

# ABSTRACT ART - Abstract art is art that does not attempt to represent an accurate depiction of a visual reality but instead use shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect

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Joan Miró, [Painting](#) , 1927

Automatism (c.1920): Inspired by Freud's idea of free association (the desire to reveal the unconscious mind), artists such as Joan Miro and Max Ernst created automatic paintings. This free way of creating art led to simplified organic shapes, which Miro developed into his own personal sign language.

Strictly speaking, the word abstract means to separate or withdraw something from something else. The term can be applied to art that is based on an object, figure or landscape, where forms have been simplified or schematised.

It is also applied to art that uses forms, such as geometric shapes or [gestural](#) marks, which have no source at all in an external visual reality. Some artists of this 'pure' abstraction have preferred terms such as [concrete art](#) or [non-objective art](#), but in practice the word abstract is used across the board and the distinction between the two is not always obvious. Abstract art is often seen as carrying a moral dimension, in that it can be seen to stand for virtues such as order, purity, simplicity and spirituality.

Since the early 1900s, abstract art has formed a central stream of [modern art](#)



Mark Rothko, [Red on Maroon](#) 1959

Colour field painting (1940–1950s): Another form of abstract expressionism, the colour field painters produced simple compositions made out of large soft-edged areas of colour with no obvious focus of attention, with the aim of producing a meditational response in the viewer.



Jackson Pollock, [Yellow Islands](#), 1952

Action painting (1940–1950s): The action painter abstract expressionists were directly influenced by automatism. Pollock channelled this into producing gestural, improvised 'drip paintings' by placing his canvas on the ground and pouring paint onto it from the can or trailing it from the brush or a stick.



# WASSILY KANDINSKY KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER






## Biography

- Wassily Kandinsky was a Russian painter.
- He is considered to be one of the leading figures in creating abstract art (art that is not intended to show images of our everyday world).
- Kandinsky was a keen experimenter, and his style and techniques changed throughout his life.
- He is most famous for works such as *On White II*, *Composition VII* and *Farbstudie Quadrate*.
- Kandinsky was fascinated by colour, and was also interested in geometry. Vibrant colours and geometrical shapes can therefore be seen throughout his work.
- He only started painting studies aged around 30.



-Kandinsky lived between 1866 and 1944. He was born in Moscow, Russia. However, he later moved to France and became a French citizen.




## Significant Works

<b>On White II (1923)</b>		-In <i>On White II</i> , Kandinsky explores the features of life and death. -Life is shown as white, alongside several colours, showing the vibrancy and possibilities of life. Death is presented as black, cutting through the white, to show how death can destroy the joy of life.
<b>Composition VII (1913)</b>		- <i>Composition VII</i> is often considered to be the most important abstract painting of all time. - It is a huge painting, measuring 200 x 300cm. Kandinsky worked on 30 preliminary sketches for this painting. -The whole piece is purely abstract – there are no representational meanings. Kandinsky considered it his greatest composition.
<b>Farbstudie Quadrate (1913)</b>		-The name of the painting means 'Squares with Concentric Circles.' -This drawing is a study of how different colour combinations are viewed by the observer. Kandinsky believed that colours could combine to create sounds and music.

## Key Vocabulary

- Kandinsky
- Russia
- Moscow
- Colour
- Music
- Abstract
- Composition
- Constructivism
- Expressionism
- On White II
- Composition VII
- Farbstudie Quadrate
- Concentric Circles

## Styles and Techniques

<b>Abstract Art</b>	-Abstract art is a type of modern art which does not aim to represent images of our everyday world. -Abstract art has colours, shapes and lines, but these are not intended to show objects or living things. -Abstract art encourages imagination and thinking 'outside of the box.' -Kandinsky was one of the first to create purely abstract art. Although the paintings may look random, these paintings used colours to express emotions.	
<b>Constructivism</b>	-Constructivism began around 1915, and was a specific type of abstract art. Some of Kandinsky's work could be described as constructivist. -Constructivist artists believed that art should reflect the modern industrial world. -The main idea of constructivism is that art should be carefully 'constructed' rather than just painted.	
<b>Expressionism</b>	-Expressionism was another art movement that began in the early 1900s. Some of Kandinsky's work (especially his later work) could be described as expressionist. -Expressionist art tries to show emotions and feelings rather than the realities of the physical world. -To show emotions, the subjects are often distorted or exaggerated, and colours are vivid and shocking.	

## How do I create art like Kandinsky?

**Step 1:** Turn on your music! Abstract painting is about hearing music in colours and seeing colours in music!

**Step 2:** Split your A3 page into six equal squares (creating a 3x2 grid).

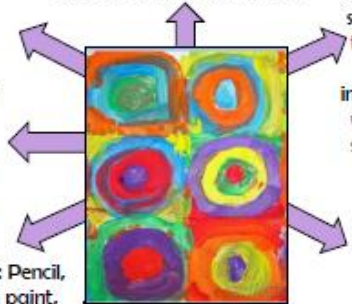
**Step 3:** In each square, draw in pencil an outer circle (the same size in each square), then middle and inner circles.

