

## Painting, Printing and Graphic Design

Youth Art  
Activities with  
Helper Information



Name \_\_\_\_\_





The  
path from  
your  
portfolio is  
the path to  
your future.

Haley Goodwin

Welcome to Portfolio Pathways! This activity guide is for you, plus packed with information for the art helper. Have fun exploring. There are three media, **painting, printing** and **graphic design** for you to choose from to develop your artistic skills and talents. All the activities focus on teaching the elements and principles of design and encouraging the development of skills for a lifetime. The Brain Joggers test your problem solving ability. You may connect locally through artistic community service or service learning opportunities. And, you may test your knowledge of art through cultural and historical art experiences that are interwoven throughout the activities. The learning indicators at the end of each activity help you evaluate the learning process.

Art Helpers are teens or adults who assist youth with the activities. Read the Artist Notes at the beginning of each activity to become familiar with the background, history, culture, science, safety and techniques of the activity. Explore the Visual Arts Project Online to enhance your art experience. Read about the experiential learning model and life skill development on pages two and three. Discuss the Reflect and Apply questions in each activity. These steps will enhance your overall art experience.

### National Standards for Art Education

*Developed by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations under guidance of the National Committee for Standards in the Arts through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, 1994.*

#### Visual Arts Content Standards provide program goals for all grade levels:

- Understanding and applying media, technique and processes
- Using knowledge of structures and functions
- Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
- Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture
- Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
- Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines



Explore more at

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National 4-H Curriculum

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# Portfolio Pathways

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BU-07597



*Sketchbook Crossroads*  
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# Unit 1

# Painting



## Artistic Techniques with Acrylics

In and Out of Control with Color, Watercolors

Free Lines, Shapes and Colors, Abstracts

Sand Painting

Painting a Self-Portrait

Paint into Action

Oil Painting, Impasto and Scumbling

Oil Painting Using Perspective

Brain Jogger – Encaustic Challenge

**P**ainting offers the artist options for creating, from acrylics to watercolors. Painting allows for personal expression and is adaptable to any skill level and artistic style. Painting requires some type of paint, a support surface and an application tool. The creative process is up to the artist.

## Pigment and Binders

Paint consists of pigments, which are particles or crystals of varying size, suspended in a binding medium. The **pigment** powder is the color and it may be organic (carbon based), inorganic or synthetic (man-made). Each particle of pigment floats in a binding media, though each pigment particle is completely wet, they do not dissolve. The pigments float.

Binding media may be water, egg, drying oil, polymer plastic, beeswax, glue, gelatin, casein, starch and gum. Each binder plays a specific role in making paint. **Tempera** paint, used long before oils by master painters, is made first by grinding pigment with purified water to make a paste. The paste is then mixed with equal parts of egg yolk and a little water. Tempera may also be mixed with oil or egg and casein, rather than just the egg yolk. When dry, tempera can be over-painted with either oil or water-based paint.

Pigment ground with drying (or semidrying) oil makes **oil** paint. The oils may be linseed, nut, poppy or safflower. Each pigment requires a differing amount of oil to create the desired paint consistency. Different colors may require several days to dry. Some oil paint may be used with a variety of techniques, such as wet-onto-wet painting and/or building up of paint layer by layer. **Turpentine** labeled “for artists” makes the paint more fluid and flexible.

It is important to work “fat over lean” with oils. Fat is the paint taken directly from the tube or mixed with linseed oil added. Linseed makes the paint more flexible when dry. Lean is painting with no added oil or thinning the paint with a solvent. When building up layers, start with low oil content paint followed by high oil content paint. Paint with added linseed oil is applied last. As a general rule, working from light to dark colors is helpful.

**Acrylics** are a mix of pigment, water and polymer plastic. Acrylics are fast drying paints, but with careful planning, can be manipulated like oils. A **retarder** may be added to slow the drying process. When dry, acrylics are water resistant. They may be applied like a watercolor wash or thickly with a brush or knife. Acrylics are a great way to learn painting techniques and are affordable for the beginning artist.

