

Introduction



for education

COLOR PSYCHOLOGY

COLOR PSYCHOLOGY: FOR EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS

Imagine a world without color.

How would that make you feel? How would it affect your mood?

We take for granted the rainbow of colors that paint our world. Color inspires, illuminates, and is a beacon that enables us to express our thoughts and feelings.

Color can have a significant impact on learning, as it can affect the brain's cognitive and emotional responses. If you had the opportunity to change the trajectory of student learning outcomes based on color, would you be more considerate?

HOW COLOR IN THE CLASSROOM IMPACTS STUDENT LEARNING:

- ✦ Attention + Focus: Certain colors can help improve focus and attention, making it easier to absorb information. Colors like blue, green, and yellow have been shown to have a calming effect on the brain, helping to reduce stress and increase focus.
- ✦ Memory: Colors can also help with memory retention. For example, using different colors to highlight important information can help the brain remember and recall that information later on.
- ✦ Emotions: Colors can evoke different emotions in individuals. For example, warm colors like red and orange can evoke feelings of energy and excitement, while cool colors like blue and green can evoke feelings of calmness and relaxation.
- ✦ Visual Appeal: The use of color can make learning materials more visually appealing, making it easier and more enjoyable for learners to engage with the material.

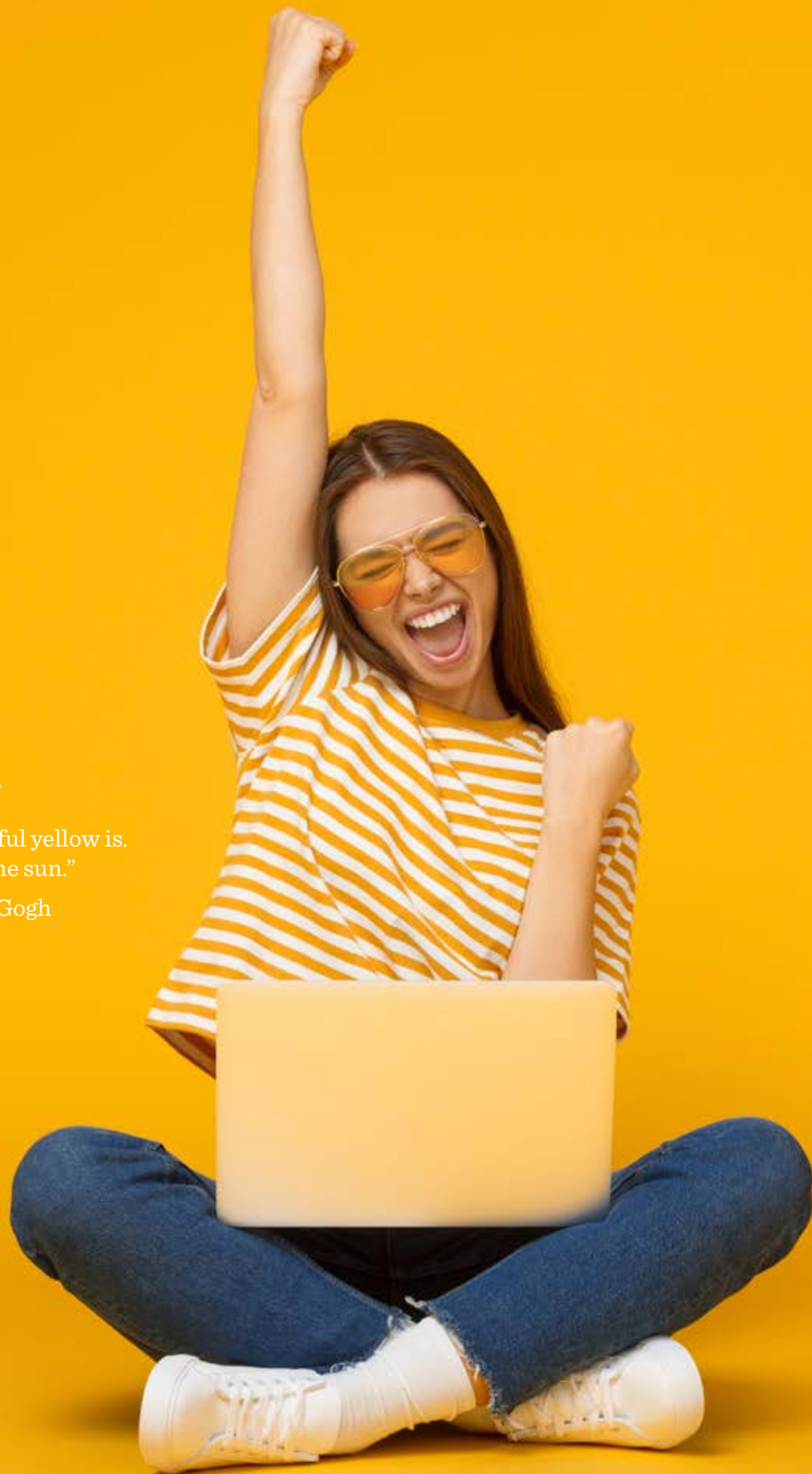
Read more: [Resources to help you recreate your school's learning environments.](#)



