

Issue 1

Art Projects for Schools



Inspirational ideas and techniques
for creative art projects

Art Projects for Schools

- **Hands-on experience for children**
- **Nurture children's ability to think creatively**
- **Build self-esteem through the creation of high quality products**
- **Raise funds that can be used to invest in the school**

Creativity is central to helping children think originally and plays a vital role in developing an understanding of the world in which we live. The APFS projects give children opportunities to create designs and see them produced on real items such as T-shirts, mugs and cards. This gives pleasure and pride to the children and their families and helps to build their self-esteem. We find that children with self-esteem have the confidence to explore, experiment and create, thus building the skills that help them to be more fulfilled throughout their lives.

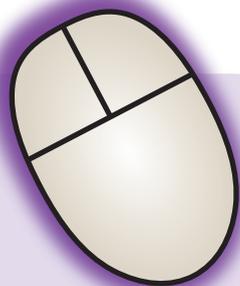
This booklet has been created to give you and the children some ideas for creating designs while also helping to build skills in areas such as printmaking, weaving, colour awareness and using different media. Importantly the ideas encourage children to have fun experimenting.

These ideas can be included in existing schemes of work or can be used as a discrete unit in Art or Design Technology. You will find more ideas and information on our website.

The information in this booklet has been written by Alison Couchman, a practising primary Art teacher since 1987. Alison has also been training teachers since 2004 and provides practical, hands-on InSET for primary teachers. If you have any questions, suggestions or would like to share how you have used these ideas with your children then please contact Alison on alison@apfs.org.uk

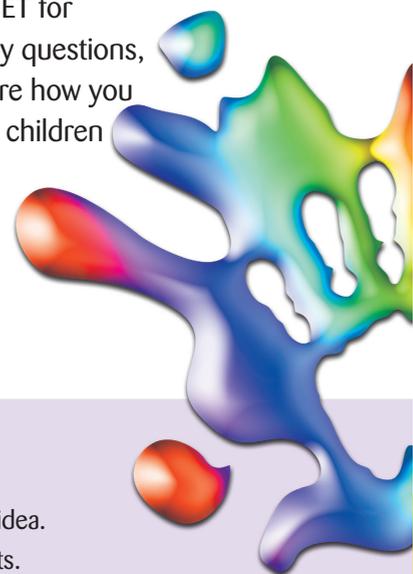


For more detailed information go to
www.apfs.org.uk



On our website you will find:

- More detailed suggestions for cross-curricular work.
- National Curriculum programme of study elements covered by each idea.
- Clickable links that take you straight to images by the suggested artists.
- Information to ensure the children get as much out of your involvement in the projects as possible.





Colour Families

Help to consolidate children's understanding of colour by grouping paper into colour families.

Materials

Coloured paper including tissue paper, sugar paper etc.
Backing paper.
Glue sticks.

Method

- Ask children to select some papers that they think are connected or related in some way.
- Talk about their choices.
- If necessary, guide the children towards grouping the papers into colour families e.g. shades of green, shades of red etc.
- Children select one colour family and find all the different papers that belong to it.
- Tear a piece of each paper - this could be a random shape or a long narrow strip.
- Glue the pieces down onto the backing paper in any way that the children think is attractive.

Taking it Further

Broaden the colour families to include related colours e.g. Yellow/Orange/Red or Turquoise/Green/Blue. Add strips of fabric, ribbon, braid or some sequins on top of the paper to give texture. Investigate a range of other materials and sort them into colour families.



Why is colour important?

Colour is woven through our everyday lives in our sayings, literature, affecting our moods and how we see the world around us. Children need to be familiar with colour names and the terminology of colour in order to be able to give voice to their ideas.



Strips and Stripes

Encourage children's awareness of patterns and shapes, enabling them to explore materials and effects.



