

Initial Activity (20 minutes)

- Colour is very important in our lives. Different colours gives us different feelings.

The colours we wear may affect us, the way we decorate our room or home may influence us. At one time superstition said it was unlucky to wear green; in a room blue may give a cool feel whilst peach may give a warm feel. People are thought to gamble more when under a red light—Las Vegas is the city of red neon. Warm colours seem closer to viewers than cool colours.

- Use a painting of the Nativity, approximately 15th century style.

Talk about the use of blue as worn by the Virgin Mary. This blue was made from lapis lazuli, a valuable gemstone, which makes the colour ultra-marine when ground down. No-one else was allowed to have this colour so it gave a huge significance to the Virgin Mary.

Gold on the picture, from the Byzantine era, i.e. AD 330-1453, or on icons [(eligious pictures) represents 'not of this world'. A very valuable item 'of this world', gold, represents a very valuable item 'not of this world.'

- Look at the painting 'The Scream' by Eduard Munch. He is from the expressionism school of art —colour is important, rounded shapes are used, there are no hard lines. The painting reflects a time of great sadness in Munch's life.
- Pablo Picasso painted 'Weeping Woman', a portrait of one of his mistresses. She is crying, highlighted in white, hurt probably by the artist himself. The yellows and greens are fighting, the red is weary, the purple is sinister. It appears that he wants to 'mutilate' his sitter. He needs to express his power.
- National flags have symbolism or meaning, expressed through one or more of seven basic colours. They follow the basic rules of heraldry, a system of designs from the middle ages. Popular stories often explain the colour in a flag, nations with a common history sometimes use the same colours.

Development (15 minutes)

- In pairs, using small pieces of paper, shade a colour in one corner. What does this represent today? Does red symbolise anger? Review in groups, discuss as a class.

Extension (20 minutes)

- Play music, preferably quiet music e.g. Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony or Debussy.
- Allow pupils to express with colour—paint preferably —any emotions or feelings that arise. Say that they may be asked at the end to explain the choice of colour, shape etc. It may be possible to do this in pencil but possibly this would not be as effective. Discuss as appropriate.