Yellow.

“How wonderful yellow is.
It stands for the sun.”

-Vincent Van Gogh



COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF YELLOW

Color psychology is the study of how certain colors impact human behavior, not to be confused with color theory. Both are important to understand when determining how to use it effectively in modern learning environments. Yellow is believed to be the most noticeable of all colors to the human eye. It has the ability to boost mood but can also become overpowering and strain the eyes if overused. Understanding how color affects people, ensures that the colors in your learning environments are working for rather than against you.

YELLOW IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Warmth + Sunshine
- ✍ Joy + Happiness
- ✍ Cheerfulness
- ✍ Positivity
- ✍ Optimism



THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH YELLOW IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 01** Use sparingly. Too much yellow could make your design could feel cheap and overstimulating.
- 02** Add brightness. Yellow furniture, walls, or accents can add illumination, even to a small space.
- 03** Balance. Have you ever tried to read yellow text? Yellow is the most fatiguing of all colors to the eye because it reflects so much light. Try balancing with a complimentary like such as blue or green to give your brain a break.

YELLOW HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ✦ Promote interaction
- ✦ Promote high levels of thought
- ✦ Boost memory
- ✦ Encourage communication

USE YELLOW AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✦ Grab attention
- ✦ Build emotional energy
- ✦ Encourage communication
- ✦ Wake up the nervous system

COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF RED

Colour is believed to be the most important visual experience to human beings (Adams FM, Osgood CE, 1973). Look around. How many colors do you see? Be mindful of how these colors make you feel. If you are in an office environment, do the colors and textures support creativity? Can you concentrate or are you distracted by the color scheme? If you are at home, do the colors make you feel safe, comfortable, and calm?

These types of questions are all too common in interior design for commercial and residential spaces but are often overlooked in education. The same thoughtful consideration should be given to the learning environments that support our future generations.

RED IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Energy
- ✍ Danger
- ✍ Strength + Power
- ✍ Determination
- ✍ Passion + Love

Red.

“Color is a power which directly influences the soul.”

-Wassily Kandinsky

THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH RED IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 01

Use sparingly: Be mindful of how powerful this color can be. Balance with calming colors so the red doesn't overstimulate.
- 02

Combat boredom: Use red strategically in learning zones where students are asked to complete repetitive learning activities.
- 03

Think maker space: Help keep students energized and inspire creativity by adding flexible red seating to STEAM, robotics, media, and technology centers.



USE RED AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✍ Encourage creativity
- ✍ Stir up conversation
- ✍ Improve performance/concentration
- ✍ Inspire movement
- ✍ Increase alertness

RED HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ✍ Enhance human metabolism
- ✍ Increase respiration rate
- ✍ Raise blood pressure



Blue.

