



Painting Animals

Use the stimulation of seeing animals in real life to produce sketches then choose one to turn into a painting.

Materials

- Visitor with animal/pet
- Cartridge paper
- HB pencils
- Books/photos of same animal (optional)
- Sugar paper
- White chalk (optional)
- Ready-mixed paint
- Brushes
- Water

Method

- Arrange for a suitable visitor to bring a small animal into school. This could be a parent or a local vet or animal charity. In this instance it was a visit from a local animal welfare charity.
- Allow a period of time for looking, touching (if appropriate) and questioning then ask the children to make some sketches of the animal. Encourage the children to do several drawings.
- Focus the children's attention on details of colour, shape, pattern etc while the animal is still in the classroom.
- After the visit ask the children to choose one of their sketches to use for a painting.
- Work on large sheets of sugar paper as this will allow the children to work in a big, bold way with the paintbrushes. If using the paintings for an APFS project remember the work will need scanning or photographing in order to arrive at the required A4 size.
- Use the sketches as a reference for the paintings. If the child would prefer, they could draw the animal onto sugar paper with white chalk first or they can go straight to paint. The chalk is a helpful tool for children that may lack confidence.
- Encourage the children to choose brushes that are an appropriate size for the area they are painting e.g. smaller brushes for detail.
- Some children may wish to add a background to their painting which is to be encouraged if appropriate.



This example was done by a child in the summer term of their Reception year and shows how some children are capable of capturing the characteristics of things that they know. Black outlining is often misused by children but in this painting it adds strength to the image and composition.

Taking it further

Ask children to paint their animals without a background then cut out when dry to create a collaborative scene. Try working on larger or smaller scales. Provide a range or textured materials to make a collaged animal.

Experimenting

Making sketches immediately after this visit will allow children to get details down on paper and also allows them to process what they've seen and experienced. It also provides some time for the excitement to die down before starting to use paint.

