

Painting Nature

Tallgrass Prairie Center, University of Northern Iowa

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Painting Nature (K-3)

Curriculum Connection: Arts; Language (Oral Communication)

Materials: One paintbrush and one cup of water for each pair of students

Activity: Expose students to the use of texture in paintings of various works and artists. Explain and discuss one beautiful aspect of nature is the combination of textures and colors. In pairs, students should find interesting textured objects outdoors (leaves, twigs, grasses) and *gently* paint them using their brushes and water to explore the texture. Follow up with discussion on what was felt through painting nature.

Possible Prompts or Leading Questions:

- What happened when you applied water to texture? What's the first thing you noticed?
- Did your partner notice anything different?
- What changed as you painted with the water?

Extensions & Other Options:

- Surprise your students with small canvas boards and have them try to recreate (paint or draw) the textures they found while still outside so they have a concrete visual. If this isn't possible, take pictures and complete back in the classroom (*Arts*)
- After 5-10 minutes line up as a class and switch the pairs of students. Tell them to explain to each other what they painted previously and go find another natural object to paint with one another.