Watercolor Painting

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Knock Knock Children’s Museum is a community spark for engaging, playful learning experiences that inspire and support lifelong learning.
The Art & Science of Watercolor Painting
Age Level: All ages | Lesson Duration: Unlimited
Learning Zone: Art Garden | Subject: Painting

WATCH THE VIDEO LESSON HERE!

Materials Needed:

- Watercolors palette
- Paint brushes
- Watercolor paper taped on board
- Oil Pastel
- Extra sheets of plain paper
- Cup
- Water
- Paper towel
- Imagination

Louisiana Standards:
VA-CE-M1, VA-CE-M2, VA-CE-M3, VA-CE-H1, VA-CE-H5, VA-AP-E1, VA-AP-E2, VA-AP-E3,
VA-AP-E4, VA-AP-E5, VA-AP-M1, VA-AP-M3, VA-AP-H1

Louisiana's Birth to 5 Early Learning & Development Standards:
AL1, CC2, LL2, PM2

Learning Objectives:

For this activity the learner will use art to learn about the science of materials and the reaction of oil and water.
Steps:

- Take out your materials, place them on a table or on the floor to work.
- Find a plastic cup and fill it 1/2 full of cool water. Put your brushes tip down in the water for them to soak.
- Open your paint box. Notice that the paint is dry - it will need to be activated or softened with water to change its state from a solid to a liquid.
- Put your brush in the water and dab (drop) water onto each of the colors.
- Wait a few minutes for the water to start reacting to soften the solid paint so you can use it.
- The paper we are using is called Watercolor Paper. Touch it, notice it's not smooth but instead slightly rough. Watercolor paper has texture which is called a "tooth" - compare it to the other paper in your kit.
- Watercolor paint will work on any type of paper but the "tooth" or texture makes the paper stronger, so it won’t disintegrate (fall apart).
- Your watercolor paper is taped onto a cardboard - this keeps the paper flat as it dries and creates a frame or border around your completed painting, making it look professional.
- Take out your oil pastel, notice that it feels softer than a crayon. That is because it is made out of a soft oil. Draw on your paper with the pastel. You can draw lines, your name, a heart, a tree, an animal.

Cool Science Fact:

If you were to leave your oil pastel in the sun it would get soft and melt. Oil pastels are soft version of a crayons. Crayons are made with wax, which is a form of oil that has a higher melting point. Any crayon or oil pastel will melt in the sun, but the pastel will melt faster because it has a lower melting point. You can try melting a broken piece of crayon or cray pas and see what happens.

History:

Watercolor is a type of paint which uses dry pigments (colors made from natural materials from the ground) and water. The first paintings ever created by humans were painted during the Paleolithic Era, 14,000 years ago. They used red dirt and black charcoal ground up and mixed with water to make paint. They painted images of animals inside caves, using their fingers and sticks as good luck symbols before hunts.

In more recent time, 700 years ago, artists discovered they could make brighter colors by grinding minerals, and stones to get blues, greens and yellows. Bright red and purple came from insects and shells. The Cochineal Beetle makes a bright red, and sea urchins make purple. Two hundred years ago new colors were created using chemistry. Today, scientists have figured out how to create almost any color you can imagine.
Dig up different types of dirt in your yard. Notice the different colors. Dirt is made from different kinds of minerals. Try mixing the dirt with water to create paint. What else can you paint with?

Follow Up Activities:

- Dig up different types of dirt in your yard. Notice the different colors. Dirt is made from different kinds of minerals. Try mixing the dirt with water to create paint. What else can you paint with?