

Lesson #20 Painting Watercolor Flowers

Grade Level: 1-6

Description/Objective

Students paint enlarged view of flowers based on Georgia O'Keefe's flower paintings

Time

45 minutes - 1 hour

Materials

Flowers in a vase (large petal flowers like pansies, lilies, sunflowers, etc.)

Magnifying glass (2-3 for class)

Prints by Georgia O'Keefe - available at public library

11" x 14" white kid surface vellum bristol paper

Permanent non-toxic black fine tip Sharpie brand markers (1 per student)

Watercolor paints (8 or 16 color Prang or Crayola brand best) (2-3 students share 1 set if necessary)

#10 watercolor brushes (1 per student)

Containers to hold water (baby food jars)

Salt (optional)

3/4" drafting tape for border on edge of paper (1-2 rolls, 60 yd.) OPTIONAL

Procedure

1. Optional - Teacher or older students should tape border before start of activity and carefully and slowly "untape" after work is dry to create white border.
2. Students observe flowers close up or use a magnifying glass to study the shapes, textures (bumpy, flat, etc.) and patterns (repetitive circles, lines, colors, etc.) that make up the whole flower. Discuss analogies to other shapes they might see - fruits, vegetables, animal ears, etc.
3. Display prints of flower paintings by Georgia O'Keefe and discuss how she fits the flower in the picture plane, leaving very little negative space (white space within art).
4. Have students squint to look at negative space in paintings.
5. Students choose a flower and draw an enlarged view of it with black marker, concentrating on the outside edge and lines delineating pattern.
6. Demonstrate "wet-on-wet" watercolor, wetting 1 petal on the paper at a time (with no color just water) and then applying color to that same surface. Colors will merge forming soft edges.
7. Students add paint to flowers and to negative space using the wet-on-wet technique.
8. Students have the option of adding salt to their paintings which creates interesting textural effects. Take a pinch of salt and sprinkle on wet paint in area of desired texture.

Subject Matter Integration

LANGUAGE ARTS: To build on the idea of enlarged forms, students write about what they imagine a garden would look like to a bug. Ask students to write about not only the sights they would experience, but also the sounds and smells.

Variations/Extensions

1. The same materials and process can be used to paint close up pictures of fall leaves.