“It’s calm under the waves in the blue of my oblivion.”

-Fiona Apple

COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF BLUE

According to this study conducted by The University of British Columbia, which analyzed the effects of the color blue and red on 600 people between 2007-2008, red was deemed the most effective at enhancing our attention to detail, while blue is best at boosting our ability to think creatively. Based on this study, and others, we know that red and blue both deserve a place in learning environments. It just depends on the nature of the learning taking place in each space.

BLUE IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Peace + Tranquility
- ✍ Relaxation
- ✍ Trust
- ✍ Loyalty + Reliability
- ✍ Sadness, Loneliness + Coldness



THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH BLUE IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 01** Be thoughtful: While blue is known for peace and tranquility, it is also associated with feelings of sadness, coldness, and depression.
- 02** Use multiple shades: Because blue has such a versatile palette, you can put colored furniture and décor in a blue room using similar hues fabrics, and your eyes won't feel too overwhelmed!
- 03** Think calming corner: Consider softening a reading nook by using dark shades of blue to help regulate students' emotions.

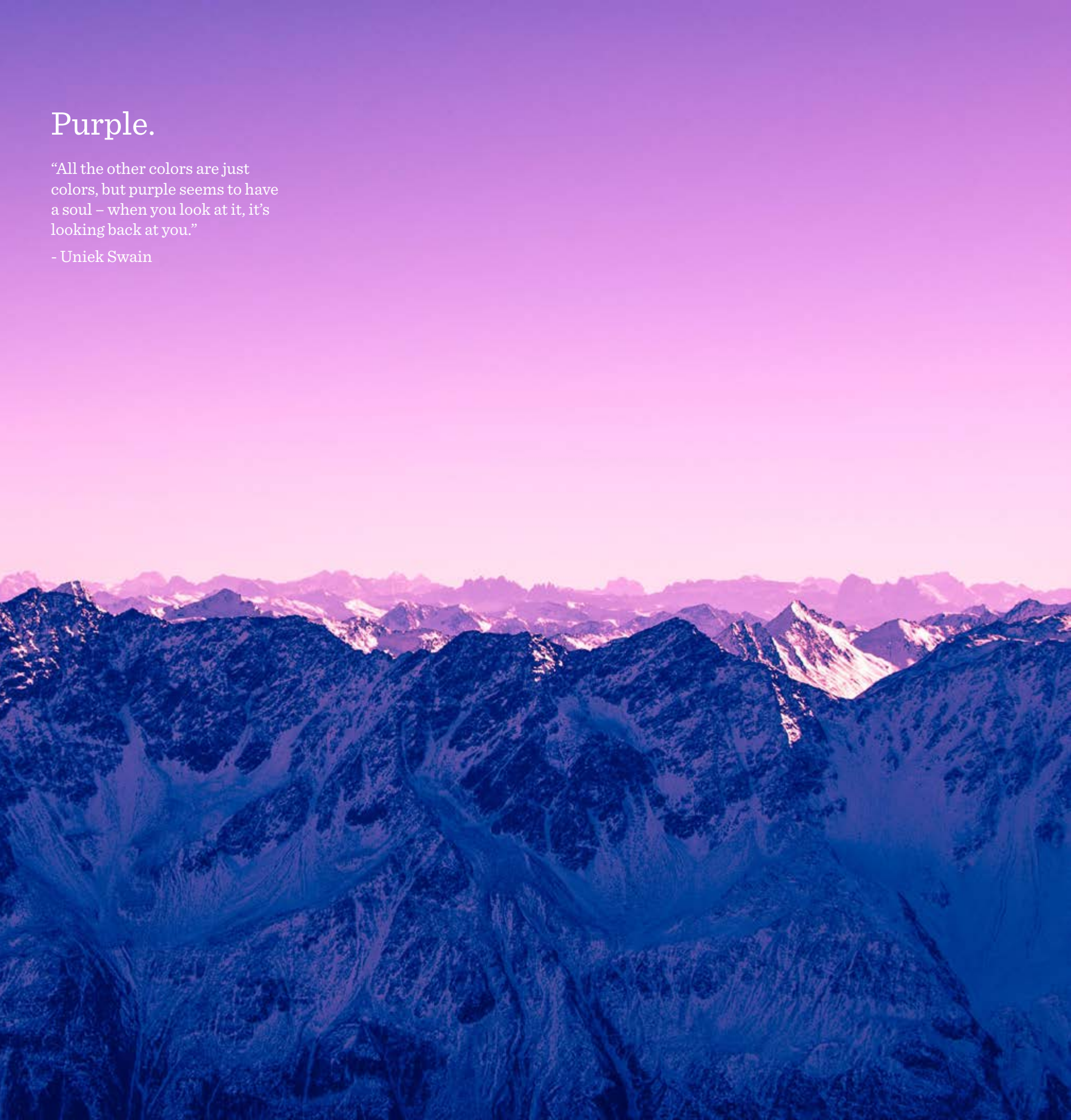


BLUE HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ✓ Lower blood pressure and pulse rate
- ✓ Relieve stress
- ✓ Promote high levels of thought
- ✓ Relax
- ✓ Calm racing minds

USE BLUE AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✓ Increase productivity
- ✓ Create order
- ✓ Enhance cognitive abilities
- ✓ Open communication
- ✓ Extend perspective



Purple.

“All the other colors are just colors, but purple seems to have a soul – when you look at it, it’s looking back at you.”

- Uniek Swain

COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF PURPLE

Many moons ago, purple was recognized as the color of the elite. It symbolized status, power, and wealth. Purple’s elite status stems from the rarity and cost of the dye originally used to produce it. Purple fabric used to be so outrageously expensive that only rulers could afford it. Keep reading for suggestions on how to incorporate this royal color into modern learning environments so students feel just as powerful as those who ruled before us.

