

# Red Dogs and Pink Skies: Painting and Music Together

with  
The Music of Bruce Adolphe  
Inspired by the Paintings of Paul Gauguin

## Teacher Guide

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Excerpted and revised from *Red Dogs and Pink Skies: Paul Gauguin on Painting and Music*  
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Have you ever seen a red dog?

Paul Gauguin did!

Have you ever seen a pink sky?

Paul Gauguin did!

Have you ever seen a purple ocean?

Paul Gauguin did!

Have you ever seen a yellow horse?

Paul Gauguin did!

But who was Paul Gauguin?

This is Paul Gauguin. (title page, and page 6)

Paul Gauguin lived more than 100 years ago.  
He was born In France.  
As a young man, Paul was a sailor and traveled  
around the world.  
Then he worked in a bank.  
But he didn't like banking.  
He was very unhappy.

Paul didn't like the city.  
He didn't like the noise.  
He didn't like the way people lived on top of  
each other in big buildings

But Paul knew what he did love:  
He loved to paint.  
He loved to paint people.  
He loved to paint animals.  
He loved to paint hills and trees and rivers and  
horses.

Paul wanted to find a place where people lived  
together in peace.  
He wanted to find a place where people lived in  
nature, not in a city.  
That would be a wonderful place to paint!

So Paul packed his bags and set sail for a small island, far, far, far away.

The island Paul went to was called Tahiti.  
The people were Asian with brown skin and black hair.  
They were farmers and fisherman.  
The lived very simply.  
And they became Paul's friends.

Paul lived with the islanders and learned their way of life and their language.  
Living with the islanders changed Paul.  
He felt free – free to paint anything he wanted, any way he wanted!

Now let's look at some of Paul Gauguin's paintings.

Here is painting called “Arearea”. (page 7)  
That is a Tahitian word for “joyfulness.”

Look carefully!

What do you see?

What color is the dog?

What color is the tree?

Have you ever seen a green grass that green?

Do you see red, purple, and yellow together?  
What do you think it is?

What would happen if we took all the color out of Paul Gauguin's painting? (pages 13 and 15)

Look carefully!

Which painting do you like better?

Which painting gives you more feeling?

Which painting has more life?

Which painting is more joyful?

But how can a dog be red?

How can a tree be blue?

How can water be so many colors?

People asked Paul these questions.

Paul told them, “I do it purposefully! It’s like music. I take an idea from life and arrange lines And colors...but I do not paint reality.”

Paul also said, “Color should be used to help our imaginations soar, to decorate our dreams, to open doors to the mysterious... My paintings should make you think the way music does.”

Paul said his painting is like music!

Can painting be like music?

Let’s think about this.

Bruce Adolphe is a composer.  
He writes music.  
Bruce loves Gauguin's paintings.  
He heard music in Gauguin's paintings.

Let's listen.

There are six parts to his music. The titles are:

1. What Can I say to All These Coconut Trees?
2. Tahitian Night – A Flute, the Beating of My Heart?
3. Delightful Water, Delicious Water
4. Gauguin Does Not Howl with the Pack
5. Rose Petals
6. Storm, Sun, Yesterday

Bruce used different instruments together.

What instruments do you hear?

How many do you hear?

Is the music fast, or slow?

Is it loud or soft?

What does the music sound like to you?

What mood does it give you?

How is the music like Paul Gauguin's painting?

## Color in Painting

1. Painters use paints.
2. Paints come in different colors.
3. Colors can be bright or dark.
4. Colors can also be called loud or soft, like a soft pink or a loud, hard red.

## Color in Music

1. Musicians use instruments.
2. Instruments make different sounds.
3. Sounds can be loud or soft.
4. Sounds can be called bright or dark. The sound of a flute can be called bright. The sound of a cello can be called dark.

So an instrument has a “color” too. The color comes from the wood or metal that makes the instrument.

## Harmony in Painting

1. Paintings can mix colors together to make new colors. They can put colors next to each other, or on top of each other. This is called harmony.

## Harmony in Music

1. Musicians blend sounds together from different instruments to make new sounds. Different sounds can play at the same time. This is called harmony in music.

## Texture in Painting

1. Paint can be thick or thin, and put on in layers. This is called texture.

## Texture in Music

1. There can be a lot of sounds from a lot of instruments, or only a few, or just one. This is called texture in music.

## Contrast in Painting

1. Paintings can have bright colors next to dark colors, big shapes next to small shapes. This is called contrast.

## Contrast in Music

1. Music can have loud parts followed by soft ones, and fast music followed by slow music. This is called contrast in music.

## Mood in Painting

1. Everything the painter does with colors and shapes to make the painting gives you a feeling. This is called the mood of the painting.

## Mood in Music

1. Everything the musicians do together to make sounds gives you a feeling. This is called the mood of the music.