other way around.
6. When she's made all the shades she wants, give her a piece of paper and have her paint a picture using only the new shades she's mixed. How creative can she get?

When she's all done with this activity, don't forget to try it out with different colors. The more she experiments, the more she'll learn, and the fact that she's mixed her own paint makes the finished product extra special.

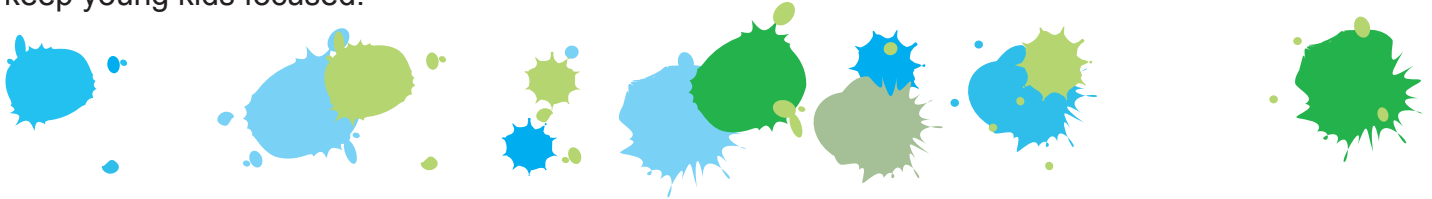
Make Smudge Monsters

By Reuben Maness



Tempera

Here's a simple art activity that's sure to bring lots of laughs along the way! Use wadded up cloth or sponges to make messy blotches with paint—then turn those blotches into crazy creatures with extra decorations. Once he's done, have him give his monsters names and encourage him to tell you stories about them. It's a great way to give a painting project just enough structure to keep young kids focused.



What Else Do You Need?

- Paper
- Old sponges or rags

Let's Get Started!

1. Have your child wet the sponges and squeeze out the water.
2. Encourage him to dip the rags into the paint—just a little bit will do it!
3. Press the sponge onto the paper and release, like pressing a stamp. You should get an interestingly-shaped smudge.
4. Make a few more smudges then give the “smudge art” 5-10 minutes to dry.
5. Then, it's time to turn those smudges into critters! Your child can draw or paint eyes, legs, feet, ears, and tails to add personality. How many different monsters can your child come up with?

For some extra fun, have him make a scene of smudge monsters. He can draw a family of smudge monsters having dinner, a smudge monster birthday party, or a smudge monster classroom scene! Encourage him to be creative and fun is sure to follow.

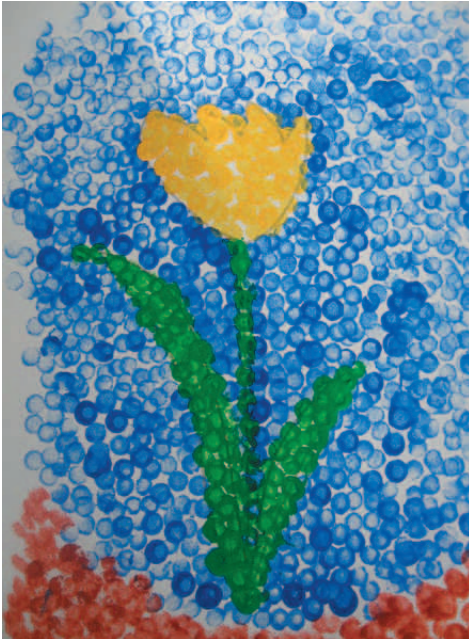
Pointillism Art

By Hannah Boyd



Tempera

If you've ever looked at an abstract painting in an art gallery and thought, "My kid could have done that!" you're not alone. But you've probably never strolled passed a Van Gogh or Seurat and thought the same thing. Well, don't underestimate your preschooler! This activity will introduce your child to a form of art called pointillism, which uses many small dots of primary colors to make a painting. It's fun to study because it's easy and challenging at the same time — your child will get to express her creative side as she learns about primary colors and different art forms.



