

October 2026 Art Docent Lesson

Synesthesia &
Chromesthesia

The Color Wheel

K-5



What is Synesthesia?

Synesthesia, pronounced “sin-ess-THEE-zh-uh”, is a phenomenon that causes sensory crossovers, such as seeing colors when hearing music, tasting words, or linking numbers to specific hues. Some people describe it as having “wires crossed” in their brain because it activates two or more senses when there’s only a reason for one sense to activate.

Synesthesia is largely and wholly involuntary (done without a choice). It is lifelong and the sensory overlap stays the same over a person’s lifetime.

Brain scans, like Functional MRI (fMRI) and MRI show extra physical connections and cross-activation between different sensory regions of the brain. Scans reveal how the brain blends senses like sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste.

It is not a disease. It’s a natural difference in how the brain is wired, and it affects about 3%-5% of people.

Many different types of Synesthesia have been identified.
We are going to focus on one type.

Chromesthesia: where sound involuntarily evokes an experience of colors, shapes, or movement.

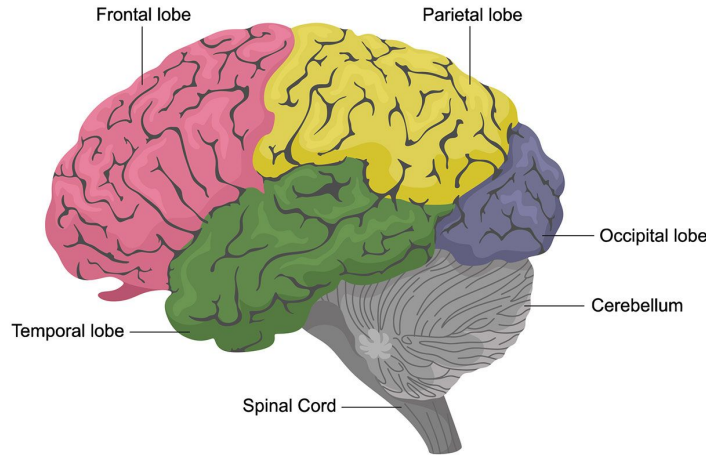
[What is Chromesthesia? 1:46](#)

[What it's like to hear colors 4:37](#)

[The musician who sees colour and feels textures when she hears music 3:35](#)

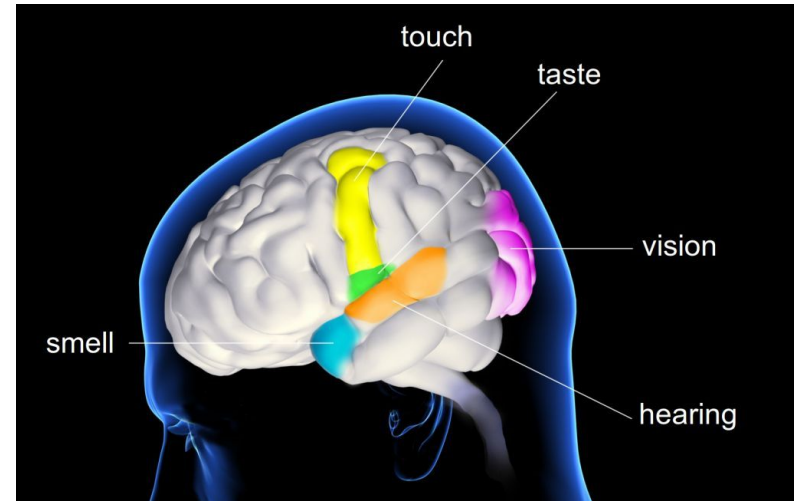
[*Visualizing sound: motion and chromesthesia 0:42](#)