Painting with watercolors is challenging but a very creative process. Watercolors have long been in use. Earliest records show they were used in the Mediterranean area for wall murals and by the Japanese for scroll painting. The earliest watercolors were made by mixing water with clay and minerals to produce natural pigments. Today, **watercolor** paints are made from ground pigment usually mixed with gum arabic, a water-soluble binding medium. Other ingredients may be added, such as (glycerineas) a plasticizer, ox gull as a wetting agent and tragacanth as a thickener. Watercolors come in either cake or pan (solid) or tubes (paste). Watercolor tubes provide a brilliant, more permanent color. Select a semi-moist variety and add a few drops of water when working with watercolor pans.

**Encaustic** is not a commonly used binding medium today. Encaustic uses pigment mixed with beeswax and at times, carnauba wax. The challenge is to keep the paint at a consistent temperature in order to apply it to the rigid support which is often a treated wood panel. Encaustic was widely used throughout the 2nd and 3rd century A.D. **Jasper Johns** and **Kay Walkingstick** are two current artists who have successfully worked with encaustic.

## Supports and Grounds

Wood, canvas, paper, even brick and cement are **supports** for painting. Selecting the support is as important as selecting the subject to paint. How well the paint adheres to the support over time is an important consideration. All supports have qualities that may or may not work with the variety of media. Wood supports may be made of natural or composite fibers. Wood is perfect for tempera and encaustic, but it may absorb too much paint or warp over time if not treated correctly. Aluminum, steel, copper and fiberglass are other types of rigid supports.



Flexible supports include paper, canvas and synthetic fabrics. Paper selection is as varied as paint colors. Each has specific qualities that enhance the right medium. To learn more about paper, see the Drawing Unit in *Sketchbook Crossroads*. A canvas may be of linen, cotton, silk, jute or synthetic fibers. The quality, texture, and durability vary in each type. Careful preparation of the canvas may be required before paint is applied. After the canvas is stretched on a frame, it is primed; first with glue sizing is applied and then the ground coat.

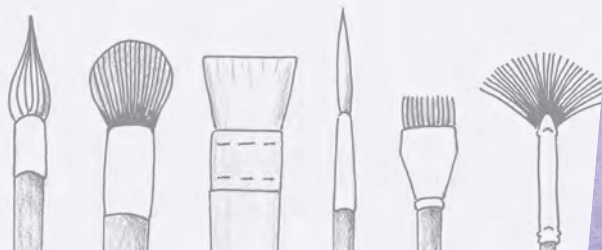
A pre-coat of paint is the **ground**. Each media requires a different ground. Oils on canvas may need a glue sizing and then a thick coat of gesso. Acrylics on a natural wood panel may need a latex primer. **Gesso** is composed of gypsum and glue size. It forms the surface for the painting. Gesso is a foundation for acrylic and oil paintings on canvas and boards. Whether or not a ground is used is up to the artist. If the artwork is to endure, then consideration should be given to the appropriate preparation of the support.

## Brushes

Artist paintbrushes come in various sizes and are made of a variety of materials. Some brushes are useful for acrylics and oils, others just for watercolors. They are made from red sable, ox, camel or squirrel hairs, etc. The red sable is best for watercolor because of its very fine point when wet. Ox hairbrushes are great for use at school. Camel hair or squirrel hair is inexpensive, though they fail to hold their shape when saturated for a long time.

The **ferrule** is the metal ring that holds the hairs or bristles to the brush handle. A round ferrule is what makes a **round brush** and a flat ferrule refers to a **flat brush**. Brushes come in various sizes from #00 (smallest) to #16 (largest). Length of brushes has become standard with watercolor brushes, being 7" to 8", and oil and acrylics being 12" to 14".

Painting techniques vary depending on how the brush is held. Long handles make it easier to stand up and work over a canvas. Different strokes are made by holding the brush close to the tip, in the middle, or at the end of the handle. Different effects can be achieved by holding the brush vertically, at an angle, loosely, or firmly.



There are two types of natural hair brushes. **Soft-hair brushes** hold a good deal of thin paint, while maintaining their shapes. They are most often used with watercolors but may also be used with acrylics and oils. **Bristle brushes** are coarse and hold plenty of paint, while retaining their shape. They are mostly used with oil and acrylic paints.

**Synthetic brushes** may be both soft or firm and are less expensive than natural hair or bristle brushes. Over time, they tend to build up a "heel" next to the ferrule causing stray hairs to stick out. In the short run they work well but will not last as long as natural hair brushes.

Brushes come in several basic shapes and work best with specific techniques.

