

Zara's Colour Theory Masterclass

Learning objective: To understand and apply the principles of the colour wheel, including primary, secondary, and tertiary colours, and the effect of complementary contrasts.

Zara the Zebra is preparing for her grand gallery opening! She needs your help to organise her paintings. Follow the steps below to demonstrate your understanding of colour theory by categorising colours and explaining their relationships.

Word bank: Primary · Secondary · Tertiary · Complementary · Hue · Intensity · Contrast · Pigment

1. Zara has mixed red and yellow paint to create orange. Explain why orange is classified as a 'secondary' colour and name the other two secondary colours. (2 marks)

2. Define the term 'complementary colours' and identify which colour sits directly opposite blue on the traditional colour wheel. (2 marks)

3. If Zara wants to create a painting that feels energetic and vibrant, justify why she might choose to use high-contrast colours rather than harmonious, analogous colours. (3 marks)

4. Compare and contrast 'tint' and 'shade'. How does adding white or black to a pure hue change the viewer's perception of the artwork? (3 marks)

5. What might happen if an artist only used tertiary colours in a piece of work? Explain the effect this would have on the overall composition. (3 marks)

6. Zara is selling her paintings for £45.50 each. If she sells 4 paintings, but decides to give a 'complementary discount' of £2.50 off the total price for every pair of paintings bought together, calculate the final total for 4 paintings. (2 marks)

Draw: Draw a 12-part colour wheel. Label the primary, secondary, and tertiary colours accurately, and then design a simple geometric pattern in the centre using only complementary colours to create a bold, vibrant effect.



Extension challenge: Research the 'warm' and 'cool' temperature of colours. Create a short poem or a brief artistic manifesto explaining how a painter can manipulate these temperatures to change the mood of a landscape painting.