



Warrnambool Art Gallery - Explore Learn Create from home

Let's meet Henri Matisse!

Henri Matisse was born in 1869 in a town in France called Le Cateau-Cambrésis. It was a small town known for its weaving.

As a young boy, he loved to watch his mother paint ceramics. He was fascinated by the colours and shapes.



Dessin En Cinq Couleurs (Design in Five Colours)
1952
Lithograph

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Felton Bequest, 1954
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Even though he loved to paint, his father wanted him to become a lawyer. Henri trained in law but found it boring. He drew fun shapes on all the legal documents that he wrote!

When Henri was 20 he became ill with appendicitis. His mother remembered that he loved art and bought him some paints to help him pass the time whilst he recovered. After this Henri never went back to law. Instead he went to art school in Paris.

At first life was difficult for Henri and he did not sell many paintings but eventually he became successful and people bought his work.

When Henri got older he became ill and did not have much strength. He could not even stand long enough to be able to paint. He had to think of another way to be creative.

Do you know what he did?

He began to use scissors instead of paints and pencils. He was able to cut out beautiful, colourful shapes and stick them down in collages.

He called it 'drawing with scissors'.



Echarpe no. 2, scarf
ASCHER LTD, London
(manufacturer)
Henri MATISSE (designer)

National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne
Purchased, 1948
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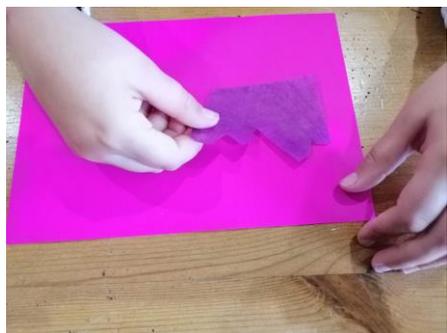
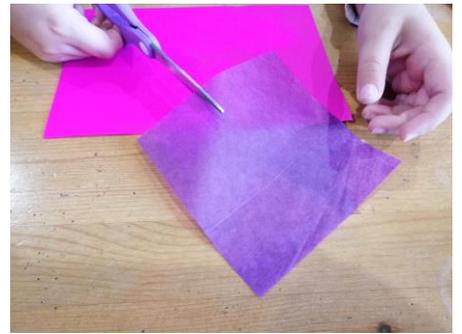
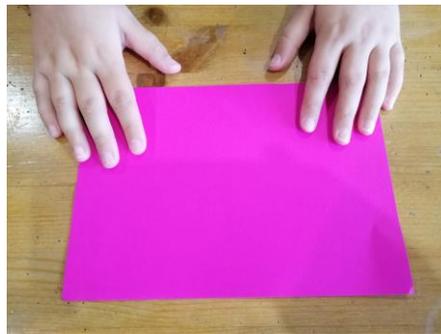
Your turn!

Begin by spending some time learning about Henri Matisse. There are lots of resources available online. At the bottom of this document we have listed some that you can use but there are many more. There are also some great books to read if you can still borrow from your library or buy online.

You will need:

- Scissors
- Glue
- Paper (if you don't have coloured paper you could colour in white paper which is what Henri had to do. You can also use pages from an old magazine)
- Imagination

1. Take a piece of paper to use as your base to stick shapes to
2. Choose coloured paper or magazines and cut out shapes. Just use your imagination, no pencils!
3. Stick the shapes to your paper any way that you like – you can overlap them, place them in patterns or just higgeldy piggeldy. It's up to you!
4. Take a photo of your artwork and post it in the comments of the Warrnambool Art Gallery Facebook post. We would love to see your creations!



Resources and books

The Tate:

<https://www.tate.org.uk/kids/explore/who-is/who-henrimatisse>

Ducksters: https://www.ducksters.com/biography/artists/henri_matisse.php

Henri Matisse for Kids, RSE Art Appreciation:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hy4DUpsC22c>

Henri Matisse, Drawing with Scissors by Keesia Johnson and Jane O'Connor.
Illustrated by Jessie Hartland

Matisse's Garden by Samantha Friedman. Illustrated by Cristina Amodeo

Henri's Scissors by Jeanette Winter