

## Three ways to 'paint' a poem 3: Masking tape painting

*Literacy/Art*

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To use words as a starting point for painting
- To use painting to explore mood rather than exact representation
- To understand abstract forms of expression
- To link words to images.

### SKILLS TARGETED

- Interpreting text
- Expressing mood through painting
- Experimentation
- Art and Design.

### RESOURCES

- Light-coloured sugar paper
- Low-tack masking tape that pulls off easily
- Coloured inks, powder or poster paints
- Examples of Vorticist paintings, eg *The Ypres Salient at Night* by Paul Nash
- Vorticist drawings by Rae Smith from War Horse website

### SUGGESTED TIME SCALE

- One session

### WHAT THE CHILDREN NEED TO KNOW

- That this way of working creates surprises as they can't immediately see how the picture will turn out

#### Step 1

Show the children some examples of Vorticist paintings by Nash, Bomberg and Leger; and the designs by Rae Smith which point to this style

#### Step 2

Read the extracts from Wilfred Owen's poem *Anthem for Doomed Youth (On 3 ways to paint a poem1)* and look at the paintings.

Discuss with the children the idea that neither the poet nor the painters create accurate reports or descriptions of war in the trenches – instead they create an 'impression' which is, in many ways, more powerful.

Discuss with the class what range of colours could represent earth (eg, shades of brown), sky (grey to yellow) or figures (black silhouettes). Explain that collage works best if you stick to a limited palette of colours.

#### Step 3

Give each child a sheet of sugar paper. The children can use masking tape to create their landscapes with straight lines and zig-zag

shapes on the paper, in the style of the Vorticists.

The lines can represent any part of the landscape or object within it, eg, fire, barricades, sunlight

#### Step 4

Remind the children to think about the proportions of sky and land they want to use

#### Step 5

Once the children have made enough lines using tape, they can begin to add colour. They can forget about the masking tape and paint over it. Remind the class to work with a limited palette for best effect

#### Step 6

Before the paint has completely dried, the children can peel away the masking tape to reveal fresh paper underneath.

#### Step 7

Give everyone one vivid contrasting/complementary colour, which they can now introduce if they wish. Children can use this colour to fill in the unpainted areas – bearing in mind what the original lines represented.

### SUCCESS CRITERIA

- Children will represent abstract landscapes using straight lines
- They will explore the link between words and pictures
- They will understand that there is an element of surprise to their paintings
- They will work with the surprise shapes they get when the tape is removed
- They will work with a limited palette
- They will use contrasting colour on their paintings.

War Horse Learning

War Horse drawings by  
Rae Smith

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warhorseonstage.com  
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