

Lesson Plan: Bushfire

Class: _____ **Teacher:** _____ **Date:** _____

Easy Peasy Level:

All levels

Lesson Focus:



- Natural Disasters: bushfires / forest fires
- Painting: expressionism - using colour and the way that we apply paint to express our feelings

Evidence of Learning:

By completing this lesson, the student:

- Is able to use the way that they apply paint as an expression of their feelings
- Is able to apply paint in a given way using his or her fingers.
- Is able to identify the way in which colours can be used to represent feelings or emotions.

Description:

The recent Australian bushfires have been devastating. So many people, property, animals and their habitats have been affected or lost. Sometimes these things are hard to talk about and expressing our feelings with our art can help. In this artwork we create a painting of a terrifying fire scene. We think about the fear and despair that people would have felt and we show this by the way that we use paint in our painting.

Easy Peasy Tips:

- You will need two sessions for this artwork. One to paint the background and one to paint the burnt outline of the building and tree once the background is dry.
- Really try hard to imagine what you would be feeling in this situation. Try to put these feelings into how you move the paint with your fingers on the page.

For The Teacher:

So many students and people in Australia have been affected by these devastating fires. The need to treat this topic with sensitivity is a must and this lesson would need to be tailored to the age and experiences of those students in your class.



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Other points to remember:

- Finger painting is obviously a very messy but worthwhile experience. Have in mind a well thought out clean up plan so that students know what to do with their paint covered fingers and hands.
- This activity would be a great end of day activity as you would then have space on the student's desks for the artworks to dry overnight.
- Allow more capable students the freedom of drawing their own landscape over the flames. For some teachers this could be a little scary but the individuality of the artworks would be well worth it.
- Talk with your class about the idea of expressionism. This means that when an artist paints, he or she uses their feelings to help apply the paint or colour. For example, an artist might use sharp, jagged lines or reds and black to show that they are angry or scared.

You will need:

- White paper
- Paint: yellows, oranges, reds and black. Poster paints or acrylic paints will work best.
- Black oil pastels or crayons or permanent markers
- Paint brushes
- Newspaper or table cover to protect work space
- Paint shirts or aprons
- Space to store paintings while drying

Creating your artwork:

1. **Background:** Organise your workspace, paper and paint. Try to find lots of different shades of yellow, orange and red paint.
2. Start with yellow. Dunk your fingers in the paint and then begin painting the flames. Paint in long vertical strokes, imagining the terrifying fire tearing through the landscape. Overlap the strokes but also leave some space between them for the other colours.
3. Now begin using orange. Add more fingers so that you can move and swirl your fingers to show how scary the flames would be. During the fire, the flames were spread by huge winds causing the fires to spread quickly.
4. Use red last to complete your flames. Try not to mix your paint into one big orange mess. Try to leave some flames yellow, some flames orange and some red. This will help to add to the effect we're after of creating scary flames. Being a good artist is all about making decisions and knowing when to stop. If we go too far, we can ruin our work.
5. Finish off the background by making sure you have covered all white spaces. Once your flames are complete, set your painting aside to dry.



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6. **Foreground:** In our artwork, the black burnt landscape is close to the person viewing the scene. This part of a painting is called the foreground. Once your flames are dry, begin the foreground by drawing a black irregular line from one side of the page to the other as shown. You can use a black oil pastel, crayon or felt marker the choice is up to you.
7. On one side of the page draw the outline of a burnt building as shown. Make it nice and big and think about how the fire may have caused part of the building to tumble.
8. On the other side of the page draw a tall tree stump. Begin thin at the top and get thicker at the base where it touches the ground.
9. Now add branches. Think of the letter 'Y'. Draw your branches in a diagonal direction from the trunk.
10. Repeat this on each of the branches by adding smaller branches to the larger ones. Don't worry if yours isn't perfect as the tree would have been burnt badly in the fire.
11. Add a fence as shown. Remember to use thin lines on the fence to keep your painting in scale. This means that the fence is the right size compared to the house and tree.
12. Colour the ground and building black. Here you have the option of painting it black, or colouring it using your oil pastel, crayon or marker.
13. Your artwork is now complete.

What do you like about your artwork? What would you do differently next time?

Teacher Evaluation / Comment:



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