

A Teacher's Guide for *BLUE on BLUE* Written by Dianne White Illustrated by Beth Krommes Beach Lane Books | Simon & Schuster Dec. 2014 ISBN 978-1-4424-1267-5

Summary

It's a bright, beautiful, blue-on-blue day, but a summer storm is on its way, and soon... Thunder! Lightning! Raging, roaring! Rain on rain on rain is pouring. Will the sun ever be back?

Praise for BLUE on BLUE:

"A joyous, pelting, dripping celebration." ★ Booklist, starred review

"...measured and musical..." ★ Publishers Weekly, starred review

"Words land on readers' ears with the pleasing, plodding patter of raindrops." ★ Kirkus, starred review

"a strong choice for storytimes and one-on-one sharing." School Library Journal



DIANNE WHITE has lived and traveled around the world. She holds an elementary bilingual teaching credential, a master's in Language and Literacy, and an MFA in Writing for Children and Young Adults from Vermont College of Fine Arts. After teaching students of all ages for 25 years, Dianne now writes full-time and enjoys the desert rainstorms of her new home in Gilbert, Arizona. BLUE ON BLUE is her first picture book. Visit her at diannewrites.com.

BETH KROMMES received the Caldecott Medal in 2009 for THE HOUSE IN THE NIGHT by Susan Marie Swanson. She has illustrated a number of other highly acclaimed picture books, including SWIRL BY SWIRL: Spirals in Nature by Joyce Sidman. She lives with her family (and her umbrella collection) in Peterborough, New Hampshire, where she listened to recordings of rain while she worked on this book. Visit her at bethkrommes.com.



Beach Lane Books | Simon & Schuster | ISBN 978-1-4424-1267-5
Art © 2014 Beth Krommes

Teacher's Guide written and designed by Dianne White www.diannewrites.com

BLUE on BLUE is picture book length poem, ideal for readers of all ages, and as a mentor text for writing.

This Teaching Guide contains activities that can be used, with modifications, for grades K–8. Some pages contain ideas that can be expanded to create a lesson, while others are complete lessons. Each teaching invitation is geared to meet relevant Common Core State Standards (CCSS.) Refer to the standards for each particular grade to determine how deeply to engage and modify the activities to meet the grade’s standards.

Before Reading:

Cover Connection: Take a moment to study the front cover, noting the title, author, and illustrator. Have students share what they observe about the setting (both the “where” and “when”) of the story. Be sure to open the book so students can see the front and back covers at the same time. Make predictions. What will the story be about? Does the title give any clues?

Picture Walk: “Walk” through the first few pages, focusing on illustrations, paying attention to the way the setting/ environment begins to change over time. Make predictions about what will happen next. Encourage students to notice specific details in the illustrations and allow them to describe what they see in short phrases (leaves blowing, choppy waves, trees bending, etc.)

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Literature: Key Ideas and Details: CCSS.ELA-Literacy. RL.K.1; 1.1; 2.1; Craft and Structure :K.6

During Reading:

Pause, Ponder, and Predict: BLUE on BLUE is a 119-word picture book length poem. For the first reading, consider asking kids to shut their eyes and make the pictures or movie in their heads. Take the time to read slowly, allowing each word its space. On the second read, savor the illustrations. Notice the farmer’s hat as the winds blow bolder. Count the fish in the pond, the turtles climbing on rocks, the frog sitting in the middle of the path. When you reach the end of the story, encourage predictions about other types of days. What would a wintery “white-on-white” day look like? A fall “yellow-on-gold” day?

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7; 1.7, 2.7, 3.7, 4.7, 5.7

Beach Lane Books | Simon & Schuster | ISBN 978-1-4424-1267-5
Art © 2014 Beth Krommes

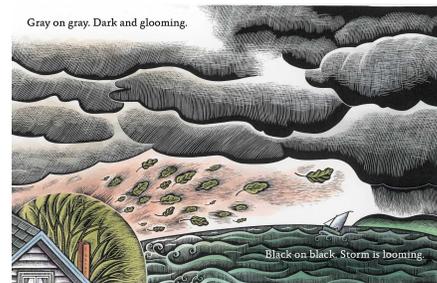
Turn and Talk: Depending on the ages of the students, the general questions below can serve as a springboard to further discussion of story elements, such as the use of poetic devices, the compression of the story arc, and the marriage of pictures and text.