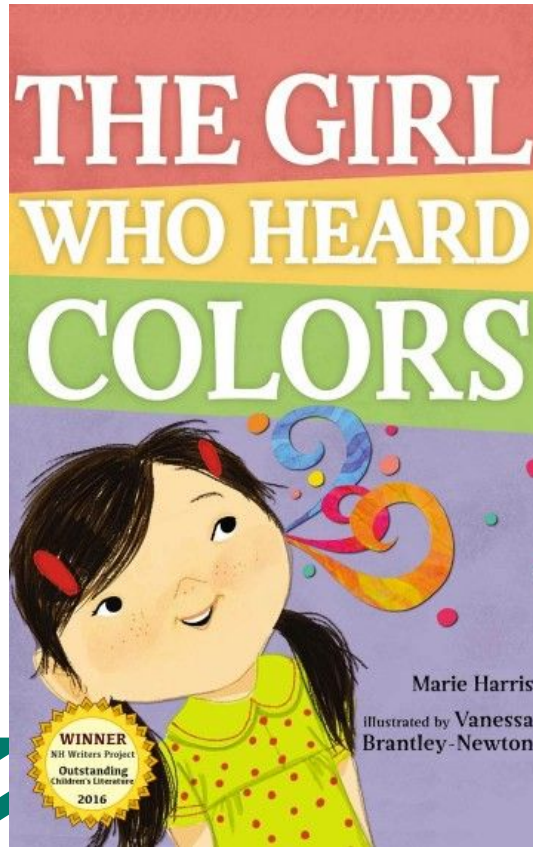
Human Brain Anatomy



For someone without Chromesthesia, when you hear music you only have a brain response in the auditory cortex (hearing, highlighted in orange). The auditory cortex is in the temporal lobe of the brain (green area in the picture above).

For someone who does have Chromesthesia, when you hear music you also have an additional brain response to the vision area (highlighted in pink) of the cerebral cortex. The visual area is in the occipital lobe (to the left in the dark blue).



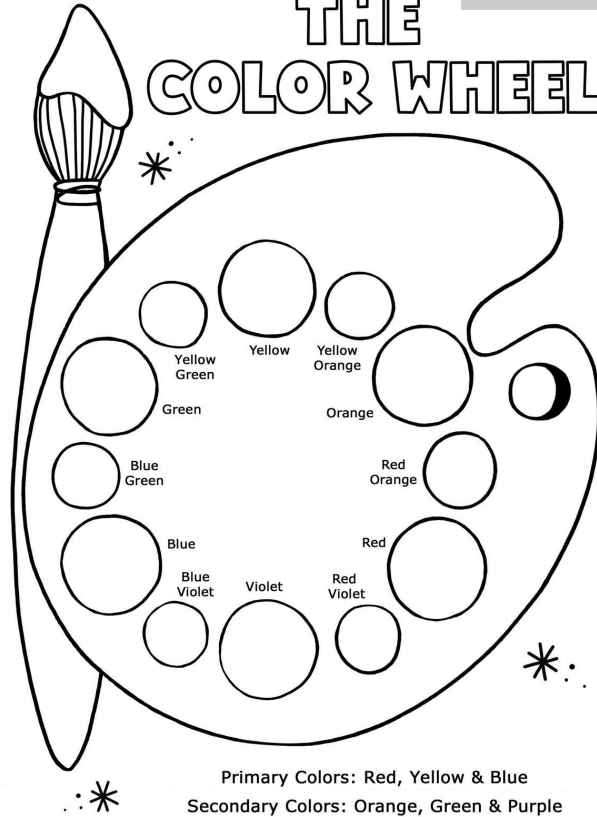


Throughout the year, the PTA Art Docent program is going to donate a book per art lesson. These books will be available at the Woodside library.

Each book will related to one specific art lesson. Please be on the lookout for this book and future books.

