

Reverse Glass Tempera Painting



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Create a brilliantly luminous painting—in reverse!

In reverse glass painting, paint is applied to the back side of a glass surface and viewed from the smooth, unpainted front side. The artist builds layers, starting with a black outline of the image, then working from foreground to background, allowing each layer to dry before the next color is added.

Examples of glass painting can be found as far back as the Middle Ages. It reached its height of popularity during the Renaissance period, a time when glass was expensive to produce and acquire. The paints used had to be specially crafted to ensure proper adhesion on the glass. The high cost of materials, along with the degree of skill needed by the artisan, added to glass painting's allure and made it favored by noble families.

As glass became more readily available, glass painting dropped in popularity and was relegated to a genre of folk art. These folk artisans kept the tradition and methods of reverse glass painting alive through to modern times.

Now there is a variety of modern materials that can be used as the "glass" base. In this lesson, students will use non-glare styrene, a clear thick acrylic sheet that is much more durable and safer than glass. Blick Premium Tempera is mixed with a small amount of Elmer's Glue All for adhesion. To finish, a sheet of silver mirror paper is applied to the back, filling in any clear space and reflecting light to brighten the painting.

Note: Instructions and materials are based on a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.



Materials (required)

Blick Premium Grade Tempera Paint, assorted colors and sizes (00011-); share one bottle of black and at least five colors across class

Elmer's Glue-All, 4oz (23886-1004); share one bottle between four students

Blick Non-Glare Styrene Sheet, 8" x 10" (10566-1002); need one per student

Mirror Boards, Silver, 8 1/2" x 11", package of 10 (12486-9331); need one sheet per student

Glue Dots, Removable, 1/2", Pkg of 200 (23875-1200); share one package across class

Scotch Permanent Double-Sided Tape, 1/2" x 450" (23084-1005); share one roll across class

Ready to order materials?

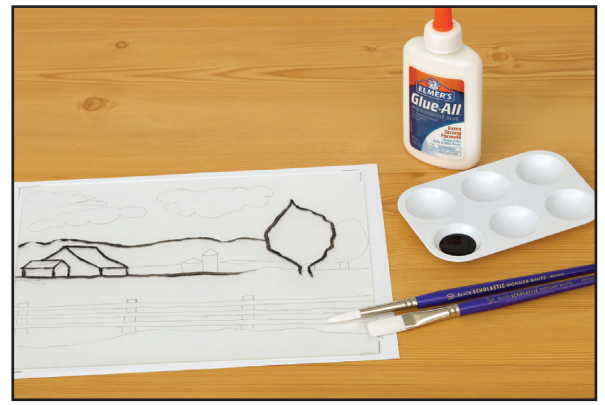
Go to www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plans/Reverse-Glass-Painting/ to access a product bundle for your convenience.

Preparation

1. Create a sketch for the painting. Simplified, outlined shapes will work best when reverse painting.

Process

1. Blick Non-Glare Styrene Sheets come with a protective film on both sides. Remove the film, but avoid touching the surface of the glass. The paint may be repelled by oils in the skin. If this happens, clean the area with a small amount of rubbing alcohol.
2. With the preliminary sketch face up, place a removable glue dot in each corner. Place the sheet of styrene on top of the drawing.
3. Blick premium grade tempera paint is highly pigmented, thick-bodied for one-stroke coverage, lightfast, non-toxic and lead free. It will also reactivate after drying if wetted with water or paint. Each color will need to be prepared to avoid lifting color in this reverse painting process. Because each color is applied as a separate layer its best to only mix colors one at a time, as needed. To stop the paint from re-wetting and lifting, add a few drops of Elmer's Glue-All per teaspoon of paint.
4. Mix approximately two or three drops for Elmer's Glue-All with black Blick Premium Tempera paint. Using the sketch as a guide, outline all major elements of the design, using the black paint and glue mixture.
5. Fill in color section by section, starting with the foreground and moving to the background. Allow the paint to dry between each color layer. Dry times will vary depending on temperature and humidity, but thin layers should dry within 10-15 minutes.
6. When all areas are painted, remove the sketch and allow the piece to fully dry and cure overnight.
7. To finish, use double-sided tape to adhere the mirrored side of a piece of silver mirror board to the painted side of the styrene. The mirror board will fill in any gaps in the painting as well as accentuate brushstrokes.



Step 1: With a preliminary sketch secured under a piece of styrene, outline large shapes in black tempera paint.



Step 2: Fill in color in sections, starting with the foreground and moving to the background.

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Presenting

Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



Step 3: Use double-sided tape to adhere mirror paper to the backside of the finished, dry painting.



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