Zara’s Colour Theory Explorer

Learning objective: To understand and apply the principles of colour theory, including primary, secondary, and complementary colours.

Join Zara the zebra on an artistic journey! Use this template to investigate how colours interact. Fill in the boxes using your knowledge of the colour wheel and your own creative observations. You will need a set of paints or coloured pencils to complete the tasks.

Word bank: Primary · Secondary · Complementary · Hue · Shade · Tint · Warm · Cool · Spectrum

1. Primary Foundations: Zara says primary colours cannot be made by mixing others. List the three primary colours and explain how they form the basis of the colour wheel. (3 marks)

2. Secondary Secrets: Choose two primary colours and describe what happens when you mix them together. Name the new secondary colour you have created. (2 marks)

3. Temperature Check: Explain the difference between 'warm' colours and 'cool' colours. Which group would you use to paint a bright, sunny desert, and why? (3 marks)

4. Complementary Contrasts: If you place a blue object next to an orange object, why does the image look so striking? Define what a 'complementary' colour is. (2 marks)

5. Creative Application: Zara wants to paint a scene that feels calm and quiet. Which colours would you choose to achieve this mood and how would you use tints to help? (3 marks)

Extension challenge: Create your own miniature colour wheel in your sketchbook, making sure to label the primary and secondary colours clearly. Then, try to mix a 'shade' by adding a tiny touch of black to one of your colours.