What Else Do You Need?

- Newspaper
- Smock, apron, or old t-shirt
- Paper
- Pencil
- Q-tips, at least one for each color of paint
- Paper plate

Let's Get Started!

1. Use a pencil to sketch a simple drawing on a piece of paper. Some ideas could be a tree, a face, a house, etc.
2. Lay out the newspaper and have your child put on the smock to keep the mess at bay.
3. Help your child pour a little bit of each primary color of paint onto the paper plate, and have her stick a Q-tip into each color.
4. Using the Q-tips, invite your child to fill in the drawing by applying small dots of paint to the paper. Encourage her to stay inside the lines and use true-to-life colors (i.e. green leaves, blue sky, yellow sun, etc.) but if she can't hold back her creative side, it's no big deal.
5. When she fills the page, set it aside to dry.

Hang the painting on the wall or fridge and stand back. The dots of different colors should blend together and make the impression of an image. Even though your child only used primary colors, it might look like there are some other shades too.

Paint a Mural

By Erica Loop



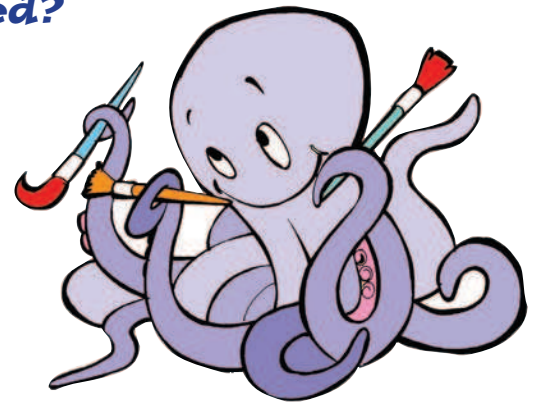
**Tempera
and
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A mural is a large scale design usually painted directly on a wall, often in a public space. You can find these unique works of art all across the country, from suburbs and school yards to inner cities and art galleries. Turn your home into a public art space by trying your hand at creating your own removable wall mural. This kid-directed design can be put up, taken down, or rearranged depending on your needs.



What Else Do You Need?

- Large piece of butcher or white wrapping paper
- Pencil
- Markers
- Paint brushes
- Tape



Let's Get Started!

1. Help your child decide on a theme: dinosaurs, outer space, the beach, or something else of his choosing. Once he has a topic, help him research it. Try searching for educational material on websites or at the library. Thumb through nonfiction picture books filled with vibrant photographs or illustrations, or even visit a local science or natural history museum.
2. Spread the paper on a large floor space. Invite him to draw a basic outline of the scene with pencils or markers. Have him draw the ground first so he knows which direction the mural goes.
3. Once he finishes sketching the scene, it's time to start painting. Since painting can get very messy, make sure your workspace is covered with newspaper or a drop cloth and your child is wearing a smock or play clothes. Encourage him to paint one section at a time, and allow drying time in between.
4. After the paint has dried completely, tape the mural up on a wall. Move the mural as desired from indoor spaces to outdoor walls.
5. Enjoy your new public art project!

This activity can be expanded to fit any theme. Ask your child to think of new and unique scenery to draw on the mural. Alternatively, try a more abstract mural creation. Explore shapes, patterns, colors, and lines as they mix together to form interesting images.



