



The power of colour and line

GRADES 9–12

Norval Morrisseau uses colour and line in *Sacred Medicine Bear* to communicate emotion and meaning. Explore colour and line with the following activities:

Art Activities

Experiment with line

Draw an image or symbol of something meaningful to you. Make sure your drawing takes up the whole page. Divide your paper into four equal boxes. Using a black fine liner, trace and add details to your drawing. Use a different thickness or quality of line in each box. Some could be thick and wavy, others could be thin and angular. Notice the different energy or emotions various lines convey.

Experiment with colour

Divide your paper into four equal boxes. Pick a different colour scheme for each of the first three boxes. Experiment with hue, value and intensity. In the last box use only pencil or charcoal to add different levels of shading. Do the various colour schemes spark different feelings? Which colour scheme is the most impactful to you?

Explore duality through collage

An important aspect of Morrisseau's *Sacred Medicine Bear* is the concept of connection and duality. Using old magazines, newspapers, books and paper scraps, brainstorm a theme for your collage. Cut out images and designs from the various media that contrast and connect to one another. Once all the images are glued down to a blank backing, use markers to add personalized designs or different types of lines to accentuate the connections and contrasts between the elements of your collage.

If you'd like to extend the lesson beyond visual art, here are some other activities:

Write an artist statement (language)

Write an artist statement reflecting on any of the art activities above that you completed. Explain the different components of your piece and why you included them. Comment on the elements of colour and line that are included in your design and what their intended impact was. Present your work to a friend or family member to practice speaking skills and deepen your understanding of the concepts.

Learn about Morrisseau's life and work (history)

Read Art Canada Institute's book *Norval Morrisseau: Life & Work* by Carmen Robertson to learn more about his life, style, themes and inspiration and other key works.

Glossary

Line: An identifiable path created by a point moving in space. It is one-dimensional and can vary in width, direction, and length. Lines often define the edges of a shape.

Colour: Light reflected off objects. Colour has three main characteristics: **hue** (red, green, blue, etc.), **value** (how light or dark it is), and **intensity** (how bright or dull it is). Colours can be described as warm or cool.

Duality: A quality of having two aspects or two opposite ideas or feelings that exist at the same time, for example, war and peace or night and day.