PURPLE IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Nobility
- ✍ Luxury
- ✍ Wisdom
- ✍ Spirituality
- ✍ Power
- ✍ Courage (Purple Heart)



THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH PURPLE IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 01** Have fun: Balance the bold with a neutral work surface such as white or grey and consider these pops of color to make students feel alive and visually inspired.
- 02** Spark imagination: Use purple soft seating in zones where students are inspired to create.
- 03** Provide an escape: Design a quiet zone where students are able to escape the monotony of the day. Consider painting a corner of your room purple and adding the SnugSack to encourage kids to kick up their feet and decompress.



USE PURPLE AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✦ Calm the mind
- ✦ Boost mood
- ✦ Meditate + reflect

Providing Breakout Spaces within or outside the classroom encourages students to kick back, relax, and move at their own pace. Shades of purple communicate originality, brilliance, and visionary thinking.



Arguably more important than color is access to natural light in learning environments. Think your student is spacing out when he's gazing out the window during math class? He may be instinctively searching for a cognitive reset that will improve his ability to focus.

One study of 21,000 U.S. elementary students showed that, over one school year, kids who were exposed to more sunlight during their school day displayed 26 percent higher reading outcomes and 20 percent higher math outcomes than kids in less sunny classrooms.

PURPLE HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ✦ Inspire
- ✦ Uplift
- ✦ Encourage creativity
- ✦ Spark imagination



Orange.

“Orange is the happiest color.”
- Frank Sinatra

COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF ORANGE

Did you know that colors impact thoughts, emotions, and behaviors in our daily lives? Let’s take a minute to inventory the colors of clothes in your closet. Do you have an obvious preferred color palette? What about your home and office décor? What does your favorite color say about your personality?

Like yellow and red: orange is an attention grabber. It radiates warmth and happiness, combining the strength and power of red with the positivity of yellow. Often associated with outdoor elements such as fire, sun, and autumn leaves, orange is a surefire way to bring joy and energy to any space.

