

Watercolor Flowers

Purpose

- Introduction to color mixing (secondary) and basic brush strokes.
- Create a watercolor composition (circular) using both wet-on-wet and dry-brush techniques.

Docent Provides

- One sheet of drawing paper
- Box watercolors with brush
- Water container
- Pencils & scissors
- 9" circle templates
- 11x11 watercolor paper
- Paper towels
- Docents supplies for demonstrations.
- **Art prints: (in large portfolio)**
 - "Poppies" - O'Keeffe
 - "Yellow Sunflowers" - Nolde
 - "Gladioli" - Duffy
 - "Summer Abundance" - Kubik
 - "Poppies" - Nechis

Give Each Student

1. water
2. paper towel
3. water colors
4. large construction paper
5. small watercolor paper

Room Set-Up

- Display art prints.
- Pass out circular template and one sheet of 11x11 watercolor paper to each child.
- Pass out drawing paper and have students set aside or in desk until later.

LESSON

1. **Introduction:** (Point out the following details on the art prints as you discuss)
 - Flowers have always been a favorite subject for artists. These prints are painted in very different styles.
 - Review what primary and secondary colors are and point them out in prints. Also discuss boldness vs. delicate, and the variety of shapes and sizes.
 - Focal point: explain what it is and its importance. Usually larger than other elements in painting. An attention grabber!
 - Describe watercolor techniques of painting: Wet on Wet vs. Dry Brush
 - wet on wet: when clean water is brushed across paper before colored lines are painted (making very soft-looking lines that "bleed" outward)
 - dry-brush: when the paper is dry and the paint applied to the brush is not too watery (making very rich colored lines that either have solid lines or slightly ragged edges)
2. Today you will be the artist! We'll use watercolor to paint pictures of flowers. We'll try new ways to use our brush and discover how to mix secondary colors. But most of all we'll have fun!

3. **Review how and then Prime your paints:**

By squeezing 4 or 5 drops of water off your brush into pigment (paint). Let it sit there a few minutes to soften the paint.

4. **Review how to Cleaning Your Brush:**

After your brush has paint on it and you want to change colors you **MUST** squeeze excess color off (give your brush a hug) into paper towel **BEFORE** rinsing in your water. This will help your water stay clean so much longer.

5. **Paint the base layer onto the watercolor paper:** (students follow along)

- **FIRST:** have them put their name in the center of the back
- Using a pencil, trace circular template onto your watercolor paper.
- Wet your paper with brush all over with clear clean water.
- Working quickly, while paper is still wet, paint “blobs” of primary colors
- Overlap blob colors to create secondary colors.
- Make the **YELLOW** blob the focal point. Make it almost as big as your hand.
- Make 2 small yellow ones.
- Make 2 or 3 medium size **RED** blobs.
- Make 2 or 3 smaller **BLUE** blobs.
- **Set aside to dry (green paint comes later).**

6. **Use sheet of drawing paper to practice watercolor techniques:** (Review these quickly so that there is plenty of time for the kids to work on the actual watercolor)

- **Mixing Secondary colors:**
 - Load your clean brush with yellow. Make a yellow blob with a back and forth motion of the brush (if brush doesn't glide across then it is probably too dry)
 - Tip brush in red and add to the center of the yellow blob (what secondary color did it turn into? Orange)
 - Loading brush with red, make a red blob then dip tip in blue to make purple.
 - Reverse procedure to see change in value. Load in Blue and tip in red.
- **Brush Strokes:**
 - Fine Line Spiral! Load brush with red. Hold brush straight up and down, so handle points straight at the ceiling. Use just the tip of the brush, hardly bending the bristles. Try to use your whole arm; move it from the shoulder. We can use this spiral to make roses.
 - Broken Spiral! Let your brush line be broken, your arm is "nervous" Use this stroke on carnations and mums.
 - Stipple Stroke: Stipple stroke with two colors. Load brush with red then tip in blue. Hold brush from top as you would a toy car if moving it across the floor. Press and lift, and again like printing with your brush!
 - Pull Stroke: Load brush with yellow and tip in blue. Position your brush beneath the red and blue stipple strokes and make a stem with some long pull strokes. Make leaves by running slowly and lifting gradually. Look at the many shades of green we get. You can use the pull stroke to make stems and leaves for your other flowers.

7. Tips for docent to remember before the kids work on their finished product:

- Be very insistent that students do **not use black** and **hold off on green** until it is time to add stems and leaves.
- Flowers may be realistic or new creations!
- Help the children to keep the fresh look of watercolor and not to overwork their paintings.
- Remind children to hug their brush before rinsing in water!

8. Return to Watercolor Paper

- Now we will complete details on the flowers and add greenery. Show the example pieces of other kids' finished work.
- Show flowers (real or plastic). Talk about details (petal structure) or different types of flowers and remind the students that for this piece, we are looking down at the top of our bouquet of flowers and can't see the stems.
- Try using all of the brush strokes that we just reviewed.
- Try dropping drops of water on top of another colors to create a lighter water spot effect.
- Experiment and have fun.
- Add some leaves
 - Use yellow and blue strokes.
 - Use yellow and blue stipple strokes to make ferns.
 - Mix yellow and blue to make regular leaf shapes.
 - They may use the brighter green from paint box too -- but encourage them to make green instead.
- DON'T OVERWORK IT! A little white space is okay, and better than lots of murky blobs of brown.