

Crayon and Pastel Drawing — Cave Creature

Approach: Independent

Time: 20 minutes

Level: Year 4 and year 8

Focus: Students can produce an expressive coloured drawing based on an imaginative idea, using skills of composition and media effects.

Resources: Video containing words on screen and voice-over. Per student: set of 12 oil pastels; set of 12 soft crayons; 1 sheet of B3 grey sugar paper; cardboard under-surface; tray for crayons.

Questions/instructions:

On each student's table place a sheet of grey sugar paper on a cardboard under-surface, and a set of 12 pastels and 12 crayons arranged tonally on a tray.

Show video tape.

Cave Creature video script.

In this activity you are going to draw a picture of a make-believe cave creature.

You will have your own set of crayons and pastels to work with. Try to use both the crayons and pastels in ways that make your colours and shapes look strong, bright and really effective. You can get different effects in your colours and shapes by using crayons and pastels over the top of each other. You can blend, mix and rub different colours in all sorts of interesting and unusual ways.

Now let's think about that make-believe cave creature — your very own special cave creature that comes from your own ideas and imagination. A cave creature that glows big, bright and colourful.

Imagine that at night your creature lives in a huge hollow cave at the edge of a steamy, swampy pool of weedy water. During the daytime it likes to stomp and stalk through the bushes and grasslands, and to cool off in a pool of slimy mud, muck and water that surrounds its cave.

Let's pay attention to the creature you are going to draw. It's a strange kind of creature, because in one way it helps to protect the swampy pool and everything that lives in it, but in another way it can be scary and frighteningly fierce. As well as being a good protector, it can also be an awesomely powerful beast that none other would like to tackle or challenge.

Think about what your cave creature might look like. Think about the size and shape of its body, and think about the parts of its body — its eyes, its nose, its mouth, its teeth, its tongue and its powerful jaws. This cave creature is going to look strong, fierce, alert and full of energy? It's a creature that can bellow an enormous and spine-shivering roar that will make attackers twitch and tremble?

Think about its spine, its tail, its legs and claws. This creature can stomp and splash and thrash its way through the mucky pool as well as run, prance, grab and shake with great power and speed?

By now you will be thinking hard about the shape, colours, body parts and body patterns of your wonderful cave creature — a cave creature that will seem to have almost magical powers to protect

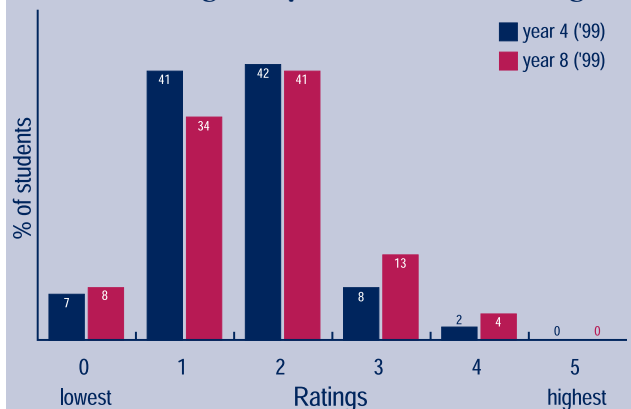
and attack. No one has ever seen a real live cave creature of this kind, so no one can ever say that your drawing is right or wrong. But try to make it special, interesting, and as big as you can make it, so that it fills your paper.

You need to work quite quickly to do as much as you can in 20 minutes.

Remember — bright, glowing colours and a wonderfully big and powerful cave creature.

When there is 5 minutes to go, remind students of the time remaining.

Global Ratings: Crayon and Pastel Drawing



Key attributes:	(0 low – 3 high)	mean score	
		y4	y8
expressiveness: image appropriate to task (cave creature); strength, vitality, colour, movement, dynamism, imagination, avoidance of cliché		1.1	1.2
composition: use of whole pictorial space; appropriate context; arrangement of images; balance		1.1	1.2
detail: finer features included; use of line, texture, pattern, colour blends			
use of media: technical control of media; exploiting a range of mark making		1.0	1.1
Global rating:	(0 low – 5 high)	1.6	1.7

Commentary:

There was very little difference between year 4 and year 8 in the mean scores for each of the attributes of the student drawings. 50% of year 4 and 54% of year 8 drawings were marked in the middle range of the global ratings; large percentages of drawings were marked in the bottom range of the global ratings. Overall differences between year 4 and year 8 were quite narrow on this task. Teachers marking this task expressed general disappointment with the quality of the drawings. Students attempting the 1995 crayon and pastel task achieved higher results.

MID RANGE EXEMPLARS

This work is characterised by bold filling of the page and strongly applied pastel. The duck billed creature may owe much to "Australiana" in its choice of colouring and pattern. The confident heavy black outline tends to flatten the design. Although no attempt has been made to give the swampy context, the creature's form seems well adapted to that environment. The way it moves around the page is assured.



The body is boldly patterned and strongly decorative. In contrast to the body, the head feels a little pale and insipid, lacking the strong colour and defined features of the rest of the creature. This lack of continuity tends to fragment the reading of the image as a whole. The suggested movement in the tail probably arises from the need to fill the space on the paper rather than any intention to suggest drama. There are no indications of the context where this creature lives. Colours are used very discretely with no attempt to blend.

A ferocious evil grin has nasty pointy teeth and crossed bloodshot eyes. The pastel is energetically scribbled to give a damp furry appearance. Main features are emphatically outlined in contrast to the soft body. While understanding contrast and depicting some stereotypical fierceness, the drawing lacks development of either form or context. Children exposed to many years of drawing “monsters” will often resort to their previous schema without elaboration. This could indicate failure of the task to inspire new challenges as much as any apparent limitations in the drawing itself.



The bold graduated colour on the tail suggests the potential power of this student's work. However, much of the remainder of the drawing is filled with small linear patterns. In terms of overall design the creature has a pitbull like ferocious head with spiky ornamentation. Given more time to develop both the form and context this creature might become boldly original and vibrantly alive.

One of the many “bug-eyed spotty monsters” this task inspired! Imaginative tasks can generate these kinds of solutions when there are no opportunities for directed observation of actual creatures in motion. There is conscious use of bold colour patterning as well as mixed colour in the paler areas which could be either wings or background. The drawing appears to be growing from the centre outwards while remaining strictly frontal in pose. A developed background would enhance the potential drama. The limbs are “sausage-like” and non-threatening in their formlessness.



LOW RANGE EXEMPLARS

HIGH RANGE EXEMPLARS

