


MOOD PICTURES

To experiment with a variety of graphic tools to achieve a specific outcome.

 Individual or pairs.

 20 minutes at the computer; 10 minutes discussion.

Previous skills/knowledge needed

A familiarity with the basic tools available within a graphics program (brush/pencil tool, line drawing tool, flood fill tool and so on) and the type of effects they achieve.

Key background information

Colours have the power to affect our moods, although we may not always be aware of this. This activity allows the children to experiment with a variety of IT graphics tools to produce an abstract 'happy picture' without having to be

Communicating information

particularly artistic. The children will soon discover that it is not only colours that generate a particular mood but also the type of patterns and shapes used.

This activity could accompany a conventional art lesson, offering a group of children an IT opportunity while the remainder use conventional media. Art produced by conventional means is difficult to change but IT offers much more flexibility for making alterations and correcting errors. The children should experience this 'fluidity' which is similar to that gained by using a word processor. In both types of software the children should learn to experiment, as nothing need be printed out until a satisfactory outcome has been achieved.

Vocabulary

Brush tool, pencil tool, line drawing tool, flood fill, paint spray, colour palette.

Preparation

Collect together a variety of abstract works of art which clearly convey different moods, such as Joan Miro's *Women and Bird in the Moonlight*, 1949 (silence and dreams), Picasso's *Three Musicians*, 1921 (sinister, solemn) and Paul Klee's *Park near Lucerne*, 1938 (display of experiences and sensations) to discuss with the children.

Before starting the activity, it is important to have talked about what makes the children happy or sad, and to have looked at a variety of abstract pictures, talking about how their mood is affected by these pictures.

Resources needed

A computer, graphics software with a variety of drawing and colouring tools, a colour printer, paper, several examples of abstract art.

What to do

Many pictures portray mood through their content but this activity concentrates on generating mood purely through

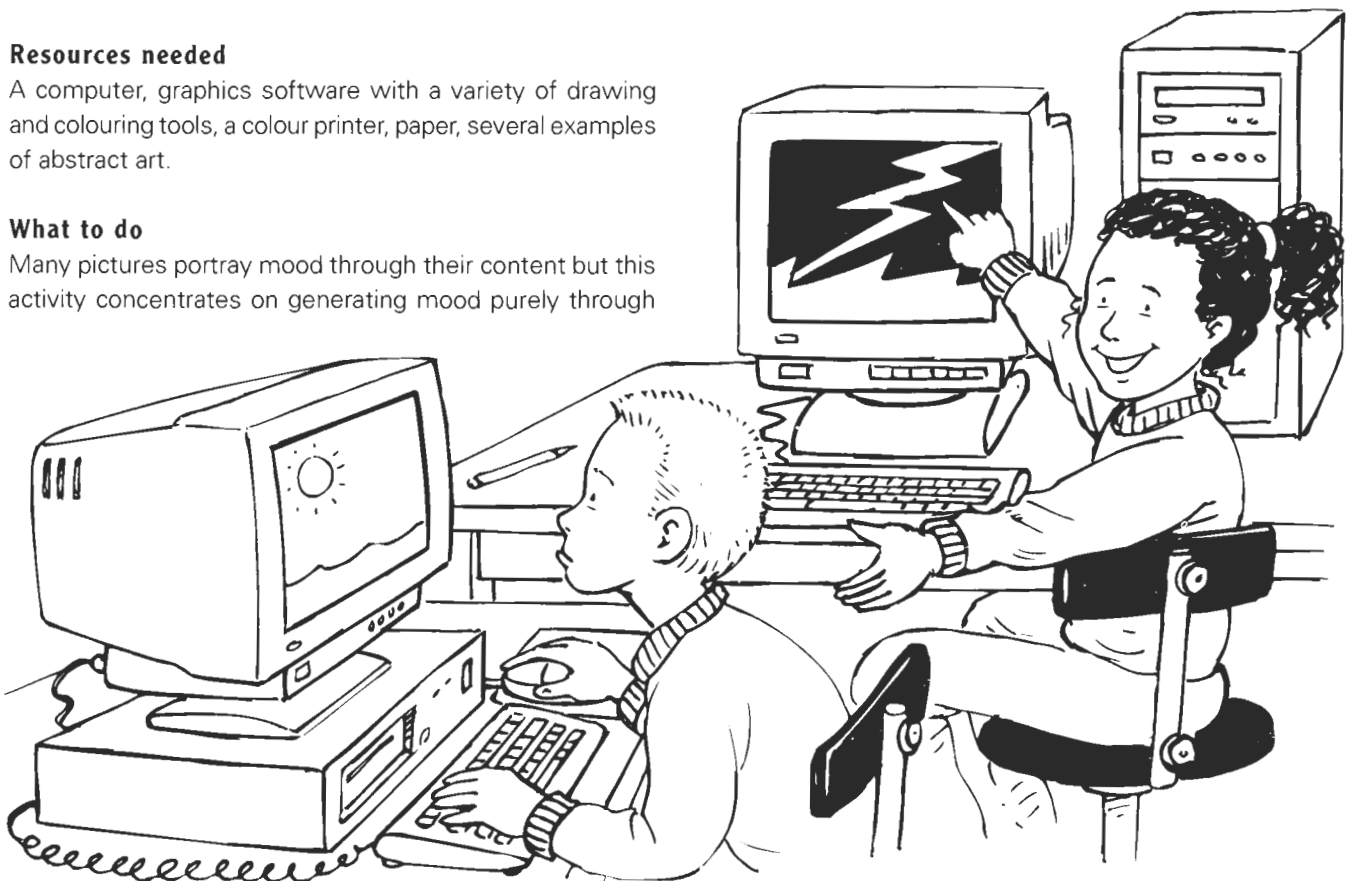
colour and form. Show the children a variety of abstract pictures by well-known artists and discuss how each picture makes them feel. Try to identify what features create a particular mood, for example bright colours typically suggest light-heartedness, while dark or grey shades create more sombre atmospheres. How does pattern, shape or line define mood? (A good example is jagged lines which can be used to express anger.)

Now tell the children that they are going to produce their own 'happy picture' on the computer. Explain that rather than showing something 'real' the pictures must be abstract, focusing on line and colour. Let them work in pairs on the computer, producing their pictures together once they have agreed how the mood is going to be illustrated. They may be able to produce a picture each, depending on the time available, otherwise they should agree on content and technique and produce one picture between them. Encourage them to use a variety of graphics tools such as the brush/pencil tool, line drawing tool, flood fill tool and so on to produce their pictures.

Finally, ask the children to produce a short explanation on the word processor as to how their drawing suggests a particular mood.

Suggestion(s) for extension

The children could extend their skills by portraying a sad or angry mood using graphics tools that they have not used in their previous picture.



Suggestion(s) for support

Some children may not be familiar with the graphics tools. Ask a more confident child to demonstrate what effects these tools can produce but limit the number of tools used for less confident children.

Assessment opportunities

You will be able to assess the children's ability to use IT to generate, amend, organise and present ideas in picture form using a variety of graphical tools. There are also opportunities to make assessments in art.

Display ideas

The children's work could be used to create a comprehensive display, perhaps entitled 'Mood through pictures'. Placed alongside posters of abstract art, the children's work will look attractive and generate much interest. The addition of written explanations will create further discussion around your display.