

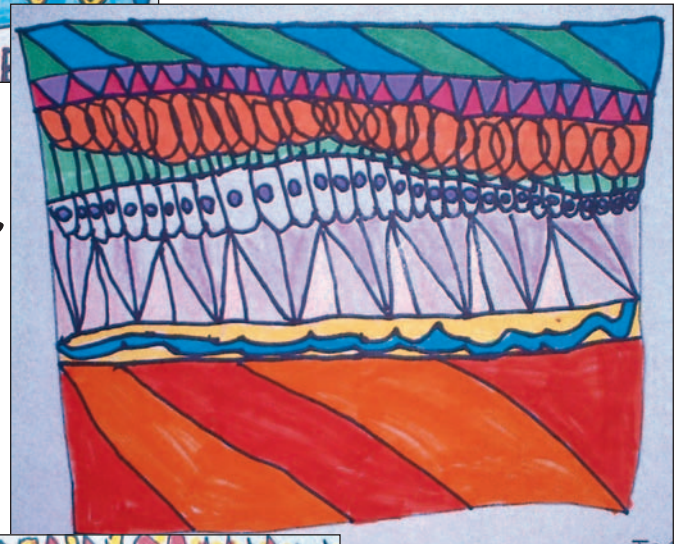
## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will...

- become comfortable and confident in the art-room setting.
- learn how to follow simple directions.
- explore the fundamental element of line.
- learn that a line can also be created by repeating a shape many times.
- recognize that letters and numbers are shapes that can be used as a design element.

## MATERIALS

- Paper
- Crayons
- Color markers
- Black permanent markers



# Let's Explore line

by Shelley Phillips

**A** project that I begin with almost every year for my youngest students (kindergarten or first-grade) is the exploration of line. When I meet the children for the first time, I want to make them feel comfortable and excited about what they can look forward to in art class.

Line is a very basic element and something I know all the children will know how to draw. "Who knows how to draw a straight line?" Every hand goes up. Then, "Who can draw a wavy line?" Again, all hands go up. Already, they are feeling confident and excited to know the answers.

"Let's pretend our finger is the pencil and the air is the paper and we'll all draw the wavy line together." They love this part! We do a few more lines on our "paper" like zigzag and loop-loop/spiral.

I then demonstrate by drawing these lines on paper. I make sure they know that it's perfectly fine for one person's zigzag line to look totally different than someone else's. I also show them that by repeating a shape across the paper, it too becomes a line. We name different shapes and they usually come up with neat ideas, like lollipop or raindrop or bagel shapes, in addition to geometric and letter shapes. I encourage them to be inventive and try to think up lines and shapes we have not mentioned.

With black permanent markers, children draw their lines, beginning at the top of the paper, touching each side



**This project is a comfortable challenge for the start of the school year.**

edge and working their way down the page. Sometimes they draw freehand "frames" or borders. We use color markers and crayons to fill in. Without even realizing it, children are creating beautiful color patterns and works of art.

I love this as a first project because it is a comfortable challenge for the young children. I see all lev-

els of sophistication; some kids are extremely detailed with their lines and shapes, while others are more basic. They get very involved in the drawing and generally take at least two 45-minute periods. As a follow-up, I continue with line projects in the coming weeks using other media, such as stamping lines, collages with strips, and pop-up strip "amusement parks."

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