



Kendra

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Middle- and high-school students will ...

- draw a chameleon.
- learn how to use shapes to add to their chameleon drawing.
- learn how to contrast colors.
- draw different texture ideas.

MATERIALS

- 9" x 24" black paper
- Erasers
- Pencils
- Metallic markers



Kyle



Cassie



Tagart

Chameleons

REPTILIAN TEXTURE

by Hugh Petersen

What inspired me for this project? First, a drawing of a chameleon I saw in an art-supply catalog. Then, I was at a pet store that had chameleons. I didn't realize how fascinating they were—filled with texture and color, as the drawing I had seen tried to capture. I loved how their tails could roll up to form a perfect spiral. With these facts about the chameleon in mind, chameleons proved to be a good subject to highlight shape, color and texture with my eighth-graders.

It would have been nice to have a real live chameleon as a model for the students to draw, but the next best thing were the many pictures of chameleons I found on the Internet to inspire their drawings. (I don't know how we used to teach before the Internet! It is such a handy research tool, where you can get a flood of information or pictures instantly.)

Once the student found their chameleon picture, they were to sketch it lightly with pencil on a piece of 9" x 24" black construction paper. The students were to draw the chameleon large enough to fill the paper.

In every picture you see of a chameleon, it is hanging on a branch, so the branch was also added to the drawing. Next, the students were to look at their chameleon sketch and think about what sort of designs they could imagine for their chameleon bodies. Naturally, some chameleons may have stripes or spots, and they may especially have interesting design patterns on their face or around their eyes. The students lightly sketched in their own ideas on what stripes or spots they imagined

for their chameleon.

Now it came time to add color. We used color metallic markers, which are a nice medium to use against black paper. But I didn't want the students to color their chameleons in solid colors, which would not add any interest to their drawings or represent the real feel of the chameleons' skin. I wanted them to add texture to their chameleon's bodies. I had the students draw out different pattern texture ideas, such as scales, bumps, lines, shapes, etc., on a separate piece of black paper.

We also talked about different color combinations they could use in their texture ideas. I wanted them to understand they needed to have color combinations that would make their different texture ideas contrast each other; an example is to use warm colors in one texture and cool colors in another. This way their stripes and spot designs they drew on their chameleon bodies would stand out. They also put the appropriate texture on their branches and leaves.

The end result was more than a chameleon drawing—it helped the students see how they could use shapes, such as stripes or spot designs, to add to their chameleon drawing. They learned how to control color by contrasting colors to make the patterns they drew on their chameleon bodies stand out. And they understood how texture added interest and feeling to their chameleon drawings. ■

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