Materials

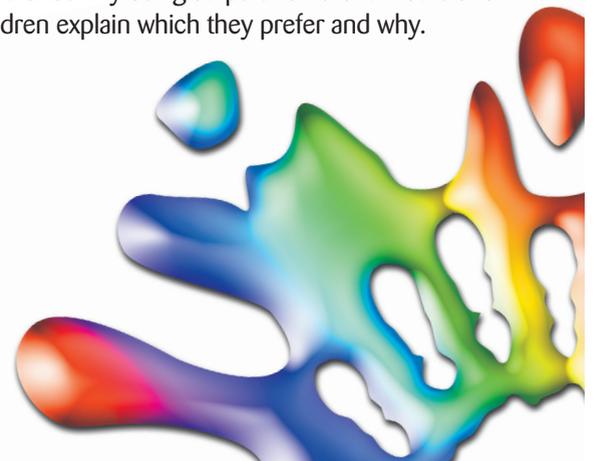
Background paper - plain A4 sheets, any colour.
Thin sheets of paper to be torn into strips.
Ready mixed paint.
Large flat paintbrushes or sponge rollers.

Method

- Tear strips of paper and lay down onto the background paper, arranging the strips as desired.
- Load the brush or roller with paint and cover the background paper and strips. Lift the strips off to reveal a pattern.
- Leave this layer to dry, or repeat these steps laying more strips on top of the wet paint and brushing more paint on top.

Taking it Further

Start with a light colour e.g. yellow and allow the paint to dry before adding a second layer of strips and paint - this time use blue paint and encourage the children to comment on how the paint colour changes. Alternatively add the second layer of paint while the first is still wet and see how it blends. Try using strips of different widths and let the children explain which they prefer and why.



Investigating Patterns

This activity enables the children to investigate ways of changing and developing the pattern that they make, comparing the way their work changes as they add more to it. It is an excellent way to consolidate understanding of shapes and patterns and there are ample opportunities for speaking and listening.



Collage

A great way to explore texture, colour, repeating patterns and a range of different materials.

Materials

Backing paper or thin card - the other materials will be glued on so it must be sturdy (it looks better if it is coloured rather than white).

A range of materials chosen for their interesting textures and colours e.g. cotton wool, string, scrunched up paper, packaging materials etc.

Card from a cereal box.

PVA glue.

Scissors.



Method

- Choose a simple shape that has a plain outline e.g. geometric shapes, or invent a new shape.
- Draw the shape on the cereal box card and cut out - this is the template.
- Children can explore the materials available, grouping them & discussing their chosen groups.
- Children select materials for their collage - you may wish to limit the number of different materials they can choose.
- Draw round the template on the different materials and cut out carefully.
- Lay the cut out shapes onto the backing paper and arrange in a repeating pattern.
- Stick the shapes to the backing paper with PVA glue & allow to dry.

CROSS-CURRICULAR

IDEA

Shapes - choose regular shapes
& link to tessellation
in Maths

Taking it Further

Limit the colour range to 2 colours only. Set rules such as only using natural materials. The shape of the template could fit into a specific theme. Experiment with tessellation. Try mixing 2 or more shapes and see how they relate to each other.

Understanding Texture and Shape

Children will encounter a variety of textures and shapes and can suggest suitable descriptive words. The activity helps practise manipulative skills, fine motor control and encourages the children to make choices and explain them.

Wax Resist

Introduce children to the concept of resist using basic materials and simple methods. More complex outcomes can be built up to enable progression.

Materials

Plain cartridge paper - maximum A4.

Wax crayons or oil pastels.

Transparent colour e.g. Brusho® powder mixed with water.

