

Acrylic Paint

What is it?

Acrylic paints are composed of pigments suspended in an acrylic emulsion. Acrylics are thinned with water and can be mixed with gels and pastes to create textural effects. They are quick to dry, forming a hard plastic. Sometimes artists mix an acrylic retarder into the paint to slow the drying process.

Acrylics are well suited for building transparencies and/or flat color, rather than for painting that requires delicate control and blending.

Preparation

- Each table should be covered in newspaper or larger sheets of paper to help soak up water spills
- There should be a water cup for every 2 people
- There should be a tray or paper plate with small amounts of each paint color (or needed colors) for every two to three people.
- Each child will need one brush
- Paper towels are helpful to contain spills

Techniques to Try

Painting - Hard Edge – Use a flat brush to create even, straight strokes. Allow the area to dry before painting next to it (to preserve the edge)

Painting - Soft Edge – use a damp brush to apply color in an area. Soften the edge by running a wet brush over the edge. You can achieve a gradation of color by painting another color right next to the first color and blending the edges together.

Double Colors- Dip opposite sides of the brush hair in different colors and paint an area in one even stroke.

Pressure Variations- Vary the painted line width by pressing down harder or softer to create different effects.

Mirror Image Effect - Create an ink-blot or mirror-image effect. The ink-blot technique can be used for a variety of creations, such as unusual symmetrical creatures, insects, plants, masks and hats. Fold a piece of paper or a paper plate in

half, then open and paint on one side of the fold. While the paint is still wet, fold the sides together and rub over the outside of the unpainted side to transfer the paint. Open and observe the mirror-image effect. Add more paint and repeat the process to change the image or add details.

Crayon Resist- Color lines and shapes heavily with crayons. Then cover with paint. The waxy crayon will "pop" through the painted surface. Experiment with thinning the paint with water.

Crayon Antiquing- Experiment with crayon antiquing. Draw using heavy crayon layers to cover most of a heavy paper such as oak tag or a recycled brown paper grocery bag. Brush or dab black paint, thinned with water, over a small area of the drawing then wipe off immediately. Polish with a soft cloth or tissue. Repeat until entire piece is completed.

Clean-up

Projects need a space to lay flat and dry for a few hours. After the projects are dry, they can be stacked and stored in a safe place.

Brushes and water cups need to be rinsed with cold water and gently dried. Brushes should be stored with the brush side up.

Paint plates need to be thrown away – if the students used the plastic trays, they need to be washed and dried before putting back in the box.

Newspaper/paper covering the tables needs to be thrown away (and tables wiped down if needed)