ORANGE IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Happiness
- ✍ Excitement
- ✍ Enthusiasm
- ✍ Playfulness
- ✍ Vibrancy
- ✍ Warmth

Photo by Noah Buscher on Unsplash

THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH ORANGE IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS



01

Keep it subtle, to start. While monochromatic color schemes are trending, it might be best to start small. Adding a sunset orange chair to your classroom might be the right amount of color.

02

Be bold. Learning Hallways + Breakout Spaces are great places to be daring with paint and fabric selections.

03

Balance. Orange pairs well with many different colors from earthy tones to pastels to bold tones such as black, blue, and red.



In the past, schools were built to meet basic functional and financial requirements. Uninspiring colors like beige, gray, and navy blue dominated most learning environments, and design was hardly a consideration. Today, modern educational institutions are more committed than ever to design spaces with purpose. Learning strategies, teaching strategies, color, layout, nature, and lighting among other things are all considered when designing spaces to improve teachers’ and students’ educational experiences through thoughtful aesthetic choices.

ORANGE HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ⚡ Boost activity level
- ⚡ Spark two-way communication
- ⚡ Stimulate appetite
- ⚡ Motivate

Whether you're looking to create a fresh new scheme or to breathe new life into an existing space, there are many ways to use orange within educational environments to foster encouragement, motivation, and drive during rigorous times.

USE ORANGE AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✂ Grab attention
- ✂ Uplift
- ✂ Rejuvenate
- ✂ Boost confidence



Green.

“In every walk with Nature, one receives far more than he seeks.”

- John Muir

COLORS FOR LEARNING: THE IMPACT OF GREEN

There are hundreds of studies that support the idea that experiences with nature boost academic learning and improve children’s psychological and physical well-being. But what if your students do not have access to an outdoor classroom or the freedom to take a stroll outside? Luckily, even having a view of nature out of the window helps restore kids’ attention, providing them the opportunity to reset their concentration.

GREEN IS COMMONLY ASSOCIATED WITH:

- ✍ Nature
- ✍ Harmony
- ✍ Tranquility
- ✍ Peace
- ✍ Growth
- ✍ Renewal

Photo by Noah Buscher on Unsplash



THREE TIPS FOR DESIGNING WITH GREEN IN LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS:

- 01** Wallpaper: Replace your basic bulletin board with a bold nature print keeping the base green. It will create a wonderful natural theme (think forest or jungle).
- 02** Spark imagination: Use purple soft seating in zones where students are inspired to create.
- 03** Views of nature: If you don't have nature views, consider a plant wall (real or faux), a green rug, or pictures of greenery to hang on the wall.



USE GREEN AS A STIMULANT TO:

- ✓ Focus
- ✓ Relax
- ✓ Inspire creativity
- ✓ Motivate
- ✓ Reduce fatigue
- ✓ Relieve stress



Providing Breakout Spaces within or outside the classroom encourages students to kick back, relax, and move at their own pace. Shades of purple communicate originality, brilliance, and visionary thinking.



GREEN HAS THE ABILITY TO:

- ✔ Promote balance
- ✔ Generate positive outcomes
- ✔ Provide a sense of security
- ✔ Improve memory
- ✔ Stabilize the nervous system
- ✔ Alleviate anxiety and depression
- ✔ Increase self-control and compassion
- ✔ Reduce irritability



ARTCOBELL CAN HELP YOU: INCORPORATE COLOR INTO YOUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

- ✈ [Materials Guide](#) - Take a look at our color options for seating, work surfaces and storage
- ✈ [Blog: NextGen Spaces](#) - Read more about classroom design
- ✈ [How to Buy](#) - Reach out to a furniture expert

LET ARTCOBELL CONNECT YOU WITH SOLUTIONS:

- ✈ Design Consultation
- ✈ Project Management & Installation
- ✈ Support
- ✈ Price Quotes
- ✈ Furniture Selection
- ✈ Local Inventory
- ✈ Technical Data

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