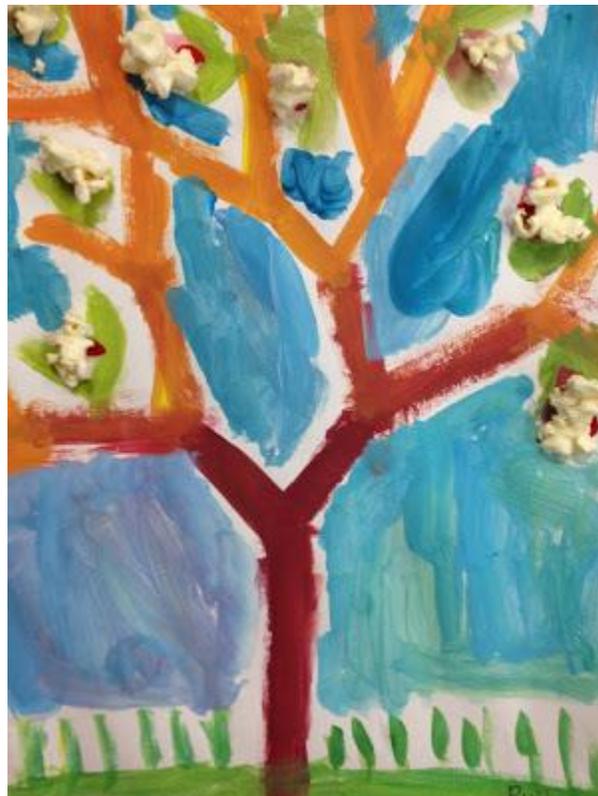




ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing

Blossoming Pop Corn Tree

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Cheryl Trowbridge
www.teachkidsart.net



Objectives:

The participants will:

1. Explore nature to use as the inspiration for their art
2. Be introduced to the art elements of lines and color
3. Explore mixed-media art
4. Create their own art suitable for framing

Audience:

The “Blossoming Pop Corn Tree” lesson reinforces color-mixing skills and teaches a basic technique for drawing/painting trees. Adding popcorn also gives the opportunity to talk about the concept of “mixed media”. This lesson is suitable for elementary grades to adults.

Learning Opportunity:

The oldest ears of popcorn ever found were discovered in the Bat Cave of west central New Mexico in 1948 and 1950 and are about 4,000 years old. Popcorn was integral to early 16th century Aztec Indian ceremonies. In 1519, Cortes got his first sight of popcorn when he invaded Mexico and came into contact with the Aztecs. Popcorn was an important food for the Aztec Indians, who also used popcorn as decoration for ceremonial headdresses, necklaces and ornaments on statues of their gods.

Popcorn was very popular from the 1890’s until the Great Depression. Street vendors used to follow crowds around, pushing steam or gas-powered poppers through fairs, parks and expositions. During the Depression, popcorn at 5 or 10 cents a bag was one of the few luxuries down-and-out families could afford. During World War II, sugar was sent overseas for U.S. troops which meant there wasn't much sugar left in the States to make candy. Thanks to this unusual situation, Americans increased their popcorn consumption three fold.

Popcorn went into a slump during the early 1950s when television became popular. Attendance at movie theaters dropped and, with it, popcorn consumption. When the public began eating popcorn at home, the new relationship between television and popcorn led to a resurgence in popularity. Americans today consume 16 billion quarts of popped popcorn each year. The average American eats about 51 quarts.

Source: <http://www.popcorn.org/EncyclopediaPopcornica>

Supplies/Materials:

- 9x12 white construction paper
- Tempera paint: red, yellow, blue (*we use turquoise*) and white
- Paper plates for palette and for glue (*I cut glue plates into quarters.*)
- #8–10 watercolor brush
- Water
- Glue or glue guns

Class Instructions:

1. First, I showed students photos I had taken of trees near our school, with new leaves sprouting and fluffy blossoms that looked like popcorn! I told them to be sure to look for these trees on their way home from school and to point them out to their families and friends!
2. Next, we mixed the primaries (red, yellow and blue) to make brown, and we painted a tall “Y” in the middle of our paper to form the trunk and first two branches.



3. Then, we added a “V” to the end of each branch, and kept repeating that pattern until we went off the top and sides of the paper.
4. From there, we mixed blue and yellow to make green and painted small leaves sprouting from the branches. We also painted some grass across the bottom of the paper.



5. Then we mixed white with a tiny bit of red to paint a pink blossom on each cluster of leaves.



6. Never wanting to use a color straight from the bottle, we mixed our blue with a little white to paint the sky in each of our *negative spaces* (another concept you can teach with this project!).
7. Finally, you can proclaim your painting finished, or go on to add a piece of popcorn on each blossom. To add popcorn, I gave each student a small handful of popcorn and a little glue on a paper plate. (*Students were told that they could have their very own cup of popcorn when they were finished if they didn't eat any while they were working.*) Simply dip the popcorn, one piece at a time, in the glue and place on your paper. Make sure the

paintings stay flat until they have a chance to dry! Then, wash your hands and enjoy your popcorn treat — delayed gratification!



I think these paintings are lovely with or without the popcorn, but my guess is that the kids will vote for adding the popcorn!

Please visit <http://www.teachkidsart.net/blossoming-popcorn-trees/> to view this lesson in its entirety.

*Special thanks to **Cheryl Trowbridge** for sharing a wealth of information and resources and ideas on her excellent website www.teachkidsart.net ! Cheryl has her art education credentials and has been teaching art to kids for over 20 years. She is inspired by watching children of all ages discover their ability to be creative. Her passion is to make successful art lessons accessible to help share the joy of art with all the kids in our lives. Visit Sheryl's on-line store <https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Teach-Kids-Art> to purchase a variety of resources for helping kids create art.*

If you have used this activity, we'd love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website www.hildegardcenter.org .

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