**Step 4:** Paint your circles! Try to avoid using the same colour twice in any square. Paint from the outside in. Try carefully to stay inside the lines – this will stop you from smudging colours!

**Step 5:** Leave your painting to dry. After it has dried, add a second coat to any areas in which you have gone over the lines!

**Things you'll need:** Pencil, A3 drawing paper, paint, paint brushes, paper towels, jar with water.

*A child's concentric circle painting.*



## Kandinsky Timeline

16 <sup>th</sup> December 1866 Kandinsky is born in Moscow, Russia.	1886 He studies law at Moscow University.	1893-1896 Associate professor at the law faculty. Later quit to paint full time.	1903-1908 He travelled Europe with his acquaintance Gabriela.	1909 Co-forms 'The New Group of Artists.'	1911 Makes the argument that creativity lives 'outside of the conscious mind.'	1913 Creates <i>Composition VII</i> .	1923 Creates <i>On White II</i> .	1923-1933 Takes an interest in geometric forms in his artwork.	1934-1944 Lives in Paris, France.	1891 Creates <i>Sky Blue</i> .	13 <sup>th</sup> December 1944 Kandinsky dies in Neuilly-sur-Seine, France.
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# Painting Techniques

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## PAINTING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

**WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?**

**TEMPERA** • non-permanent; dries chalky and matte; use on paper and wood

**ACRYLIC** • Permanent; dries glossy; use on paper, wood, fabric, plastic, flexible surfaces

**WHICH BRUSH IS RIGHT?**

USE BRUSHES THAT ARE ORGANIZED BY SIZE - THEY ARE COLOR CODED WITH TAPE ON THE CANS AND BRUSH HANDLES - DO NOT USE WHITE WATERCOLOR BRUSH

### TECHNIQUES:

**FILL IN SHAPE**

**OUTLINE SHAPE**

**DABBING**  
dots paint on

**LIGHT STRAKING**  
straks overlap to blend

**BLENDING**  
2 colors gradually blend

**SPRAFFITO**  
use tooth to scratch paint into surface

**OVER PAINTING**  
bottom layer dry fast

**DRY BRUSH** dry brush

**SCUMBING** scrub brush

**STREAKING & BLENDING**

**TEXTURES**

**WET-ON-WET**

<p>Wet on wet</p>	<p>color bleed</p>	<p>dry brush</p>	<p>graded wash</p>	<p>wet on dry</p>
<p>Salt</p>	<p>splitter</p>	<p>finger print</p>	<p>cotton ball</p>	<p>Q-tip</p>
<p>oil pastel resist</p>	<p>crayon resist</p>	<p>masking tape and stickers</p>	<p>masking fluid</p>	<p>dripping</p>
<p>plastic wrap</p>	<p>cork</p>	<p>sand paper</p>	<p>sponge</p>	<p>Lines</p>

# Working with air drying clay

## Air drying clay:

- Manmade, using fibres, paper etc
- Dries in the air and can be painted using any normal paints.
- Is more fragile and easily breakable.
- Can't be washed or put in a dishwasher - porous

## Normal clay:

- Comes from the earth
- Is fired in a kiln when dry
- Glazes are used to decorate
- Is strong and hard
- Can be washed or put in dishwasher – non-porous



*Small Family* by Beate Kuhn 1988

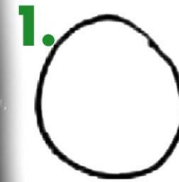


*Porcelain faces* by Johnson Tsang 2016

## Key words and terms

Pinch pot	A 3D shape made out of clay by pinching it.
Slip	A running clay used to help join clay together.
Score	Marks scratched on the clay to join it together.
Score and slip	The method to join to pieces of clay together.
Plastic	Wet clay that can be sculpted.
Leather hard	Clay that has dried out a little.
Bone dry	Clay that is completely dry and can be painted or fired.
Sgraffito	Scratching a design onto a surface to show a colour underneath.
Relief	To build out pattern on a surface.

## How To Make a Pinch Pot Monster



**Step 1:**  
Roll the clay into a ball. Do not poke and play with it as this will cause the clay begin to crack and dry out.



**Step 2:**  
Gently push your thumb into the centre of the ball, going almost to the bottom. Do not go through the bottom.



A good pinch pot has even sides that are about 1cm thick or a little bit less.



**Step 3:**  
Using your thumb on the inside and your fingers on the outside, gently pinch the sides of the ball to widen the pot.

If the sides are too thin, they will not support the features you will add and will collapse. During the drying stage, thin side will dry too quickly and crack. Thick sides will take a very long time to dry.



Ceramicist: Dean DeRosso