



'After the Storm' by Regina, Watercolor (age 13)

Stormy Weather

Throughout the ages, the power of nature has been a source of fascination for humans. Storms can frighten as well as inspire us. In this activity, you will see how some artists have depicted storms and then paint a picture of your own storm scene.

Materials You Need: 12x18 inch white paper (the heavier the better); watercolor paints along with a water container, 2 or 3 different sized paint brushes, a paint shirt, newspaper, a paper towel sheet or sponge, and masking tape.

Getting Started: Before you begin your picture, look at how other artists have depicted storms. Here are two examples from the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC:

- *Approaching Storm* by Thomas Hart Benton
- *The Coming Storm* by Winslow Homer

How does each artist create the feeling that a storm is approaching? Does the storm seem close or far away in each picture? What words would you use to describe each picture? What kinds of clouds do you see in the sky? What other things do you notice in these pictures?



"Dust Storm" by Luis, Watercolor (age 12)

Here are two more storm scenes by artists. How are they different from each other and the other two storm pictures?

- *Driving Rain* by Ando Hiroshige
- *A Storm* by Georgia O'Keeffe

Think of the last storm that you experienced. How did it look outside? Was it windy? Was it raining hard? What kinds of clouds were in the sky? Was the storm loud or quiet? Recall how you felt during the storm and afterwards. Once you have an image of the storm in your mind, begin painting.

The Activity: Prepare to paint your storm scene by putting on your paint shirt, spreading newspaper on the table, and placing a sheet of white paper in front of you along with a watercolor set, brushes, and a container of water.

Tape your paper down in the corners to prevent it from curling as your work. Instead of drawing your storm scene first, paint directly on the paper. If possible, paint standing up in front of your work area. (That way you can be more expressive.)

Before you begin painting, think about how you will interpret the elements of a storm like rain, wind, thunder, and lightning. What kinds of colors and lines will you use? Will you paint the storm approaching or on top of the viewer? Once you have made these decisions, you may begin working on your painting.

There are many watercolor techniques that you can use in your painting.

Want To Do More? Write a short story or poem about the storm in your painting. Look for storm paintings by other artists on the Web or in art history books. Go to the American Memory Project website and do a search using the word "storm." Examine images of the past and personal accounts by Americans from the late 19th and 20th centuries concerning their life changing experiences with the forces of nature.

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