



National Art Experience

PAINTING

2016–2017 Youth Project Activity Sheet

Painting

Painting is the 2016–17 art medium. Camp Fire is continuing to follow the established six-year cycle of art mediums for the National Art Experience—painting, fibers, printmaking, photography, clay, and open medium.

As an art form, painting can be accomplished in many different projects. Painting can be realistic or abstract.

Some examples of painting include:

- A picture created on a piece of paper or matte, such as a portrait, landscape, or an abstract design.
- A design created on an object, such as a piece of wood, a vase, a picture frame, furniture, pottery, shoes, or clothing.

The purpose of the Camp Fire National Art Experience is to encourage creativity and explore art as a career or hobby.

To participate in the Camp Fire National Art Experience, you can choose from several activities. You may do these activities with your Camp Fire group, at your Camp Fire program site, with your family, or on your own. Be sure to learn about the rules and deadlines for your council's art show or experience.

National Art Experience Youth Activities—Painting

To participate in the National Art Experience, youth need to complete **four of the 10** activities. We encourage every participant to enter a piece of artwork in the council's experience:

1. **Field Trip.** Visit an art gallery, museum, or craft show where paintings are on exhibit and try some of these activities. Remember to be respectful of the artworks and other visitors.
 - If the gallery has postcards of the paintings, purchase one or two, then locate the same paintings in the collection. Compare looking at a real painting and looking at a picture of one.
 - Look at a painting very close up and again from far away? How do these positions affect what you see?
 - Must paintings be “beautiful” or “realistic” to be good? What does beautiful mean? Do all paintings tell a story? Discuss these ideas with others.
 - Make up a gallery scavenger hunt and locate the items in paintings. Some suggestions are: an animal, sun or moon, children playing, a room, a pattern, the color purple, a boat, and some fruit. Add some more items to look for or make up your own list.

2. **Uncovering Hidden Artists—Women and Artists of Color.** It has only been within the last three decades that women, American Indians, African Americans, and other underrepresented artists have been recognized for their accomplishments. Create a poster display of works by underrepresented artists. When you visit a museum, look for works by artists from underrepresented groups.
3. **Talk to a Pro.** Have a conversation with a painter and find out why painting is important to them. Ask how they get ideas or inspiration for their work. What are their favorite subjects for painting? What kinds of paints, tools, techniques, and processes do they use? What else can you ask them?
4. **So Many Kinds of Paint.** If you have ever used *watercolors* and *tempera* paint in school, you may remember how different they are to work with. Watercolors can be very thin and transparent, while tempera paints are thicker and more opaque. Experiment with [different kinds of paint](#), such as watercolors, tempera, *acrylic paints*, *oil paints*, and *pastels*. Choose a simple subject and make three small paintings of it using a different kind of paint for each one. Compare your three painting experiences as well as the finished paintings. What were the challenges? What discoveries did you make? Share your art and new knowledge with friends or family members.
5. **What Should I Paint?** Artists use *observation*, *memory*, *imagination*, and *experimentation* to determine subjects for paintings. Use two or more of these methods to decide on subjects, then paint your ideas.
 - Observe and paint some objects you have arranged in an interesting way (*still life*), observe and paint what you see in your neighborhood (*landscape*), or look in a mirror and paint yourself (*portrait*).
 - Paint something you remember, such as a place you visited, a pet you once had, or a memorable experience.
 - Paint something from your imagination, like a dream, an imaginary animal, alien life forms, or what your future will be like.
 - Experiment with materials. What will happen if you use tools—such as sticks, cotton swabs, a turkey baster, or a squeegee—instead of paintbrushes to apply paint?
 - Try to make a painting using only two colors or every color. What does paint do on an alternative surface, such as tin foil, plastic, or wood? Or think up your own experiments!
6. **What Goes Where? Learn about *composition*.** How will you arrange the objects or *art elements* in your picture to make it pleasing to look at? Artists have developed *design principles*—guidelines to help them arrange objects in ways that satisfy our sense of *balance* and desire for *unity* and *variety* and help our eyes move through the picture (*movement*). Arrange some objects in several different ways and decide which composition would make the best painting. Use a *viewfinder* to help you frame your arrangements. Will your *picture format* be *landscape* (horizontal) or *portrait* (vertical)? Make several *thumbnail sketches*, then choose one to paint.

7. **Spark a Career!** Conduct research into ways artists turn their love of painting into successful careers. Identify six industries that employ the skills used by painters and describe the type of jobs held by artists in each and what formal schooling is required.
8. **Journaling With Paint!** A journal is a book in which you keep a record of something personally meaningful, such as your daily thoughts, travel experiences, dreams, goals, even painting experiments. You can buy a sketchbook or an old book from a thrift store to turn into an art journal. A Google search for art journals will supply you with ideas on how to repurpose an old book to make a painting journal. Choose a theme and paint in your journal every day for a week or a month. Be sure to let each painting dry before you turn the page! You may choose to incorporate writing into your paintings.
9. **Digitize Your Work.** Once you've produced your work by painting in the customary style—by applying paint to a surface—investigate ways to use technology to replicate your piece.
10. **Exhibit Your Art!** Choose one of your paintings or create a new one for the Camp Fire Art Experience held by your council. Prepare your work for exhibit by matting the work, and make sure your name and return address are securely attached to the back, as well as a hanger if required. Wrapping your picture in clear acetate can protect your work during handling for the exhibit. Fill out the entry forms in full and see that your painting is delivered to the council by the deadline.

If you choose, you can earn the Camp Fire National Art Experience emblem, which is a diamond shape to symbolize creation. A hand symbol and a star symbol are on the emblem, which represent your personal creativity. You can earn this emblem each year in which you participate in the National Art Experience. You will need to complete four of the 10 activities listed above and enter a piece of artwork in the council's experience in order to earn this emblem. In addition to the emblem, you can earn a purple national project bead for each of the activities listed that you complete.