

ART: THE BASICS

Painting with Acrylic

This guide provides you with an introduction to the program and follow-up questions (along with their answers).

The question sheet is designed to be duplicated for class distribution.

Before Viewing: Give students an overview of the program using the program introduction. Discuss the words in the vocabulary box to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Use a selection of the follow-up questions to help review the program.

You can cut and paste text from the pdf file to compile your own set of questions if you wish.



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Program Introduction

Acrylic paints were first developed in the 1920s as a painting medium for mural artists to use on the exteriors of buildings. These artists needed a paint that was easy to use and quick to dry but also one that was stable in changing conditions. Acrylic paint, made by bonding pigments in a resin made up of microscopic polymer chains, made the paint very tough and durable. Acrylic paint proved perfect for murals and it was used extensively by the great Mexican mural painters, Siquieros (1896-1974) and Rivera (1886-1957).

During the 1950s the technology of plastics improved and a new binding medium was introduced, PVC. By this stage more and more artists were using acrylic paints and artists like Jackson Pollock (1912-1956) found them very useful for painting in a quick, expressionistic way.

The characteristic of acrylic paint that makes it so attractive for artists is in its fast drying. This allows a thin layer of paint to be placed over a thicker one as soon as it has dried; the time water takes to evaporate. When the layers have dried they form a very strong bond, giving a very durable surface. Acrylic paint is a great medium for the artist as it frees up the working processes, and therefore should lead to greater creativity.

Vocabulary: Polymer, Mural, Varnish, Linseed Oil, Pigment, Gouache, Opaque, Transparent, Medium, Non-toxic, Tooth, Palette, Scumble, Gel, Tempera, Gesso, Stipple, Glaze, Collage, Gloss, Matt.

Painting with Acrylic: QUESTIONS

Chapter 1: Why use Acrylic?

1. What are the major advantages of acrylic paint over other types of paint?
2. What is the main difference between oil and acrylic paint?
3. What are the pigments in oil paint bound together with?
4. How long after an oil painting is finished should the protective coat of varnish be applied?
5. What are the pigments in acrylic paint bound together with?
6. What is used to thin acrylic paint?

Chapter 2: Working with Acrylic

7. If a watercolour is transparent and watery, what is a gouache?
8. When mixed with a matt medium, acrylic paint can become as thick as what other sort of paint?
9. How is the paint applied in Impasto?
10. What sort of medium is used to make very thick painting effects?
11. To slow down the fast drying time of acrylic paint what sort of medium can be used?

Chapter 3: Properties of Acrylic

12. What are the safety advantages of acrylic paint?
13. From what is acrylic paint, when dry, very hard to clean off?
14. Name three types of painting surfaces that can be used with acrylic paint.
15. What won't acrylic paint adhere to?
16. What is the tooth of a material?

Chapter 4: Painting with Acrylic

17. The artist's palette should be broken down to two main areas, what are they?
18. What are the advantages of a paper palette?
19. What else can be used as a palette?
20. What is the technique called when you apply a thin, often broken, layer of paint over a darker layer?
21. How is scumbling useful in painting?
22. Adding Gel medium to acrylic paint makes it behave like what other sort of paint?
23. What technique is a good way to paint clouds?

24. What can be used in this technique instead of a brush?
 25. What is one solution to fixing mistakes you might have made in a painting?
 26. Dry brushing is used extensively in what type of painting?
 27. Tempera painting involves small brush strokes usually being built up on what sort of panel?
 28. Gesso does what to a panel?
 29. What can be introduced quickly to a painting by the use of under-painting?
 30. What sort of brush strokes can show the shape or form of an object?
 31. Building up an area with a series of small dots is called what?
 32. Stippling can be done with brushes and what else?
 33. How can glazes add to a painting?
 34. What are glazes thinned with?
 35. What is the artwork called when you use mixed-media such as scraps of paper?
 36. Can you paint acrylic over oil paint?
 37. Can you paint oil over acrylic paint?
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Painting with Acrylic: ANSWERS

Chapter 1: Why use Acrylic?

1. Acrylic paint won't fade or crack and is more durable.
2. Acrylic paint dries much faster than oil paint.
3. Pigments in oil paint are bound together with Linseed oil.
4. A protective coat of varnish can be applied between 6 and 12 months after an oil painting is finished.
5. A clear plastic polymer binds the pigments in acrylic paint together.
6. Water is used to thin acrylic paint.

