

The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse

In this book a child paints a blue horse. Then, with growing confidence, the young artist joyfully paints a series of other animals in bold, unrealistic colors and forms.

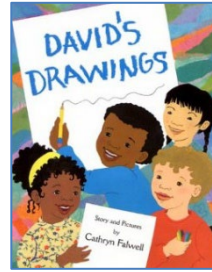
Activity: Choose one of the animals in the book and make up a story about it. How did it become that color? Try color

mixing using pipettes, watered-down paint, and empty water bottles. Mix 2 colors at a time and shake shake shake!

Activity: Create your own zoo of unique animals. A zebra can have polka dots! A hippo can have red stripes! The possibilities are endless. Think about what other features are important to identify an animal other than its colors.

Activity: Eric Carle used a technique called collage to make his pictures. Let's collage our own blue horse. Collect buttons, ribbons, papers, and other glueable items in shades of blue. Fill in the outline of a horse.

Activity: Set up an Artist's Workshop modeled after Writer's Workshops. We know that school children write best when they have opportunities to write frequently on topics of their own choosing. Time will tell if this works for young artists too! Set up an area with a wide variety of art tools in a quiet space. This area is for self-directed artwork. The rules are simple: Respect the artist at work, respect the art materials.



David's Drawings

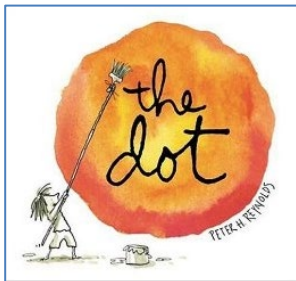
In this story, we get to know David, a shy boy who likes to draw. We learn that drawing can be a satisfying solitary activity but also a path to new friendships.

Activity: Share ideas about how you can make a class picture in a cooperative way. Should everyone be drawing on one piece of paper at the same time? If you think the sky should be blue and someone else thinks it should be pink, what can you do? After you finish your group picture, display it in the classroom.

Activity: Show the children the picture of David looking at the tree in the story. Notice how still he is; how focused. When artists pick something to draw, it's called their subject. Go outside and pick a subject. Look at it very carefully. Describe 3 things about your subject. You can stay outside and draw your picture or go inside and use your memory to draw a picture of the subject you selected.

Activity: Trees have lots of parts. How many can you name? What do you see in the classroom that was made from a tree? What can you make from the parts of a tree (e.g., leaves, seeds, twigs)? Display your tree creations as a special exhibit. Invite families to take a tour of the exhibit.

The Dot



The story starts with a child who declares, "I just can't draw", and soon finds herself on a journey of self-expression, artistic experimentation, and success.

Activity: Go on a dot hunt. Look for big dots, small dots, dots on

people, dots on things, dots on food, bumpy dots, flat dots, any dots!

Activity: Prepare a collection of dots (different sizes, colors, and textures). Invite children to select one dot and use it to create a picture.

Activity: Make 2 columns on chart paper with the headings I Can't/I Can. Talk about how the child in this story was feeling when she said, "I just can't draw." Invite each child to think about something they *can't* do and something they can do and record it on the chart. Brainstorm ideas of how to move something from the *I can't* column to the *I can* column.

Activity: Vashti learned to explore with her art materials. She mixed colors; she used different size paper, and innovative drawing tools. Collect materials from a dollar store or from contributions and open a Crazy Art Tool Center. Fill it with sponges, kitchen tools, toothbrushes, scrub brushes, etc.



I Ain't Gonna Paint No More!

Take a deep breath and know it's ok that we won't hear perfect English in this book. However, we will see some perfectly good fun that all starts with a little paint.

Activity: This little girl likes to paint everywhere including on ceilings! Let's pretend we're painting on a ceiling. Tape paper to the underside of a classroom table. To manage this activity, it's important to use a thicker paint that will not be too drippy. Let children take turns laying on their backs and painting like Michelangelo!

Activity: Do you remember when the little girl in the story says, "I ain't complete til I paint my _____?" What do you think it feels like to paint your feet? Will the paint feel cold? Slimy? Ticky? Pair up children and let a few pairs work at a time. Set up lots of newspaper or mural paper on the floor. One child is the painter. One child can take off one shoe and get his foot painted. After the foot is painted, the child can walk on the paper and admire their footprint! Have a washing station ready for easier clean up.

Activity*: There are lots of rhyming sentences in this book. Let's make a list of words that rhyme with paint colors and then make up funny sentences.

I take my red and I paint my head.

I take my blue and I paint (my shoe, mom's stew, you!)

I take my brown and I paint (my town, a clown, my crown)