



## Coloring: Good For You at Any Age!

Colouring is an activity that countless young children have performed in the course of their schooling. Only recently, however, has it gained particular attention as being beneficial for people of all ages. Whether the colourer is a young child learning to hold their pencil with some strength, an older child taking time to digest facts or conceptualize figures, a teen who finds calm satisfaction in making an image [suit their own style](#), or an adult who relishes the effective 'break' that comes from contemplating intricate details, everyone – literally! – can gain from this simple, time-tested activity. Here is a simple guide to colouring for all ages:

### Young Children

Very young children who are approaching school age can often find great pleasure in

colouring [simple, clear drawings](#). They may use markers or crayons, and should colour in an unstructured way for as long as they find it fun. Colouring at this stage of development can gently train active children to calm down a bit, and help them to strengthen the hand muscles which will make writing a bit easier later on. Colouring within the lines at this stage is difficult, and encouragement, rather than criticism, should be a parent's priority.

### Elementary School Children

Children in their first years of school learn a tremendous amount of information: both facts and the skills surrounding 'how to learn'. Colouring can help a student to take some time to [digest a difficult lesson](#). It can be used to [reinforce ideas](#), especially in subjects like [Geography](#) (colouring maps) and [Math](#) (visualizing concepts). Colouring can also help, again, to develop fine motor skills in the hand and fingers and help students who are struggling to write neatly.

At this age, tiny details will not hold much appeal, and colourers will gravitate towards images of their favourite subjects, [especially people and animals with expressive faces](#). Keeping within the lines, and colouring larger areas by trying to fill the space without leaving blank areas, should be encouraged. However keep in mind that a colouring page can provide an opportunity to rebel and do a poor job to vent feelings of frustration about other, more challenging subjects. A teacher may want to suggest areas of improvement, or may simply let the colourer 'be right' about doing an imperfect job of this non-essential schoolwork to 'let off steam'.

### Teens

Colouring may not leap to mind as an educational pastime for this age group, but it is still a relevant exercise if approached in an age-specific manner. Older children and teens will naturally reject the kind of colouring they did when they were 'little'. However, if the focus is turned to interesting and [highly-detailed images](#), this visually-oriented form of self-entertainment and self-mastery can be perfect for the current generation. Teens need ways to 'do nothing', to ground themselves through hormonal hurricanes, and to enjoy concrete

accomplishments as a contrast to ever more complex and conceptual schoolwork. Colouring fills all of these functions. Many advanced colouring books focus on highly specialized subjects, such as intricate human anatomy, making it also possible to use colouring as a form of enrichment for students with special interests. Teens can colour images in creative ways (such as using neon in a nature scene, or filling large areas with stripes or dots), and may use a variety of tools – from paints to coloured pencils or pastels. They will enjoy the freedom of doing something ‘their way’.

### **Adults**

Colouring for adults is gaining continually more attention as a way to reduce stress. When the mind focuses on shapes and colours, rather than logical thoughts and tasks that need to be completed, a remarkable shift in awareness occurs. A person loses their sense of time’s passing, and begins to enjoy every little detail of their present preoccupation. Of course, colouring is only one way to enjoy this natural ‘altered state’. Meditation is the most renowned way of achieving a similar state of calm, and with the right frame of mind, even doing laundry can be enjoyable! However, there is great pleasure to be had by setting a timer for 20 minutes (or however much time you can spare, at any time of day), and refusing to be interrupted while focussing on a [beautiful image](#) and choosing your favourite colours to decorate it. If you feel guilty about taking this extra time for yourself, remember that a calm and happy parent is a gift to the entire family! Colouring is a powerful yet gentle way to rest an adult’s mind.

Colouring books are found in plenty at Currclick. The special benefits of a print-on-demand title include being able to pick and choose images and print only those you like, printing the same image more than once (spills do happen, or you may simply want to colour the same image again with different colours), and saving both paper and ink. There’s never been a better time to explore this entertaining and highly effective activity!



*Elise Kennedy is the author of [Canadian Winter Homeschool Materials](#). She lives in Montreal, Canada, where she homeschools her 12-year old daughter. She and her husband Pierre also practice alternative medicine (in particular, breathing methods). Elise has taught a variety of subjects in numerous settings, and is delighted to share her original homeschool materials on Currclick.*