Chapter 2: Working with Acrylic

7. A gouache is thick and opaque when compared to watercolour.
8. When mixed with a matt medium, acrylic paint can become as thick as oil paint.
9. Impasto is thickly applied paint.
10. A modelling medium is used to make very thick painting effects.
11. A retarding medium can be used to slow down the fast drying time of acrylic paint.

Chapter 3: Properties of Acrylic

12. Acrylic paint is non-toxic, non-flammable and it washes out in water.
13. Acrylic paint will not wash out of any clothing or material once it has dried.
14. Canvas, panels, paper, illustration board, or other cheaper board are types of painting surfaces that can be used with acrylic paint.
15. Acrylic paint won't adhere to any oily or waxy surface, or any super smooth surface, such as glass, metal or plastic.
16. The tooth is the degree of roughness or coarseness in the texture of a paper or canvas.

Chapter 4: Painting with Acrylic

17. The artist's palette should be broken down into the warm colours (the reds and yellows etc.) and the cool colours (the greens and blues etc.).
18. The top sheet of a paper palette rips off for an easy clean-up.
19. An old meat tray from the supermarket can also be used as a palette.
20. Scumbling is when you apply a thin, often broken, layer of paint over a darker layer.
21. Scumbling is good for changing the tone of a colour.
22. Adding Gel medium to acrylic paint makes it behave like an oil paint.

23. The 'wet in wet' technique is a good way to paint clouds.
 24. A sponge can be used instead of a brush.
 25. Whiting the area out and starting again or using a wet medium to blend and soften the area are solutions to fixing mistakes.
 26. Tempera painting uses dry brushing extensively.
 27. Tempera painting uses a smooth gesso panel.
 28. Gesso gives a white ground and seals the panel.
 29. Under-painting can introduce contrast and depth to a painting.
 30. Contour strokes can show the shape or form of an object.
 31. Stippling is building up an area with a series of small dots.
 32. Stippling can be also be done with sponges, crumpled up tissue, rags or aluminium foil.
 33. Glazes add colour to a painting.
 34. Glazes are transparent layers of paint thinned with a gloss or matt medium.
 35. A collage is an artwork made from mixed-media.
 36. No, you can not paint acrylic over oil paint.
 37. Yes, you can you paint oil over acrylic paint.
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ART: THE BASICS

Painting with Watercolours

This guide provides you with an introduction to the program and follow-up questions (along with their answers).

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Program Introduction

Watercolour paints are made by mixing finely ground pigments into Gum Arabic; a vegetable gum obtained from acacia trees. The gum is easily dissolved in water and gives a firm adherence when laid on paper. In addition, it acts as a light, thin varnish, giving greater brilliance and luminosity to the colour.

Watercolour paints first came to artists' attention in the sixteenth century and one artist to use them extensively was the German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528). By the eighteenth century they had become very popular, particularly in England, where paint technologists Winsor and Newton, were constantly making reliable paints for artists to use.

The chief characteristic of watercolour is its transparency, a fact that should be exploited to the full. The lightest tones - highlights, bright skies, and whitish details - are given by the untouched paper, which is usually white. Unlike when you are painting with oil paint where you can lay lighter paint over darker tones, with water colour you must work through from the lightest tones to the darkest. Even a very light tone laid over a dark one will darken it further by covering more of the white paper underneath. It is this quality of the paper shining through the transparent pigment which gives pictures in watercolour the brilliance and sparkle which sets them apart from other styles of painting.

Vocabulary:

Gum Arabic, Pigment, Palette, Primary Colours, Secondary Colours, Glaze, Wash.

Painting with Watercolours: QUESTIONS

Chapter 1: What you need

1. When an artist selects colours for the palette, the three primary colours – red, yellow and blue – are the put out first. How does the artist then make a secondary colour, like green or orange?
2. Why is it important to fix down the sheet of paper when working with watercolours?
3. When is it useful to use the wide and flat wash brush?
4. Why does a bigger brush allow longer time between refills?
5. Why do watercolour artists use two containers of water?

