



Theme: Art Education for the Blind

Lesson: Landscape Painting to Music: An Adapted Lesson for People who are Visually Impaired

Subject area: This lesson allows individuals who are visually impaired to paint a landscape painting. The artists use a grid system to build the landscape composition and listen to music for inspiration.

Age Level: Any

Objectives:

Express thoughts and feelings related to various landscapes.

Identify the parts of a landscape painting.

Demonstrate various painting techniques.

Recognize the relationship between music and visual art.

Create a recognizable landscape painting.

Materials:

White Paper (12" x 18" minimum size)

Drawing boards or flat cardboard sheets slightly larger than the paper

Acrylic paint: pale blue, green, turquoise

Containers of various materials to hold paint: glass jar, coffee can, plastic container

Paint brushes: broad, small

Masking taper

CDs of music that relates to land, water, or sky

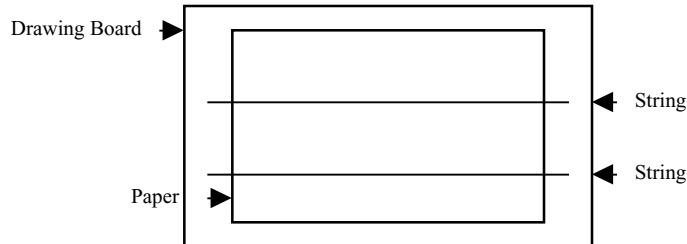
CD player

String

How to Begin:

1. Pour each color of paint into a different container, ie. Blue in a glass jar, green in a metal can. This will allow the artist who does not have sight to identify the various colors by feeling the difference in the texture of the containers.
2. Tape the paper onto a drawing board or piece of cardboard. This makes the surface sturdier and serves as a base for the strings of the grid.
3. Cut two pieces of string slightly wider than the horizontally situated paper. Lay the string across the paper, dividing the paper into three equal horizontal bands (land, water, and sky). Tape the string at each end onto

the drawing board. The painter without sight will now be able to identify which area they are working in.



4. If you are working with a group of individuals, lay out each person's tabletop space in the same manner. This will allow you to give directions that are consistent and clear. The board with the paper should be situated horizontally on the table in front of the artist. The paint containers should all be located on the right-hand side of the board and the brushes to the left.

Art Activity:

1. To begin, ask participants to describe their favorite landscape. Encourage the use of descriptive language and comparisons to other types of landscapes.
2. Show reproductions of paintings of landscapes in a variety of styles, using different geography during different seasons. For students who are low vision or blind, use thorough verbal description of works of art and tactile drawings of landscape paintings found in *Art History Through Touch and Sound*, published by Art Education for the Blind.
3. Explain that this lesson will result in a landscape painting composed of equal areas of land, water, and sky. Walk students through a description of their workspace and the placement of the various tools and objects. Have them feel the paper and the string grid. Ask students to locate the lowest horizontal band (the one closest to their bellies). Explain that this will be the water. Ask students to locate the central band. Explain that this will be the land. Ask students to locate the upper band. Explain that this will be the sky. Identify for students the colors of paint and the containers that they are in. You will need to repeat this information periodically throughout the lesson.
4. Play a piece of music that corresponds to the feeling of water (ex. *Orinoco Flow*, by Enya). Ask students to move their arms to the music. Remind students that when they begin painting they should imagine that the

paintbrush is an extension of their body and should 'dance' to the music across their paper.

5. Ask students to choose the color they want to use for the water and pull that container towards them where it is comfortable. They should also choose the size brush that they want to use to paint water. Again, play the piece of music and ask students to paint to the music in the lower band of their painting. Encourage students to paint all the way to the paper's edges and even off the edges if they desire. Also, the strings are only there as a guide and are not meant to stop the flow of color from one area to another. Painting over the strings is appropriate.
6. Repeat the above steps for each area of the painting, changing the music to correspond with the various areas of the painting. Any of Aaron Copland's compositions work well for land and Debussy and Vivaldi are good choices for the sky, but there are many, many examples to choose from. Students may also change the size of their brushes for each area. It is not necessary to clean the brushes while painting, as the colors are so close in hue.
7. As students are finishing the painting of the sky, ask them to add strokes of the sky color to the water, in the lower band of the painting. These strokes reference the reflective quality of water and add another layer of texture to the painting.
8. Remove the paintings from the drawing boards to dry and remove the strings from the painting while it is still wet. If you wait until it is dry the removal of the string can tear the paper.