1. In one sentence, tell what this poem/story is about.

2. What do you particularly like? Can you say why?

3. What other things do you notice about this book?

What do the words bring to the story? How do the illustrations complement and expand on the words?



© Beth Krommes

Compare and Contrast: Gather a collection of poems and books about the rain. Check pages 6-8 of the guide for a list of suggested poems and books.

- * **One suggestion:** compare and contrast BLUE on BLUE, with another picture book, COME ON RAIN! by Karen Hesse, illustrated by Jon J. Muth. Both use lyrical language to describe a rain storm, but the former takes place on a farm in the country and describes a “pounding, hounding, noisy-sounding” rain, the latter takes place in a city where children romp “under trinkets of silver rain.” Check the book list on pgs. 6-8 for additional book suggestions.
- * **Another possibility:** compare and contrast BLUE on BLUE with a collection of other poems about the rain. After all, rain comes in different shapes and sizes - there’s the “dot a dot dot” rain found in Eve Merriam’s poem, “Weather,” or the rain lullaby of Langston Hughes’s “April Rain Song.” There’s the quaking, shaking, fury of rain in Rebecca Kai Dotlich’s poem “Summer Storm’s Plea, or the long, cold, and gray “November Rain” described in Maud E. Uschold’s poem. (Check the resources on page 8 for the names of additional poems.)

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading: Literature: Key Ideas and Details: CCSS: ELA - Literacy.RL.K.1, 1.1, 2.1,3.1, k.3, 1.3,2.3 ; Craft and Structure: 1.4, 2.4, 3.5, 4.5, 5.5; Integration of Knowledge and Ideas: k.7,1.7,..2.7, 3.7; Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.K.1, K.2, 1.1, 2.1, 3.1,4.1;K.2,1.2,2,2, 3.2;K.3,1.3,2.3,3.3 Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL. K.4, 1.4,2.4,3.4,4.4;K.5,1.5,2.5,3.5,4.5, K.6, 1.6,2.6.3.6,4.6

Beach Lane Books | Simon & Schuster | ISBN 978-1-4424-1267-5
Art © 2014 Beth Krommes

Think (Visually) Aloud: In WRITING WITH PICTURES, artist Uri Shulevitz says, "... in a picture book the pictures do much more than illustrate the text ... the pictures say what the the words do not... since most or all of the description - the setting, the characters, and the action - is shown through the pictures." (51). Similar to a "Think Aloud" in which a reader verbalizes thoughts, making visible the strategies he or she is using to comprehend, VISUAL THINK ALOUDS, can be powerful tools to talk about and understand art.

After the second or third read of a picture book, one of the easiest ways to develop children's visual literacy and help them think critically is to turn their attention to the illustrations. Similar to *Turn and Talk* above, choose one of the illustrations in BLUE on BLUE and ask the following open-ended questions:

1. What's happening in the illustration? (What catches your eye first? What do you see?)
2. What does it remind you of? How does it make you feel? (Make a personal connection)
3. How do the illustrations convey the content? (Why did the artist makes the choices she did?)

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.7 1.7, 2.7, 3.7, 4.7, 5.7

RAIN WRITING

News Flash! *What's the rain like where you live? Do you have monsoons? Thunderstorms? Does it drizzle or pour buckets? Maybe you live in one of those places where it almost never rains.*

Invite students to be reporters documenting the events surrounding the big storm recorded in BLUE in BLUE. Use the answers to the "Big 6" (The 5 W's and an H - Who?, What?, Where?, When?, Why?, How? - that reporters use to present factual information in a concise format) to write a newspaper article. Remind students that at least half of BLUE on BLUE is told through the illustrations, so they'll need to take in both textual and visual information to write their pieces.



For a different twist on the above, follow the weather online or have students pick up a local newspaper to share, then write, weather reports based on the news from places near and far. There's always unusual weather somewhere!

