

Gray is not a color, but how do we use it? PART 2

Gray is between BLACK + WHITEa blend of the two colors becomes a grayish coloring...which means it is a color that is neither black nor white.

Black, White, Gray are not considered “colors” because they are not in the spectrum of light, we do not see these colors in a rainbow of light.

However, we do need them to help balance the colors in your painting.

Black is the darkest “Color” we can see. White is the lightest “Color.” Gray is a little of both colors which means what we are looking at is not as dark as a “black color” and not as light as a “white color.” Gray means that there is not enough red, blue, yellow, green, orange, purple, or indigo coloring to look like a recognizable rainbow color — and so we call this a “gray.” And not dark as black where no color is showing at all, and not as light as a white where no color shows more than another. So, we have given this “color” we can “see” - the name of Gray.

When a painter uses the color Gray - it will “subdue” or “dull” the painting.

Every artist should have a small “Color Wheel” to better understand the relationships of colors to each other. When you look at the Color Wheel, it shows the Light Spectrum of colors that we can see with our eyes. The Black, White, and Gray colors are called “NEUTRALS” and usually located in the center of the Color Wheel. The center area of the Color Wheel is where the “mixed color” is represented. The Color Wheel is a representation of actual paint usage — blending and mixing together to get Primary Colors, Secondary Colors, Tertiary Colors, etc. Therefore, if you were to mix the Primary colors (red, yellow, blue) together evenly with paint, it would appear to look Black meaning there is not more red than the other 2 colors or blue or yellow showing.

If you mix Black and White paint together, you will get Gray. If you then add Red, or Blue, or Green or Yellow, etc to this mixed Gray color — it will dull these rainbow colors, making them darker...muddier....and not as vivid. That is why using Gray pencil in colored pencil art work, will dull your painting if it is used alone next to colors!!

If you are going to add the Gray pencils to your painting, you should always add some other color into the gray giving the gray color a depth to its color. You could add blues, or greens, reds or oranges depending on the surrounding colors. ** This also applies to your BLACK pencil or WHITE pencil - they need “color” added! To help you remember to add another

color with the black, white, gray pencils Just think of the rainbow - there is no black, white, gray showing...only colors!

* **Brown is a blend of oranges + blues.** If you choose to use a solid brown pencil instead of mixing orange + blue, then you **MUST** add some “color” into the brown to make it richer in depth. You are a Painter > add many colors into others all the time!!

The Secret Lives of Color by Kassia St. Clair *This Book explains history of how we see color, Historical effects on use of color, when did people start to “name” colors?*