

## Mondrian

### Digital workshop: Mondrian's Forest

#### Teachers' Notes

<p><b>Summary</b></p>	<p>This is a process-led workshop which will let students explore and discover the creative techniques behind Mondrian's abstract painting. They will learn about his life, his artwork, and his inspiration. Students will get to implement what they learn in their own experimental artworks. They will also get an opportunity to develop their visual literacy by speaking about and identifying abstract art.</p>
<p><b>How the digital workshop will work</b></p>	<p>This workshop will be broadcast directly into the classroom via Zoom from the artist's studio. We will send out a Zoom link ahead of the workshop.</p> <p>The workshop has been designed to use simple materials that should already be in the classroom. <b>We ask that the teacher ensures that all materials are prepped and set up ahead of the workshop.</b></p> <p><b>As the artist will not be there in person and it is vital to its success that the teacher co-facilitates. They will be the eyes and ears on the ground. This could include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Repeating questions or comments shared by the students to the Artist. Particularly if the microphone doesn't pick up everyone's voice. This will be important at the beginning and end of the session.</li> <li>- Helping the artist with students' names and selecting students to speak so everyone has a turn throughout the workshop.</li> <li>- Provide feedback and encouragement to the students on the work they make.</li> <li>- Managing the noise and concentration level.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Materials/ equipment required</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Good internet connection</li> <li>- Projector/interactive whiteboard/screen or similar to display Zoom session in classroom</li> <li>- Speakers/microphone so class can communicate with artist</li> <li>- Camera (so artist can see class &amp; their work)</li> </ul> <p>NB – a laptop could be used for the speakers, microphone &amp; camera <b>Please check all equipment is working ahead of the workshop</b></p> <p><u>Per Student</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 1 A4 Black Paper (or a dark colour if at home)</li> <li>- 1 A4 White Paper</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scissors (or tear)</li> <li>- Glue (tape)</li> <li>- Colours: Blue, Yellow, Red (Markers or Crayons ideal)</li> </ul>
<b>Covid-19 Considerations</b>	<p>This workshop has been designed so that students can engage individually, not sharing resources and from their desk.</p> <p>In the event of school closure the workshop is transferable to an individual home setting with flexibility in materials to what is available at home.</p> <p>In this case we would require the teacher to set up and host the Zoom Meeting, sending the link to students and the artist. This would ensure data protection and child protection guidelines are met.</p>
<b>Year groups suitable for</b>	1-6th class
<b>Session itinerary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Warm-up, Tree Stretch:</b> A little guided stretch standing or sitting in place.</li> <li>- <b>Expectation:</b> Discuss what students expect to learn and write on virtual whiteboard.</li> <li>- <b>Who was Mondrian?</b> Presentation to discuss and learn about Mondrian</li> <li>- <b>Mondrian's Style:</b> Track how Mondrian developed his style through painting trees.</li> <li>- <b>Activity 1:</b> Using black paper, cut or tear the page into lines. Begin constructing the shape of a tree on your table.</li> <li>- <b>Activity 2:</b> Notice the shapes made by your tree. Now simplify! Adjust or take away the branches of your tree to make it simpler. Once you are happy glue onto white page.</li> <li>- <b>Activity 3:</b> Using three colours draw simple shapes (square, rectangle) between the lines of your simplified tree. Think of what things these abstract shapes could mean?</li> <li>- <b>Feedback:</b> Verbal and show of hands. Use visual map of activities to remind students and discuss what they liked/disliked, learnt, would change.</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<p>Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop <b>knowledge</b> about the life and work of Mondrian.</li> <li>- Learn about <b>abstract painting theory:</b> primary colours, line quality, shape.</li> <li>- Learn how to <b>experiment</b> and make <b>adaptations</b> to their artworks.</li> <li>- Learn how to <b>identify and think</b> about abstract art and concepts.</li> </ul>

