

beyond

the

aesthetic.

Dear Reader,

So, you think you can't art. Well, I'm here to tell you, you can, but not in an overly positive, super annoying, type of way. I like things a little more laidback and subdued, so you can expect no opinions being shoved down any throats.

My goal is not to tell you that you are an amazing artist who will one day sell a million-dollar painting. Or that you will always be in the drawing mood and crank out a highly intricate portrait in less than an hour. Art requires practice and skill and sometimes just plain talent, and unfortunately, not everyone gets the art gene. My first goal is to show you that being an artist is within your reach. I've talked to many people, trying to convince them to get in touch with their creative side, but the most common response I receive is, "I can't draw." A part of me wants to scream, "But art is so much more than that!" but I can usually manage a much calmer rebuttal and say, "Have you tried painting before?" Believe it or not there are multiple art forms where drawing isn't necessary. Heck, you don't have to even have a pencil within a 50-mile radius and you can still accomplish something beautiful.

You can plan to see my own art experience in high school weaved throughout the pages, with stories on different pieces came to be. I also hope to plant the idea that art is important in every person's life—especially young ones. I hope that through my own experiences and research, I can convince you that art is an essential part of life and should be kept in schools for kids to free their minds by being creative.

Just like people, every work of art has a story behind it. I intend to tell mine, and my hope is, after reading this, you will be inspired to do the same.

Sincerely, Kayla

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." - Pablo Picasso



creativity

songs for the un-inspired soul • 24 songs, 1 hr 29 min

Created by kayladb2000

Pink Lemonade
James Bay • Pink Lemonade

Homemade Dynamite
Lorde • Melodrama

Feel Again
One Republic • Native

Work Song
Hozier • Hozier

Blame It On The Girls
MIKA • The Boy Who Knew Too Much

Dream a Little Dream of Me
Dean Martin • Sleep Warm

I Would Die 4 U
Prince • Purple Rain

Story of My Life
One Direction • Midnight Memories (Deluxe)

Sober
Lorde • Melodrama

I Only Have Eyes For You
Frank Sinatra • The Essential Frank Sinatra

Hurts Good
R5 • Hurts Good

Ever Since New York
Harry Styles • Harry Styles

Moonlight Becomes You
Frank Sinatra • Sinatra With Love

Love Me
The 1975 • I like it when you sleep, for you are so...

Do Ya Think I'm Sexy
Rod Stewart • Blondes Have More Fun

A Lovely Night
Ryan Gosling, Emma Stone • La La Land (Original...

Miss You – Remastered
The Rolling Stones • Some Girls

Epilogue
Justin Hurwitz • La La Land (Original Motion Pict...)

Swing The Mood
Jive Bunny and the MasterMixers • Jive Bunny...

Wild Thoughts
DJ Khaled, Rihanna, Bryson Tiller • Grateful

Misty – Remastered Album Version
Frank Sinatra • Sinatra, With Love

Say Something
Justin Timberlake, Chris Stapleton • Say Something

La Vie En Rose – Single Version
Louis Armstrong • All Time Greatest Hits

Walking On A Dream
Empire of the Sun • Walking On A Dream

Common Art Lingo for the Average Artist

Color wheel – a tool used in the art world used mainly to get a general idea of what color families to work with

Primary colors – the basic colors you used to make new colors (i.e. red, yellow, blue, white, and black)

Secondary colors – the colors made from a mixture of primary colors (i.e. green, orange, purple, pink, grey)

Complimentary colors – colors directly opposite each other on the color wheel; because they are opposite they help each other stand out more and can make the piece more interesting and visually appealing (red & green, blue & orange, yellow & purple)

Analogous colors – colors right next to each other on the color wheel; basically, colors in the same “family” (i.e. yellow & green and red & orange)

Abstract art – real people/places/things created in an unusual/unreal way

Kiln – the place where clay is fired in order to harden it; the oven of the art world

Scoring – a method used in clay work where slashes are made on sides of clay you wish to stick together; it creates a strong hold for the clay

Value – how light or dark a color is (i.e. black and white photography showcases the wide range of gray values in a picture)

Wash – in watercolor, a highly saturated brush with roughly 95% water and 5% paint; when distributed on the page it creates a soft layer of diluted color

“Great things are done by a series of small things brought together”

