Unit 12 Interactive Art: Colours

1 Think!

a Work with a partner. What colours do you associate with the words in the box? Why?

excited holidays exams fireworks winter sport frightened vegetables

b Look at the coloured boxes on this page. Do you agree with the meanings?

Red
Red is the colour of fire, blood, danger and love. It's also associated with speed. (Think of those red sports cars!)

Yellow
Yellow is the colour of holidays and sunshine. It's associated with happiness. We can't ignore the colour yellow, so it's often used for sticky notes and highlighter pens.

Green
Green is a very positive colour. We associate it with healthy things, for example exercise and healthy foods. People waiting to appear on TV sit in 'green rooms' to relax.

Blue
Blue is the colour of water, sea and the sky. It's the most popular colour in the world, but it's also very cold. It's associated with intelligence.

Did you know?

Dogs and cats can only see two colours. Some animals can see colours which we can't see: spiders can see ultraviolet light and snakes can see infrared.

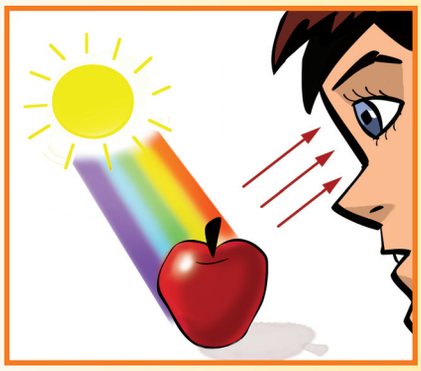
2 Reading

a Read the text and then put the steps in the correct order.

1 C

A The brain receives a message from the eye.
B The apple absorbs all the colours, except red.
C Sunlight shines on the apple.
D The eye receives the reflection of red from the apple.

How do we see colours?



Why do we see things in a certain colour? For example, why are roses red, pink, orange or yellow, but not green or blue?

Colour originates in light. We see sunlight as white. However, as we know from rainbows and prisms, all the colours of the spectrum are present in white light. Light goes from the sun to the object and finally to the eye and the brain.

Look at the picture on the right. All the colours of the spectrum are shining on the apple. The surface of the apple absorbs all the colours in the light, except red. Red is reflected to the human eye. The eye receives the reflected red light and sends a message to the brain.

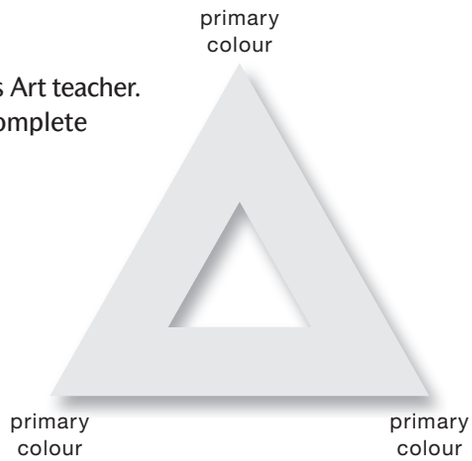
When we see something white, it is because all the colours of the spectrum are reflected to our eyes. Black objects absorb all the colours of the spectrum and do not reflect any of them to our eyes.

b Read the text again. Which colours are absorbed and which colours are reflected to our eyes when we look at the things in the box?

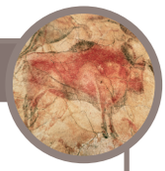
grass an orange a whiteboard a black cat

3 Listening

a 3.58 Copy the triangle in your notebook. Then listen to Chloe's Art teacher. She is explaining the colour triangle. Follow her instructions to complete the colour triangle (you need coloured pencils).



Did you know?



The first colours used by artists were red, black and sometimes white. These were natural pigments used by prehistoric artists.

b 3.58 Listen again. Write *T* (true) or *F* (false).

1 Blue, red and purple are primary colours.
2 Colours mixed from two primary colours are secondary colours.
3 Complementary colours are the same as secondary colours.
4 Complementary colours are on opposite sides of the triangle.
5 Eugene Delacroix invented the colour triangle.

Did you know?

In paintings, the shadow of an object always contains its complementary colour: for example, the shadow of a red apple always contains some green.

4 Speaking

Work with a partner. Look at the two paintings by Delacroix. Discuss the way he uses colour.

The Sultan of Morocco and his entourage, Eugène Delacroix, "Toulouse, Musée des Augustins", photo : Daniel Martin.

Hamlet and Horatio in the Graveyard.

mini-dictionary

speed = how fast something moves
prism = an object made of clear glass which separates the light that passes through it into different colours
spectrum = a set of colours - light can be separated into these colours
surface = the top or outside part of something
pigment = a substance that gives something colour

4 Final task

Work with a partner. Look at Exercise 1. Choose three more colours and write a short text about each one. You can use the internet.