



ACTION JACKSON

by
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Jackson Pollock was an artist known for his paint-swirled and paint-splattered canvases. How wonderful to have the courage of one's convictions and create something so free! Our children can make their own paint-splattered "canvases" with paints, a wire mesh screen, and a toothbrush. We can incorporate math into art by splattering the paint over geometric shapes laid on the paper before splattering.

To transition to this activity, read the book to your students and after reading it, show several more examples of Pollock's work if possible. Remark on the splatter aspects of his work. Tell your students that they will make similar pictures and will incorporate geometric shapes.

MATERIALS: 10 - 12 toothbrushes, various shades of tempera paint, three 9" square wire mesh screens per paint color (bind edges with tape or mount in cardboard), white construction paper (12" x 12") one per child, assorted geometric shapes of varying sizes three per student.

ACTIVITY: Review simple shapes with your students (square, circle, triangle, rectangle, and pentagon) and allow each student to choose the different shapes. Give them time to practice arranging their shapes in a design pleasing to them. Demonstrate the technique of rubbing a toothbrush clipped briefly in paint over a wire mesh screen, and using it to splatter paint on the paper below. Show how a shape placed on the paper before splattering will leave its outline on the paper. (You may wish to get into positive and negative space.) You may wish to have your students place all three shapes on the paper and splatter, or place one - splatter, place another - splatter, etc. Working in groups of 4 - 5 have the students arrange their shapes on their papers and splatter with first one color, and then a second. If time permits, use three colors and add shapes one at a time. Splattering with 2 - 3 different colors will create a pleasing effect. After all students are finished, and the paintings have dried, have each child explain which three shapes she/he chose. If desired, mount "canvases" on a complementary color and make a bulletin board entitled "The Shapes of Jackson Pollock".

STANDARDS:

BSL: 1.3, 1.5, 1.13, 2.1, 3.2, 6.2, 9.3, 12.5

NCTM: 9a, 9b, 9c, 9e

SCS: B1 H5

Greenberg, Jan, and Sandra Jordan. Action Jackson. Brookfield, CT: Roaring Brook Press. c2002. ISBN#0-7613-1682-5 Imagines Jackson Pollock at work during the creation of one of his paint-swirled and spattered canvases.

Spring, Justin. The Essential Jackson Pollock. NY: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., c1998. ISBN#0-8109-589-0 A book not just about Pollock but about the essentials of the movement known as Abstract Impressionism, so that one can understand both Pollock and the art of his time. [Use with Action Jackson.]