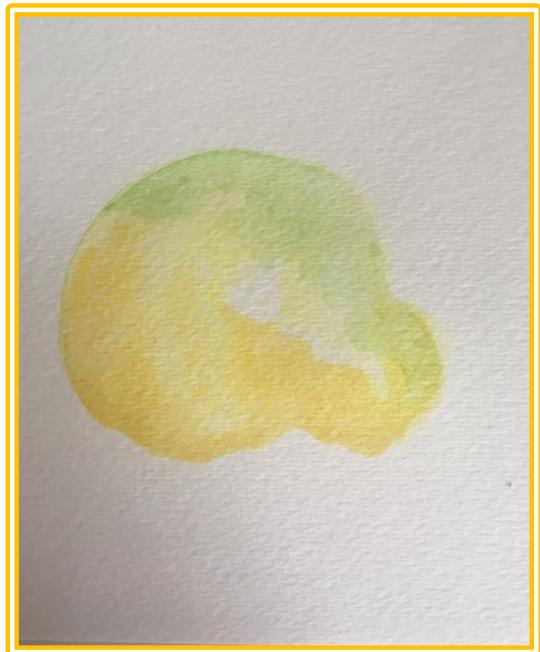
-Vincent Van Gogh

How-To: Watercolor Pear



Step 1: Start by dipping your small brush of choice into water, then into a yellow paint, and create a light wash* similar to the shape of a sideways lightbulb. To create more dimension, randomly make some sections lighter and others darker. (There is no right or wrong answer to this as it is completely random.) You may even consider leaving a white spot on the page for the “shine” on the pear.

*to create a wash you want a high water to paint ratio. I suggest dipping into the water, dipping into the paint, blotting on the paint on paper towels, then dipping back into the water. You can always add color but it's a lot harder to take away.



Step 2:

Layer a light green paint over the yellow in a similar washing fashion on the right side of the pear.

art forms that don't require you to be a good drawer¹

for the beginners

- **pointillism** – this one attracts all the ooo's and ah's and comments like, "how did you do that with just a sharpie?" but, it's simple—dots. you can consider printing out an outline of what you want to create and using a sharpie to dot all over the object, putting more dots where you want an area to be darker, and less where you want it to be lighter.
- **watercolor** – I promise it's simpler than it seems. all you need is a palette, a brush, and some paper (watercolor paper is essential!) after that you can just kind of go to town. I personally go the basic route and create fruit and flowers, but hey, you could just create some washes across the page, slap on an inspirational quote, and bam you're done.
- **collages** – this one is so simple, it's amazing. all you need to do is pick a theme (this can be as simple as a single color or all eyes), get out those old better homes and garden and people magazines your mom has had for years, and start cutting and pasting some pictures on a page in random spots.

for the intermediates

- **chalk** – not just for sidewalks, eh? of course, the actual chalk used in art are like rectangular sticks, but they really aren't that different from what you used as a kid. there's no right or wrong answer, and while you may need to create a little sketch of what you want to create, using a tool you don't have to sharpen every minute is quite a nice switch.
- **pen & ink** – I personally love this one a lot. while this one is *technically* drawing, the technique used puts it into a whole other category. instead of making continuous lines, the trick is to make quick, short strokes in different directions to create a form of shading and textures. you can literally start with an outline of a house or a simple fence and make it look old and wooden and just so, so cool.

for the experts

- **portraits** – yes, I know I just explained many different types of art for those who don't want to draw but hear me out on this one! three words— use a grid. the converting of the dimensions for the picture and paper you're using can be kind of tricky, but I'm sure you use google and figure it out pretty quickly. once you have your grid set up and numbered vertically and horizontally, it's pretty easy. just work your way around the picture, drawing the exact shape you see in the corresponding box in your original picture on your own paper. before you know it, *voila*, your favorite celebrity will be staring back at you off the page.

"Every artist was first an amateur." – Ralph Waldo Emerson

AN ART INTERVIEW WITH : OLIVIA RUSSEL²

When did you start taking art in high school?

I started taking art my first semester of freshman year and took it every semester afterwards.

What interested you in the subject/why did you decide to take art?

I've always loved drawing and making art. I remember going to the high school when I was younger and thinking all the art hanging from the walls was amazing. I couldn't wait to be in high school and take art class.

Were you encouraged by your counselors to consider taking art?

Um, no. Probably the opposite. This kind of goes into the next answer, but I was pretty upset in (I think) junior year when my counselor told me I wasn't going to be able to graduate with honors if I didn't stop taking art and take Spanish instead. My counselor had never told me that being in art ruled me out of the Honors program. I don't remember how, but there was a way that I fenagled my way into Spanish and art, but I think it's ridiculous that being in art disqualified me from Honors. I understand that foreign languages are important - I'm learning foreign languages still in college - but I think art is equally as important.