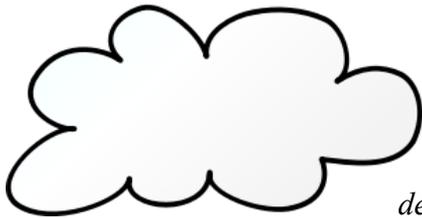
Playing with Poetry: Poetry is extremely accessible. Often short, with lots of white space, poetry offers wonderful opportunities for students to explore language. Even better, poetry is everywhere! Mother Goose, song lyrics, playground jingles and jump rope rhymes, riddles, and even short poems like “30 days has September...” stay with us for a lifetime.

Start by generating of list of what students know about poetry. Their understandings will grow with time and practice, but here are a few features of poetry that kids should be aware of. Expand the list as students’ understanding of poetry grows.

A POEM...

- * may be short or long
- * has a unique form and shape (it doesn’t look like prose)
- * has white space and line breaks
- * may or may not rhyme
- * can be silly or serious
- * uses the tool of sound (onomatopoeia, alliteration, rhyme, assonance, etc.)

As children write, be on the lookout for treasures - words that sparkle and lift the writing because of a surprising use of language or an interesting sensory detail. Share these gems and watch the rest of the class begin to rise to the same level of writing.



“Rainstorming”: Brainstorming as a tool for prewriting can take many forms - from lists to maps, to freewrites, and more. Its purpose is to generate possibilities - like and unlike words that, when put together, surprise and delight both writer and reader. The complexity of the lists will depend on the age of the students and the purpose of the writing, but at its most basic, “rain storming,” a word conjured up by Barbara Juster Esbensen in her book, *A CELEBRATION OF BEES: Helping Children to Write Poetry*, is simply a collection of “rain words” generated by the students.

- * **One suggestion:** Collect words by filling the classroom with the language of rain. Expand the words and phrases students bring from their own experiences to include words collected from picture books - fiction and nonfiction - as well as poems and songs about the rain. Remember to include words that tap into all five senses: the smell, sound, look, touch, even the taste of rain. If you like, have kids sort the words as you go - naming words (nouns), action words (verbs), descriptive words (adjectives), and so on. With a good list of words, kids are ready to compose.

* **Another possibility:** Play with metaphor and simile. These tools of poetry link seemingly dissimilar, unconnected things. For example, how is rain like silver? (“April Rain Song” by Langston Hughes) Or a bully? (“Summer Storm’s Plea” by Rebecca Kai Dotlich) Or a dust dancer? (*Come On, Rain!* by Karen Hesse, illustrated by Jon J. Muth). Notice how these poets use figurative language effectively.

Loosen up! What if rain were a person? How would it move? Where would it go? How old is rain? Is rain kind? Mean? Timid? What other ways might rain be? What else does rain remind you of?

Make lists, letting each “rainstormed” word guide your thinking in a new direction. You’ll end with a nice collection of ways to think about rain.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Writing: Text Types and Purposes: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.1, 1.1, 2.1., K.2.,1.2, 3.2,4.2,K.3,1.3,2.3,3.3,4.3,5.3;Production and Distribution of Writing:CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W. 3.4,K.5,1.5,2.5,3.5,K.6,1.6,2.6,3.6 Research to Build and Present Knowledge: CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.7,1.7, 2.7,3.7,4.7,K.8,1.8,2.8,3.8,4.8



STEPPING OUT: *Supplement your reading of BLUE on BLUE with fiction, nonfiction, and poetry*

*** FICTION ***

* **ALL THE WATER IN THE WORLD** by George Ella Lyon, illustrated by Katherine Tillotson (Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2011)

* **BOOM BOOM** by Savinder Naberhaus, illustrated by Margaret Chodos-Irvine (Beach Lane Books, 2014)

* **COME ON, RAIN!** by Karen Hesse, illustrated by Jon J. Muth (Scholastic Press, 1999)

* **RAIN** by Linda Ashman, illustrated by Christian Robinson (Houghton Mifflin Books for Children, 2013)

* **RAIN RAIN RIVERS** by Uri Shulevitz (Farrar Strauss & Giroux, 1969)

