

Teaching Fauvism from a Fishbowl

Norma Stache

My second-grade students were interested and ready to attempt to create the illusion of the three-dimensional form on a two-dimensional surface. I wanted to create a painting/art history lesson that would include this skill. I also wanted students to recognize and use pattern, practice using bright colors and outlining their work to make it stand out, and learn how to make tints and shades. I searched for an artist/movement that could do all of this. The Fauves did it all. And of course, my artist of choice was the father of Fauvism, Henri Matisse.

Introduction and Practice

Students began by learning how to overlap two of the same shapes and draw lines to connect them to give the illusion of a three-dimensional form. For example, two squares can be placed so that one is lower and to the right or left of the other. Lines are then drawn to connect them and to give the illusion of a cube. Two circles can be used this way to draw a cylinder; we tried this with triangles and hearts as well.

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Creating a Fishbowl Painting

At the next class, students drew three flattened ovals on their sides and connected them with straight lines. This was the fishbowl. I demonstrated some different ways to add a table underneath the fishbowl to “ground” the object, then students added a table.

We talked next about different kinds of fish and the water in which they lived. I asked them to draw three or more fish in their bowls. When students completed this, I introduced Henri Matisse and the Fauves. They recognized Matisse’s

“Fishbowl” immediately because their drawings were similar in content. They next added paint to their fishbowl drawings. The results would have made any Fauvist proud!

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NATIONAL STANDARD

Students explore and understand perspective content for works of art.

WEB LINK

www.art.com/gallery/id--b4714/gold-fish-posters.htm



Jade Lewellyn, Out of the Fishbowl, tempera paint, grade two.