Were you ever hesitant to take art or worried about the effect it would have on your GPA?

I wasn't hesitant to take it because I loved it, but senior year I started to doubt having "wasted" time in art class that I could've wisely used to boost my GPA. I'm very glad that I stuck with art in hindsight.

Do you feel like taking an art class has benefitted your life in anyway?

Yes! In high school, it was an escape from the stress of other classes. Art class was always either the first class of the morning or the last class of the day. It was amazing either way. Being able to spend an hour being creative and imaginative each day seems so important to me. I think every student, regardless of whether they're an amazing artist or just enjoy doodling, should be in art class. Art is soothing and stimulating all at once.

Overall, what has been your favorite part of taking an art course in high school?

Art class opened a lot of doors for me. I made many close friends in my art classes, I formed close relationships with Mrs. Grippi and Mrs. Kopsky, I received a college scholarship, and I improved my artistic abilities. It was always the best part of my day, talking with friends and being creative and free.

Kayla Bridick

Mrs. Connolly

English 8A

13 April 2018

The Fight for the Right to Art Education

It is heard time and time again. The school is running out of money, the school needs to make cuts, and the arts are always at the top of the list, ready to be eliminated without a second thought. Somehow throughout the years, art has transformed into a "bonus" elective—an add-on that the school just so happens to offer. Often, the attitude towards art is that high schoolers should be honored they had the opportunity to take art in the first place. But, art should be more than just an afterthought or a privilege. It should be an encouraged subject, a place where students can get away from the hustle and bustle of the stressful school day and focus solely on putting their heart and spirit into a masterpiece.

The arts are not seen as a direct benefit to education which is one reason why funding may be low. High schools in the present day are focused less on the learning process and focused more on college preparation. With standardized tests and the minimum score requirements for tests like the ACT and SAT, there is no art focus on the tests, so also with classes, there is no focus on art. Graduation requirements make fitting art into the schedule difficult as there is no room for an art elective after all the courses required are taken (Cornwell 2). Along with this, grade point averages have become another common reason to avoid the arts. In fact, at Granite City High School, students who only take accelerated classes, but also wish to take on an elective, such as art, will receive a lower GPA than one who takes a different elective that is accelerated. While it is fair that a student in an accelerated class would receive more credit for

their GPA than one who is in an unaccelerated course, it is unfair that a student who wishes to take art doesn't have the option to take an accelerated course. With the pressures of high GPAs for college, an accelerated art course could offer a more approachable appeal and encourage students to take the course. Also, it is ironic and should be noted that at Granite City High School, Art History is offered as an accelerated elective course and is a very popular class choice among students with positive feedback after taking the class.

According to the book of Health Reference, art has been known to “reconcile emotional conflicts, foster self-awareness, develop social skills..., manag[e] behavior, solv[e] problems, reduc[e] anxiety..., and increase[e] self-esteem” (104). While art may not seem to have many academic benefits, there are many direct correlations with art and achievements in school. In fact, UCLA researchers proved that those who participate in the arts frequently scored much higher of ACT and SAT tests than those who have a low participation in the arts. In addition to having higher test scores, the students also spent less time watching TV and had a higher involvement helping the community (Ruppert 6; Catteral).

The fight for art in schools has proven itself to be an obtainable goal. A successful example of this is the Comprehensive Arts Planning Program (CAPP) in Minnesota. With this program instilled, the schools are required to provide its students with the options of taking media, theater, dance, music, and visual arts. In addition to this, earning one credit in one of these courses is required for graduation (Cornwell 16). In this way, those who wish to take art have a much better opportunity to fit it into their schedule, and those who may not have necessarily taken an art elective will be exposed to a new kind of creative learning environment they may have never have experienced.

In a world full of smart-phones and tablets with apps and games at the touch of a fingertip, it's more important than ever to get children and young adults to be creative. Most adolescents engage in activities and games that have already been created for them, they need not supply their own imagination, all they must do is tap, tap, tap. With everything already laid out in front of them, the ability to problem solve becomes a problem itself. Adolescents will not have the capability to come up with their own ideas or learn skills needed for self-discovery because technology has made it unnecessary to use this skill regularly (Bernstein).

It is the job of the society to pass on the tools to create and imagine to children before they lose the skill altogether. If it is not being pushed to be artistic at home, the schools need to take responsibility in encouraging the arts and allowing the child to let loose and create something whether that be in the form of dance, theater, music, or in an art class setting. A child's job is to create just as it is the world's job to inspire them to create.