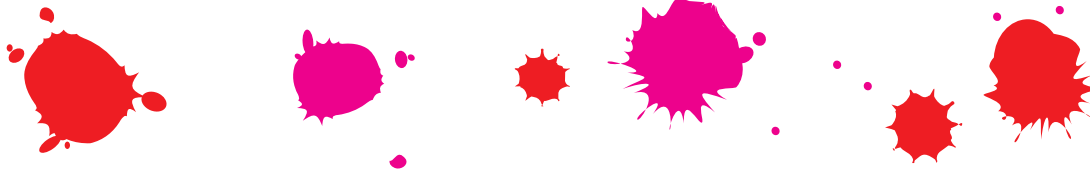
Ice Paint

By Christen Robinson



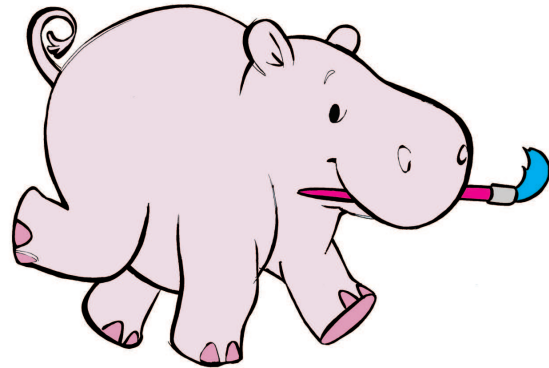
Tempera

On those especially hot summer days you can cool off with chilly ice paint! Kids love to swirl the melting paint over paper, creating beautiful designs. They'll practice their color recognition and counting skills while observing paint go from a liquid state to a solid state, then back to liquid again.



What Else Do You Need?

- Ice cube tray
- Craft sticks
- Paper
- Plastic wrap (optional)



Let's Get Started!

1. Help your child pour the paint into the ice cube tray. Let her count out how many cubes of each color she wants.
2. When she's done filling up the tray, have her put a craft stick into the middle of each paint cube. The sticks should be able to stand up on their own, but if they won't stay up, try covering the tray in plastic wrap. Then, poke the sticks through the wrap for extra stability.
3. Have her carefully place the ice cube tray in the freezer, and let it sit until the paint is frozen solid.
4. When the paint cubes are frozen, it's time to paint! Ask your child to choose a color, and help her pop the chosen paint cube out of the tray.
5. She can hold the craft stick and swirl the frozen paint cube over paper. As it melts, it'll leave a lovely trail of paint. Encourage her to use several different cubes to create her masterpiece.
6. As she paints, discuss the process of freezing. What happened to the paint when she put it in the freezer? What's happening to the paint when it's exposed to the warm air and paper? What does the paint feel like as it melts?

Ice paint is also a great tool in teaching your child about color mixing. Freeze only yellow and red paint cubes, and let your child discover what results from using those colors together. As they melt, the paints will magically mix into orange!

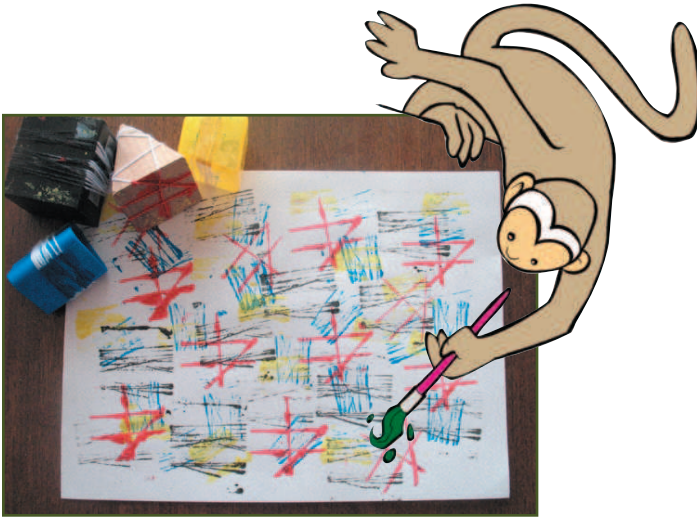
Create Line Design Prints

By Sarah Lipoff



Tempera and Homemade Paint

Line designs can be straight, curvy, zigzagged, or wavy. Teach your child how to create lots and lots of line designs by wrapping string around wooden blocks, and using them to create line-filled prints. Your young child can press the wrapped blocks onto plates filled with various colors of tempera and homemade paint. Challenge him to fill an entire paper with lines!



