

# The Fascinating History of the Colour Wheel:

## Cloze Reading

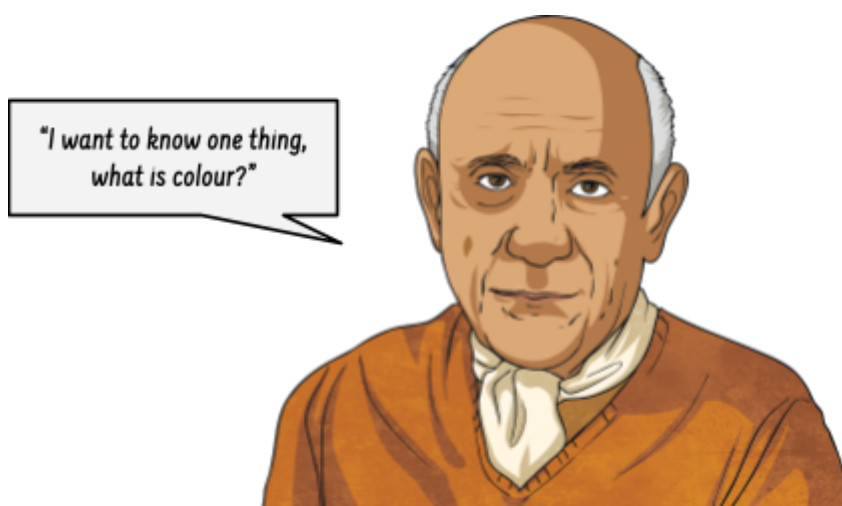
Use the word bank to help you fill in the missing words so the information makes sense.

famous	deduced	prism	outbreak
history	booklet	create	pigments
harmonised	combinations	spectrum	organised
polluting	scientific	observations	shattered

Pablo Picasso, one of the most ? artists of the 20th century asked this question, "I want to know one thing, what is colour?" What an interesting thing to ask. How would you answer his question?

Over 40,000 years ago the first ? or paint colours were invented by artists. They were made from a combination of dirt, animal fat, burnt charcoal and chalk. These materials gave them a palette of five basic colours to work with. Red, yellow, brown, black and white.

Imagine if these were the only colours that we could use to ? art today! The creation of the colour wheel added ? discovery and knowledge to the colours found in nature. It opened up a whole new world of colour.





Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) is one of the most influential mathematicians and scientists in ?. He was also an astronomer, physicist, theologian and author.

When he was 23 years old, he was sent home from his university because of an ? of the bubonic plague. The university was closed for two years but that wasn't going to stop him from thinking and learning.

While at home, he got himself a prism, which was a piece of glass shaped like a pyramid. He shut the blinds in his room until it was totally dark, except for one small hole that he poked through a blind. Then he waited for the sun to move to the right place in the sky.

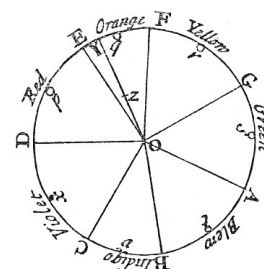
When the sun's angle was just right, a ray of white light shot through the small hole and into the room. Newton quickly put his ? in front of it. The light ? and became a rainbow of colours on the wall. Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet. In Newton's own words, he saw "a coloured image of the sun".

At the time Isaac Newton was alive, people believed that white light was given by God or nature. They thought that the prism itself was impure in some way. In other words, the prism was ? the light and creating the rainbow of colours.

So, Isaac Newton got a second prism and held it up to the area of blue light. What happened? Nothing. The blue light remained blue. The second prism didn't affect or pollute the blue light at all. Newton ? that the rainbow of colours he saw wasn't coming from the prism but were actually inside the white light itself. The prism just divided the white light into its basic parts, a ? of rainbow of colours. All the light we see around us is made up of the rainbow of colours.

Newton noted down the seven different colours he saw. Then he had a thought that those colours might be related to the seven notes of the musical scale. He matched up each colour with a musical note (A-B-C-D-E-F-G) that he felt ? with it.

**He then put the colours (in rainbow order) and notes on a rotating disc. This was the first time anyone had captured the colour spectrum on a colour wheel. It's where our modern colour wheel comes from.**



In 1769, Jacob Schaffer, a German naturalist, illustrator and inventor, ? the colours into a hierarchy. He decided that red, yellow and blue were the most important because all other colours were ? of them.

Using nature as his inspiration, he made a ? that showed how red, yellow and blue could be mixed to create the secondary and tertiary colours. From his ? of the world around him, Schaffer also recognised that there could be many shades of one colour.