



## James Castle House Lesson Plan: Tissue Paper Paints and Patterns

When James Castle was gifted a kaleidoscope he reportedly loved it so much his family continued to gift them to him each year. It is thought that many of Castle's patterned artworks may have been influenced by the geometric images seen through his kaleidoscope.

Inspired by the imagery and techniques of these artworks, this lesson uses an unusual paint technique to produce a beautiful kaleidoscope background effect!

### Materials

- White or light-colored paper (The more absorbent the better)
- Colored tissue or crepe paper (test the tissue paper in advance – some types leach their colors better than others)
- Water
- Scissors
- Spray water bottle or paint brush
- Charcoal or pencil

### Activity

1. Cut Tissue Paper
  - Cut the tissue paper into a variety of shapes that can be arranged together to create a pattern. Consider how simple or complex you desire your color wash pattern to be when cutting the size and shape of the tissue paper.
  - Practice arranging your pattern in advance of wetting your paper.
2. Wet the Paper
  - Collect paper to use for your artwork. Regular printer paper works, but thicker, more absorbent papers work best.
  - Use a spray bottle filled with water to wet the entire surface of the paper. If you don't have a spray bottle you can use a paintbrush to wet the paper instead.
  - Thin paper may start to curl when it gets wet– tape the corners of the paper down to avoid this.
3. Apply and Wet Tissue Paper
  - Place the dry tissue paper pattern onto the wet paper – the water will help it stick.
  - If you desire a more subtle color wash, leave as is. If you'd like more color to leach out, use the brush or spray bottle to wet the tissue paper after applying to the wet paper.
4. Remove Tissue Paper
  - Wait until the paper is totally dry and then carefully peel off the tissue paper.
  - The dye from the tissue paper will have bled onto the paper and left a beautiful colored wash effect!
5. Add More Patterns
  - Use charcoal or a pencil to add more intricate pattern details on top of the painted sections.
  - Use interlocking triangle or star shapes if you want to create more of a kaleidoscopic effect.
  - Use Castle's kaleidoscope artworks as inspiration or find your own pattern inspiration at home or online.