- *Round* has a smooth curved end and is good for detail strokes and washes or filling in space. It is used for all media.
- *Pointed round* has a precise point and is fine for painting details in all media.
- *Mop* is round and used for washes. It is most commonly used in watercolor and is often made of squirrel hair
- *Oval wash* is a wash brush with rounded hairs used for watercolor.
- *Flat* is a squared end useful for bold, sweeping strokes for all media.
- *Bright flat* is short hair, squared end, useful for short controlled strokes for oils and acrylics.
- *Filbert* is set in a flat ferrule with a curved end and may have medium to long hairs. It is good for blending oils and acrylics.

## Painting and Palette Knives

Knives may be used to apply paint to the canvas. The knife blades are springy and flexible, and shapes range from diamond and trowel to pear and paddle. Palette knives are used to mix and move paint on the palette, while painting knives are used to apply paint.

### Cultural Celebration

Frida Kahlo (Mexican, 1907–1954) became one of Mexico's renowned artists. She loved her country and its peoples. Many of her paintings express the customs, traditions and dress of various regions of Mexico. Notice the style of clothing and hair. She often painted herself in Tehuana clothes from the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which consist of a long velvet skirt and a white embroidered shirt. Her jewelry was often a pre-Columbian style. Kahlo used many symbols in her paintings such as **retablos**, small painting celebrating a person's survival of misfortune, pre-Columbian artifacts and indigenous flora and fauna.

# Artistic Techniques with Acrylics

**Design Elements:**  
Color and form

**Design Principles:**  
Proportion and unity

**In the Studio:** Paint a still life using fruit as the model.



## Artist Notes – Applying Paints

**A**pplying paint requires practice, patience and problem solving skills.

Acrylic paints are a fairly recent invention in the art world. In the 1940's, two scientists, Leonard Bocour and Sam Golden, experimented with acrylic polymers. They found a way to use the **polymers** to suspend **pigment**, thus creating **acrylic paints**. Acrylics are versatile. They can be very fluid or have a thick-bodied consistency. They can be applied to any surface and come in a wide range of colors. Acrylics are made up of three ingredients—pigment, acrylic polymer resin and water that make up an emulsion. As the paint dries, the water either evaporates or soaks into the painting surface. With the water gone the polymers join together holding the pigment tight. The result is a beautiful rich color. If you want to thin the acrylic paint, be careful not to overdo it. If adding water, add a little more paint. If the pigment is too thin when it dries, it will not bond within the polymer net.

If using a surface other than paper, make sure it is dirt and oil free and consider priming it with a high quality **acrylic gesso** or base coat. Acrylic gesso provides a strong flexible ground on which to paint. To finish off your acrylic paintings, use a varnish and follow manufacturer's directions. The **varnish** will help keep dust and dirt from damaging the painting. If there is any paint leftover, store it in an airtight container such as a black film canister. Keep your palette from drying out from day-to-day by sliding it into a sealable plastic bag.

### Life Skill:

Problem solving

### Youth Outcome:

Uses cognitive abilities and processes to find solutions

### National Art Education Standard:

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

### Materials:

- Brushes
- Palette or new Styrofoam tray
- Acrylic paints
- Rinsing can
- Paper
- Palette knife
- Fruit for model
- Lamp – optional
- Spray bottle for misting – optional

## Your Challenge

As you begin painting, notice the shadows and lights surrounding your model. Consider how you will apply paint to the surfaces to make **forms** out of what you see. Acrylics respond to the surface in ways which are different from oils or watercolors. Practice and patience are necessary as you figure out how to create. Try this activity several times, perfecting your skill and technique.

### Create

1. Position a single piece of fruit so it has contrasting shadows and light. If in a poorly lighted area, use a lamp.
2. Use a pencil to draw a contour sketch of the fruit before you paint it. (See *the Drawing unit in Sketchbook Crossroads*.)
3. Mix colors to create the base color of the fruit. Do this with the palette knife, not a brush.
4. Using the mixed paint, begin painting inside the contour sketch.



5. For shadows, mix a portion of the remaining base color with black. Black is never used by itself, only mixed with other colors because it overpowers other colors. Paint on the darker shades to create the shadows. If you need different darkness of shadow, add more black.

6. For light areas, mix the base with white paint. You can use plain white on the extreme light areas, but consider using it in moderation.