*** FICTION (cont'd.) ***

- * **RAINDROPS ROLL** by April Pulley Sayre (Beach Lane Books, 2015)
- * **STORM IN THE NIGHT** by Mary Stolz, illustrated by Pat Cummings (HarperCollins Publishers, 1988)
- * **TAP TAP BOOM BOOM** by Elizabeth Bluemle, illustrated by G. Brian Karas, (Candlewick Press, 2014)
- * **UMBRELLA** by Taro Yashima (Penguin Books, 1986)
- * **WATER CAN BE** by Laura Purdie Salas, illustrated by Violeta Dabija (Millbrook Press, 2014)
- * **WATER DANCE** by Thomas Locker (Houghton Mifflin/Harcourt, 1997)
- * **YAGUA DAYS** by Cruz Martel, pictures by Jerry Pinkney (Dial Books for Young Readers, 1976)

*** NONFICTION ***

- * **DOWN COMES THE RAIN** by Franklyn M. Branley, illustrated by James Graham Hale (HarperCollin, 1997)
- * **FLASH, CRASH, RUMBLE, and ROLL** by Franklyn M. Branley, illustrated by True Kelley (HarperCollins, 1999)
- * **IT'S RAINING** by Gail Gibbons (Holiday House, 2014)
- * **STORMS** by Seymour Simon (HarperCollins, 1992)
- * **WEATHER** by Seymour Simon (HarperCollins, 2006)
- * **WHAT WILL THE WEATHER BE?** by Lynda DeWitt, illustrated by Carolyn Croll (HarperCollins, 1991)



*** POETRY ***

- * **SPLISH SPLASH** by Joan Bransfield Graham, illustrated by Steve Scott (Houghton Mifflin, 1994)
- * **ONE BIG RAIN: *Poems for Every Season*** compiled by Rita Gray, illustrated by Ryan O'Rourke (Charlesbridge, 2010)

And... a small sampling of rain poems to get you started:

- * **“April Rain Song”** by Langston Hughes; **It’s Only the Storm,”** by David Greygoose; **“Rain”** by Spike Milligan; **“Rain Sizes”** by John Ciardi; **“Rain Sound”** by Lillian Morrison; **“Spring Rain”** by Marchette Chute; **“Summer Shower”** by David McCord; **“Summer Storm’s Plea”** by Rebecca Kai Dotlich; **“Weather”** by Eve Merriam; **“Weather”** by Anonymous

All of the above poems can be found in at least one of the following anthologies: **HERE’S A LITTLE POEM**, collected by Jane Yolen and Andrew Fusek Peters, illustrated by Polly Dunbar; **POETRY BY HEART**, compiled by Liz Attenborough; **SHARING THE SEASONS**, selected by Lee Bennett Hopkins, illustrated by David Diaz; **TALKING LIKE THE RAIN**, selected by X.J. Kennedy and Dorothy M. Kennedy, illustrated by Jane Dyer; **THE 20th CENTURY CHILDREN’S POETRY TREASURY**, selected by Jack Prelutsky, illustrated by Meilo So, **THE BILL MARTIN JR. BIG BOOK OF POETRY**, edited by Bill Martin Jr. with Michael Sampson.



A SPRINKLING OF SCIENCE

NGSS: Earth’s Systems
Weather and Climate
K-ESS2.D
3-ESS2.D

The earth has a limited amount of water. That water keeps going around and around in a cycle: evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and collection.

Water has three states or forms: solid, liquid, and gas. As temperatures change, so does water.

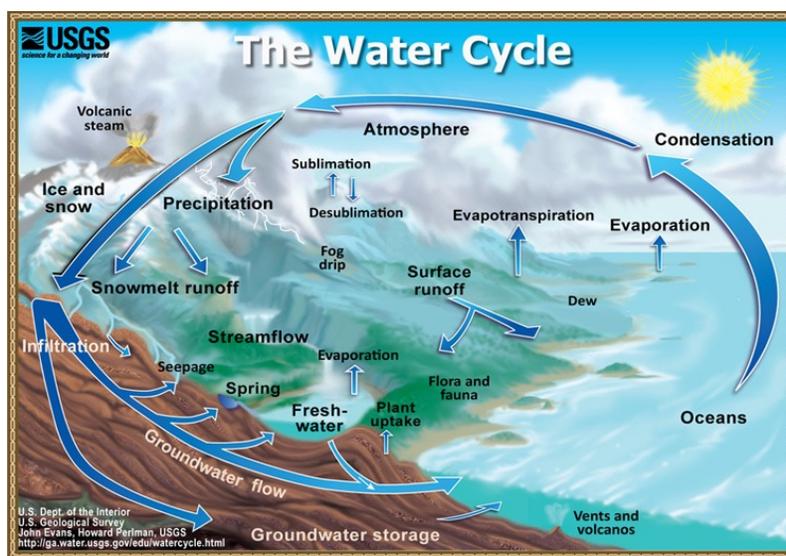
The heat of the sun causes water to evaporate from streams, rivers, lakes, and oceans. The water vapor rises and, when it reaches cooler air, condenses to form clouds. Water droplets in a cloud come together to form bigger, heavier drops which then fall as ice crystals, snowflakes, or rain. This process is called the water cycle.

