

Autumn Tree Paintings

Give your child some hands-on experience mixing autumn colors. All you need is a large piece of white paper and tempera paint. If your child knows what they will get when they mix red and yellow, this will be an opportunity to share what they know. If not, they'll have the opportunity to learn.

What You Need:

- Large piece of white painting paper
- 3 paintbrushes
- Paint pallet or paper plate
- Tempera paint in black, yellow, and red

What You Do:

1. Before you involve your child, paint three black tree trunks on the sheet of paper. Paint one in the center of the paper, one to the left, and one to the right. Add a few branches on each tree trunk but be sure to leave plenty of space for autumn leaves.
2. Allow the tree trunks to dry.
3. Invite your child to finish the painting, adding red leaves to the tree on one side of the page and yellow leaves to the tree on the other side of the paper. The tree in the center should be left blank.
4. Does your child know what color they will get when they mix red and yellow? If they say orange, challenge them to mix the paint and prove their guess. If your child doesn't know, encourage them to mix the paint and see for themselves. You may need to coax your child a bit since hand-mixed orange seldom looks as bright as pre-mixed orange paint. Helpful Hint: Use mostly yellow and just a brush full of red.
5. Once your child has mixed the paint, it is time to paint the center tree.

Expand on this activity by asking your child what colors they see on the trees around their home every autumn. Some maple trees are vibrant orange and yellow. Other trees mix red and brown. Still, others blend green and yellow. Paint additional trees, mimicking what your child sees in nature.

