



Inside-Out Seascapes

by Judy Kalil



Because we live in *northern* Florida, “where Florida begins,” people often perceive us as a colder climate. But, the truth is, fish are jumping here all year long. Fish, therefore, are always wonderful subjects to choose for art. They represent the image of Florida we try to present.

For the primary grades, it’s fun to display some of the many fabrics that have lots of lovely, colorful fish swimming in aquamarine water. After much demonstration and discussion on the varieties of ovals that create the different fish shapes, paper is handed out and we begin to practice-sketch.

Students are encouraged to practice drawing ovals and adding different geometric shapes to create the eyes,

MATERIALS

- 15" x 22" watercolor paper
- Watercolors and paintbrushes
- Ultra-fine-point permanent black markers
- Pencils and sketch paper
- Photos and other visuals of fish and underwater/ocean scenes
- Photos and/or reproductions of art by masters that exhibit seascapes and water (i.e. Homer, Monet and many others)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Elementary students will ...

- study the works of great artists such as Claude Monet and Winslow Homer.
- paint with watercolors and understand the properties of water and the medium of watercolor.
- learn about color: analogous and complementary.
- see how easy it is to create fish from geometric shapes.
- learn about seascapes.

thing else they might see in a seascape.

We do have another lesson on how to draw different types of boats. Once everything is drawn, the students go over their pencil lines with black, ultra-fine-point permanent marker. The more detail, the better. Clouds, birds, fish, treasure chests, pirates, sharks, sunsets, pirate ships, cannons, palm trees, flowers, crabs, coconuts, fishing poles and many other items that challenge the imagination can appear in these wonderful creations.

The fun really begins when we add watercolor. Students work on the inside seascape first, then they start drawing again, adding sea grass, small fish, seaweed and maybe even a mermaid *outside* the fish, in the background. Once again, this is done in pencil and then drawn over with permanent black marker. Watercolor is added to the detail.

But, the inside-out seascapes *really* look great when the backgrounds are filled in with complementary colors. If the fish are done in blues, for example, then the background would be in oranges.

Our seascapes really make the students jump with excitement—just like our Florida fish do! ■

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Students joined the likes of Monet and Homer in painting seascapes—but with a twist: their seascapes are inside the fish!

fins, tails and other details of their fish. Having many visuals available helps students decide which fish will be *the one* that will be the center of their masterpiece. (It might even be a turtle!)

After the children feel comfortable and happy with their sketches, they each transfer their drawings onto a large piece of watercolor paper. They should draw the fish very large. Once on the page, only fins, an eye and tail are added. All sketching is done first in pencil.

The next step is to design a seascape to go *inside* the fish. Slides, books and visuals about the art of such famous artists as Winslow Homer and Claude Monet can be introduced to demonstrate the properties of water, and things that can appear on the water.

Simple watercolor techniques should also be discussed. Lessons about the properties of water, direction of water and light in the water are valuable. We then add our water/horizon line across the inside of our fish—about midway. On that line, students are encouraged to draw a boat, an island with trees or any-