“I think it’s necessary for kids to get bored once in a while—that’s how they learn to be creative.” – Kim Raver

AN ART INTERVIEW WITH : JACK BLOMME³

When did you start taking art in high school?

I started taking art my senior year.

What interested you in the subject/why did you decide to take art?

I have always had an interest in art, but I was always busy with other classes I couldn't fit it in my schedule.

Were you encouraged by your counselors to consider taking art?

Not exactly, they didn't really push me to take it. They offered other classes before art.

Were you ever hesitant to take art or worried about the effect it would have on your GPA?

That was my issue with taking it earlier in high school, I wasn't sure of the effect it would have had on my GPA.

Do you feel like taking an art class has benefitted your life in anyway?

It has, it has helped me with college choices and is now something I can use to take a break from school.

Overall, what has been your favorite part of taking an art course in high school?

It is a class where I get to create and design things in my own way and I am not stuck doing it one way. I can be as imaginative as I please. It is a really good break from school and gives my mind some freedom to roam.



Step 3:

Dip into an orange shade and create a wash on the left side of the pear, again making random areas of lightness and darkness.



Step 4:

Use a red-orange color to create another wash over the orange color. It works best to keep the darkest of the color to the outside edges, but don't be hesitant to bring it further into the middle of the pear as well.

The Mural

November 1st. Thirty days. 720 hours. 43,200 minutes. 2,592,000 seconds. That's how long he had to finish this project. How long he had to put his heart and soul into something he knew may become one of the most importance things he had ever created in his entire life. Yet, he felt time was against him, trying to beat him in a race he desperately needed to win. With every ticking second, he felt the presence of failure swiftly approaching, ready to swallow him whole.

She was declining. Slowly, but there was no doubt she was on a down-ward spiral toward the point of no return. She had insisted she would last longer, even talked about future plans a year from now they would take part in together. They'd never been to New Zealand. That trip would be in December, the 22nd to be exact, the first day of the Southern Hemisphere summer. Then, they could finally say they'd been swimming in ninety-degree weather on Christmas. It was no surprise May excited her the most. But not because of a trip she had planned. Rather her son would be graduating high school. She had been his support system all throughout his four years. The games, the girlfriends, the dances, the grades. And now, she would finally be able to see the end result. Her only son walking across the stage, ready to begin a brand-new chapter in his life. She even planned a special trip for them both right before he was to depart off to college. They were going to take a trip to South America, volunteering to help underprivileged children in poor countries, and eventually climbing up steps to Machu Picchu in Peru.

They were inseparable, which is odd considering most teenage boys want nothing to do with her mothers. But this was a special relationship. It was just him and her. Her and him. His father had died in a car accident when he was just three years old. She raised him, and as he got older, he supported her just as much.

She had been a town favorite. Always volunteering and supporting her hometown community which she loved with her whole being. In her honor, the town wished to paint a mural for her. This had

been planned to take place in June, but the diagnosis pushed the date up much further, by seven months. Of course, they could think of no better choice of an artist than her own son.

So now, here he was standing beside the brick wall, waiting for inspiration to strike. With no time to create a plan, he needed to be able to jump right in and start. But, every time he lifted the brush, all he could think of was her cold, fragile hand holding his as she lay in the hospital bed.

The cold wind blew his hair across his face. He was losing time. His mother told him she didn't need to see the finished mural to see how much he loved her. He had already shown her his whole life. But, she had seen all his other finished art pieces, and this one would be no different.

That's when he remembered her simple piece of advice that she had given him every time he was at a loss for inspiration.

"Paint from the heart," she said.

And so, he did. It wasn't about her outward appearance, her now sunken in cheeks and sallow skin. It was about her life. How beautiful, inspiring, and strong she was. Cancer could take away her long, flowing hair and rosy cheeks, but not her beaming personality. He painted her portrait brilliantly. As radiant as the sun. He knew in his heart, that even if she didn't get to see it in person, she would still see it soon, and would be there smiling at his graduation as he grabbed his diploma, proud of her only son who she believed would one day change the world.

"If you hear a voice within you say 'you cannot paint,' then by all means, paint, and that voice will be silenced."
- Vincent Van Gogh

Begin.

Finger to paper.

Paper to table. Finger to brush.

Brush to water. Brush to color.

Water rich with color,

floods the paper.

red, purple,

blue, yellow,

green, black,

Gray, orange,

pink.

A single

Line, a

simple

dot.

A faint

outline.

A wash

of color.

More Lines.

More dots.