A SPRINKLING OF SCIENCE (cont'd.)

Condensation takes place when the water vapor in the air changes from a gas back to a liquid.

Evaporation is the change of a substance from liquid to a gas. It takes place when molecules of water escape from a body of water, such as a puddle, lake, stream, or ocean. Temperature and the amount of water vapor already in the air affect the speed of evaporation.

Precipitation happens when tiny water droplets condense to the point that the air cannot hold it anymore. The clouds get heavy and water falls back to the earth in the form of rain, hail, sleet, or snow.



Create your own mini water cycle:

Condensation:

Materials: an empty tin can (label removed), ice, water, food coloring

Procedure: Fill the tin can with ice. Add water colored with a few drops of food coloring. Let it stand, untouched, for a few minutes.

Results: Drops of water form on the outside of the can, making it appear to be "sweating."

Explanation: The drops on the outside of the can are not colored, so they can't be the ice water leaking from the inside of the can; the water comes from the air - water vapor around the can has been cooled by the ice.

Evaporation

Materials: large flat dish, a deep narrow jar, water

Procedure: Place equal amounts of water in the dish and the jar. Place both, uncovered, on a shelf or table to stand overnight. Check them in the morning.

[Alternate Procedure: Place two dishes filled with equal amounts of water in different parts of a room--one in a sunny window, the other in a shady corner. Which dries first?

The dish in the sun dries first. The warmer the air, the faster the molecules move into the air and the faster they evaporate.]

Results: Less water remains in the flat dish than in the narrow jar.

Explanation: Water molecules can escape only from the surface. Water will evaporate faster when the surface area is larger. A wide shallow puddle of water dries more quickly than a deep, narrow one.

Precipitation

Materials: glass jar, pie plate, hot water, ice cubes

Procedure: Pour about two inches of very hot water into the glass jar. Cover the jar with the pie plate. Wait a few minutes before doing the next step. Put the ice cubes on the plate and watch what happens.

Explanation: The cold pie plate causes the moisture in the warm air, which is inside the jar, to condense and form droplets of water. This is the same thing that happens in the atmosphere. Warm, moist air rises and meets colder air high in the atmosphere. The water vapor condenses and forms precipitation that falls to the ground.

Make a Water Cycle Bracelet

* **WATER DANCE** by Thomas Locker is a particularly nice way to talk about the water cycle before introducing this activity.

Materials: 7 Beads: light blue, brown, blue, green, yellow, clear, and white; pipe cleaner

Directions: Have children retell the water cycle as they make the bracelet.

1. Light blue = precipitation
2. Blue = water in lakes, rivers, oceans
3. Brown = water in ground (accumulation)
4. Yellow = sun - source of energy/heat
5. Green= plants (transpiration)
6. Clear = evaporation
7. White = condensation (clouds)

How to Make a Rain Stick

Supplies: paper towel tube, construction or poster board, compass or lid larger than paper towel tube, foil, rice, glue, things to decorate rain stick

Instructions:

1. Trace two circles 1-2 inches larger than the diameter of the paper towel tube to create ends for the rain stick.
2. Cut out both circles. Line up **one** circle evenly and glue firmly on the tube. Let dry.
3. Cut a piece of aluminum foil that is 1 1/2 times longer than the tube. Roll the foil between your palms to create a long, narrow shape. Twist the shape into a spiral, wrap it around the tube, and slowly pull it off.
4. Drop the foil inside the tube and pour in 1 cup of dried rice.
5. Glue the other circle on the open end of the tube. Let dry.
6. Decorate the rain stick with markers, paint, and stickers.



