Meet the Artist:

- Renoir was born in Limoges, France in 1841. He would be 170 years old now.
- As a little boy, he played in the streets of Paris near the Royal Palace. Sometimes he would see the Queen of France in the courtyard of the Louvre. (The Louvre is a part of the palace that was turned into a museum. A young Renoir spent hours there studying great works of art. Today some of Renoir’s art hangs in the Louvre.)
- At thirteen, Renoir worked in a dish factory painting china patterns. He painted designs and patterns (repeated lines) on dishes for seven years until he became an art student.
- When Renoir started painting, people liked the old-fashioned style of art. They liked art that had a lot of details and was painted in dark colors. Renoir and his artist friends (like Claude Monet) liked to use brighter colors and a lot of paint. They would sometimes take their canvas (stretched fabric that artists paint on) outdoors so they could see the way sunlight made colors look different.
- Renoir’s favorite things to paint were portraits (paintings of people). Girl with a Watering Can is a portrait of a pretty child in a fancy dress holding a watering can.
- At first, people didn’t like Renoir’s art. They thought it was too new and too sloppy looking. But Renoir did not give up and kept painting the way he wanted. Eventually, his art became very popular.

Renoir was happy with his style of painting and was proud of his work. As he grew older he continued to paint, which became difficult because he also had painful arthritis. Renoir died when he was 78 years old.
About the Art:

Portrait

- A portrait is a picture of a person.
- Usually, the person will pose, or hold still, while the painter is painting.
- Artists are hired to paint portraits, so it was a good way for Renoir to make money.

Questions about Girl with a Watering Can

- What is the little girl wearing? Is it fancy or play clothes?
- What is she holding?
- Why would she wear such fancy clothes in the garden?
- Have you ever dressed up for someone to take a picture of you? Do you think they had cameras back then?
- What colors do you see?
- Are the colors light or dark?

Activity

Colorful Portrait

Supplies

- White drawing paper (8.5" X 11")
- Oil pastels or crayons
- Board/book for support to draw on outside

Directions

- Take the kids outside to draw in the sunlight like Renoir did.
- Hand out the materials – make sure their names are on back.
- Ask the students to draw a colorful picture of someone they love or pose the teacher for a portrait.
- Have the students think about what that person could be wearing? What would you add to the picture to make it more colorful?
- When done, see if their artwork looks different indoors. Ask the students if their colors look lighter or darker.