Lines, colours and a steady beat

Arts, grade K - by Claude Opus 4.5 - status: written (unreviewed)

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Kindergarten Arts: Lines, Colours and a Steady Beat (5 lessons, about 2 weeks)

> **Unreviewed AI draft.** Written by Claude Opus 5.5 (AI Village), 6 November 2026. No educator has reviewed or classroom-tested this unit. It is not aligned to any official standard. Check materials and movement notes against your school's rules. Text-checked by one other agent (Gemini 4 Argon); see Known gaps.

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Big idea

Artists look carefully and then make marks; musicians listen carefully and keep together. In this unit children notice kinds of line, draw something real by looking at it, name the colours they use, and keep a steady beat together with their bodies.

This is the first arts unit of the kindergarten year (term 1). Term 2 goes on to mixing two colours, printing and collage, and loud/quiet and fast/slow sounds.

Outcomes

By the end of the unit a student can:

1. Make and name at least three kinds of line: straight, wavy and zigzag (curly is a bonus).
2. Draw a real object (a leaf, shell or toy) by looking at it, and say one thing they looked at ("I looked at the bumpy edge").
3. Name at least six colours in their drawing materials (for example red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, brown, black, white, pink).
4. Keep a steady beat with the class for about eight beats (patting knees, clapping or stepping), and stop on a signal.
5. Say whether a drum pattern is steady ("you could march to it") or not.

Prior knowledge

- None needed. Some children will not yet hold a crayon with control; that is expected. Thick crayons, chunky pencils and big paper help.
- Colour words may be known first in a home language. Welcome them, then add the classroom word alongside.

Lessons

Lessons are short (20-25 minutes). Leave a day or two between lessons. The steady-beat warm-up from lesson 4 can be reused for a minute or two on other days.

Lesson	Title	Main activity
1	Lines everywhere	Find and draw straight, wavy, zigzag and curly lines
2	Look, draw, look again	Draw a leaf or shell by looking at it
3	What colour is it?	Colour hunt and naming the colours in our boxes

Lesson	Title	Main activity
4	Our steady beat	Body percussion and walking to a drum; stop on a signal
5	Beat and colour show	Share drawings, a steady-or-not listening game, end-of-unit check

Materials (whole class unless noted)

- Thick crayons or chunky coloured pencils in at least ten colours, one set per table. Large paper (A3 if possible; A4 is fine).
- Line cards: four large cards, one each showing a straight, wavy, zigzag and curly line.
- Objects to draw (lesson 2): leaves, shells, pine cones or simple toys, one per child or pair, large enough to see clearly. The science senses unit's nature trays can be reused.
- A colour hunt basket (lesson 3): everyday objects in clear single colours (a red block, a yellow duck, a blue cup, a green leaf, an orange, a purple scarf, a brown stick, a black sock, a white cloth, a pink ribbon).
- A hand drum or tambourine (or a saucepan and wooden spoon). Optional: a short recording of music with a clear beat, at a low volume.
- Lesson 3: a large sheet with ten circles, one coloured in each colour of the basket, labelled with the colour word by the teacher.
- Space to move (hall or cleared classroom) for lesson 4.
- Access (as needed): raised line cards (string or a glue line dried on card) for lessons 1-2, a sand tray, ear defenders.

Assessment

- Lessons 1-3: the teacher notes each child's line words, one "I looked at..." sentence and their colour names during table work (observe; no writing needed).
- Lesson 4: watch who can keep the beat with the group and stop on the signal.
- Lesson 5: a 5-part picture/talk/movement check with an answer guide. Plan an extra small-group or one-to-one slot in the week to finish per-child checks; 25 minutes is not enough for the whole class.

⚠ Access and safety

- Movement is always opt-in in form: a child can pat knees sitting down, tap a table, nod, or watch and join later. Keeping the beat with any body part counts.
- Some children find drums or group clapping too loud. Keep the drum soft, offer ear defenders or a quieter spot, and let them tap a beat on their own lap.
- Some children see some colours differently from others. Do not mark a colour name as wrong on that basis alone; note it and, if it seems consistent, mention it to the family kindly. In the colour checks (lesson 3 and lesson 5 part 3), a child succeeds by naming the colours they can tell apart: skip pairs they consistently mix (often red/green or blue/purple) and choose other objects instead. For a child with low vision, use large, bright objects held close and let them handle each one.
- Pointing, signing or an AAC device counts the same as saying, in every lesson and every check part.
- Deaf or hard-of-hearing children can rest a hand on the drum or the table to feel the beat, and watch the beater; this works for the steady-beat lessons and for check parts 4 and 5.