How To Make Rain {Follow the Leader}

1. Rub your palms together.
2. Snap your fingers.
3. Clap two fingers to palm.
4. Clap hands.
5. Slap your thighs (stomp feet)
6. Clap your hands.
7. Clap two fingers to palm.
8. Snap fingers.
9. Rub palms together.
10. STOP

CREATIVE EXPRESSION: VISUAL ARTS

Beth Krommes, illustrator of BLUE on BLUE uses a technique called scratchboard. In a December 10, 2014 [interview for the Monadnock Ledger-Transcript](#), she explains her process - starting with a black sheet of scratchboard that has a white background hidden underneath, she uses etching tools to scratch away the black, creating a monochrome image. She finishes the illustration by watercoloring a copy of the scratchboard image. Learn more about Beth's technique on her website: <http://www.bethkrommes.com/illustration/what-is-scratchboard> .

CREATIVE EXPRESSION: VISUAL ARTS (cont'd.)

Do-It-Yourself Scratch Board Recipe:

Materials: Black tempera, dish soap, crayons or oil pastels, heavy-weight paper (such as watercolor), and tools for scratching, such as forks, old pencils, corn holders, skewers, nails, toothpicks, popsicle sticks, etc.



© Beth Krommes

Procedure:

- * Mix equal parts black tempera paint and dish soap.
- * You may leave your (heavy-weight) paper white underneath **OR**, *before painting with the black paint recipe*, decorate the background with shapes, patterns, and designs of your choice using light- colored crayons or oil pastels, making sure to press hard.
- * Use a wide, soft-bristled brush to completely cover the paper with the black paint recipe. Let dry. Add a second coat.
- * Plan your illustration. Be sure to complete one to two practice sketches before scratching out your final illustration. *(If you make an “oops,” work with it!)*

DIRECTED DRAWING:

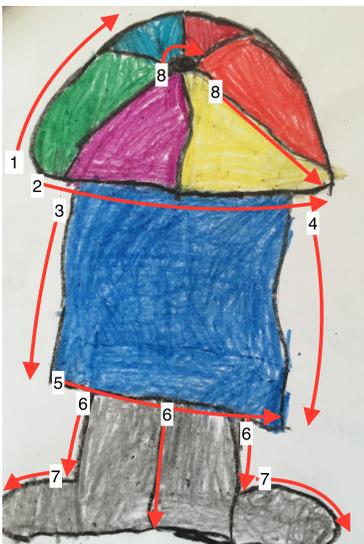
You don't have to be an artist to teach students how to "see" as they draw. One place to start is with the principles taught by Mona Brooks, founder of the Monart Drawing Schools and author of **DRAWING WITH CHILDREN** and **DRAWING FOR OLDER CHILDREN AND TEENS**.

This directed drawing approach builds confidence and helps even the youngest and most reluctant student artist create proficient pieces, each delightfully personal and unique.

**UMBRELLA CHILD:**

(Don't be put off by the lengthy directions, which are far more complicated than the actual project!)

1. Draw a curved line, like a rainbow, in the top half of your paper. (You might have students practice drawing "in the air" before putting pencil to paper.)
2. Starting on the left bottom side of the "rainbow," connect the left and right sides with a curving line.
3. Starting on the bottom left side of the umbrella, about 1-2" inside the edge, draw a curving vertical line as long as you imagine the raincoat will be. Leave space for the boots.



Kdgn. student drawing,
annotated

4. Repeat on the right side. Again, leave room for the boots.
5. Starting on the bottom left side of the raincoat, connect the left and right sides with a gently curving line.
6. Draw 3 vertical straight lines from the bottom of the raincoat for the sides of the boots. The middle line is slightly longer than the other two.
7. On the left bottom side, draw a "C" like shape for the "toe" of the boot. Complete the boot on the right side.
8. In the upper middle section of the umbrella, draw an ellipse. Draw curving lines from the ellipse to the outer edges of the umbrella.
9. Outline with black crayon. Choose 5-6 colors and fill in completely.
10. If you choose, finish with watercolor. Pick 3- 4 colors and paint a (striped) vertical or horizontal pattern. For the best results, choose only light colored paints.