THE MAGIC OF MARKERS

Using cheap markers in a sophisticated way!

Quote of the day: **"All colors are the friends of their neighbors and the lovers of their opposites".**

Marc Chagall

Artist of the day: **Sinclair Stratton** http://sinclairstratton.com

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=1vQk5ZeIzI0

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=IjrereHEd0Q

IN CLASS LESSON PLAN

ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES

Contour line, shape, color, proportion

GOAL: Students will be introduced to gridding and enlarging an image. They will learn to layer transparent colors to create new colors using markers and make background washes with watercolor. Also introducing painter Sinclair Stratton.

MATERIALS:

5 x 7 photos of animals (provided), pencils, rulers, extra fine black sharpies, cheap sets of markers such as Crayola brand, white sulfite paper 10 x 14",(or even better, smooth watercolor paper) ,inexpensive watercolors, water, cups, large flat head brushes

Step 1: **Open File: Sinclair Stratton**
I recommend printing this, copying enough for each table to have one, then laminating them.

Animals appeal to everyone at every age, so I chose this subject matter and artists that use animals in their work to teach layering of marker and if you wish to color the background, teach students a watercolor wash. I chose Sinclair Stratton for **her unrealistic use of color** as well as her **amazing compositions** of the animals. Her YouTube videos are worth showing to your class – it's important for them to see artists making a living at what they love.

Step 2: **Open File: Animal photos**
There are 25 photos. Print out all animals and let students choose. You may want to print more of certain photos incase multiple students want to do the same animal. I took these at the zoo in Houston so I don't claim to be a great photographer ☺. Some have fences in them. That could be a cool element to include for a more advanced drawing student.

Step 3: Make black and white copies of all photos you like. Students will need both color and black/white photos for reference. Black and white is easier to see value changes.

Step 4: **Open File: Table Instructions.** Students will now begin to apply color. Detailed instructions will be in front of them. Print enough so each table can have a set. Read them to your students and if they are confused, go step by step together as a class. I won't repeat those steps in the lesson plan since they are in the attached file: Table Instructions.

Step 5: Students need to draw a 1" grid directly onto the black and white copy of their photo. Label the grid.

Step 6: Students need to draw a 2" grid onto their sheet of 10 x 14" paper **LIGHTLY!!!! I can't emphasize this enough. The grid will be erased but if pressure is applied with the pencil it will leave the grid embedded in the paper. Be prepared for Lazy Louis to draw his grid hard with a dull pencil and inaccurate. Politely hand him another piece of paper and tell him to redo his grid.** ☺

Step 7: Students can begin to color with layering markers. Emphasize to go SLOW and use the side of the marker most of the time.

Step 8: Background: Ask students what type of color scheme they want. Complimentary color for the background or another analogous color? Remember, the emphasis is on the animal, so the background needs to compliment it, not over take it.

If Speedy Steve gets finished before everyone else, challenge him with doing a drawing of his choosing small to fit on a piece of letter size paper folded in half and have him make a card for someone special.

GRADING: This is my suggesting for grading this project but grade as you wish.

Open File: Grading Rubric: Print out and make copies. I would post one up in the room while introducing project so students are aware of expectations. Modify as you wish.

CRITIQUE:

Have all students put their finished pieces up on the wall using scotch tape rolled up and stuck on the back – just enough to hold it there for critique.

Don't skip critique! Once the students see how it helps the design process, they look forward to it! I bring candy and make it a big celebration! You can do this at the midpoint of more complicated projects. Put it into your own words, but this is how I approach it:

> "Critiques are hard because as artists we are married to our work. Our work comes from within us and is an outward extension of us so putting it out there for others to comment on is an uncomfortable place to be….at first. But in order to move forward and improve our art journey we must divorce ourselves from our art and look at it objectively. This is always uncomfortable the first time you do it. But soon you will crave input and constructive criticism. What is my piece missing? Why does this part work? Why not? Look at your list of art words and use them – this will help you talk about art. It's not enough to say you think something is "cool" or "gross" or "yellow". If you like something, WHY do you like it? If you don't like something, ……..WHY?
>
> **For example, you are looking for Right on Ricky to say:**
>
> **"I really like this tiger. I keep looking at it because it has really detailed contour lines that capture the whiskers, wiggly spots and eyes. She really did a nice job of layering colors to make new ones – it doesn't look like a 4th grader colored it"**

THE ELEMENTS AND PRINCIPLES WORD LIST

Open File: Elements and Principles Word List Print several, mount them on a colored paper, and laminate them. Keep them accessible at all times so you can use for all critiques. I spread them out on the table where the sculptures are or tape on a wall if we are looking at art against a wall – wherever students can have multiple points to look at it.

OUT OF CLASS LESSON

This is assignment is optional but I feel this connects your classroom to what is going on in the contemporary art world. It makes your students work relevant and exposes them to artists who paint animals using unrealistic colors and / or in an unusual way.

Open File: OUT OF CLASS LESSON ASSIGNMENT 1

I put the assignment and the example up in my classroom by the door or somewhere students can see it to show them, remind them, etc.

TEACHER BONUS

While assigning a written assignment in art will be met with grumping, rioting, and possibly cries of "what the____?! This is art! This is supposed to be my easy class!" Hang tough, because those sweet cherubs of yours who are calling you names under their breath, will not only, God forbid, learn something, but they will expose YOU to artists and processes you never would have stumbled across yourself, thus expanding your knowledge base… and the only price you pay is putting up with the whining. ☺

TEACHER TIP!!!

Keep a see through plastic tub large enough to hold a full set of photos, and laminated images and instructions so next year everything will be together. Even keep an extra print out of the lesson plan in the tub too.

TEACHER CHALLENGE!!!

Go out to your local zoo and photograph some animals – mornings are best because they are usually out eating, but you can call and find out for your zoo. Animals are so funny – enjoy your morning being amused by them – make it a family outing too if you want.