

# Smarty Pants Magazine for Kids Original Art Technique - Coloring and Enhancing Color Sheets

It is a social reality, that in our *Age of Information*, school systems are increasingly focusing on preparing students for global competition. Educational agencies are creating standards that strictly emphasize the teaching of Math and Language Arts.

Now, this is not necessarily a bad thing - except that in their commendable zeal to prepare students to be successful in their vocational pursuits, they are dropping Fine Arts programs, including Music, Drama, Art, and Dance.

## “Let Those Kids Color!” The Psychology of Coloring

Consider the following benefits of ‘free art’ coloring in childhood development. This is what is really happening when it looks like they are “just coloring.”

**Improves Motor Skills.** The tension of gripping the crayon and the motions of coloring strengthens little fingers, wrists, and hands for writing. Coloring improves dexterity.

**Encourages Creativity.** Fosters an appreciation for visual differences. Sorting through and choosing the perfect color and deciding where to apply results in a design that is uniquely their own.

**Improves Focus.** ‘Eye-hand’ coordination is an early and ongoing skill set. Coloring specific areas cultivates concentration. Coloring provides practice in self-regulation and attention to a task. Sharpening crayons involves coordination of ‘eye-hand motions.

**Color Awareness and Recognition.** Names of primary colors and subtle hues. For example, current color box hues of green include: Asparagus, Inch Worm, Electric Lime, Sea Green, Forest Green, and Granny Smith Apple!

**Invokes the Senses.** Besides exciting the visual sense, crayons leave an indelible memory of childhood through their waxy smell. The feel of a crayon in hand prompts a feeling of confidence and anticipation that this is something I can do.” And, although, some very young children will taste the crayon, it’s not recommended!

**Math-Art.** Introduces lines, shapes, patterns, comparative sizes, and perspective.

## **Social. Relationships. Awareness of Others.**

In a free Art Center, children coloring together creates an uninhibited, non-threatening, and bonding atmosphere to talk to each other. Children will communicate positively in comparing their coloring, asking opinions of colors, praise each other's coloring, and generally bridge all gaps of human relationships as they engage collectively in the simple Art of Coloring.

### **Enhancing the Color Sheet - Using a Color Sheet as a Teaching Tool**

#### **Introduction**

*Enhance: to improve or augment, especially in effectiveness, value, or attractiveness. You can adapt a blackline coloring sheet to your curriculum agendas.*

#### **“Oh, the Many Ways You Can Texture a Color Sheet!”**

1. Let the children color the sheet
2. Have a “sample ” crafted example
3. Give children craft items appropriate to the picture
4. Glue on a stockboard or manila folder backing for support, if texture is heavy.

#### **List of Craft Items: Enhancing the Color Sheet with Texture**

Application involves “Fine Motor” skills for dexterity and “Tactile” *sense of feel* experiences, (see the textured Squirrel pdf and the textured Elephant pdf for other examples).

#### **Writing/Drawing/Coloring:**

- Crayons
- Markers
- Chalk
- Color pencils.

#### **Paints:**

- Watercolors
- Temperas: smooth, long/short strokes
- “Dab Paint”: press up and down with paintbrush tip for a textured effects.
- Mix colors for shades and hues (white and a drop of red for pink for ‘pig’).

- Mix red and yellow for orange for a 'pumpkin'.

### **Papers:**

- Copy paper
- Color construction paper, (tear/cut)
- Tagboard /stock board//manilla folders
- Colored tissue paper (cut/tear)
- Paper towels/ Kleenex/toilet paper (tear/wad in balls to apply)
- Crepe paper
- Newspaper
- Wax paper
- Recycled magazines

### **Nature items (Take a Nature Walk):**

- Leaves
- Sticks/twigs
- Fallen tree bark
- Sand
- Dirt
- Small rocks
- Acorns
- Seeds

### **Textiles:**

- Yarn
- Craft felt color materials
- Scraps of wood
- Burlap
- Wool

### **Three Dimensional:**

- Aluminum foil
- Chenille stems
- Scrap wood pieces
- Popsicle/craft sticks

### **Miscellaneous:**

- String
- Beads
- Sponge

- Glitter
- “Pom-pom” balls
- Cotton balls (pull apart to apply)
- Googly eyes
- Craft foam
- Sequins

## **You and Children’s Imagination!**

### **Enhancing the Color Sheet with the “Scribble-Scrabble” Technique**

(see pdf: [Water](#), for the presentation of how to “[Scribble-Scrabble](#)”)

Works for covering **large** coloring areas (sky, grass, large animal blacklines).

## **Enhancing the Color Sheet by Using it in Group Discussion**

*“A Picture is worth a thousand words.”*

(see pdf: [Pirate Ship Picture and worksheets](#) for sample questions for verbal response)

### **Materials:**

1. Copy of a Color Sheet
2. Crayons

**Classroom Setting:** Large or small group activity

**Preparation:** Study the picture for possibilities in your current curriculum “theme”

**Procedure:** Use the color picture for vocabulary and comprehension

**Ask Questions:** ‘What’s happening in the picture?’

**Thinking Skills:** Encourage picture-word association by saying, “point to the ‘shark in the water’, ‘point to the shark on the sail’. This is a good age-related activity for the very young child.

**Ask Questions in True/False Answer Format:** “Can the shark be a pet?”

1. Variation: Cut a set of blue squares and yellow squares. Blue = True and Yellow = False.
2. Give each child a set. Or cut the squares and write Letters ‘T’ and ‘F’, or words.

Rather than verbalizing answer, children hold up the appropriate square.

Color together or put copies in Art Center

### **Enhancing the Color Sheet with Text Labeling**

1. ([see pdf](#): Pirate Ship Labeled Color Sheet)
2. ([see pdf](#): Squirrel Labeled Color Sheet)

Create vocabulary worksheets by adding text and a line beneath on an original color sheet. Children can copy print under the labeled word. Create a color code for children to color by instructions.

### **Enhancing the Color Sheet by Drawing Details**

*(Animals, People, Clothes)*

(see pdf Tiger Without Stripes)

Draw stripes on blank tigers, zebras. Draw spots on cheetahs, giraffes, and cows. Draw designs on clothes. Add features to people.

### **DO IT YOUR WAY!**

Good Teachers have always “enhanced” their materials because teachers are smart, creative, incredibly resourceful, adaptive, flexible, patient, compassionate, and generally the most amazing people in the world.

We hope you will enjoy these suggestions to your curriculum and we believe that your children will benefit from the presentation of these creative activities.

### **Texturing the Pig**

*(see Smiling Pig pdf Coloring Sheet)*

#### **Preparation:**

1. Print pdf of Smiling Pig
2. Run Copies

**Classroom Setting:** Art-Small Groups

#### **Materials:**

- White and Red tempera paint
- Mixing bowl
- Paintbrushes

- Paint aprons
- Water and Dirt (can give children baggies and go to the playground to get dirt)
- 6 individual paint cups for paint
- 6 individual paint cups for 'mud'

## Process with Children

1. Mix red with white to get a 'pink' (teacher mixes or individual mixing)
2. Paint the Pig
3. Let dry before 'painting with 'mud'

*Hint: take a paper towel and lay on paint and press to absorb for quicker drying.*

## Mix Mud

Let children spread mud with fingers on the bottom of the page for 'pigpen.'

### **Conclusion**

Congratulations, for letting your kids make so much mess and have so much fun!

**Smarty Pants Magazine for Kids** believe in the sound principles behind art and coloring. We will continue to strive to bring your children and students creative techniques to further their development in this area.

Check out [Curriculum Corner](#) for FREE pdfs on unique methods to inspire and engage your budding artists.