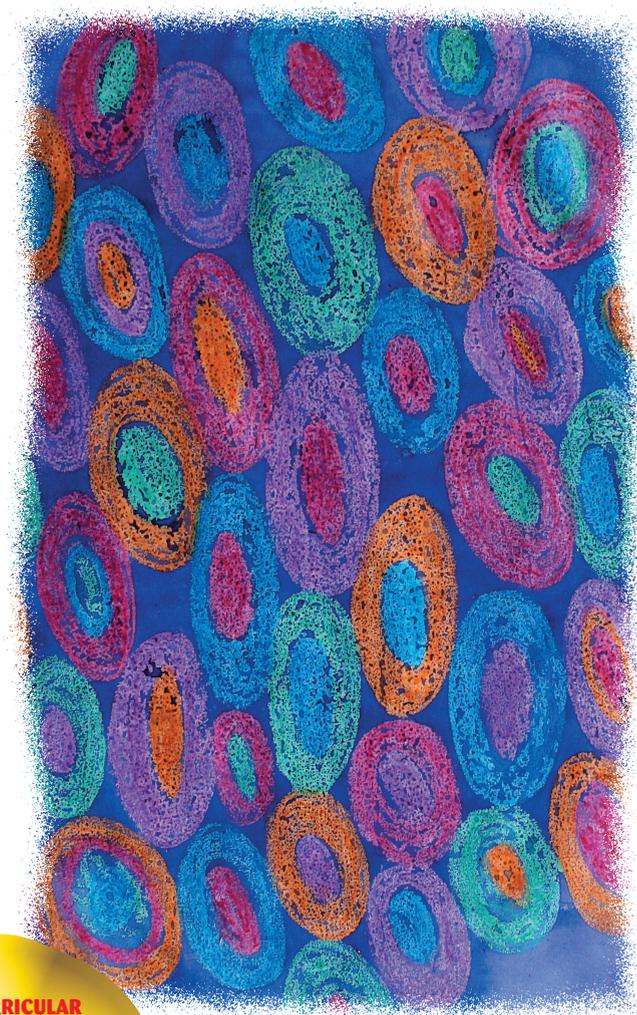
Large paintbrushes.

Method

- Draw firmly onto the paper with the wax crayons or oil pastels.
- Fill in the drawn shapes to give bold areas of colour.
- Choose a colour of ink or dye that will complement the drawing and brush over the whole sheet of paper with a large brush.
- Children will see that where the wax crayon or oil pastel is placed the liquid colour cannot penetrate i.e. the drawing resists the liquid colour.

Taking it Further

Set the challenge of starting with the lightest colour of ink at the top of the page and getting gradually darker at the bottom. Try brushing ink over paper that has already been made damp with clean water and encourage the children to comment on how the ink bleeds into the wet areas - this is particularly effective if done with 2 colours of ink. Where the inks meet and bleed together they mix to make a 3rd - discuss what happens and why.



CROSS-CURRICULAR

IDEA

Science - observational drawings
of flowers & leaves in pencil
followed by wax resist

Irresistible Resist

There is something rather magical about brushing liquid colour over wax crayons or oil pastels, watching as they resist the liquid. This is a great opportunity to experiment with the properties of materials as well as becoming familiar with the concept of resist which is necessary for later work in Textiles.



Take a Line for a Walk

Combine children's awareness of the qualities of line with painting skills and looking at tones of a single colour.

Materials

Sheet of cartridge paper - A4 size.
Soft drawing media e.g. charcoal, chalk pastel or soft pencil.
Ready mixed paint in one colour plus white.
Paintbrushes.

CROSS-CURRICULAR

IDEA

Look at maps to find footpaths in the local area in Geography

Method

- Do some preliminary work in sketchbooks looking at the different qualities of line e.g. flowing, jagged, angular etc.
- Children choose their favourite type of line. Start at one edge of the paper and draw the chosen line across to the opposite edge.
- Make sure the variations in the line are obvious as it goes for a walk across the paper.
- Repeat this at intervals until the whole page is divided up into sections - don't put them too close together as it takes a long time to complete the painting.
- Start with some white paint and mix in a little of the chosen colour.
- Paint one section in this pale tone.
- Add more colour to make a darker tone and paint another section.
- Continue adding more colour, making darker tones and filling in each section until all are complete and the whole page is filled.



Taking it Further

Allow the line to wander off its route to make swirls or angles, making sure it comes back to its original path. This makes the piece more visually interesting. Paint each section in order, starting light and getting darker in tone as it goes across the page.

Exploring the Qualities of Line

Investigating the different qualities of Line will enable children to be more discriminating when they are drawing. If they understand how angular lines can give a different feel to a drawing compared to flowing lines this will inform the work they go on to do. The sketchbook element of this activity is important as it gives freedom to explore and discover without the pressure to produce finished work.

Weaving

An easy way to introduce basic weaving that is enjoyable and that will grow quickly.

