

PIXEL ART-Y TEACHER'S GUIDE

A 30–45-minute art lesson for students in pre-K through 5th grade.

Uses the [Pixel Party](#) game.



OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to collaborate and explore imaginative ideas with hands-on materials.
- Students will be able to use a variety of materials to make personal and meaningful art.
- Students will be able to identify and give meaning to abstract figures.

ABOUT THIS LESSON

In this lesson, students will use their imagination and creativity with the pieces from *Pixel Party* to design their own works of art, which will double as playable *Pixel Party* puzzles. They will start by following a set of instructions that allows them freedom of choice, while ensuring the shapes they create will help them accomplish the objectives of the lesson. The challenge for students in this activity is in seeing a figure in an abstract shape, similar to finding a cloud that looks like an animal or a face in an ink blot, then bringing that figure to life.

Some key elements of artistic growth include hands-on exploration of materials, finding patterns in randomness, and bringing out the beauty in the mundane. This activity encourages students to explore each of these elements in their own unique ways. This activity works well as an icebreaker, as a review, or as a way to allow students to use old or new media, such as pastels, chalk, tempera paints, watercolors, etc.

NATIONAL CORE ART STANDARDS CORRELATIONS

Pre-K

- VA:Cr1.1.PKa: Engage in self-directed play with materials.
- VA:Cr1.2.PKa: Engage in self-directed, creative making.

Kindergarten Grade

- VA:Cr1.1.Ka: Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.
- VA:Cr1.2.Ka: Engage collaboratively in creative art-making in response to an artistic problem.

1st Grade

- VA:Cr1.1.1a: Engage collaboratively in exploration and imaginative play with materials.
- VA:Cr1.2.1a: Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.

2nd Grade

- VA:Cr1.1.2a: Brainstorm collaboratively multiple approaches to an art or design problem.
- VA:Cr1.2.2a: Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.

Standards correlations continue on page 3.

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PROCEDURE

1. Hook

Begin the lesson by introducing the *Pixel Party* game to students. Explain the rules and allow them to solve a few of the puzzles. The better they understand the premise of the game, the easier Part 1 of the student activity will be for them.

2. Instruction

Show a few of the puzzle shapes and ask if they would have seen the image portrayed on the puzzle in the shape if the background wasn't there. Some of the puzzles are clear, but for other puzzles, the background context is needed. Discuss with students how the background context makes the puzzle easier to see while making it more appealing at the same time. Explain to students that their objective for this activity is to create their own *Pixel Party* puzzle image, and to decorate the puzzle in a way that displays what the puzzle is supposed to look like, just like how the included game puzzles have visual context.

3. Student Activity Part 1: Shaping up

Take time to walk through the steps in Part 1 of the student handout to demonstrate for students how to make a shape on the Pixel Art-y Grid using the game pieces, and what an example final product might look like. The grid helps ensure that the shapes that students create are simple, but have enough flexibility that students can make a wide range of images to find patterns to build pictures from.

For students with a competitive demeanor, you might consider turning Part 1 into a two-player *Pixel Party* mini game. The extension activities section, below, provides more details.

4. Student Activity Part 2: Bits and Masterpieces

For Part 2, students will design and color their shapes to better display what they see in them. This connects to the discussion during the instruction phase of the lesson about how a background can give context for the puzzle picture.

It may be challenging at first for students to see an image or figure from the shape they made in Part 1. Encourage them to be patient and look at the shape from all different perspectives. Students may opt to do Part 1 again if they want a different shape to work with. As when looking up at clouds, it may be hard to see a figure at first, but eventually they will start seeing plenty of patterns to choose from.

Once students have decided on an image to bring to life, let them title their picture, then provide them with the tools and materials you want them to use to decorate the image.

5. Conclusion

When students are finished with their artwork, allow them to challenge others to solve the puzzle they made. Each Pixel Art-y piece is best appreciated as a *Pixel Party* puzzle.

Assessment

The main goals of this lesson are achieved when students create a piece of art that acts as a puzzle. Students doing these activities explore imaginative ideas, use a variety of materials, and give meaning to an abstract shape. You may choose to also emphasize other assessments, such as attention to detail and working with precision. Or perhaps you want to evaluate how well students work with the media provided. Since there are a variety of options, use your discretion when formally assessing and providing feedback to students, based on the context of your goals.

Extension Activities

To boost engagement in this lesson, you can use the Pixel Art-y Grid as a two-player mini-game. The first player places a *Pixel Party* game piece on the grid so that at least two squares of the shape are within the grid. The rest of the piece may extend off the grid. Players continue placing pieces on the grid until no more pieces can be placed without breaking the two-square rule. The last player to legally place a piece is the winner.

3rd Grade

- VA:Cr1.1.3a: Elaborate on an imaginative idea.
- VA:Cr1.2.3a: Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.

4th Grade


- VA:Cr1.1.4a: Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.
- VA:Cr1.2.4a: Collaboratively set goals and create artwork that is meaningful and has purpose to the makers.

5th Grade

- VA:Cr1.1.5a: Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making.
- VA:Cr1.2.5a: Identify and demonstrate diverse methods of artistic investigation to choose an approach for beginning a work of art.



CHIP THEORY Kids

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PIXEL ART-Y

STUDENT HANDOUT

Use the pieces from *Pixel Party* to create your very own puzzle masterpiece, then unleash your inner artist to bring it to life with color and creativity. Follow these steps to find your inner Picasso.

PART 1 - SHAPING UP

1. One at a time, place each piece on the Pixel Art-y Grid so that at least two squares from the game piece are on the grid. The rest of the game piece may extend past the grid.
2. Keep placing pieces until you cannot fit another game piece on the grid without breaking the two square rule. It's ok to have blank spaces left.
3. Trace your shape on the paper. Make sure to trace any blank spaces in the shape as well.
4. Take the game pieces off the grid. Your traced shape will turn into your very own *Pixel Party* puzzle in Part 2!

PART 2 - BITS AND MASTERPIECES

1. Look at your traced shape from all angles. Flip the paper around, look at it upside down, look at it sideways. Pick your favorite way to look at your shape.
2. Now comes the fun part. Let your imagination help you make out a figure from the shape. You might see something as simple as a desk lamp, or as wild as a duck riding on a comet. What do you see in your traced shape? Write your title at the top of the page.
3. Now decorate and color your traced shape to bring to life whatever figure you see. Don't forget to create a matching background!
4. Congratulations! You now have your very own *Pixel Party* puzzle. You can use it with *Pixel Party* to challenge your friends!

PIXEL ART-Y GRID

Title:

Rock Hands!

Grid:

