



# Setting the table: Tempera Paint

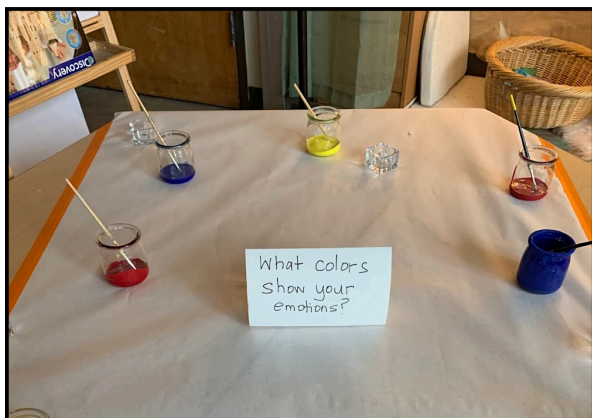
Tempera paint, a water-based medium, is a versatile and engaging material in the classroom. Its vibrant pigments, quick-drying properties, and non-toxic, water-based formula make it safe and easy to use.

Painting with tempera provides a compelling, expressive, and embodied art-making experience for children of all ages.

## Materials Checklist:

- Liquid tempera paint
- Paintbrushes in a variety of sizes (synthetic brushes will last the longest)
- Other Painting Tools: Sponges, cardboard tubes, sticks, feathers, et.
- Thick paper, cardboard, recycled materials, butcher paper, etc.
- Plastic Tupperware, yogurt cups, or any recycled small vessels to hold the paint and water if you need. Vessels with lids are especially helpful.
- A drying rack, shelf, or clothesline to hang art to dry.
- A bucket or bowl for cleaning brushes
- Palettes and/or Trays: plastic (Ikea is a great source) or metal baking trays
- Smocks or large t-shirts
- Paper towels, wipes, rags for cleaning brushes, hands, and tables





## Material Variations:

- Tempera sticks are a great tool to use in combination with liquid tempera or on their own.
- Tempera cakes are also a wonderful material for the classroom, and work beautifully at classroom easels.
- Try painting, printing, or stamping with brayers, toothpicks, or cotton swabs
- Use natural materials as paintbrushes

## Possible Community Agreements:

- Explore and have fun
- Use materials with care
- Put on a smock & push up sleeves
- Treat the paintbrushes with care; add paint or water if the brushes look like a twisted mop
- Place paintbrushes in the water bucket when you are done
- Only paint on agreed upon surfaces
- Put your name on your painting (or ask for help) and put it on the drying rack to dry.
- Share materials with others
- Wash your hands when you are finished



# Using Tempera in the Classroom:

- Begin by allowing children time to explore the spontaneous joy of tempera as an expressive medium before structuring their experience.
- Encourage children to mix colors, experiment with texture, and use their whole arm to paint. Using an easel in the classroom is an accessible and low stress way to begin this process.
- Once they've become familiar with tempera, there are endless ways to connect it to learning. You can pair painting with storytelling or read-alouds; inviting children to paint a scene, character, or feeling from a story—deepening comprehension and vocabulary.
- Or, use painting to observe and document the natural world. Provide leaves, flowers, or other natural materials and encourage kids to paint what they see—building observation skills and reinforcing science concepts.
- Don't forget to involve children in the cleanup to build responsibility and independence.

## Companion Texts

*Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni

*Color Dance* by Anna Jonas

*Mouse Paint* by Ellen Stoll Walsh

*Mix It Up* by Herve Tullet

## Helpful Directions for Applying Paint:

- **Dip** - Dip your brush in the paint, not too much, just a tiny kiss!
- **Wipe** - Wipe away any extra paint on the side of the paint container, like your brush is wiping its feet before coming inside.
- **Paint** - Now gently paint on your paper—let your brush glide and slide like it's skating across the page!