Materials

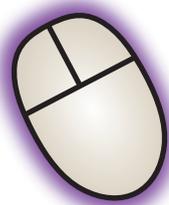
Plastic netting e.g. as used in the garden
 - choose mesh size appropriate to age of children.
 Yarns, string, plastic bags, strips of fabric etc.
 Large plastic needle/bodkin (optional).

Method

- Choose a theme for the weaving and select materials in the appropriate colours.
- Cut material longer than the width of the weaving - this makes it easier to do.
- Thread the chosen material through the holes in the netting, alternating over and under each time.
- The netting structure means that the weaving can be done as desired and will not fall apart.
- Traditional weaving patterns can be produced but more free-form work is also easy to do, particularly for younger children.

Taking it Further

Everyone makes a small section which are all joined together when finished. Large collaborative pieces can be worked on by groups of children. Place the emphasis on recycling by using carrier bags and packaging. Older/more able children can add beads, sparkly threads, tassels etc. to embellish the weavings still further.



For more detailed information go to
www.apfs.org.uk



**CROSS-CURRICULAR
 IDEA**
 History - investigate why children worked in mills in Victorian England

Experimenting with Textiles

Sorting, grouping and preparing materials will enable the children to become familiar with some of their properties. The actual weaving is excellent for fine motor skills and offers an opportunity to look at traditional weaving across the world.



Colour Mixing

Yellow and blue make green but **which** yellow and **which** blue? Practise and refine colour mixing skills then investigate the ways that artists painted trees.

Materials

Coloured paper in a neutral colour e.g. buff.
Ready mixed paint in Lemon Yellow, Mid Yellow, Cyan and Ultramarine.
Paintbrushes.
Images of paintings showing trees in a range of styles.
Pencil or chalk to map out size of tree (optional).

Method

- Ask children to choose a blue and a yellow and try to mix a bright, mid green.
- Identify which colours are needed (Cyan and Lemon Yellow).
- See how many different shades of green can be mixed in a set period of time e.g. 15 mins. Lots of discussion should result as children count and comment on each other's work.
- Provide a range of images by different artists and look at the different ways they have painted trees.
- Talk about the ways the paint might have been applied e.g. in lines, thickly, dabs on top of each other etc.
- If desired, map out the size and shape of the tree on paper.
- Mix a range of colours and paint tree using some of the methods they saw in the images.
- Encourage the children to layer colours on top of each other to make the foliage look more natural.



CROSS-CURRICULAR IDEA

Geography - compare trees that grow across the world and conditions needed for survival

Taking it Further

Add PVA glue to the paint and use a glue spreader only to apply the paint in the style of Vincent van Gogh. Go outside and draw trees around the school from 3 different viewpoints - standing, kneeling and sitting. Do close observational drawings of leaves concentrating on achieving different tones with a pencil. Roll out clay and use a range of tools, pressing them into the clay to create the shape and texture of leaves.

Yellow + Blue = Green. Or does it?

By KS2 children should understand what happens when you mix two primary colours together. This activity enables them to investigate the subtleties that occur when different shades of the primary colours are mixed and to understand how many variations are possible.

Mono Printing

An exciting and immediate method of printmaking where every print is unique. Mono means 'one' hence the name Mono Printing.

Materials

Smooth flat surface e.g. inking tray or table top covered with plastic.

Ready mixed paints - must be fairly thick - mix with PVA glue if a bit runny.

Variety of tools e.g. glue spreaders, scrapers, fingers etc.

Plain paper.

Method

- Spread some paint over the printing surface (a sponge brush works well).
- Draw into the paint - this will remove some paint.
- Lay a sheet of paper over the design.
- Smooth gently over the back of the paper with a flat hand.
- Lift up the paper starting from one corner.
- Leave to dry.
- Spread more paint on the surface and repeat these steps for a new print.

Taking it Further

Try taking a second print without adding more paint - this gives a paler print but shows much more texture and detail. Print onto coloured paper to make wrapping paper. Cut up the prints for paper weaving. Try printing landscape or beach scenes that include sky, land and water. Work with others on a big table to produce HUGE mono prints.



CROSS-CURRICULAR

IDEA

Find examples of mazes in myths & legends in Literacy

Working quickly to make unique prints

Children have to work fast to draw into the paint and make a print before it dries. They must make decisions quickly yet can brush over and start again if they choose. Also great for bold, expansive arm movements enabling them to work on a large scale.

