

PLEIN AIR NEIGHBORHOOD LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS

INTRODUCTION

In this project, we will create our own **landscape paintings** and build our **observational** painting skills.



Examples of landscape paintings by students at Buchanan Street Elementary

MATERIALS

- Mixed media, acrylic or any thick paper
- Acrylic paint
- Paint brushes
- Palette, or a plate or paper to mix colors on
- Water cup
- Pencil

VOCABULARY

Landscape art: art that depicts natural scenes such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers, and forests, especially where the main subject is a wide view.

Observational painting: creating a painting from what you see and trying to depict it as accurately as possible.

Perspective: the representation of three-dimensional space in a painting.

Landmark: a feature of a landscape that is easily seen and recognized from a distance.

Plein air: the practice of creating an observational landscape painting outdoors.

STEPS

- 1** Choose a location in your neighborhood that is important to you. This can be your house, a favorite park, or a **local landmark**. Pick one spot to sit or stand. Sketch your location on your mixed media paper. Make sure to stay in one place and not move around while you sketch! Use your **observational** skills to draw the landscape from this one **perspective**. Observe what shapes + lines you can see.
- 2** If you can stay at this location to paint, set up your paints, palette and brushes to paint **plein air** in the same spot you stood to sketch. If you can't stay in this location to paint, take a reference photo so you can look back and match your colors and details.
- 3** On your palette or plate, begin to mix your acrylic paints to match the colors you see at this location or in the photo. What is the color of the sky? What colors are the plants + buildings?
- 4** Begin filling in shapes with your acrylic paint. Start with large shapes + background colors, like the sky and any surfaces of buildings. Once you have these filled in, let them dry and then add other details like shadows, textures, plants and anything else you observe.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How did it feel to draw and/or paint outside?

Were there details that you didn't notice at first that you noticed after looking at your landscape location for a while?

How did your perspective change your painting? Would it have looked different if you stood somewhere else, or sat down?

Take a photo of your painting and send it to
ffleming@oxy.edu or tag us [@oxyarts](#)