*REMINDER: Light travels on a straight line, so it falls on the fruit's curve.*



- What happened when you mixed colors to paint the fruit?
- When blending the base colors with white and black what happened?
- How did you create a shadow to give the fruit form?
- How does the painting's form (fruit) and proportion work together?
- What problems did you have when using acrylic paint? How did you solve them?

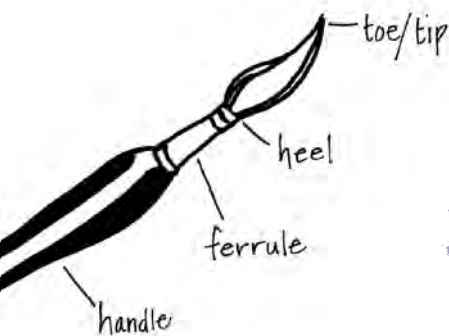


1. Set up for another painting. Now add 2–3 pieces of fruit to the composition. Position the fruits in an interesting composition, creating contrasting shadows and light.

2. Create a contour sketch of the fruits.

- 3. Mix the color for the first fruit and begin painting.
- 4. Mix the colors for the other fruit when you are ready.
- 5. If your paint begins to dry, lightly mist with water to keep the palette moist.
- 6. Mix the base colors with black and white as needed. Paint in the shadows and light areas.

- What challenges did you have with creating shadows when painting more than one object?
- What did you learn from painting fruit that you can use in painting other objects?
- What is an activity you do every day where you have to solve problems that are similar? Describe how you solve these problems.



## Art-i-fact

Color pigments come from interesting sources. The Chinese ground cinnabar, a raw ore form of mercury, mixed it with sulfur to make Vermillion, a vivid red color. However, it was radioactive. Other safe sources of pigment are used today. Indian yellow was made in the Bengal province of India from urine of cows that ate mango leaves. When the urine was heated, the liquid evaporated, leaving a yellow powder pigment. Ultramarine, a rich blue color, was originally made from lapis lazuli stone. The best stones came from the Kokcha Valley of Afghanistan.



## Portfolio Entry

Add the paintings to your portfolio. Consider answering the Reflect and Imagine questions in a sketchbook.

## Learning Indicators

Through creation and imagination I:

- Mixed colors to paint a fruit.
- Painted shadows, creating form and proportion in my painting.
- Figured out how much black or white paint to use to create shadows or light spaces.

**Acknowledgement:** *What Every Artist Needs to Know About Paints and Colors*, David Pyle, Krause Publications, Iola, WI, 2000.

Activity written by Haley Goodwin.



# In and Out of Control with Color

**Design Elements:**

Color, line and shape

**Design Principle:**

Emphasis

**In the Studio:** Explore the potential of watercolor, using a variety of techniques to complete a painting.

**Life Skill:**

Problem solving

**Youth Outcome:**

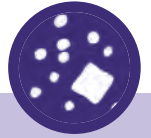
Uses cognitive abilities and processes to find solutions

**National Art Education Standard:**

Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

**Materials:**

- Brush,
- Watercolor paper, variety
- Water color paint
- Paper towel
- Sponge
- Watercolor pencils
- Gum eraser
- Rubber cement
- Spray bottle
- Scissors
- Waxed paper or Mylar



## Artist Notes – Watercolors

**H**ow do you control the colors in a painting? Should the colors be controlled or allowed to mix at will? Learn to enjoy various happenings and develop a personal style with watercolors. A **watercolor** painting should be spontaneous and have sparkling colors. Colors that run together may be desirable. Experiment! The essence of the medium is transparency, emphasizing the use of water, value, contrast and rich colors.

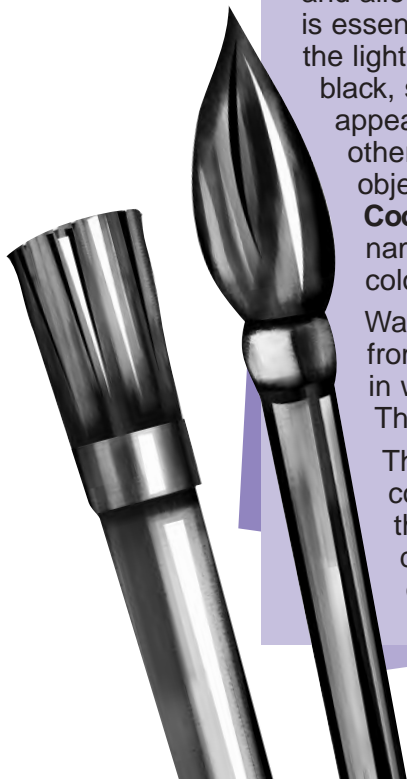
Careful planning of a composition is important; however, a detailed drawing is not needed. Let the colors, textures, design and patterns speak. Keep the composition simple. Move from one area of the painting to another, taking advantage of accidental bleeding. Watch the painting as it dries. The addition or removal of paint may be just what is needed. Move away from the painting, come back, add details and absorb color with a sponge or paper towel. Always consider positive changes as the painting develops.