Try a physical warm-up with the children before they start work by drawing in the air - this will also imprint the movements into their physical memory.

Encouraging Conversation and Collaborative Work

When children feel comfortable talking freely about ideas to their peers, speculating, letting their minds roam and asking 'What if...?' then they get vastly more from any practical activity. Collaboration encourages argument and discussion, helps with formulating hypotheses and promotes children's interaction. Try some of these ideas for promoting conversation and collaborative work in your classroom.

Looking at Pictures (whole class or in groups).

Use images with lots going on and start by asking 'What can you see?'. This encourages observation and participation. Other questions could include: 'What is this person doing?', 'What might be through this door?', 'What would you see if you walked along this road (and out of the picture)?', 'What would you see if the artist painted the same place 10 minutes later?'. These types of questions ask children to speculate, use their imagination and motivate them to talk.

Encouragement Stickers

Make stickers with encouraging language on them. Get the children to list positive words and phrases they could use when talking about each other's work. Each child wears a sticker and they act as reminders of how they can comment positively on each other's work.

Outbursts of Enthusiasm!

Create opportunities for children to speak about something that enthuses them. Ask the others to think of questions that show a sincere interest in each other's ideas.

Playground Pictures (only works if the playground is dry)

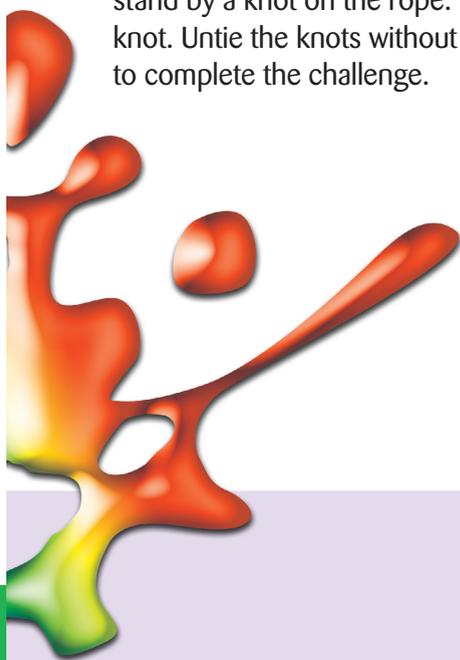
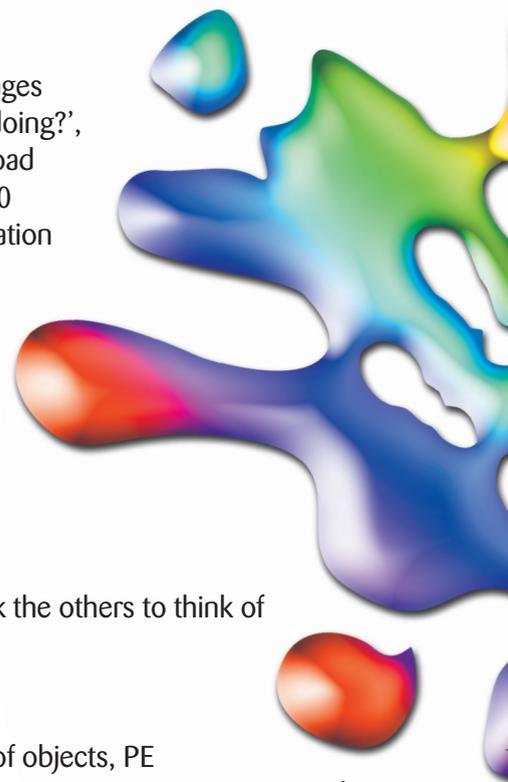
Divide the class into groups and ask them to make imaginary people. Use a variety of objects, PE equipment etc. and lay them on the playground to make their figures. Use plant sprayers to spray water over and around the equipment then lift it off, revealing the completed people. Take digital photographs to record the work before the ground dries.

