

Lesson Plan:

Experimental Watercolor

6th- 8th Grade

Introduction:

This art lesson relates to the work of Darren Waterston. Waterston's work at the KMA is oil on wood panel, but many of his paintings are watercolor or appear to have watercolor like qualities. This lesson allows students to experiment with watercolor as a medium, trying out a variety of techniques.

Objectives:

After completion of this lesson, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of various watercolor techniques.
2. Draw connection between the art of Darren Waterston and Asian art history.

Instructional Objectives:

The student will Demonstrate an understanding of various watercolor techniques through the production of 7 individual technique/texture pieces and one combined piece in relation to the style of Darren Waterston.

Vocabulary:

- See watercolor techniques
- Color (primary, secondary, tertiary)
- Tint and Shade
- Monochromatic
- Texture



Darren Waterston, *Ice and Stars*, 2007, oil on wood panel

Materials/Media:

- <http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolor-tutorials.htm>
- Watercolor paper
- Watercolors
- Thick and thin brushes
- Paint palettes
- Water jars
- Drying Rack
- Salt (Salt Texture Technique)
- Rubbing Alcohol (Rubbing Alcohol Texture)
- Toothpicks (sgraffito texture)
- Old toothbrushes (splattering and spraying texture)
- Plastic Wrap (plastic wrap texture)
- Optional: Acrylic Paint (to paint in details)
- Optional: Black roller ball pens (to paint in details)

Instructional Procedures:

1. **A. Set -**

The teacher will then show the work of Darren Waterston and ask a series of questions that relate to the work as seen in Key Questions. The teacher will then show the students a series of Waterston's work that can be found on his artist website. The teacher will explain that Waterston seeks to explore the unknown worlds of space, the cosmos, and microbiology in his washes. The teacher should also draw comparisons between Waterston's work and Asian paintings, subject matter, and style.

B. Key Questions – After finishing the set the teacher will show the students the photo of Darren Waterston's art and ask the following questions:

1. Do you remember seeing this piece at the museum?
2. What materials has he used?
3. What feeling do you get when looking at the work? Are you curious? Confused? Mystified?
4. What do you think the intent of the artist was?
5. How does the color relate to the subject matter?
6. How does Waterston's work relate or not relate to the Asian paintings we are viewing?

Who Made It?

Darren Waterston Biography

DARREN WATERSTON was born in California in 1965 and received his BFA at the Otis Art Institute in Los Angeles. He continued his training in Germany studying painting at the Academie der Kunst in Berlin and the Fachhochschule fur Kunst in Munster. He has previously been the recipient of the Richard C. Diebenkorn Teaching Fellowship at the San Francisco Art Institute, and the Civitella Ranieri Foundation Fellowship in Umbertide, Italy, where he was an

artist in residence in 2005. Waterston lives and works in San Francisco, California.

Waterston's paintings, watercolors and murals have been exhibited internationally and are included in many permanent collections, such as the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Museum of Contemporary Art in San Diego, CA, the Oakland Museum of California, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA, and the Portland Art Museum in Portland, OR.



Classroom Strategies Day One

Watercolor Techniques- Wet on Wet, Dry Brush, Mixing Colors in the Palette, Large Washes (translucent and thick)

1. Review the artwork of Darren Waterston and Asian art.
2. Inform the students that they will be following along with a series of techniques on small 3" x 3" pieces of watercolor paper.
3. Remind them to pay close attention because they will be replicating these techniques later in individual smaller paintings and eventually one larger painting.
4. Demonstrate Wet on Wet technique (see website for tutorial).
5. Monitor student progress.
6. Demonstrate Dry Brush technique.
7. Monitor student progress.
8. Demonstrate mixing colors on the palette (review colors, tint, and shades).
9. Monitor student progress.
10. Demonstrate large washes (translucent and thick)
11. Monitor student progress.
12. Clean up five minutes prior to end of class.

Classroom Strategies Day Two Watercolor Techniques- salt texture, alcohol texture, splatter texture, plastic wrap texture, sgraffito texture.