With watercolor painting, plan for all white and light areas. Work from light to dark and allow each wash to dry before adding another. Knowledge of the color wheel is essential in order to make successful watercolor overlays. Color **value** refers to the lightness and darkness of color. Colors with white added are **tints**. By adding black, **shades** are created. Using value allows objects to look close or far away, appear solid or three-dimensional, rough or smooth and separate from each other. Value can also be used to show the importance or unimportance of an object. **Warm colors** are those with a large amount of yellow, orange or red. **Cool colors** have a large amount of blue, green and violet. **Hue** is another name for color. Once water evaporates out or soaks into the surface, the colors tend to become lighter than when wet.

Watercolors are made from **gum arabic** and color pigment. The gum comes from the acacia tree of Senegal and the Sudan in Africa. The gum is soluble in water leaving no residue, which makes the paints very clear and clean. The gum is a perfect vehicle for the pigment.

There are two types of watercolors. Transparent watercolors are the most common. Though transparency varies, in general they allow the color of the surface to show through. **Gouache** is opaque watercolor. It allows for dense flat colors. To produce gouache an opacifier is added, such as chalk or calcium carbonate to the watercolor.





Doodle here ...



Watercolor paper quality is important. It may be either machine or hand made. Good quality watercolor paper is made of cotton and is acid free. The recommended weight to use is 140 lb or more. Paper of this weight or higher provides less wrinkles and usually does not need stretching. The **watermark** is a maker's brand that is readable in the lower front corner of the paper. It is found on better quality paper. The side of the paper with the watermark is the front side.

Follow these **techniques** when using watercolors. Always completely clean brushes and store them with bristles up until dry. Store flat when dry. Make sure lids are on watercolor tubes and the pans for color are dry and clean before putting them away.

The following exercises are helpful in understanding how washes are used. Complete these exercises and use them as a reference for the painting activities:

First, make some washes of several colors on paper, achieving a single value. A **wash** is a very thin coat of paint; one can see the paper underneath it, as it is transparent:

### To Make a Wash

- Choose either one color of a watercolor tube or semi-moist block (cake) paint.
- Select a round brush and pre mix some paint by adding water.
- Tape or attach the paper to the working surface. Pre-moisten the area to be painted with water and a clean brush. Do not make the paper too wet. Choose paper with enough tooth and weight to avoid warping when water is added.
- **Charge** your brush (load it with color)
- Apply the color to the dampened paper with smooth strokes and overlap just enough to complete an area with a single value of color.
- Now choose six colors and make vertical washes of each, using a wide brush, and leave a small space between each color. Allow the painting to dry.
- Using the same colors make horizontal washes over the vertical washes. Notice cool over warm colors. Notice how the colors change when overlapped. Use this exercise as a resource.  
Note: A color can be grayed by putting its complementary color over it or by mixing two colors. Do not use black to change the intensity. Avoid muddy colors by overworking and scrubbing.
- Practice taking color from a wash.
  - Apply bold strokes of color on a paper.
  - Use a paper towel or sponge to absorb paint to make a cloud or remove color before it dries.

## Your Challenge

Try five or all of these techniques when using watercolors. As you paint, apply new ideas. You will soon find what works and what does not work for you.



### Use Stop Outs

To block out lines or shapes that should not receive color or remain white, use the following: masking or transparent tape, rubber cement (remove after it dries), or commercial stop outs.