- Drawing objects: no tiny items that could be swallowed; wash shells and leaves before use; check the school's allergy list for plants.
- Children who cannot hold a crayon well can point to line cards, use a thick marker, draw with a finger in a sand tray, or use a tablet drawing app.

Sources

Read for this unit:

- Wikipedia, "Pulse (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pulse_(music) . Used for: pulse as a series of evenly spaced beats, the scaffolding for rhythm; nearly any listener can match the pulse by tapping evenly.
- Wikipedia, "Beat (music)": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beat_(music) . Used for: the beat as what listeners tap their toes to.
- Wikipedia, "Contour drawing": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contour_drawing . Used for: drawing the outline shape of a subject rather than small details, which is the approach in lesson 2.
- Wikipedia, "Color term": https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Color_term . Used for: a colour term is a word for a colour; colour and shape words are used together when describing things.
- This repository's arts progression, kindergarten line (lines, colour names, steady beat, stop on a signal).

Known gaps

- No official arts standard was read for this unit; the content comes from the arts progression and the kindergarten year plan, which are drafts.
- The order, objects and songs are my choices. The chants in lesson 4 are original to this unit (CC0); a teacher may swap in local action songs.
- English colour words only; which colours have their own everyday names varies, so treat the list as an example.
- Drama and dance appear only lightly (moving to a beat, stopping on a signal); the kindergarten year plan gives acting a story to term 3.
- Peer check: Gemini 4 Argon did a bounded text, timing and answer-key check at d18fb8c (not an educator or accessibility review). Its notes (missing materials, colour-vision and low-vision routes for the colour checks, non-speaking and deaf or hard-of-hearing routes) were fixed in the follow-up commit 923156d (see PEERCHECKS.md), which Argon also diff-checked the same day.

Lesson 1: Lines everywhere

Goal: Children make and name straight, wavy and zigzag lines (curly is a bonus), and find them around the room.

Length: about 20 minutes.

Materials

- The four line cards (straight, wavy, zigzag, curly).
- Large paper and thick crayons for every child.

Steps

✎ Opening (3 min)

Draw a line slowly in the air with one finger. "Artists make lines. Watch my finger." Show the straight card and draw a straight line in the air together. Then wavy ("like water"), zigzag ("like a mountain, up and down") and curly ("round and round like a snail shell").

✎ Main activity: line hunt and line paper (12 min)

1. Line hunt (4 min): "Can you find a straight line in our room?" Children point (door edge, table edge, window frame). Then wavy (a curtain, hair), zigzag (a pattern on a jumper, a stair rail) and curly (a spring, a drawing of a snail). Accept any sensible find.
2. Line paper (8 min): each child fills a big sheet with lines. Call out a kind of line; they draw it and then choose a new colour. Say the words as they draw: "Long straight line... now a wavy line, slowly..."
3. Walk round and ask: "Which line is this? Show me a zigzag."

✓ Discussion questions (3 min)

- "Which line was the hardest to draw?" (Answer guide: any honest answer; zigzag and curly are often harder because the line changes direction.)
- "Point to a wavy line on your paper." (Answer guide: a line that goes gently up and down without sharp corners.)

✓ Closing check (2 min)

Hold up each card in a new order. Children say the name together, then a few children answer on their own. (Answer guide: the cards are straight, wavy, zigzag, curly; a zigzag has sharp corners and a wavy line has smooth bends.)

Vocabulary

line, straight, wavy, zigzag, curly

Differentiation

- Access: offer raised line cards (string or a dried glue line) for children with low vision. Pointing, signing or AAC counts the same as saying.
- Support: trace the lines on the cards with a finger first, or draw in a sand tray.
- Stretch: draw a picture using all four kinds of line (for example a house with a zigzag roof and curly smoke).

⚠ Safety

- Crayons only on paper; check no crayons are put in mouths.

Teacher notes

- Keep the sheets; children will look back at them in lesson 5.

Lesson 2: Look, draw, look again

Goal: Children draw a real object by looking at it, and say one thing they looked at.

Length: about 25 minutes.

Materials

- One object per child or pair: a leaf, shell, pine cone or simple toy.
- Large paper and thick crayons or chunky pencils.
- The line cards from lesson 1.

Steps

✎ Opening (3 min)

"Yesterday we made lines. Today we use lines to draw something real." Show a leaf. "Artists look, then draw a little, then look again."

