Lesson Plan: Basic Watercolor Painting Techniques

**I/O:** Students will learn basic concepts about the medium of watercolor paints, care of supplies, & how to paint with them. They will learn various techniques & procedures for getting started, painting, and cleaning up. Observe and demonstrate understanding of basic watercolor painting techniques.

**Preparation:** Copy Basic Watercolor Techniques Worksheet onto cardstock or watercolor paper-one/student.

**Delivery 1:**
1. Watercolor paints are made from either natural pigments found in the earth; clay, minerals, etc., or from synthetic pigments, which have been finely ground down and then held together with a water-soluble based "gum" binder.

2. **Watercolor Characteristics:**
   a. Watercolor paints are often more fluid or flowing than other paints.
   b. They are meant to be diluted and transparent rather than opaque.
   c. You usually can't paint over mistakes the way you can with other paints!
   d. How do you make colors lighter with watercolors-by adding water to the paint. *Demo*
   e. Light reflects through the pigment bouncing off the paper’s surface.
   f. Watercolors look lighter when dry than wet, so mix pigments darker than required.
   g. Watercolor applied in thick layers creates cracks and is slow to dry.
   h. Painting layer over layer will sometimes muddy clarity. If you intend to paint one wash over another, allow the first wash to dry thoroughly before applying the second. Apply the second wash lightly and rapidly over the first to prevent picking up the pigment in the first wash. This technique is called glazing.
   i. Water can be added to dried paint to reconstitute the paint.
   j. Clean paintbrushes with soap & water. Store brushes BRISTLES UP!

3. **Getting Set Up**
   a. Put newspaper under your paper to protect the table
   b. Get worksheet, water cup, 2 paper towels, paint brushes, & a watercolor palette
   c. Rinsing procedure- Go over classroom procedures for getting clean water etc

4. **Surfaces & Brushes**
   a. Types of surfaces- various watercolor papers (lbs, rough/smooth, hot/cold press, yupon)
   b. Types of brushes -sable & synthetic, flat, round
   c. How to hold brushes-classic, overhand (how you would hold a screwdriver)

5. **Review Color Palette.**
   a. Warm/cool Colors, Difference between Colors that have both warm & cool options like pthalo blue & ultramarine blue, etc.
   b. Laying out the palette
Delivery 2/ ACTIVITY: WORKSHEET- Basic Watercolor Painting Techniques Worksheet
Teacher Guided Activity

**Wash:** A wash is a very thin coat of paint, the paper underneath is transparent. Washes are good for flat, light areas like sky or a large body of water. Washes are created using the "wet-on-dry or wet-on-wet" techniques.

**Wet-on-Dry Technique:**
1. Wet-on-dry means you work with a **wet brush on dry paper**.
2. Load your brush with a color & paint in the square using overlapping strokes

**Wet-on-Wet Technique:**
1. Wet-on-Wet means you are painting with a **wet brush on wet paper**.
2. With clean water, paint in the box or area you want to paint. Let soak in so there is no more shine on the paper.
3. Load your brush with a color & paint in the square using overlapping strokes

**Drop Color Wet in Wet**
1. Dropping Color means exactly that, you are dropping very wet paint onto a wet surface. You are painting with a wet brush on wet paper, but dropping instead of using brush strokes.
2. With clean water, paint in the box (can also be done with color). Let soak in so there is no more shine on the paper.
3. Load your brush so that it is dripping with a color & drop the paint in the square. The color will bleed into the paper.

**Dry Brush**
1. Dry brush means exactly that you apply somewhat wet paint onto a dry surface.
2. Load some paint on brush, then dry most of it off onto a paper towel
3. Apply brush strokes on a dry surface.

**Hard Edge:**
- Hard Edge is painting wet paint right next to dry color to achieve a clean, sharp edge.

**Soft Edge:** (Bleeding)
- Soft Edge is painting wet paint right next to wet color to achieve a bleeding of the colors. The result is a fuzzy (out of focus), blended edge.

**Blotting:**
- Create soft, cloud like textures by blotting a damp wash with tissue or paper towel to lift color.

**Masking Fluid or Frisket ("Save the Whites")**
Materials: Frisket or masking fluid, liquid dish soap & small paintbrushes
1. Masking fluid is a liquid applied to the paper before paint is applied in order to "save the whites" or to keep certain areas the white of the paper.
2. Coat bristles of paint brushes with liquid dish soap-this will help the masking fluid to not stick to the bristles ruining them.
3. Dip brush in Frisket/masking fluid & paint in areas you want to stay the white of the paper.
4. Let dry completely before painting over with watercolors. Let dry.
5. Remove Frisket by rubbing back & forth over it.
Value Scale
1. Begin with the lightest value. Load your brush with a small amount of paint & mix it with a lot of water- so the color is very light. Paint in the first box.
2. Add some more paint to the mixture, making the color slightly darker. Paint in the next box.
3. Repeat the process until you have your darkest value in the last box.
4. When finished, you should see a progression of the values getting darker in each box.

Graded Wash: (Wet on Dry or Wet on Wet)
1. Graded wash or gradation is basically creating a value scale.
2. There are two methods of achieving a graded wash:
   a. Preparing a Value Scale of Colors before Painting:
      i. Load your brush with dark paint. Starting at the top of the box, gently pull a straight line of paint across the box.
      ii. Dab your brush on a paper towel and refill your brush with the lighter mixture (added water). Start your second stroke overlapping the bottom of the previous stroke. The stroke will begin to flow together.
      iii. Rinse your brush and blot it on a towel or damp sponge, refill from the lighter mixture. Make your next overlapping stroke.
      iv. Rinse clean and dip your wet brush into the lighter mixture, further lightening the wash. Lay your next overlapping stroke.
      TIP: If your stroke doesn't flow evenly or breaks up, charge your brush and repeat the stroke IMMEDIATELY.
      v. Rinse your brush well and using clear water start your last overlapping stroke. Squeeze the water out of your brush and pick up the bead of paint at the bottom of the wash.
   b. Adding Water to a Loaded Brush
      i. Load your brush with dark paint. Starting at the top of the box, gently pull a straight line of paint across the box.
      ii. Drip your brush in water & swirl once, then lightly dab brush on a paper towel.
      iii. Start your second stroke overlapping the bottom of the previous stroke.
      iv. Repeat this method until there is almost no paint left on the brush.

Practice painting a sphere form to look 3D.

Evaluation: Quiz Grade & Visual: did the student paint strokes successfully?

Materials Needed: worksheet printed worksheet cardstock or watercolor paper-1 per student, watercolors paints and brushes, water cups, palettes
Basic Watercolor Painting Techniques

Name______________________

Wet on Dry                           Wet on Wet                    Drop Color Wet in Wet                     Dry Brush

Hard Edge          Soft Edge                      Blotting                              Masking Fluid

Value Scale

Lightest Value               Darkest Value

Graded Wash (1 color Gradation)      Blend 2 Colors                   Paint the Sphere to look 3D