

GREAT ART IDEAS FOR TEACHERS

EXPRESSIVE SKIES: INSPIRED BY IMPRESSIONISM

YEAR 4–6

OVERVIEW

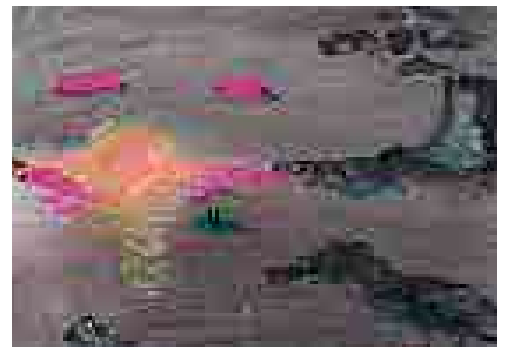
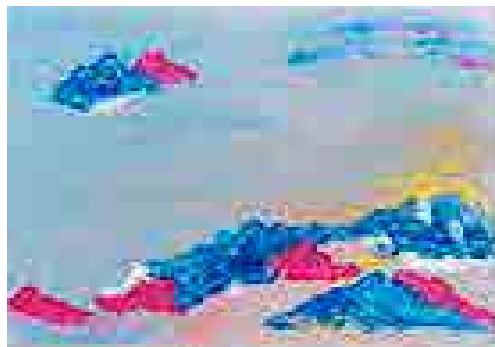
In this activity students explore ideas and artworks of Impressionist painters as inspiration for the creation of their own works of art. They analyse how artists manipulate and apply materials and techniques to convey meanings and ideas. Students experiment with a range of media and processes and apply these approaches to create their own expressive artwork that evokes a feeling.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Compare and contrast the aesthetic qualities of the sky in Impressionist works from the NGV Collection.
- Interpret meanings and ideas expressed in representations of the sky in different paintings.
- Develop and create an expressive painting of a sky using pastels on paper and paint on acetate.
- Identify and explain their expressive choices to a partner and explain what inspired their painting.

STUDENT EXAMPLES



RELATED ARTWORKS



Claude Monet
Rough weather at Étretat (Gros Temps à Étretat)



Gustave Courbet
The wave (La Vague)



Louis Buvelot
Waterpool near Coleraine (sunset) 1869
oil on canvas
107.4 x 153 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Purchased, 1870



Arthur Streeton
Evening with bathers 1888
oil on canvas
40.8 x 76.4 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Bequest of Sunday Reed, 1982

DISCUSS

Look at the related works of art with students and explain that abstract art does not represent recognisable places, people or things. In abstract art, artists use elements like line, texture, colour, shape and tone to create moods and effects.

- Describe the colours in each of the works – are they bright or dull?
- Which shape families are used – are they rounded, geometric, sharp, smooth, long, thin or angular? How are the shapes used – are they layered, bunched together or spread out?
- Which mood do the shapes and colours create?
Bright colours and round shapes might make the picture look lively, friendly and happy. Shapes bunched together might make the work feel busy.
- What do the works make you think about and why? For example, they might remind you of a patchwork blanket or a busy freeway.

RESOURCES & MATERIALS

- White A4 paper
- Soft pastels
- A4 acetate
- Acrylic paint
- Brushes
- Palettes
- Clear plastic tape

CREATE

Students create an artwork which depicts the sky through the following steps:

1. Prior to artwork production, allow students time to experiment with soft pastels on paper and acrylic paint on acetate.
Blend the pastel colours together to achieve various results and aesthetic qualities. See how the acrylic paint interacts with the pastel drawing underneath.
2. Choose a mood or feeling to express in your depiction of the sky.
Will your sky be bright and radiant, or dark and gloomy? Consider what colours and techniques will best convey your chosen mood or feeling. Use the related works of art as inspiration.
3. Create your background using soft pastels from your chosen colour range on a piece of white A4 paper.
Apply the rendering and blending techniques you practised during your experimentation.
4. Place your pastel drawing underneath the acetate.
Consider what additional details you can add to your sky on this layer. For example, clouds, mist, suggestions of weather conditions, and light beams. These details should further enhance the mood or feeling in your expressive sky.
5. Apply the next layer of detail by adding acrylic paint to the acetate layer
You don't need to paint over the whole sheet. In fact, it's best to allow the pastel to show through parts of the acetate.
6. Once your painting has dried, attach the painted acetate layer to your drawing with clear tape.

PRESENT & REFLECT

Students present their expressive sky with a partner or small group:

- Describe the expressive sky you painted as a metaphor.
- What might the conditions feel like to someone underneath your sky?
- How does your choice of colour enrich the meaning in your expressive sky?
- How do the techniques you applied enrich the meaning in your expressive sky?
- Share your favourite part of the process you followed to make the artwork.

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