	- Gain <b>well-being and enjoyment</b> from experimenting without any specified product outcomes.
<b>Themes explored</b>	Nature, colour, line, process of making art, mindfulness, wellbeing.
<b>Methods</b>	We will use discussion, powerpoint presentation, zoom demonstration, collage, observation, and drawing to discuss and learn about these themes.
<b>Curriculum links</b>	<b>Visual arts:</b> drawing, construction, awareness of line, shape, colour and texture. <b>SPHE:</b> breathing exercises, curiosity and celebration of difference. <b>History/English:</b> biography of a person. <b>English:</b> developing vocabulary, visual literacy. <b>Science:</b> colour theory.
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<b>Knowledge:</b> The life of Mondrian, his artworks, and his methodology. <b>Skills:</b> learn how to make abstract art, how to make a composition, how to develop, find inspiration and experiment, improve observation, improve visual literacy. <b>Attitudes:</b> Experimental, open minded, playfulness. <b>Inspiration:</b> Noticing everyday things.
<b>Before your workshop – background information</b>	<b>Piet Mondrian</b> Born: 1872 in Utrecht, Netherlands Died: 1944, New York, USA Began his career in the Netherlands as a <b>realism</b> painter, painting <b>landscapes</b> , nature, and buildings. As he got older he was inspired by artists like the <b>cubist</b> painter <b>Picasso</b> to experiment with shape and colour. It wasn't until he was almost 50 years old that he started making his <b>abstract</b> paintings that he is known for. He became interested in making images as simple as possible. His style became known for its lines, <b>geometric</b> shapes, and <b>primary</b> colours. He was one of the first artists to paint like this and became part of a group called <b>De Stijl</b> who all tried to paint with simple colour and lines. They wrote about and shared their ideas in a magazine also called <i>De Stijl</i> .  He is one of the most famous artists of that time and his images inspired musicians, architects, designers and fashion designers many years after he died. His career shows how it is important for artists to be inspired by each other and share ideas.  This <b>exhibition</b> in the National Gallery of Ireland is the first exhibition of Mondrian's work in Ireland displayed alongside other artists that he inspired and inspired him. Many of the artworks are on loan from the Kunstmuseum, The Hague, Netherlands, which has 280 drawings and paintings by the artist.

	<p><b><u>Glossary</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Realism:</b> is a style of painting trying to make things look like real life.</li> <li>- <b>Landscape:</b> is a painting of an outdoor space. It could be a field, mountain, forest or river. Sometimes it has people but they are usually small.</li> <li>- <b>Picasso:</b> a French Artist who became famous for Cubist painting.</li> <li>- <b>Cubism:</b> a style of painting which plays with view point, shape, and colour.</li> <li>- <b>Abstract:</b> a simplified version of an image in its shape, colour or line.</li> <li>- <b>Geometric:</b> shapes and patterns made up of simple flat lines.</li> <li>- <b>Primary colours:</b> a group of colours which can make any other colour by mixing (Blue, Red, Yellow).</li> <li>- <b>De Stijl:</b> a group of artists and designers in the Netherlands who made abstract art.</li> <li>- <b>Exhibition:</b> when a gallery or artist gather artworks for visitors to look at.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Before your workshop</b> – suggested activities</p>	<p><b>Look up Mondrian’s studio: how did he make his space inspiring? How can you make your classroom inspiring? Tate Liverpool had an exhibition about his studio in 2014. Find their resource for teachers here: <a href="https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/mondrian-and-his-studios">https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/mondrian-and-his-studios</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum links: visual arts, history</li> <li>- Learning outcomes: Design appreciation, learning about how people lived in different time periods.</li> </ul> <p><b>Look at the places where Mondrian lived: Paris (1911), Leiden (1917), London (1938), New York (1940). Find images of how they looked back then and compare them today. What has changed? What do you think inspired Mondrian in these places? What historical events may have been happening at those times? Use this website as an aid: <a href="https://worldhistoryproject.org/topics/piet-mondrian">https://worldhistoryproject.org/topics/piet-mondrian</a></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum links: Geography, History, English</li> <li>Learning outcomes: build knowledge and connections between the past and present. Learn how to research the life of a person.</li> </ul>
<p><b>After your workshop</b> – suggested activities</p>	<p><b>See if you can use the same process to abstract other things: an animal, a building, a person. Try a different medium.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curriculum links: Visual Arts, painting, construction, drawing.</li> <li>- Learning outcomes: Developing visual literacy and skill in artistic process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Have a discussion about colour and emotion How do certain colours make you feel? Do another collage thinking about emotion and colour. Find more here:</b></p>

<https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/feeling-through-colors/>

- Curriculum links: Visual art, English, SPHE
- Learning outcomes: Visual Literacy, emotional awareness intelligence, confidence in self-expression.

**Look up Mondrian's artwork *Broadway Boogie Woogie*, 1942-43. Mondrian became friends with Jazz Pianist Thelonius Monk. Listen to Monk's music and see what connections you can make between his music and Mondrian's painting.**

- **Listen to *Rhythm-a-ning* here:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wwsL96nZMt4>
- Curriculum links: Visual arts, music
- Learning outcomes: understand another inspiration to Mondrian, understand different forms of creativity, have fun thinking about the connections between music and image.