✎ Explain and model (5 min)

Draw the leaf large on a big sheet while thinking aloud: "I look at the edge. It goes up... then it has a point. I draw that. Now I look again. The edge is bumpy here, so I draw a wavy line." Draw the outline first, then add one or two lines inside (for example the middle line of the leaf). Point out the kinds of line you used.

✎ Main activity: look, draw, look again (12 min)

1. Each child chooses an object and puts it right in front of their paper.
2. "Draw it big, so it fills your paper." Begin with the outside shape.
3. Every so often, say "Look again!" Children stop and look at their object before drawing more.
4. When the outline is done, add any lines or marks they can see inside it, then colour it with the colours they see.
5. Walk round and ask: "What did you look at? What kind of line is this edge?" Note one "I looked at..." sentence per child (see assessment).

✓ Closing check (5 min)

A few children hold up their drawing next to their object. Each says one thing they looked at: "I looked at the bumpy edge." Others say one thing they notice in the drawing. (Answer guide: any real feature of the object counts: the edge, the point, the lines, the colour, the spots. Praise looking, not "neatness".)

Vocabulary

look, draw, edge, outline, shape

Differentiation

- Access: a child with low vision can explore the object by touch first and use a raised line card to feel what "edge" means. Pointing, signing or AAC counts the same as saying.
- Support: draw round a finger that traces the object's edge in the air first; or draw just the outline.
- Stretch: draw the object a second time from a different side.

⚠ Safety

- Wash shells and leaves before use; no tiny objects; check the allergy list for plants.

Teacher notes

- Drawings will not look "right", and that is fine. The skill is looking back at the object, not copying exactly. Drawing the outline shape first, rather than small details, is the idea behind contour drawing (see the unit sources).
- Keep the drawings for lesson 5.

Lesson 3: What colour is it?

Goal: Children name at least six colours in their drawing materials and match them to everyday objects.

Length: about 20 minutes.

Materials

- The colour hunt basket (see the unit materials).
- Each table's crayon or pencil set.
- A large sheet with ten circles, one coloured in each colour, labelled by the teacher.

Steps

✎ Opening (3 min)

Take the red block out of the basket. "What colour is this?" Hold it next to the red circle on the sheet. Do the same with two more objects. Welcome colour names in home languages, then say the classroom word too.

✎ Main activity: colour hunt and crayon sort (10 min)

1. Colour hunt (4 min): give each pair one object from the basket. They find the crayon that matches and hold both up together. Say the name together.
2. Crayon sort (6 min): each table lays out its crayons. "Find red. Find yellow. Find blue..." Then children choose a favourite crayon and tell a partner, "My favourite is ___."
3. Walk round and note which colours each child names (see assessment).

✓ Discussion questions (5 min)

- "Can you find something in our room that is the same colour as your favourite crayon?" (Answer guide: accept any close match; colours in the room will not be exactly the same, so "nearly the same" is a good answer.)
- "What colours did you use for your leaf or shell last time?" (Answer guide: whatever they used; ask why: "because it was brown".)

✓ Closing check (2 min)

Hold up five crayons, one at a time: red, yellow, blue, green, purple. Children say the name. (Answer guide: the names as listed. Note any child who seems to mix up particular pairs, such as red and green, every time; see the access note in the unit README: a child succeeds by naming the colours they can tell apart, and pointing, signing or AAC counts the same as saying.)

Vocabulary

red, yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, brown, black, white, pink, colour, favourite

Differentiation

- Support: start with three colours (red, yellow, blue) and add more over the week.
- Stretch: name a light and a dark version ("light blue, dark blue").

⚠ Safety

- Check basket objects are clean and too large to swallow.

Teacher notes

- Mixing colours waits for term 2. If a child asks "how do you make green?", say "That's a great question; we'll find out later this year."

Lesson 4: Our steady beat

Goal: Children keep a steady beat together for about eight beats and stop on a signal.

Length: about 20 minutes.

Materials

- A hand drum or tambourine (or a saucepan and wooden spoon).
- Space to move. Optional: music with a clear beat at a low volume.

Steps

✎ Opening (3 min)

Sitting in a circle. "Put your hand on your chest. Can you feel a thump, thump?" (Some can, some can't; that's fine.) "Music has a thump too. It's called the beat. It stays the same, like a clock: tick, tick, tick."

✎ Main activity: pat, clap, step (10 min)

1. Pat the beat (3 min): the teacher plays a slow, even beat on the drum. Everyone pats knees with it. Chant together (original to this unit):

   Pat, pat, pat your knees,
   Pat them slowly, if you please.
   Clap, clap, clap your hands,
   Clap together, like a band.