What Else Do You Need?

- Small boxes or wooden or plastic shapes
- String
- Tape
- Scissors
- Paper plates
- White paper

Let's Get Started!

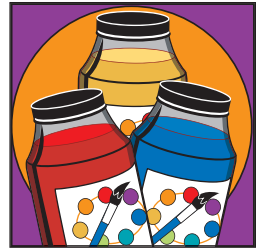


1. Look around your house for different types of lines with your child. Lots of things are made up of lines! Check out patterns on your furniture, designs on the curtains, and the siding of your house. Encourage him to think of words to describe all the different kinds of lines you find.
2. Next, help him find several blocks or small boxes around the house to use for creating his piece of art.
3. Provide him with lengths of string to use for wrapping the blocks. Tape one end to the block and then allow him to wrap the shape—a great way to boost those fine motor skills. Once the string has been used up, tape the other end to secure it in place.
4. Now, place a small amount of paint on the paper plates. Position a paper next to your child along with the wrapped shapes.
5. Invite him to press the string-wrapped shapes in the tempera paint, and then stamp them onto his paper to create a line design.
6. Let the line design creation dry.

Point out to your child how the tempera and homemade paints created different results. Use the finished artwork as wrapping paper, or for decorating the front of a handmade card!

Splatter Painting

By Hannah Boyd



Tempera

Splatter painting can be a lot of fun, but it requires a special machine. So what are your alternatives? Using marbles, tin foil, and some paint, you and your preschooler can create a homemade splatter paint “machine” that’s even more fun than the real thing!



What Else Do You Need?

- A rimmed baking sheet
- Tin foil
- Old t-shirt or apron
- White paper
- Marbles
- Small containers for the paint
- Plastic spoons



Let's Get Started!

1. Put the old t-shirt or apron on your child to use as a smock to protect her clothes from paint.
2. Help your child line the baking sheet in tin foil. Let her check for rips and tears so paint won't leak through!
3. Place a couple pieces of paper on the baking sheet, on top of the foil.
4. Let your child choose her favorite colors of paint and help her pour a little bit into a few separate containers.
5. Now here comes the fun part! Have your child plop a marble into each cup of paint and stir with a spoon to make sure each marble is completely covered in paint.
6. Use the spoon to fish out the marbles one at a time. Flip the spoon over and drop them onto the paper.
7. Tilt the tray back and forth and side to side so the marble slides over the paper, creating a paint trail that makes funky designs. Experiment with different colors.
8. Once the painting is finished let it dry.

She can make as many paintings as she wants. Once her works of art have dried you can hang her favorites up for all to see!

CORK STAMP ART

By Korey Marquez



Tempera

It may be summer now, but fall is right around the corner! Explore the changing seasons with your child by creating a cork-stamped masterpiece. With cork stamping, your budding Picasso can form leaves, flowers, rain, and other elements of nature, turning a blank canvas into an original work of art. This activity provides learning opportunities through sensory exploration and discussion about the seasons.



What Else Do You Need?

- Clean, dry corks in several different sizes
- Two sturdy sheets of 8 1/2" x 11" paper
- Markers

Let's Get Started!

1. Prepare the activity by setting out the corks and two sheets of paper on your child's workspace. Pour a small amount of paint into individual shallow containers for dipping.
2. Starting with summer, talk to your child about the weather and seasons. Ask him if he knows what type of weather is usually observed in the summertime
3. To provide some initial structure to the painting, help him draw some tree branches and flower stems.
4. As you talk, help him complete a visual portrayal of summertime by dipping the flat end of a cork lightly into the paint. He can then stamp the cork onto the paper to form leaves on the trees and flowers on the stems. As he gets the hang of it, he can use the cork to stamp additional items such as clouds, or rays of sun, using the markers to add detail if desired.
5. When your child has finished stamping images of summer, ask him the same questions about fall. On the second piece of paper, invite him to use the paint-dipped corks to stamp out elements of fall, such as leaves, different colors or swirls of wind, and maybe even some raindrops.

