

# COLOR STORIES



What is the photographer trying to say with color?...

Photo source: <http://bit.ly/1g29y9b>

## Captivate the Imagination: Color and movement in Photography

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On a September evening, Thomas was attempting to photograph the cold landscape extending in front of him while visiting Sylt, a German island on the North Sea. He labored for four hours in the freezing cold without mittens. The darkened blue sea provided high wind and his hands and cheeks flushed from pink to red.

It became darker, almost black because the sky was moonless. Thomas was hungry, frozen, exhausted, and ready to go home. He hurriedly packed his camera and equipment into bags and cases before beginning a long walk over stretching, grass covered dunes.

Thomas reached a wooden stairway and shuffled quickly down its steps. Before leaving, he shifted his equipment, which sat heavily against his back and shoulders, and turned around. The Milky Way was not only visible, but also aligned with the creaky stairs he had just scurried down!

After students spend some time looking at the photograph and hearing the story, ask them to make observations about the image using color. Some examples:

- The Largest portion of photograph is made up of various shades of blue
- There is bright yellow in the center
- How do you feel about having most of the photograph be blue?
- What does it mean to have a person surrounded in yellow? (For example, to show how he or she is feeling)
- What does the dark blue in this photo make you feel/think of? expansive, depth, sea, quiet
- What does the light blue in this photo make you feel/think of? hopeful, friendly, relaxed
- Blue: Security, trusting, soothing, calming
- Yellow: hopeful, cheerful
- What other colors do you see?
- What is the photographer trying to say with color?

Though he was cold, he unpacked his camera and began taking pictures of the lightened blue sky. To add a soft and warm light, Thomas used his flashlight to light the creaky stairs too. He supposed the image looked better with an addition of yellow light, but also thought there should be a person in the photograph. However, nobody was there except him! As a result, his freezing fingers fumbled around the screen of his camera and he set a timer. He took in one slow breath before sprinting to the top of the stairs with his flashlight.

The resulting photograph offers its viewers the opportunity to be in awe of nature. Those who wish to see the German landscape Thomas explored ought to, but an encounter like his can happen anywhere! "Go out, shoot."

See the full photograph My God, it's full of stars by Thomas Zimmer by visiting this link: <http://bit.ly/1g29y9b>

# COLOR EXPLORERS

This project is designed to have children intensively analyze colors, their variations, and the emotional associations we have with colors

## Materials Needed

For the Colored Glasses:

- Cardboard
- Colored Theatre Gels or other transparent colored plastic in various colors (one for each color in the color wheel is ideal: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Violet)
- Masking tape
- Knife for cutting cardboard

For the Color Journals:

- 8.5 x 11 sheets of paper
- Recycled Magazines (National Geographic is great for keeping with the "explorer theme")

## MATERIAL CONSTRUCTION

To make colored glasses:

Step One:

Cut rectangular pieces of cardboard that are approximately 6in x 3in Leaving a 1in border cut a rectangular hole in the center of each cardboard sheet to make a hole for viewing

Step Two:

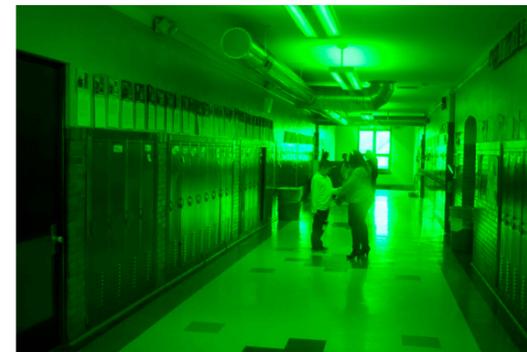
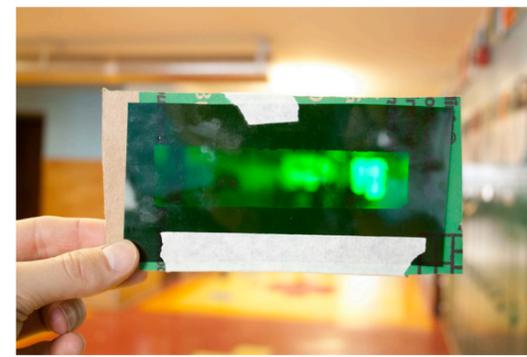
Tape a cut piece of colored gel or plastic to the cardboard frame making sure the gel does not extend beyond the edges of the cardboard.

To make color journals:

Step One:

Take two sheets of 8.5 x 11paper, fold in half, and staple at crease to make small 8 page booklets.





## Exploring for Color

\*The Color Explorers lesson may be accomplished in one session, and can be stretched out to an entire unit. For convenience, we broke down each section of the lesson to parts.

### Part One: Discussion

Begin this activity by discussing various associations with color. As each student participates, allow ideas to snowball into creative theories. Ask thought provoking questions such as, "What does blue make you think of? Red? Green?," and encourage students to think out-of-the-box. Try to grow simple responses of, "Green makes me think of grass" to "The green grass reminds me of feeling playful when I was young." Conclude discussion by creating a participatory list of the students' responses on the board. Write a list of emotions or colors and verbally correlate responses accordingly (example: excitement is magenta).

### Part Two: Identifying Color

Break students into groups based on color- one for each color of theatre gel or transparent plastic. Ask students to "explore for their color" in National Geographic magazines, and collect all tints, shades, and variations of the assigned color. Each color should be cut from the magazine and placed in an envelope to be kept safe during the activity progression. Encourage students to cut according to color tone and not just around the edge of an object.

Once students have a significant pile of colors, intentionally arrange the cut shapes on their desks. Perhaps they may be arranged yellow-green to blue-green or light to dark. Strategically arrange and glue the cut magazine pieces into color journal. Conclude Part Two by encouraging a short discussion about new color discoveries.

### Part Three: Color Walks

With color journals handy, send small group of children into the hallway (or outside if possible) with pre-made color glasses that match the color they explored for in the magazines. Ask them to carefully observe what the world looks like through the colored glasses. What looks different? What colors are different? How does viewing through this color change the way you think of this place that you see everyday? Does seeing this way make you feel any specific emotions? Ask students to write their observations in their Color Journals. Conclude Part Three by encouraging a discussion about the entire Color Explorers journey.

#### Variations:

Ask each student to explore the school and playground with each color glasses and make observations about the differences in mood or emotions. How does the feeling of a place change when it is blue vs. when it is yellow?