

Lesson: Experimenting with Color

Artform: Visual Art

Skill Level: Low

Teaching Artist: Sally Alexandres

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Color comparisons:

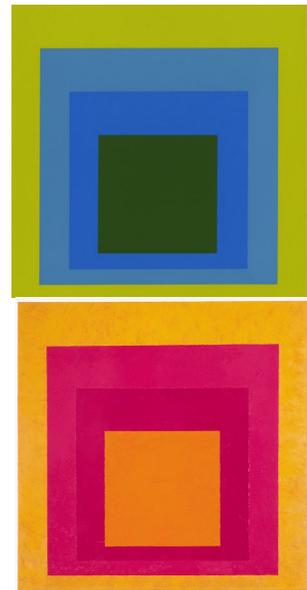
- Student will compare the visual effects of putting different colors adjacent to each other.
- They will learn about the work of Joseph Albers and his studies in color theory

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Joseph Albers was a painter and teacher. He was interested in the interaction of colors, of how colors changed their appearance depending on the colors next to them.

He made a series of paintings called “Homage to a Square” in which he painted a square with a smaller square inside, then a smaller one inside that. Each square was painted a different color. So, for example the green color of a green square inside of a red square looks different than a green square inside a blue square.

He put examples in a book called *Interaction of Color* and wrote about his theories of color. This has been an important book for artists and designers.



MATERIALS

- White drawing paper
- Crayons

ACTIVITIES

1 - Draw a square about 3 x 3 inches. Make another square inside of it. Color the outside square one color and the inside square a different color.

2 - Make another square with another inside. Color in the one square with a different color and the inside one with a color you used in the first square.

When you color try to make the coloring dark and solid rather than soft.

3 - You may repeat this many times, repeating some of the colors you used before but putting them with a different color each time. You may choose the colors yourself but you might want to begin with the suggestions below.

The drawn squares do not have to have straight lines: you can draw them without rulers.

Square set 1.	A. green.	B. Red
Square set 2.	A. Blue	B. Green
Square set 3.	A. Yellow	B. Red
Square set 4.	A. Purple	B. Yellow.

4 - Which squares look brightest? Which colors seem to pop out more when you look at the page? Does the red used in the different squares look like the same red color? Which colors do you think look best together? Make more experiments with different colors.

5 – Which group of colors do you like best? Can you color a picture with just those colors?

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR INCLUDING ALL CHILDREN

It might be helpful for some if you draw the squares for them. You could also lay out the colors for them for each set of the squares or you choose one color and let them choose the one to go with it. Or, for some students it might be helpful to color one of the squares and let the students do the inside one or vice versa.

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