The Project, part 1

THE COLOR WHEEL

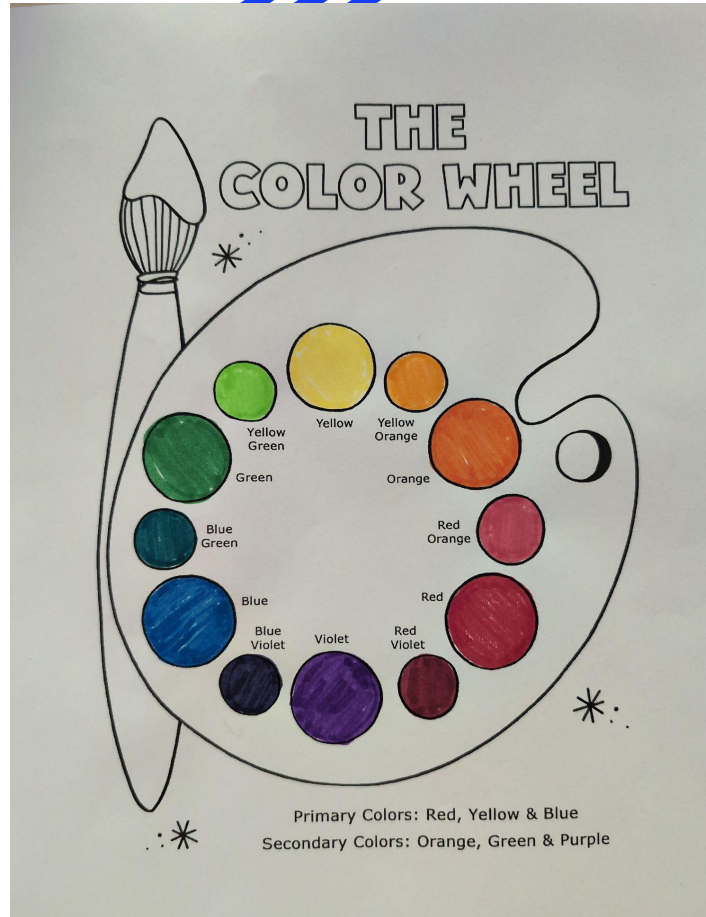


We're going to take the color wheel worksheet and color in each circle with the color that matches the labeling.

Some of the markers have the same name as found on the color wheel worksheet. Some do not. Choose the marker that you think best fits each circle. Have fun!

This is to show that for people with Chromesthesia, there is no set color for each note, sound, tone, or musical instrument, etc. It is entirely specific to that individual person.

Try to spend about 10 mins on the color wheel.



Coloring sheet label = marker used

Red = Red

Red Orange = Infra Red

Orange = Orange

Yellow Orange = Golden Yellow

Yellow = Yellow

Yellow Green = Electric Lime

Green = Green

Blue Green = Teal

Blue = Blue

Blue Violet = Plum

Violet = Violet

Red Violet = Raspberry

Part 2 & Supplies



For the next part of the art lesson, you'll need the following supplies:

- Half sheets of drawing paper (about 4). Please have the students write their name on the back of each sheet of paper.
- Markers (you may use other coloring items, like crayons or colored pencils).
- Large tan sheet of paper to protect the table/desks.

The art docent(s) will choose songs from the list. Choose about 4 (depending on how much time is allotted).

As each song plays, the students will draw and color like they are experiencing Chromesthesia. Try choosing colors that match what you hear. You can draw lines, or any shape that you feel matches what you hear (see). Use one half sheet of paper per song.

Please keep the drawings and coloring school appropriate.

Music List:

Please minimize each video

Classical music:

[Jacques Offenbach "Can Can" 2:11](#) (upbeat)

[Karl Jenkins "Palladio" 3:46](#) (upbeat)

[Gustav Holst "Jupiter"](#) please play up to 4:40 (upbeat)

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky ["Pas de Deux" 5:55](#) ["Swan Lake Theme" 3:00](#) (Both slightly slower paced)

Theme Songs/Soundtracks:

John Williams ["The Chairman's Waltz" 2:39](#) ["The Imperial March- Star Wars" 3:49](#) (moody)

[Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra "Pokemon Gotta Catch 'Em All" 3:54](#) (upbeat)

[Super Mario Bros. Theme Song 1:22](#) (upbeat)

[Yann Tiersen "La Valse d'Amelie" 2:15](#) (upbeat)

Music List Continued:

Please minimize each video

Electronic:

[Gabry Ponte "Tutta L'Italia" 3:05](#)

[Deadmau5 "Ghost and Stuff" 6:11](#)

[Odesza "A Moment In Time" 3:54](#)

[Bag Raiders "Shooting Star" 3:47](#)

Big Band:

[Benny Goodman "Sing, Sing, Sing" 5:23](#)

Miscellaneous:

[Led Zeppelin "Immigrant Song" 2:26](#)

[Cher "Believe" 3:59](#)