1. Review the concepts and techniques covered in the previous class.
2. Inform the students that they will be following along with a series of techniques on small 3" x 3" pieces of watercolor paper.
3. Remind them to pay close attention because they will be replicating these techniques later in individual smaller paintings and eventually one larger painting.
4. Demonstrate Salt technique by making a wash and then gently sprinkling salt into the wet paint. (see website for tutorial).
5. Monitor student progress.
6. Demonstrate Alcohol texture technique by dripping alcohol into the paint and watch the paint resist and spread apart.
7. Monitor student progress.
8. Demonstrate splatter texture with the old toothbrush. Be sure to remind students of the classroom rules: mutual respect and not to abuse materials.
9. Monitor student progress.
10. Demonstrate plastic wrap texture and allow to dry on the drying rack with plastic wrap attached overnight.
11. Monitor student progress.
12. Demonstrate how to use the thick wash from last class to incise with a toothpick as the sgraffito technique.
13. Monitor student progress.
14. Clean up five minutes prior to end of class.

Classroom Strategies Day Three and Four Larger Individual Paintings of each technique.

1. Review the concepts and techniques covered in the previous classes.
2. Distribute the 6" x 6" sheet of watercolor paper the student should practice their techniques on. Each students should have at least 7 techniques demonstrate after the two-day work period.
3. Monitor progress and help when needed.
4. Clean up five minutes prior to end of class.

Classroom Strategies Day Five and Six (and Possibly Seven) Combined Watercolor Painting

1. Review the concepts and techniques covered in the previous classes.
2. Demonstrate how to combine the techniques.
3. If there is a theme along with a life sciences course, allow the students about 15 minutes to brainstorm ideas.

4. Monitor distribution of materials as well as student progress.
5. Clean up five minutes prior to end of class.

Practice and Review:

- The students will review the artist Darren Waterston throughout the process, addressing the variety of watercolor techniques used and combining all techniques as a final project.
- The students will review scientific terms that may have been used through an interdisciplinary approach to the lesson.

Learner Involvement:

- Students will answer and ask questions during the discussion.
- Students will be picked as volunteers to help pass out the supplies.
- Students will be encouraged to give feedback to the critique and be expected to talk, at least briefly, about their own piece and how it relates to the artist.

Learner Environment:

- Teacher will need to prepare by gathering examples of Darren Waterston's art found on the Knoxville Museum of Art website as well as the artist's personal site: <http://www.darrenwaterston.com/>.

The teacher should also review watercolor techniques and texture found at: <http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolor-tutorials.htm>.

- Teacher will need to make sure all accommodations have been made for special needs learners.

Closure:

- Close with positive statements about each student's work.
- Ask the students to think about what they liked and did not like about the project.
- Students will receive a rubric that scores their individual work.

Alternative/Supplemental Activities:

- This project can be quite involved and turned into an entire unit on watercolor or could be a quick overview of techniques. The teacher has the option to do as many or as little techniques and textures as would be fit. The more techniques though, the better final combination outcome. Also, other materials besides acrylic paint and pen could be used for detail.
- This could make for an interesting interdisciplinary project that relates to the life science and/or astronomy. Many of Waterston's work reflect life, biology, and astronomy. The science class could study a particular organism or astronomical phenomenon and paint it into their art.

Evaluation:

Informal: Teacher will walk around the room to make sure the students understand the assignment. Teacher will check individually (time permitting) with each student.

Formal: Teacher will grade students according to rubric.

Reteaching:

- Teacher will go over the artist at successive intervals in the future.
- Teacher will ask students in successive lessons if they remember the artist Darren Waterston and what he did in his art work.
- Teacher will remind students of the wonderful job they did on this project even when it has passed, citing specific examples of student work that stood out to those individual students.

References:

<http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolor-tutorials.htm>

<http://www.darrenwaterston.com/>

<http://www.knoxart.org/index.html>

State Standards for Visual Arts:

6th-8th Grade:

