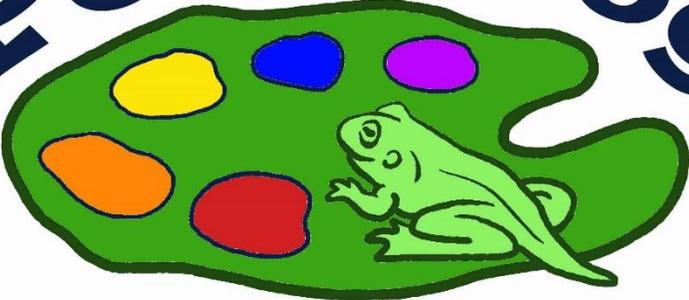


Pollywog



Art and Storytime

Welcome to **Pollywog At Home**, Session 9! Chalk by **Bill Thompson**

Parts to **(read aloud)** to kids are labeled before the text.
Parts that are **((asides to caregivers))** are indicated with double parenthesis.

(read aloud)

Hi, Pollywog Friends! I was having a summertime feeling with the last few sessions - but THIS is the one where it feels like summer truly begins! All of the older kids' school years are ending, and we are looking ahead to a summer of activities together. That is why I'm hoping to make this an extra special Pollywog class - one you can get ideas from that last all summer long! But, first...

Welcome Song –

Let's start off with The Welcome Song together:

~ sung to the tune of Rock-A-Bye Baby ~
Welcome to Art Class!
Ready for some fun?
First we sit still,
and quietly listen.
After our screen time,
we'll make something new -
but first we sing this
so we know what to do!

Opening (read aloud)

Today we will be focusing on sidewalk chalk.

I hope you have some sidewalk chalk at home, or that there is a safe way that your family can get some for you to use this summer. It is tricky for me to plan our art projects with the safety rules about being extra safe from the coronavirus. Mostly, I am relying on families already having basic art supplies like crayons and paper. But, today, in celebration of beginning summer together, I am hoping that everyone can get a hold of some chalk. I am talking about the big, colorful, chunky sticks of chalk that are best used outside on driveways and sidewalks.

You may feel that you know all about sidewalk chalk. I think that I will probably be giving you some new ways to think about it and use it - and I will show you that chalk is just as useful, fancy, and fun as art supplies like paint and other materials you might think of adult artists using.

When I think about what my kids need to have on hand to start their summer, chalk has always been on the list. We are also big fans of bubbles, water toys, walking sticks, bug-collecting containers (I saw lightning bugs last night!), scrapbooks and a summer reading chart. For my family, these are important summertime supplies!

Do you have any special things in your family that you start your summer off with? ((Pause to discuss your own family traditions for the summertime. If nothing comes to mind, or you have not really thought about the subject before, create a starting place for the idea that suits your child's situation. This summer, a lot of the things we normally like to do will be impacted by health and safety concerns, so being extra conscious about planning our time will be soothing, grounding, and will provide much needed engagement during these months.))

Storytime (read aloud)

Our story today is named Chalk, and it is a wordless picture book. We have not done a wordless picture book in Pollywog At Home yet. These can be especially valuable books for young children who are not ready for independent reading, but would like to "do it themselves!" and not rely on caregivers for all of their storytimes. Enjoy this video of the book **Chalk** by Bill Thompson. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQ3i86_Sx6U ((copy and paste into browser if clicking does not work))

After Story (read aloud)

Pretty fun, right? The artwork was very realistic, which makes it especially easy to feel like the story happened or might happen today at a nearby playground. I am happy that the first drawing was of a sun, because - aside from drawing people, suns are one of the first things a lot of young artists draw. My parents tell me it is the first thing I drew - a sun with a happy face. I am also glad that there was some rain in the story, because water can be a fun part of chalk art and not just to wash it away.

Our Project (read aloud)

I would like you to know how this is a subject that is near and dear to my heart. On a trip with my wife, I saw a sidewalk chalk fest with chalk art made by art students in Savannah, Georgia. Fest is a short form of the word "festival", and it really was a celebration of creativity. I saw students using pieces of cloth to rub over their chalk artwork, and it spread the chalk into the sidewalk cracks so it looked more like paint. I also saw students "shaving" their chalk into bowls, adding a little water, and painting with it!

I have always loved making art, and this was so fun to see. Hundreds of pieces of art were made that day, and people could walk in the grass of the park and look at row upon row of decorated sidewalks.

That memory stuck with me and was so strong that, years later, I had the idea of bringing the idea up in a meeting with other parents at my child's elementary school. I planned a sidewalk chalk fest for the school - and we held that event for 8 years in a row! Every year, over 100 students would come to school on a Saturday morning and everyone decorated a sidewalk rectangle with their very best artwork. We had judging, prizes, and snacks - but most of all we had sunshine, chalk, and hundreds of creative little hands at work outdoors.

Here is a picture from one of the chalk fests I helped with:



I made sample chalk artwork each year at the sidewalk chalk fest so that every student knew that the materials they had could be used to make pictures that are more than simple line drawings. Here are a few examples of those samples I made:



Materials –

- A set of sidewalk chalk - A simple little set that may be available at the dollar store is perfect. If you can get chalks with stronger colors - less white and washed-out looking (higher pigment, in other words) - that would be especially good. Smaller chalks are fine if sidewalk chalk isn't available. Small chalks are usually available at the grocery store.
- A couple sizes of paint brushes - You can certainly work with your chalks without paint brushes, but if you have some available today they will make for an extra interesting experience. These can be small children's brushes, but if you have some 1/2" or 1" bristly brushes (often used for painting trim), try to have those on hand.
- A couple of small plastic bowls - art supply bowls, cut from plastic from the recycling bin, is a good choice and can be used over and over.
- Water, in one of the plastic bowls.
- A piece of rag - For this type of project, I have some pieces of old towel or washcloth cut into 4" squares. An old washcloth simply folded into quarters works fine, too. I will be referring to this as our Blending Cloth.
- A butter knife.

Optional: a piece of artist's charcoal. I use charcoal from big bags at the grocery store. You can use the kind that people grill with (that contains no accelerant). I won't be showing that in my examples today, because I can't reasonably expect families to have it on hand, and I do not want kids to feel left out. Just know that charcoal like that (or expensive artist's charcoal from an art supply store, or a free piece of charred wood from an long-extinguished campfire) makes a perfect black piece of "chalk". A lot of sidewalks are tan, and the black charcoal gives useful contrast, enabling an artist to achieve a wider range of effects (fancier charcoal is more likely to stain the sidewalk).

((We will be using materials during Pollywog At Home that families are likely to already have on hand. If I list an item you do not have, see if you can think of a substitute - - if you're really stuck for a solution, feel free to email me for advice! r.schiding.studio@comcast.net))

How To –

I will do a step-by-step example piece with you, to show you how to try the materials you may have never used with chalk before. Those are the blending cloth, the butter knife and bowls, the water, and paint brushes. You can do this example to experience how those work - then you can make your own pictures of anything you like!



1) Start by making a yellow circle, a little larger than a paper plate.



2) Now add some sun rays to the circle - this is a pretty good way to make a sun.



3) Fill in the sun by laying a yellow piece of chalk on its side and rubbing it all over inside of the circle. When you want to color in a big area when you are using chalk, this is a great way to do it.



4) Now try out that blending cloth. Use it to gently rub, or blend, the yellow color fill you added to the circle.



5) With a white piece of chalk, you can add a face to the sun. That is how we know it is happy!



6) Now, of to the side, make a red oval. This way we can give our sun a friend.



7) Add a couple little bumps at the bottom of the oval. Fill the oval with red by using the side of the red chalk. Blend the chalk, with the cloth, like you did inside the sun. We are making a balloon!



8) Add a balloon string, and a face that looks toward the sun, with white chalk.



9) Now for something different! Use the butter knife to scrape the side of a blue piece of chalk into one of your bowls. This may take some practice, but since butter knives won't cut your skin, you can keep trying until you get the hang of it. If you become impatient, your grown-up helper will probably be happy to help you. After you have about 2 or 3 tablespoons worth of blue chalk dust, shave a purple piece of chalk into another bowl.



10) Now add a little water to each bowl. Try starting with about a teaspoon or two. Mix the water into the powder until it forms a poster paint type consistency. You can experiment with more and less water.



11) You can use these just like paint. Paint the sky between the sun and balloon - some with blue, some with purple. You can add a little more water to "stretch" out and blend your chalk paint. It will look much more like

water than chalk until it dries - - so there is some patience involved as you wait for it to dry. If it is a sunny day, it will dry pretty quickly.



Here is how my example project looks dry:



Try mixing chalk dust colors to see what happens. Try painting over some drawings you've already chalked, to see how they look when the water dries.

You can use these chalk techniques to draw anything you want - including paintings that aren't meant to look like anything at all. That's called abstract painting, and it's educational for you to experiment and just enjoy the process while you make your artwork. The warm weather months of summer are perfect for doing this kind of project again and again. If you want to surprise someone you haven't been able to see very often - like grandparents - you can do some chalk artwork on their driveway!

I hope you will enjoy your sidewalk chalks in all these brand new ways.

And – that is all for today's Pollywog! See you next time!

As we do Pollywog At Home, you are encouraged to send photos of your Pollywog projects to me at my email address: r.schiding.studio@comcast.net. I will share the work on the Library's website at the end of our Pollywog lessons. (I do not show children's faces in photos of their work that I share.)

You and I are lucky to be able to have art and storytime together. Thanks to **Wernersville Public Library!** Libraries are the best! They give us the chance to have wonderful things, without needing to spend extra money! Remember to thank them when you get the chance.

Follow the steps with the library file to register that you participated with Pollywog this week to get a prize. We are creating a whole set of rewards, including certificates and gift cards! ((You can receive credit for attending and working through this Pollywog At Home! Please follow this link to a form that will go to the Wernersville Public Library for an attendance prize:

<https://forms.gle/sBDFdXqtpGHJzsnYA> – – copy and paste into browser if clicking does not work))