Chapter 2: Techniques used in Watercolour painting

6. What happens when you overlap watercolours?
7. How is a broad area of graduated colour or 'wash' best achieved?
8. How can paint be removed from a page to make clouds and other high-lights?
9. Before adding a new layer of paint to a composition what first needs to be done?
10. The 'salt technique' produces what sort of paint effect?
11. What colour should be avoided when working with watercolour?
12. Which technique is used to keep an area completely clear of paint?
13. What is a glaze?
14. How can textures be applied?

Chapter 3: Painting a picture

15. If you do the under drawing with a soft pencil, like a 2B, it will bleed through when layers of watercolour are placed over it. What sort of pencil should you therefore use for under drawing?
 16. When doing a landscape, what is first line drawn on the page?
 17. Which technique in watercolour painting is good for filling in the sky?
 18. How do you reveal highlights?
 19. How does using a large brush aid flexibility when working with watercolour?
 20. It's best to keep loose when working with watercolours, adding and building up the image slowly, but in what order is this done?
 21. If you were painting in oil paints and you needed a lighter red you could add white. How would you achieve this in watercolour painting?
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Painting with Watercolours: ANSWERS

Chapter 1: What you need

1. Secondary colours such as green or orange are made by mixing two primary colours.
2. You fix down the sheet of paper because as the paper gets wet it will buckle, forcing the paint into areas you didn't necessarily want it to go.
3. The wash brush is good for applying broad areas of colour or washes.
4. A bigger brush needs less refills as more pigment is soaked up by the brush.
5. One water container is for washing the brushes and the other is kept clean for thinning down the paint.

Chapter 2: Techniques used in Watercolour painting

6. In watercolour painting the base colour will show through.
7. To achieve an even gradient with the 'wash' you must apply it evenly using a broad, wet brush.
8. Watercolour can be removed by dabbing the wet paint with a piece of tissue paper which lifts the paint from the surface.
9. The first layer must be totally dry, which doesn't take too long with watercolours.
10. It breaks up the paint surface, creating a bursting effect, and gives it a gleam.
11. Using white will cause the colours to lose their transparency.
12. The masking technique will keep an area completely clear of paint by using a masking fluid to prevent any paint hitting the paper.
13. A glaze is a thin layer of paint applied over an already dry area.
14. Paper towels and sponges can help to apply textures to a composition.

Chapter 3: Painting a picture

15. A hard pencil, like a 4H, should be used for the under drawing when working with watercolour.
 16. Drawing in the horizon line lightly, with a fairly hard pencil or pastel, is a good place to start.
 17. A 'wash' is a good technique for filling in the sky area.
 18. The whiteness of the paper will give you the highlights, so removing the pigment with a paper towel will reveal highlights.
 19. It's hard to get caught up in the detail if you're using a large brush.
 20. When working in watercolours you work from light to dark, building up the dark areas last of all.
 21. In watercolour painting you allow more of the white paper to show through by thinning down the paint.
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ART: THE BASICS

Pastel Painting

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Program Introduction

Pastels were first used by artists in the fifteenth century and at the time of Leonardo da Vinci (1452-1519) were known as the dry colour method of painting. They're made from chalk mixed with pigment and were first used mainly for doing preliminary studies or sketching. As time went by, artists started to use it as a medium for more finished works. It became a very popular during the late nineteenth century, when Impressionists, Monet (1840-1926), Manet (1833-1883) and Renoir (1841-1919) used the medium widely.

Pastel is a medium that's ideally suited to doing quick colour studies of a subject or with careful working can produce almost photographic results.

Like all art materials there are special rules that apply when working with pastels. To achieve a particular result certain steps have to be taken. Even the 'tooth', or roughness, of the paper has an effect on the final picture. Along with rules that apply to all drawing (such as the need for careful observation, and starting with the broader shapes and then refining them), you can add others that apply more directly to pastels, such as working from light to dark, to achieve great results.

Vocabulary:

Renaissance, Charcoal, Chalk, Linseed Oil, Varnish, Tooth, Kneading Eraser, Complementary, Analogous, Perspex, Stippling, Pigment.

Pastel Painting: QUESTIONS

1. From which century do the earliest known drawings in pastel date?
2. What was pastel painting known as during the Renaissance?
3. To begin with only three basic colours were available; black, red and white. Why was this?
4. By which century was pastel being used for finished portraits?
5. What is mixed with white clay, chalk or gypsum to make pastels?
6. Do the colours in a pastel keep their freshness longer than oil paint?

