

RioTintoAlcan

# Unlikely Friends

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## Introduction

### *Rio Tinto Alcan Van Go 2010-2011*

As our planet stretches its resources to cope with environmental, economic and societal pressures it becomes more important than ever that inter-species cooperation takes place.

As well as developing a history of amazing symbiotic relationships, animals of different species bond for comfort and friendship.

Children develop empathy for animals and learn more about human and inter-species possibilities when they witness these kinds of strong, intimate attachments. It is hoped they will perceive that cooperation supports diversity and diversity creates sustainability.

This year Van Go will present two variations of Unlikely Friends: On Mondays Marta Robertson Smyth will lead a chalk pastel workshop exploring unusual animal friendships. Tuesdays and Wednesdays will feature drawing and painting workshops dealing with symbiosis, led respectively by Marta Robertson Smyth and Jamie Hume.



# Unlikely Friends

## Chalk Pastel Workshop

Classroom Activity

Recommended Teaching Level K-7

Developed by: *Marta Robertson Smyth, Alexis Macdonald Seto*

Why is it that animals of different species, expected to be enemies can actually become best friends? There are many examples throughout the world of unusual animal pairings that experience no prejudice and no fear towards each other. We can learn a great deal from these curious couples and this phenomenon of behavior. These animals have reached an understanding and know intuitively that cooperating works, and peace is always an option.

### **Students will:**

- Learn how to 'block' a drawing using basic shapes (circles, squares, rectangles and triangles) to build a 'structure' for an animal body
- Learn how to begin a sketch using blocking and basic composition i.e. foreground, background, figure etc.
- Learn to combine two mediums (chalk and paint) to create a vibrant work of art
- Learn a basic description of 'left brain' and 'right brain' activity, and what they can do to enhance their ability to draw and concentrate
- Learn to do a professional technique called scumbling, to create depth and texture with their chalk pastels
- Learn various ways of using brushes to create texture, smooth edges and to blend colours
- Learn the process of making art by observing the instructor create a piece from beginning to end — "it's like magic!"
- Learn some of the terms for animal groupings i.e. gaggle of geese, pride of lions etc.
- Develop more confidence in their own ability to draw, make decisions and create

### **Activity:**

Students will gather together and view illustration boards showing photographs of real life animal pairings in their natural and man-made habitats. Students will also see and hear stories of animal friendships that defy explanation! Students will view examples of art that have been created and inspired by stories of real life animal pairings.

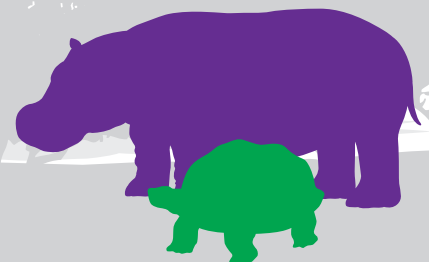
Some examples include:

- A crow and a wolf
- A polar bear and a dog
- A tiger and piglets
- A tortoise and hippo
- A gorilla and kitten
- A deer and a dog

Instructor will go through a step-by-step demonstration. Students will use chalk pastels to draw two animals of their choosing, fill in figures using scumbling technique, and apply paints to paper to hold the chalk in place.

### **Materials:**

- Illustration boards
- Reference materials: Books, photocopies of animals
- Roll of kraft paper to protect floor
- Newsprint drawing paper
- Black construction paper (18" x 24")
- Chalk pastels (all colours)
- Tempera paints (full range of colours)
- Brushes (3 sizes)
- T-shirts to protect clothing



# Unlikely Friends

## Painting And Drawing Workshop

Classroom Activity

Recommended Teaching Level K-7

*Developed by: Marta Robertson Smyth, Alexis Macdonald Seto*

Relationships in the animal kingdom can seem very strange, because the most unlikely creatures do wonderful things to help each other survive. What makes these friendships work? Children will be introduced to fascinating images and stories that illustrate many ways in which different species of wild animals cooperate with each other for their mutual comfort and safety.

### **Students will:**

- Build skills that develop their confidence and expand their range of expression
- Integrate the sciences and humanities through art-making
- Broaden their awareness and empathy towards other species
- Be encouraged to interpret the body language of animals and reproduce their impressions through drawing and painting
- Explore ways to set up compositions that communicate action, emotion and intent
- Learn to analyze and reproduce shapes from simple to complex structures
- Consider elements of composition such as figure and ground, gesture, weight and tension
- Acquire basic painting techniques such as texturing, blending, feathering etc.
- Explore the use of colour to express dimensions of feeling and thought

### **Activity:**

Students come together to view images that illustrate inter-species cooperation and discuss the implications of these behaviours. They will observe a drawing/painting demonstration inspired by the discussion and the resource materials on hand. Starting with a practice sketch on newsprint, students will then move to a larger piece of paper to develop their imagery. Using oil pastel and liquid tempera paints students will complete a finished painting.

