



CHARACTERISTICS OF PLANTS – Encaustic Painting

Students identify distinguishing characteristics of a variety of plants, make field notes and drawings of specific plants, and then use their research to create an encaustic painting of one of them.

Required Time

120 Minutes

Grade Level

Grade 6 to Grade 8

Subject

Language Arts
Science
Visual Arts

Vocabulary

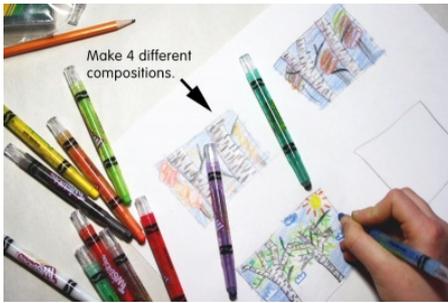
balance
colour
composition
encaustic
fine art
line
science illustration
texture

Materials

Crayola Crayons - 48 Count
Crayola Paintbrushes - 5 Count
Crayola Twistables Crayons - 24 Count
Crayola Marker & Watercolour Paper or Crayola Sketchbooks
Corrugated Cardboard - 15.2 cm x 22.9 cm (6" x 9") - 1 per student
Bristols Board - 15.2 cm x 22.9 cm (6" x 9") - 1 per student
Electric Frying Pan
Small Muffin Tin
Recycled Newspapers

Shop Crayola
Products

Steps



Step One

1. Use your field notes to make 4 different compositions of your plant.
 2. Think about how you use the elements of design to move the viewer's eye through the space.
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Step Two

CAUTION! This activity should only be done in a well-ventilated area and with adult supervision.

1. Begin by sorting the crayons according to the colours you will use.
 2. Unwrap the crayons and break them in half.
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Step Three

1. Place the broken crayons into the muffin tin palette.
 2. The muffin tin stays in the electric frying pan.
 3. Make sure there is always **water** in the pan surrounding the muffin tin and keep the temperature turned to **medium heat**.
 4. Notice how the crayons change as they are heated.
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Step Four

1. Practice applying melted crayon on a piece of Bristol board.
 2. Try different brush strokes and colour combinations to get the feel of the technique.
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Step Five

1. When you are ready to begin your good painting work on a piece of heavy corrugated cardboard.
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Gradually build up colour and texture to create shadows and lines that will lead the viewer's eye in and around the composition.



Step Six

1. Gradually build up colour and texture until you are satisfied with the final piece.
 2. From time to time view the painting from a distance to see it with fresh eyes.
 3. Look for shadows and lines leading your eye in and around the composition.
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Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- create an encaustic painting that expresses a particular quality of a plant;
- use contrast and shadow to create balance;
- use line to create the illusion of movement;
- follow safe practices;
- demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity;
- support their ideas with evidence found in the artworks.

Extensions

Have students:

- write a poem to accompany their encaustic painting;
- photograph their encaustic painting;
- create a digital class poetry book illustrated with the photographs of the encaustic paintings;
- write an artist statement about their painting to be included at the back of the book;
(Downloads - WritingArtistStatement.pdf)
- invite others to view and comment on the book.

Prepare

1. Prior to this lesson organize the equipment into a centre for about 6 students. (Students will have to take turns using the equipment depending on how many frying pans you have.)
2. Take students on a field trip to a park or outdoor education centre to do field sketches of plants and trees, and/or download images from the Internet, e.g.,
Deciduous
Coniferous
Birch
Maple
Spruce
3. Download several fine art paintings of plants. For example,
Klimt
Monet
Cézanne
Frommel
4. Download several science illustrations of plants. For example,
Flowers
Nutmeg Tree
Apple Tree
5. Download and display the Elements and Principles of Design **posters** available on this website.

Introduction

1. Have students look at a variety of plant images to compare composition and techniques.
2. Discuss the composition of the pictures, focusing on the arrangement of elements to create balance, and how the artist holds the attention of the viewer taking their eye on a journey around and through the space.
3. Discuss the characteristics of some of the plants students have been studying - leaf shapes and type, flowering plants, etc.
4. View the images of science illustrations and fine art paintings and compare them. Explain that they will be making a fine art painting to express a particular quality or characteristic of their plant.
5. Introduce the challenge.

Activities

The Challenge

1. Create an encaustic painting that expresses a particular quality of your plant.
2. Use contrast and shadow to create balance.
3. Use line to create the illusion of movement.
4. Follow safe practices.
5. Demonstrate technical accomplishment and creativity.
6. Support your ideas with evidence found in the artworks.

The Process

1. Make sure everyone understands the challenge.
2. Establish success criteria with your students, for example,
I know I am successful when I have:
 - created an encaustic painting of a plant
 - created 4 thumbnail sketches based on my field notes

- *changed things for artistic purposes*
 - *used contrasting colours to create balance*
 - *used line to create movement*
 - *created a composition that moves the viewer's eye in and around the picture plane*
 - *followed safe practices*
 - *kept everything in good condition*
3. Ensure safe practices. For example,
 - *be aware of the hot electric frying pan*
 - *always make sure there is water in the frying pan, replacing it when it evaporates*
 - *keep the frying pan temperature set to medium*
 - *work in a well-ventilated area*
 4. Guide students through the steps outlined in this lesson plan.
 5. Observe students as they work.
 6. Provide individual assistance and encouragement.

Sharing

1. Once all the paintings are complete display them for a group discussion. Remind students of the challenge.
 - *Look closely at the drawings.*
 - *Choose one that interests you for some reason.*
 - *Share thoughts about the work.*
2. During the discussion include references to:
 - *composition - how it holds the attention of the viewer taking the eye on a journey around and through the space*
 - *balance - how line and colour balance the composition*
 - *technique - special qualities created by the encaustic technique*

Assessment

1. Observe students as they work - thoughtful focus, discriminating, seeking more information, elaborating, experimenting.
2. Observe students as they discuss their paintings - speaks with a clear voice, looks at audience while speaking, points to areas in the painting, provides accurate information, answers questions from the audience effectively.
3. Observe students as they listen - looks at presenter, asks effective questions, supports ideas with evidence found in the artwork.
4. Use a checklist to track progress. (Downloads - Encaustic_tracking.pdf)
5. Have students use the self-assessment form to evaluate their work. (Downloads - Encaustic_self-assessment.pdf)