Chapter 1: Materials used in pastel painting

7. Pastels come in three grades of hardness. What are they?
8. Which type of pastel will produce the fullest colours?
9. What is a good pastel for doing dark, detailed work?
10. What is the 'tooth' of the paper you are working on?
11. What sort of paper should be used if you are trying to superimpose different coloured pastels?

12. How do different coloured grounds make a difference to the final work?
13. What is a complimentary colour?
14. What are thumbnail sketches?

Chapter 2: Working with Pastels

15. When you are drawing, what does varying the pressure on the pastel do?
16. What is the 'blending stump' made from?
17. Why is it important to work from the top of a page when you are drawing with pastels?
18. A 'kneading eraser' is one way of removing pastel, how else can it be done?
19. What is used to fix the surface of the pastel to stop it from smudging?
20. Why should a finished pastel artwork be framed behind glass?
21. What is the purpose of the window mount in framing?

Chapter 3: Techniques of Pastel Painting

22. When working with pastels the colours are mixed on the surface of the drawing. What are two methods of doing this?

23. Overworked areas become hard and less pastel will want to stay on the surface, what is a remedy for this?
24. Complimentary colours are colours that are opposite each other on a colour wheel; green and red, blue and yellow. When laid down next to each other what do they do?
25. Where do analogous colours sit on the colour wheel?

Chapter 4: Painting a Picture

26. What is a good thing to do before starting a major work?
 27. When working on the large scene, what are the first things drawn in?
 28. Why is it best when working in pastels to work from light to dark colours?
 29. As a general rule, when do you focus on the detail of a composition?
 30. In portraiture a likeness is important, but for the overall composition, what else do have to consider?
 31. What can you use as a tool when planning a composition?
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Pastel Painting:

ANSWERS

1. The earliest known drawings in pastel date from the fifteenth century.
2. Pastel painting was known as the dry colour method of painting during the Renaissance.
3. These first colours were natural pigments; black was from charcoal, red came from iron oxides in earth and white came from chalk.
4. Pastel was being used for finished portraits by the eighteenth century.
5. Coloured powders are mixed with these materials and are held together with a mild glue.
6. They do. Because pastels have no linseed oil or varnishes that darken with time, the colours in a pastel stay fresher.

Chapter 1: Materials used in pastel painting

7. Pastels come in soft, semi-soft and hard.
8. A soft pastel will produce the fullest colours.
9. A hard pastel is best for detailed work.
10. The tooth refers to the roughness of the paper's surface.
11. To superimpose different coloured pastels you need a rough surface to hold as much of the pigment as possible.
12. Warm grounds will warm up the colours in the composition while a cool coloured ground will cool them down.

13. On a colour wheel, a complimentary colour is the colour that is opposite the first colour. Complimentary colours will balance each other.
14. Thumbnails are small quick sketches, done with little detail, to get a feel for a picture or scene.

Chapter 2: Working with Pastels

15. Varying the pressure on the pastel will vary the amount of pigment being transferred to the paper.
16. A 'blending stump' is made from a piece of tightly rolled paper.
17. Working from the top keeps the work clean from smudges.
18. A tissue can rub it off, a knife can scrap it off, and a wet brush can wash it off.
19. A fixative spray is used to hold the surface of the pastel and to stop it from smudging.
20. Pastel artworks are best framed behind glass because they have a very fragile surface.
21. The window mount is to keep an air gap between the glass, or perspex, and the surface of the artwork.

Chapter 3: Techniques of Pastel Painting

22. The two ways of mixing colours are to either overlay one colour with another or to stipple (small dots of different colours to make the impression of a third colour).

23. Spraying the surface with a fixative will allow you to work over the area again.
24. One complimentary colour will balance the other and the colours will be intensified.
25. Analogous colours sit next to each other on the colour wheel and can be used to vary the tone of a colour.

Chapter 4: Painting a Picture

26. Before beginning a major work, complete a series of small thumbnail sketches to quickly map out your ideas and the major shapes in the composition.
 27. The first things drawn in simple line drawings are the broad outlines of the scene.
 28. It is best to work from light to dark colours in pastel painting because the dark areas of the composition will need to be built up more slowly, with more pigment.
 29. You focus on the detail of a composition after the broad shapes have been put in and the tone of the composition added.
 30. The colour balance is also important for the composition to be successful.
 31. Photographs of models make a good tool when planning compositions.
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