

Limited Palette Possibilities III  
Using Combinations from the Color Wheel - Triads

1. Triads are colors that are equidistant from each other on the Color Wheel. They can be found at the points of the equilateral triangle, (labeled Triad), behind the Complement and Split Complement Triangle.
2. The combinations of colors that you can achieve with Triads will always be a more colorful overall because they are a little less complementary (so they don't gray each other down quite as much).
3. You will need to decide, (just as you have with the split complements), whether or not your painting will be overall warm or cool as you plan to use these colors together. The largest amount of color you use overall in the subject will be the decider, think Papa Bear, Mama Bear and Baby Bear amounts of each color.
4. Make a few strips of the colors connected together with these choices and then select the colors that appeal to you most from these mixtures. As you mix these colors ahead of time in your palette, you can try either choice of the primaries and select the mixture that you prefer, (e.g. In my Birch trees I used a triad of Red Yellow and Blue and I decided to use Hansa Yellow, Permanent Rose and Prussian Blue. However, I could have used Cadmium Yellow, Cadmium Red and Ultramarine Blue. Or Hansa Yellow, Permanent Rose and Ultramarine Blue, etc.-) Just try a few small swatches and see which mixtures you prefer together.
5. Use your favorite Triad combination to make a WARM and COOL version of your subject this week. For the amount of space each color occupies in the subject you can use the Bear family as a guide. (Remember the colors can be mixed together, preferably on the paper, as we did on the carrots last week).  
If Papa Bear is cool, Mama Bear will be warm and Baby Bear can be either.  
If Papa Bear is warm, Mama Bear will be cool and Baby Bear can be either.
6. Try to also allow a little of each of your chosen colors to show in the final painting.
7. If you are drawn to more than one mixture, repeat with another color choice in a simple composition.
8. Remember that you are going to make the secondary colors using the double primary palette color wheel. By using colors that lean towards each other, you will achieve brighter secondary mixes.
9. Make a strong puddle of each of the Triad of colors you have chosen and work only from these puddles. You can mix the colors together, preferably on the paper as much as possible, but also in the palette to achieve neutral variations for your subject.
10. Remember also that mixing more than two colors together in the palette will automatically result in neutral variations of the colors, because you are mixing across the color wheel when you do this and not around it. So the colors lean away from each other instead of towards each other.