After he's finished, hang the two pieces of artwork side-by-side. You could also ask him if he wants to create cork-stamping artwork for winter and spring as well!

BUBBLE PAINTING

By Danielle Wood



Tempera

Want to create some really unusual paintings? With a small container of bubbles and a little paint, your kids can put soap suds to work, and make some beautiful prints to hang on their bedroom walls, too! Gather up the simple supplies and throw on some smocks. This project can get a bit messy, but preschoolers love to dip paper into bubbles and then watch them pop. And when the popping is done, voila! You've got a stunning work of art.



WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED?

- Small bowls (one for each color)
- 1 cup of bubble soap
- Plastic drinking straw
- Teaspoon measuring spoon
- Several pieces of white computer paper, cut in half
- Newspaper
- Whisk

LET'S GET STARTED!

1. Divide the cup of bubble soap in half, putting 1/2 cup in each of the small bowls.
2. Pour one teaspoon of tempera paint in each of the bowls, and then whisk the bubble solution and the paint together until it's combined. Let your child help!
3. Give your child the straw and ask her to blow on the straw into the bowl until she gets a pile of colored bubbles. Have her do the same for the second bowl.
4. Gently lay one of the pieces of paper over a bowl of bubbles, so the bubbles stick, then lift it carefully, laying it flat on the newspaper to dry, bubble side up.
5. Wait and watch. When the bubbles pop, the paint will retain a perfect outline of each bubble's original shape, leaving beautiful images of bubbledom!

Preschoolers love the anticipation of waiting for the bubbles to break and they'll likely be up for another round. This art project offers a great excuse to experiment with color combining. For the next print, let your child dip her paper in the first bowl, then the second. Ask what she thinks will happen when the colors mix. Then let her try it with different color combinations. It's an instant hands-on color science lesson!

Paint Like Pollock

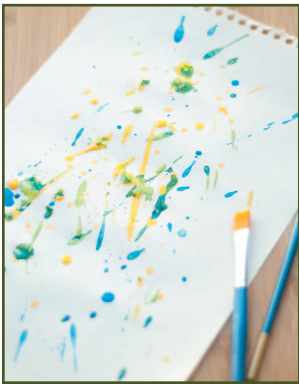
By Julie Williams



Tempera and Homemade Paint

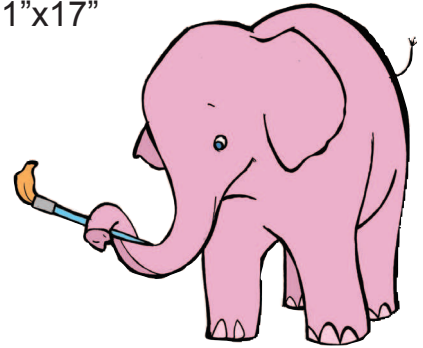
In the second half of the twentieth century, Jackson Pollock and fellow modernist painters revolutionized our idea of what a painting could be. On giant canvases, Pollock experimented with “random” drops and splatters of paint and other materials. In other words, he built a career on art and color expression that any preschooler would know a thing or two about. Pollock’s work offers wonderful inspiration for young artists exploring the wild and exciting world of form and color.

This activity is great to do outside, as things are guaranteed to get a little messy.



What Else Do You Need?

- Flat cardboard tray with a prominent rim around the edges, such as the box on the bottom of a 24-pack of soda or bottled water
- Piece of white construction paper, at least 11”x17”
- Masking tape
- Small stones and pebbles
- Eyedropper



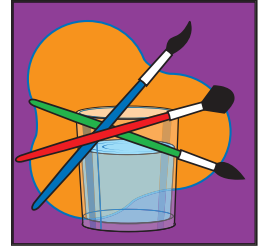
Let's Get Started!