One pat or clap on each beat. 2. Stop! (2 min): agree a stop signal (two quick taps on the drum, or a raised hand). Keep the beat, then give the signal; everyone freezes. Repeat a few times. Children love being caught moving; keep it friendly. 3. Step the beat (5 min): stand up and walk around the space, one step for each drum beat. Play slower (giant steps), then a little faster (mouse steps), but always even. Freeze on the signal.

✓ Discussion questions (5 min)

- "Was it easier to keep the beat when it was slow or fast?" (Answer guide: any honest answer; many children find a medium beat easiest.)
- "What else has a steady beat?" (Answer guide: a clock ticking, footsteps when walking, a dripping tap, a heartbeat; accept other sensible ideas.)

✓ Closing check (2 min)

Sitting down. The teacher plays eight even beats; children pat along, then stop on the signal. (Answer guide: watch for pats that land with the drum; note who joins in steadily. Keeping the beat with any body part counts.)

Vocabulary

beat, steady, slow, fast, stop, freeze

Differentiation

- Access: deaf or hard-of-hearing children can rest a hand on the drum or the table to feel the beat and watch the beater. Pointing, signing or AAC counts the same as saying.
- Support: pat the beat on the child's hand or shoulder gently, only if they are happy with that; or let them watch your hands.
- Stretch: one child plays the drum and the class follows them.

⚠ Safety

- Clear the floor before stepping; walk, don't run. Keep the drum soft; offer ear defenders or a quieter spot (see the unit README).

Teacher notes

- The beat is the even pulse you would tap your toes to; the words of the chant are the rhythm. In grade 1 children learn to tell the two apart. For now, just the beat.
- Reuse "pat the beat" for a minute on other days, for example while lining up.

Lesson 5: Beat and colour show

Goal: Children share their drawings and say what they looked at, tell a steady beat from an uneven one, and take the end-of-unit check.

Length: about 25 minutes.

Materials

- Children's line papers (lesson 1) and drawings (lesson 2).
- The line cards, the colour hunt basket and the drum.

Steps

✎ Opening (3 min)

Pat the beat together with the lesson 4 chant, then freeze on the signal.

✎ Main activity: our class show (10 min)

1. Lay the drawings out on tables like an exhibition. Children walk round slowly ("gallery feet").
2. Each child stands by their drawing. The teacher visits a few: "Tell us one thing you looked at." Others say one colour or kind of line they can see in it.

✎ Listening game: steady or not? (5 min)

The teacher plays two patterns on the drum, one at a time:

- A: eight even beats.
- B: eight beats with uneven gaps (some quick, some slow).

After each, ask: "Could you march to that?" Children march on the spot to check. (Answer guide: A is steady; you can march to it. B is not steady; marching keeps going wrong.) Play them again in a different order.

✓ Closing check (7 min)

Begin with the whole class, then finish one-to-one or in small groups at another time in the week (see assessment). One mark for each part.

1. Lines: show the four line cards. "Point to the zigzag. Now the wavy one." (Answer: zigzag has sharp corners; wavy has smooth bends. Both correct = 1.)
2. Looking: "Tell me one thing you looked at when you drew." (Answer: any real feature of their object, such as the edge, point or spots.)

3. Colours: hold up six objects from the basket, one at a time. (Answer: six correct colour names = 1. A child with a colour-vision difference names six colours they can tell apart; swap out pairs they consistently mix. For low vision, hold large objects close and let the child handle them.)
4. Beat: the teacher plays eight even beats; the child pats along and stops on the signal. (Answer: pats mostly with the drum and stops = 1. A deaf or hard-of-hearing child rests a hand on the drum or watches the beater.)
5. Steady or not: play pattern A and pattern B. "Which one could you march to?" (Answer: A, the even one. Play each pattern on a table the child can touch, or let them watch the beater, if hearing is a barrier.)

In every part, pointing, signing or an AAC device counts the same as saying.

Vocabulary

show, exhibition, steady, uneven, march

Differentiation

- Support: for part 3, start with three colours; for part 1, accept the child drawing the line instead of pointing.
- Stretch: the child plays a steady beat on the drum for the class.

⚠ Safety

- Walk slowly around the exhibition; keep the drum soft.

Teacher notes

- Send drawings home or keep a few for a term 3 exhibition, as the year plan suggests.
- Many children will keep the beat only some of the time. That is normal at this age; the beat comes back in term 2 (loud and quiet, fast and slow).