Creating Rhythm Through Abstract Art
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Objectives & Outcomes

Goals:
- Learn about the mural-making process
- Simulate the mural-making experience!

Students will be able to:
- Understand the concept of rhythm
- Connect Matisse’s painting to their own artwork!
- Create a piece of abstract art using shapes

Definitions & Examples
- Rhythm is a principle of design that suggests movement or action. Rhythm is usually achieved through repetition of lines, shapes, colors, and more. It creates a visual tempo in artwork and provides a path for the viewer’s eye to follow.

- Abstract art is modern art that does not represent images of our everyday world. It has color, lines, and shapes (form), but they are not used to represent objects or living things. Often abstract artists are influenced by ideas and philosophies.
Main Project
Students will create an artwork by cutting out and collaging colorful paper, emulating Henri Matisse’s mural-making method.

Materials
- Blank sheet of paper; or alternative materials like a cereal box, brown paper bag, or cardboard boxes
- Several sheets of colorful paper; or make your own with colored pencils, markers, watercolors, or acrylic paint
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue

Step-by-Step Instructions
1. Create your “wall”
   - Tape four pieces of printer paper together, or cut up a large paper bag or box. This will be the surface for your mural.
   
   Note: When mural making, one of the first steps is finding a wall that you can paint—and asking the owner of the building if you can paint on it!
2. Does your wall have limitations?
   - Cut the top of your “wall” to give it arches, like Matisse’s mural at the Barnes!
     Note: To design public art, you need the dimensions of the final surface. Make your surface your own by cutting out different shapes like triangles or squares!

3. Try the “parachute cloth method”
   - Draw designs on small pieces of paper that you can later assemble on your surface.
     Note: Mural Arts often makes murals by painting onto parachute cloth and then pasting the cloth onto walls.

4. Create some fun patterns!
   - Grab your paint and start creating patterns on sheets of printer paper or colored paper. Try making:
     - Solid colors
     - Dots
     - Stripes
     - Scribbles
     - Ombre shading
     - Geometric patterns
     Note: We will cut these out and paste them to your “wall.” If you already have colored sheets of paper, try adding another design to them like dots or stripes. No colored paper? Color your own or try Post-its!

5. Cut out your patterned paper
   - Pick funky shapes! Or triangles, squares, or circles!
     Note: Try cutting some large and small shapes. Remember, you are trying to fill up your “mural wall.” Keep in mind the shape of the wall and make sure you're cutting shapes that will fit it.

6. Start pasting your shapes onto your mural wall
   Note: Your shapes do not have to fit perfectly on the surface. You can trim them to fit the “wall.” And your shapes can overlap too, that’s cool!

7. Add in finishing touches
   Paint or color in any white spaces in the background.
   Don’t forget to sign your work!