1. Apply the tape or other stop out materials (allow them to dry) and apply paint over them.
2. When the color is dry, remove the stop out, and that area will remain white as planned.
3. Practice using rubber cement in an abstract style. Dribble rubber cement on the paper in various loops and lines. Let dry and apply watercolor to define shapes, patterns, etc.
4. Add additional details to include lines and patterns such as hearts, plaids, circles, etc.
5. Remove the rubber cement with a gum eraser to expose the white. Add additional color to some of the white areas if desired.

### *Use Loaded Washes on Dry Paper*

6. Keep the work simple in shapes and strong in contrast and composition. Achieve “juiciness” by applying a loaded wash to dry paper. Experiment with applying washes over already existing washed areas to make areas darker. Apply light washes first, then darker ones. Consider painting a simple sketch of a farm scene, or some fruit.

### *Paint Wet on Wet*

7. Flowing colors on a wet surface result in mixtures and blends. Control of this technique takes practice. Heavy papers can be prepared by soaking first, and lighter papers can be sponged or brushed with clear water. Make sure to tape or attach the paper to a non-absorbent surface prior to painting. Charge the brush with a pre-made wash of color; apply to the painting in broad strokes, overlapping enough to make the application of color appear smooth. Do not scrub or overwork.

### *Paint a Value Study of One Color*

8. Paint a simple still life of various size boxes. Show value changes in the shadows in and among the boxes. Consider the angle of the light on the boxes. Consider the value based on the closeness or distance between boxes.
9. Use a large flat or round brush and only work with that brush to finish the painting. Let the values (darks and lights) be evident.

### *Vibrant Patterns*

10. Draw a simple still life of objects you like. An example would be for a horse enthusiast to include a saddle, horse, boots, bit, a show card, ribbons, etc. Paint the subjects using washes. Go for details and add patterns such as repeated dots, wavy lines, circles, fill in areas with squares, triangles, patches of color, etc.

### *Positive and Negative Space*

11. Plan and paint a still life, leaving the positive space (inside the shapes) white. Complete the background, negative space, in all kinds of washes, overlapping with the addition of patterns.

### *Spray Paint Watercolors*

12. Mix a color wash of dark intensity and place in a spray bottle.
13. Cut some shapes and place them on paper.
14. Spray the wash over the shapes, and remove the shapes. Notice that the negative space is now the only space with color (background).
15. Lay on more shapes and spray on another color. Continue until you are pleased with the results; use waxed paper and/or clear mylar and cut it into stencils to place on the paper.
16. Spray the paint inside the positive area of the shapes you have cut from the waxed paper or mylar.





## Splatter Paint

17. Splatter watercolor washes on paper by loading a toothbrush and pulling a butter knife across the bristles of the brush. Experiment first to get control of this technique.



- What worked best for you when using watercolors to paint lines and shapes?
- What was the most difficult? Why?
- Describe other techniques you tried when using water colors. What did you like about the techniques you chose?
- How did you use lines, colors, and shape to create emphasis in the painting?



1. Using one of the techniques described, sketch a painting and then complete it with watercolor paints. Choose warm or cool colors and paint your composition. Study the flower paintings of Georgia O'Keeffe. Note her simplistic use of lines, colors, and shapes.
2. Visit a garden center making basic sketches of flowers and plants.
3. Paint the sketches with watercolors.

- What was most challenging about sketching and then painting?
- How did you mix colors to show depth to your painting?
- Compared to other painting media, how easy or difficult is watercolor painting?
- How can you apply what you learned about watercolor painting to other painting media?
- When using watercolors each time different challenges occurred and you had to solve them. How do you go about determining what works best for you at school?
- When challenges occur how do you solve them?

## Art-i-fact

*William Winsor and Henry Newton who started their London based company in 1832, marketed the first mass produced watercolor. Their watercolors were created from gum arabic and pigment and was soluble in water. Winsor and Newton were the first to patent the paint tube in 1842, making carrying paints much easier.*

*The weight of paper refers to the weight of a ream, which consists of 500 sheets.*

## Learning Indicators

*Through creation and imagination I:*

- Mixed and applied watercolors to achieve the desired end result.
- Learned to plan ahead for any white or light areas in the painting.
- Learned it is necessary to paint from light to dark colors.
- Learned how to make and apply a wash.
- Can apply what I learned about watercolor painting to other painting media.



## Portfolio Entry

*Place your best samples in the portfolio. Also keep your sketches. Add notes on your use of color combinations, both successes and failures. Consider answering the Reflect and Imagine questions in a sketchbook.*