### **Materials:**

- plenty of resource materials: photocopies, books, storyboards, other artists' works
- paper to protect work area
- water source nearby
- newsprint paper for practice sketches (min 18"x 24")
- kraft paper or large tag paper
- liquid tempera paints
- oil pastels brushes: small, medium and large
- masking tape
- scissors



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## Resource Materials:

### Story Books:

*Owen and Mzee: The Language of Friendship*

Told by Isabella Hatkoff, Craig Hatkoff and Dr. Paula Kahumbu  
With photographs by Peter Greste  
Scholastic Inc. NY, NY 2007  
ISBN 0-439-89959-1

*Tara and Bella: The Elephant and Dog Who Became Best Friends*

By Carol Buckley  
Putnam Juvenile, 2009  
ISBN 0-399-25443-9

### Resource Books:

*Animals: I Can Draw (ages 9–12)*

By Tony Tallarico  
Wanderer Books, 1980  
ISBN 0-671-41375-9  
ISBN 0-606-10849-1

*I Can Draw Wild Animals (ages 5–8)*

By Barbara Soloff Levy  
Dover Publications, 1999  
ISBN 0-486-40821-3

*I Can Draw Animals (ages 4–8)*

By Ray Gibson  
Photographs by Howard Allman  
Usborne Books, 2007  
ISBN 1-601-30018-2

### Reference books for expanded study:

*So You Love Animals:*

*An Action-Packed Fun-Filled Book to Help Kids Help Animals*  
By Zoe Weil  
Gamble Guides, 2004  
ISBN 1-881-69901-3

### Websites:

<http://humaneeducation.org/home>

<http://channel.nationalgeographic.com/episode/unlikely-animal-friends-4317/Overview>  
(short video stories of unlikely animal pairings)

## Related Activities:

### 1. Cooperative Mural (grades K-4)

Each student chooses two animals to draw. A length of white or coloured craft paper is rolled out and taped to wall or floor. Using children's markers, 5 or 6 students at a time draw one very large and one small animal. Animals may overlap each other; smaller animals may be drawn inside another animal.

Animals do not have to look like animals. 'Mistakes' can be turned into other animals (no need to erase). Using tempera paints and brushes, or oil pastels students will fill in shapes with colour. Once dry, students will trace the outline of the animals with a contrasting colour of paint or pastel. If desired the background can also be painted. Emphasis is on cooperation, loose and large drawing, and filling the mural with shapes and colour, not realism.

#### Materials:

- roll of kraft paper (most schools stock several colours)
- roll of masking tape
- 3-4 packages of children's felts (Mr. Sketch or similar)
- coloured pencils (optional)
- brushes (2-3 sizes)
- oil pastels (6-12 boxes)
- liquid tempera paints (assorted colours)

### 2. Artist Trading Cards (grades 4-7)

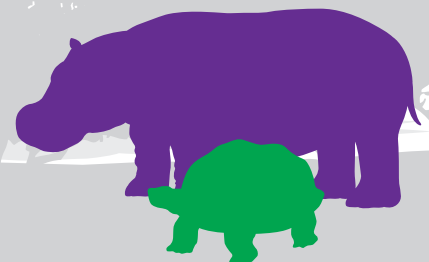
Working with a format that is already familiar in the schools, students will create small cards with single images of birds, plants, animals and fish that live in symbiotic relationships. Any combination of drawing, painting and collage would be effective for this project. The game will be to identify other cards that represent the correct symbiotic pairings and to trade skillfully enough to end up with a complete deck of correct pairings.

#### Materials:

- Poster board cut to the dimensions of trading cards (2 ½" x 3 ½")
- Scissors
- Glue sticks
- National Geographic and other wildlife magazines
- Water colours (tempera block paints will do)
- Fine brushes
- Sharpies

#### Resource Materials:

See the Resource Materials for Painting & Drawing.



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## Glossary of Terms:

**Analogous color scheme** – A colour scheme made up of colours that are next to each other on the colour wheel (eg: yellow, yellow-orange, and orange)

**Blending** – The gradual merging of one colour into another creating a new colour in the blended area

**Blocking** – Rendering a simple sketch (or an abstract) of the composition

**Border** – A frame or guideline drawn around the edge of the paper to contain the work

**Chalk pastel** – A drawing tool usually made with a combination of pigment, gum, and chalk or clay (the purest form of drawing or painting pigment available.)

**Composition** – The arrangement of the various parts of an artwork into a pleasing whole; also refers to a work of art

**Complementary Colour** – Colours that are directly opposite each other on the colour wheel (red and green, blue and orange, violet and yellow)

**Contrasting colour** – a strong difference between darkness and lightness of two or more colours

**Feathering** – The spreading of chalk in veiny lines

**Figure** – a human or animal form as a subject in a work of art

**Gesture** – Making strokes or lines that indicate movement and direction

**Ground** – The first layer on a picture

**Background** – The underlying surface of the picture

**Foreground** – The part of the picture or scene that appears nearest the viewer

**Highlight** – An area with a lighter tone; the reflection of a light source in a picture

**Hue** – Colour, a specific shade

**Outline** – A line traced around the figure(s) to separate them from the background

**Perspective** – The appearance of an object to an observer, which determines the distance from the observer

**Rhythm** – A pattern of elements in a work of art; a regular recurring colour or shape or design

**Scumbling** – Multiple layers of colour applied one on top of the other so that one layer shows through the next to create dazzling textures of broken colour

**Shading** – An area of darker tone, close lines, dots, or crosshatching to make darkness or shadow in a drawing or picture

**Tone** – The overall blend of colour and light and shade in a painting or drawing

**Texture** – The feel and appearance of a surface. How rough, smooth, furry, or scaly

**Oil pastel** – A drawing tool made by cooking raw pigments with an oil soluble wax binder, which is then molded into crayons; they are water resistant

**Tempera paint** – A washable non-permanent, non-toxic creamy paint that looks like pudding

**Under painting** – A background technique for the work surface

