



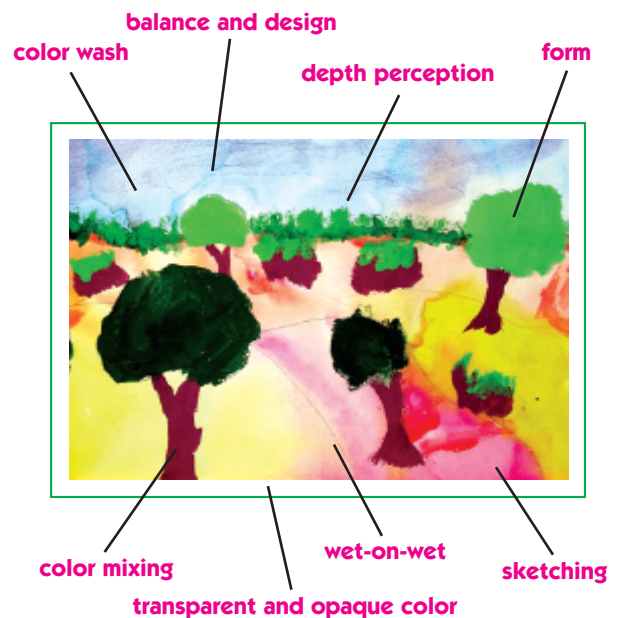
It's About the Learning Process

By Mary C. Rogers, M.A.Ed

When we think about art instruction, we often think about the outcome — “What a nice painting you created, Molly!” But what’s really important is what Molly learned as she created her artwork. What she learned in the “process.” That’s Process Art — Art that places emphasis upon the learning taking place rather than the outcome or finished product.

Let’s take a look at Molly’s watercolor painting and see what she learned through the process of creating her art. The lesson, entitled “Estivalet Landscape Doodle” introduced Molly to the work of Elizabeth Estivalet, a contemporary artist who paints landscapes of southern France. Molly learned about Estivalet and her style of using warm or cool colors and her incorporation of simple shapes into her landscapes. She also learned some techniques, some design ideas and some new vocabulary words like “perspective.” In the process of creating her art, Molly also learned that:

- We all may look at the same thing but come up with different interpretations of what we see.
- There are many solutions to challenges or problems.
- Uniqueness is good.
- There is no right or wrong way to create art.



Estivalet Landscape Doodle, by Molly, age 10

Molly was very pleased with her creation. She liked the colors, shapes and techniques that she used. She learned a lot. Her confidence soared. Molly may not always like the outcome of an art project. But with each lesson, she will learn something new. Perhaps it’s that green paint and orange paint make a muddy brown — which was not the color she intended! Art is a process. Children learn by trying new things. Sometimes the result is not as expected. But what’s important is that the child is learning. So the next time you look at a child’s artwork, simply ask, “How did you do that?” and let the child tell you what she learned. Don’t worry if the child doesn’t always like her work. Even Rembrandt created art that didn’t suit him. But look at what he learned in the process!