Untying Knots

Take a long rope and tie one knot about every metre. There should be one knot for each person. Divide the children into groups of about 6 people. Lay the rope on the ground or a table in a straight line. Have each player stand by a knot on the rope. Each player picks up the rope making sure they have one hand on either side of the knot. Untie the knots without letting go of the rope. They might end up with more knots before they work out how to complete the challenge.

Self and Partner Evaluation

The system of 2 stars and a wish is used a lot in feedback marking in Literacy and can be applied across the curriculum. The children highlight 2 things they like about their own or a partner's work, giving each one a star (verbally or literally). The wish is applied to one way that the work could be improved.



For more detailed information go to
www.apfs.org.uk

Looking at the work of artists, craftspeople and designers helps children to develop their powers of observation and discrimination. It enables them to form opinions about the Art of others as well as their own work, and to exercise their creative thinking skills.

The following artists have been suggested as their work can be used as a point of reference for each of the ideas and techniques described in this booklet. There is a similarity of style or content, an illustration of technique or composition that should prove helpful when working on these projects.

Go to our website at www.apfs.org.uk to find more information about the artists and clickable links that will take you straight to images of their work.

Colour Families

Victor Vasarely	Henri Matisse	Pablo Picasso (blue period)
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Strips and Stripes

Bridget Riley	Frank Stella	Look at the Op Art movement
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Collage

Henri Matisse	Kurt Schwitters	Robert Rauschenberg
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Wax Resist

Joan Miró	Norval Morrisseau	Aboriginal Art e.g. Clifford Possum Tjapaltjarri
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Take a Line for a Walk

Aboriginal Art	Alexander Calder	Jackson Pollock
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Weaving

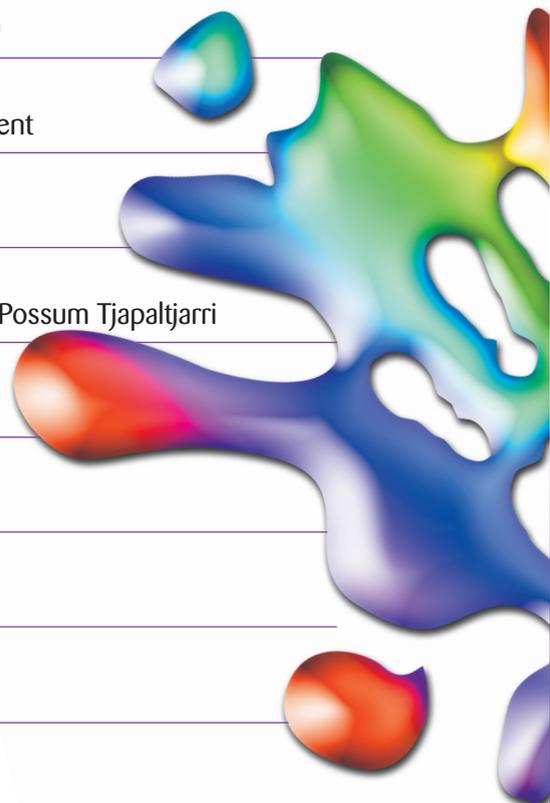
Heidi Lichterman	Lois Bryant	Eleanor Pritchard
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Colour Mixing

Vincent van Gogh	Alfred Sisley	Paul Cézanne
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Mono Printing

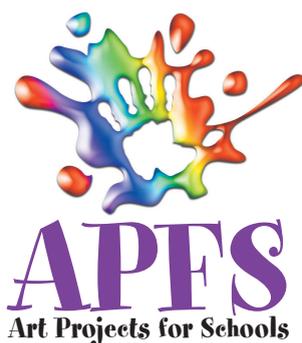
Cy Twombly	Stanley Hayter	Mark Tobey
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APFS Projects

Art Projects for Schools offer a wide range of engaging projects which can be used to enhance cross-curricular work or can be completed as stand-alone units. For details visit www.apfs.org.uk where you will also find feedback from schools that have taken part in our projects.

The Schools Art Project, The Calendar Project, The Christmas Card Project, Children as Designers, The Design a Card Project, The Academic Year Calendar Project, Leavers' Gifts, The Art of Sport.



For more detailed information go to
www.apfs.org.uk

Stimulation for Children : Support for Art : Funds for Schools

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