1. Put the construction paper in the flat tray/box and tape it down lightly along the top and bottom edges.
2. Squirt 2-3 small pools, or one 6” line, of the tempera paint on the paper in one color. Then place the little stones on the paper and have your kid move them around by shaking the box from side to side. Where does the paint go? How does it move?
3. Repeat this process using each of the other colors, and invite your child to pay attention to what happens. Which colors blend? Which seem to lie on top of one another? What surprising patterns emerge?
4. Now have him use the eyedropper to squirt the homemade paint creating little designs whenever he wants.
5. After letting the piece dry, make a construction paper frame for the masterpiece, and invite your child to study it again. What title does this work deserve? Give him a marker and a strip of paper, and help him write it out and glue it to the bottom of the frame.

Painting activities work especially well when your child does them regularly. As soon-to-be writers, children need to be able not only to see but also feel how they can move their hands to enact the shapes and lines that they see in their minds’ eye. With activities like this art exploration project, they can “read” those shapes and lines and make meaning from them. But even without these technical benefits, it’s hard to go wrong when you mix paint, marbles, and a preschooler together!

MYSTERY PAINTING

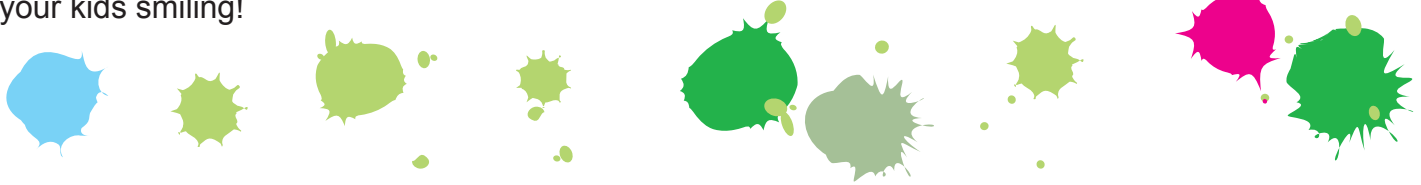
By MaryAnn F. Kohl



Watercolors

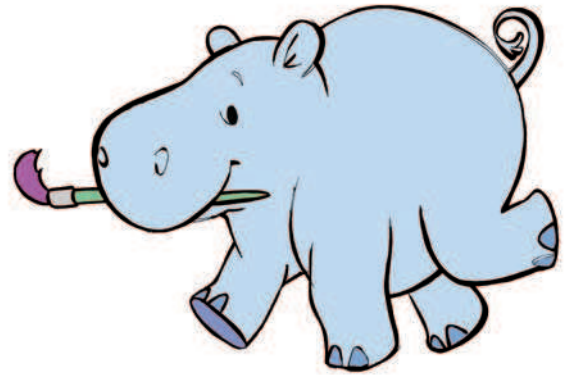
What kid doesn't love a little magic? While preschool kids may not be able to make flowers appear out of thin air, or pull a rabbit out of an empty hat, they *can* do magic ... with this easy art project.

Kids paint an "invisible" picture that can only be revealed when covered with watercolor paints. Want to add some writing practice? Have kids practice their letters, or, if they're a bit older, they can extend this activity by writing secret messages to each other. This fun and magical project that will surely leave your kids smiling!



WHAT ELSE DO YOU NEED?

- 4 tablespoons baking soda
- 4 tablespoons water
- Small bowl
- Q-tip or cotton ball
- Sheet of white paper
- Paint brush



LET'S GET STARTED!

1. Thoroughly mix the baking soda with the water in the bowl.
2. Lay out a piece of paper and hand your child a Q-tip. Dip the Q-tip in the mixture and paint an "invisible" picture on the white paper.
3. Set the painting aside until it's completely dry.
4. Use the watercolors to paint over the entire paper; this will reveal the "invisible" picture!

This painting is great to give as a gift or send in a letter, as long as you include directions on how to view the mystery message.



Great job!

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