

Watercolor

Painting with liquid watercolors provides an opportunity to mix colors and explore brush strokes. Art and science intersect when children explore a special watercolor technique with masking tape, crayons or salt.

In The Wonder Cabinet:

Today's activity is an opportunity for children to mix colors and explore brushstrokes as they create a work of beauty. The process of painting promotes the use of fine motor skills and encourages children to make choices of color and placement. For younger children, it can also be an exploration of colors. They can name each color and watch as colors join to create new colors.

We also introduce children to some basic science concepts by extending the activity with different techniques. By using *crayons* or *masking tape*, your child discovers how the paint magically disappears from those areas to create patterns. Sprinkling *salt* on a paper soaked from watercolor will dry certain areas and cause interesting effects.

At Home:

Experiment with different techniques and materials at home. Try layering paints, mixing colors, and discovering how a brush works. Try sprinkling salt on the paper *first* and then painting over the salt. What happens? Try painting on various surfaces. Materials such as wood, styrofoam trays, cardboard, or fabric can lead to unique masterpieces. Save your child's artwork by covering it with clear contact paper or by spraying it with shellac to protect the design.

Suggested materials:

- Watercolor paints, or tempera paints thinned with water
- Paper
- Wood
- Fabric
- Styrofoam food trays
- Cardboard or matte board
- Rocks
- Masking tape
- Crayons
- Salt