

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITY: COLOR WHEEL & GRADIENTS

Activity Time: Approx. 3 hours

First Used in CCCC 2D Design SP-2014

**Step 1 – Circles:** On a sheet of white paper or canvas paper make one large circle whose diameter covers nearly the width of the paper. Make another circle 2-3 inches smaller centered within this circle. Then make one more small circle in the center of these two larger circles. This last circle should be at least 1 inch in diameter. Label this sheet *Color Wheel*.

**Step 2 – Divide:** The two larger circles form a donut shaped area. With lines divide this donut area into 12 equal sections just like a clock.

**Step 3 – Primary Colors:** Paint the 12:00 section pure Yellow, paint the 4:00 section pure Blue and the 8:00 section pure Red.

**Step 4 – Secondary Colors:** Fill the 2:00 section with a medium green by mixing your pure Yellow and pure Blue together. Fill the 6:00 section with a medium violet (purple) by mixing your pure Blue and pure Red together. Fill the 10:00 section with a medium Orange by mixing your pure Red and pure Yellow together.

**Step 5 – Intermediate Colors:** Fill the 1:00 section with a mixed yellow-green. Fill the 3:00 section with a mixed green-blue. Fill the 5:00 section with a mixed blue-violet. Fill the 7:00 section with a mixed violet-red. Fill the 9:00 section with a mixed red-orange. Fill the 11:00 section with a mixed orange-yellow.

**Step 5 – Neutral Center:** Fill the small center circle with a more-or-less equal mixture of all your primary and secondary colors. This color should appear as a *neutral* grey or black. Neutral here means that the mixed color should not appear to be closer to any primary or secondary color, so if you look at it and can say that it is a red-grey or a yellow-grey add the complements of those colors until it neutralizes.

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**Step 6 – Rectangles:** For each of these steps you will need to use a ruler to draw out a certain number of long 1 inch rectangles that will go side by side and stretch the length of the paper you are working on with a reasonable amount of space in between them.

**Step 7 – Shades & Tints:** Draw out 3 rectangles on a sheet. In the first of these make a smooth mixed gradient from black on one end to yellow in the middle and then white on the other end. In the next two rectangles repeat this step replacing yellow with blue and then red. Label this sheet as *Primary Color Tints & Shades*.

**Step 8 – Primary Combinations:** On a new sheet draw 3 rectangles. In the first of these make a smooth mixed gradient from pure Yellow to pure Blue. In the next rectangle repeat this with Blue to Red, and in the last rectangle repeat this step with Red to Yellow. Label this sheet as *Primary Color Mixtures*.

**Step 9 – Secondary Combinations:** On a new sheet draw 3 rectangles. In the first of these make a smooth mixed gradient from mixed Green to mixed Purple. In the next rectangle repeat this with mixed Purple to mixed Orange, and in the last rectangle repeat this step with mixed Orange to mixed Green. Label this sheet *Secondary Color Mixtures*.

**Step 10 – Primary Complements:** On a new sheet draw 3 rectangles. In the first of these make a smooth mixed gradient from pure Yellow to mixed Violet. In the next rectangle repeat this with pure Blue to mixed Orange, and in the last rectangle repeat this step with pure Red to mixed Green. Each of these rectangles should approach a neutral black near its center. Label this sheet *Primary Color Complements*.

**Step 11 – Mixed Black Tints:** On a new sheet draw 4 rectangles. In the first of these make a smooth mixed gradient from pure Black (out of the tube) to pure White. Repeat this in the next rectangle but replace the pure Black with the neutral Black that you obtained by mixing Yellow and Violet. Repeat this in the next rectangle with the neutral Black that you obtained by mixing Red and Green. Repeat this in the last rectangle with the neutral Black that you obtained by mixing Blue and Orange. Label this sheet *Mixed Black Tints*.