

GREAT ART IDEAS FOR PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

ABSTRACTION ACTION: INSPIRED BY MELINDA HARPER'S WORKS

YEAR 1–3

OVERVIEW

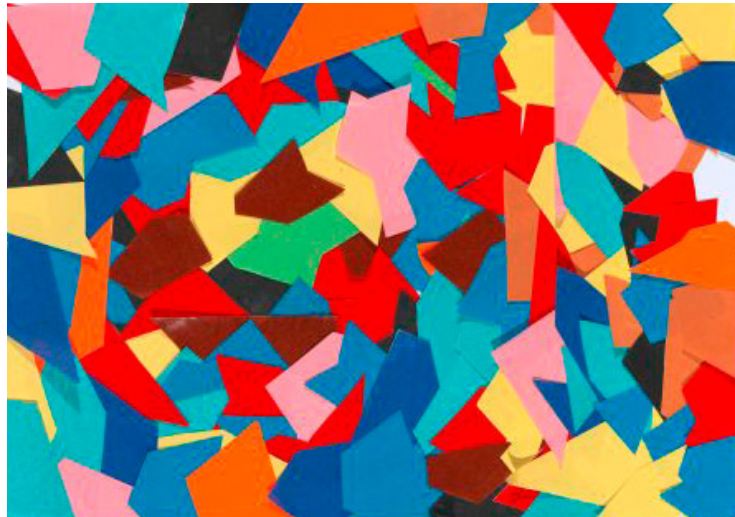
In this activity, students enhance their perceptual, analytical and descriptive skills as they explore examples of abstract art and create an abstract composition using a collage of coloured shapes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Recognise non-representational, or abstract, art and interpret its subject matter based on observations and imagination.
- Describe how shape and colour can create mood and movement.
- Plan and create a collage that utilises colour and shape families to create an abstract design.
- Share their work with their classmates, describing and identifying the expressive choices they made in their artwork.

STUDENT EXAMPLE



RELATED ARTWORKS



Melinda Harper

Untitled 1999

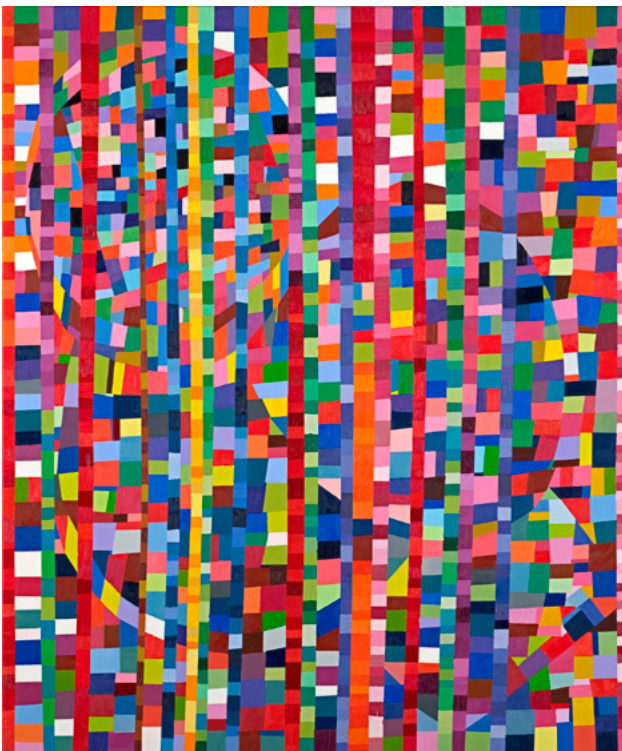
oil on canvas

122.2 x 102.2 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Purchased, 1999

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Melinda Harper

Untitled 1994

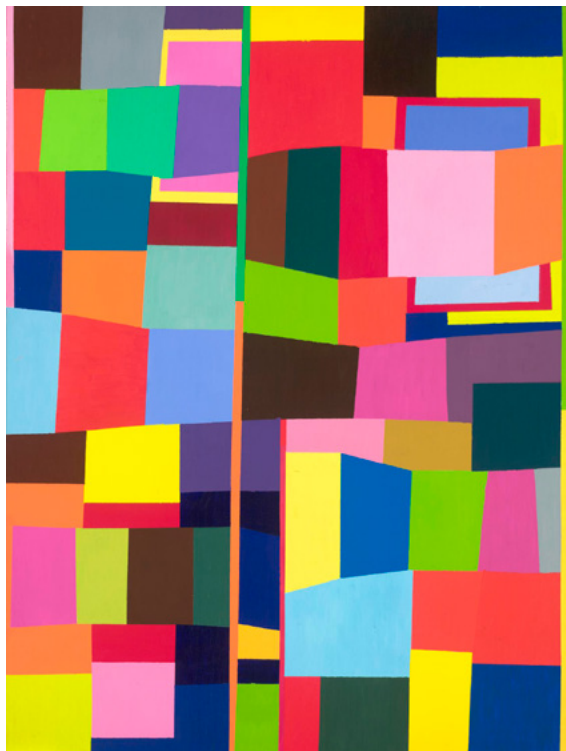
oil on canvas

122.2 x 91.6 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Margaret Stewart Endowment, 1994

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Melinda Harper

Untitled 2000

oil on canvas

183.0 x 152.3 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Presented through the NGV Foundation by Robert Gould,

Founder Benefactor, 2004

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DISCUSS

Look at the related works of art with students and explain that abstract art does not represent recognisable places, people or things. In abstract art, artists use elements like line, texture, colour, shape and tone to create moods and effects.

- Describe the colours in each of the works – are they bright or dull?
- Which shape families are used – are they rounded, geometric, sharp, smooth, long, thin or angular? How are the shapes used – are they layered, bunched together or spread out?
- Which mood do the shapes and colours create?
Bright colours and round shapes might make the picture look lively, friendly and happy. Shapes bunched together might make the work feel busy.
- What do the works make you think about and why? For example, they might remind you of a patchwork blanket or a busy freeway.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- Cartridge paper
- Coloured papers
- Scissors
- Glue

CREATE

Students design and create their work of art using the following steps:

1. Choose a shape family such as rounded shapes, angular shapes or pointed shapes.
2. Cut shapes from different coloured paper and play with arrangements on the page. *If students are not comfortable with scissors, shapes can be pre-cut and students can select shapes that match their shape family. Experiment with arrangements of colour and ways to lay out the different shapes to create different effects.*
3. Glue the shapes into place, partially overlapping each one until the page is full and none of the background is showing.
4. Give the work a descriptive title.

PRESENT & REFLECT

Students share their work with a partner:

- Describe the shapes and colours you have chosen.
- What is the title of your work? Why did you call it that?

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