More out-

lines. More

washes. A

creation.

A master-

piece.

The Franco Piece

I had always admired them in the hallway display cases. The chalk-like portraits that looked so difficult, yet so perfect. I was jealous that anyone could be *that* talented to create something so intricate with just two colors—black and white. Little did I know I'd be doing the same project the second semester of my junior year. It would actually be the last project I would ever create for the rest of my high school career.

When I was told we would be creating portraits using conté, I swear my heart skipped a beat. I was beyond excited to have the chance to do this project, but at the same time, I was extremely nervous to take on a new art medium I'd never worked with before.

My art teacher, Mrs. Kopsky, explained that the method we would use to create the piece would require minimal drawing. We would just create simple shapes of the shadows and highlights on the face and that was it. No definite features, just abstract figures. I had never done art in this way. I had always drawn every detail in with the help of a grid, and then shaded where necessary. I instantly knew I would be undertaking a huge challenge.

But before I worried about creating the piece, I had to pick a muse. While it's always recommended not to choose a celebrity you love, I usually do because I find it to be much more personal and special. In this instance, I picked James Franco because I had just finished *Freaks and Geeks* and really admired his acting skills on the show. That being said, re-creating a celebrity's face makes it ten times easier for anyone to notice a mistake. While your technique may be impeccable, no one can look past the fact that Franco's nose doesn't quite look that wide in the movies.

The first few days were hard. The shape outlines really threw me off. I was super strict with myself and wanted them perfect. I looked at my piece in despair. All I could see were empty, round holes where the eyes would be and strange-looking circles the mouth would go. Don't even get me started on the nose. I erased it so many times, I'm surprised I didn't make a hole in the paper.

At this stage, I was highly disappointed in myself. To be flat out honest, my project looked plain ugly. But if there's one thing I've learned in art, it's that everything looks worse before it looks better.

The right eye looked like a disaster, but for some reason, when I made my way over to the left eye, everything changed. My drawing somewhat resembled Franco to the point where I was positive a stranger could identify him if I asked. Now, with more confidence, I could tackle other parts of the face and rest assured that even if things looked awful now, it would all be okay in the end.

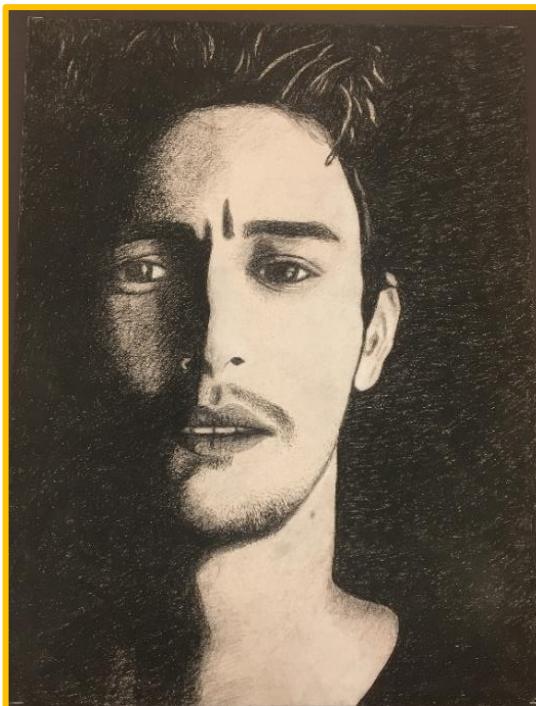
Adding the white highlight was like a walk in the park compared to the black shadows. By now, everything was pretty much done. I remember feeling so accomplished and proud of myself. I also remember Mrs. Kopsky holding my project up at a distance and feeling defeated. Something was off. Luckily, I was still a couple days early of the due date. I'm pretty sure I spent a good two to three class periods making minuscule touch-ups that only I could detect.

But in the end, it was worth it.

Once I had made the right eyebrow thicker, added more hairs to his mustache, put more shadows on the neck and forehead, and added depth to the crease of the right eye, I was finally happy. I was finally finished.

The project I thought was entirely *impossible* turned out to be entirely *possible*. I think it may even be my favorite art project I have ever created.

Of course, it was amazing to have my family and friends view my piece and ask, “Is that James Franco?” but the resemblance is my least favorite accomplishment of this art project. I’m most proud of the fact that I took a task entirely new to me, made mistakes, yet persevered until the end. After all, that’s what art is all about. Trying new things, learning how to improvise, and proving your doubting-self wrong by creating something entirely new and uniquely beautiful.

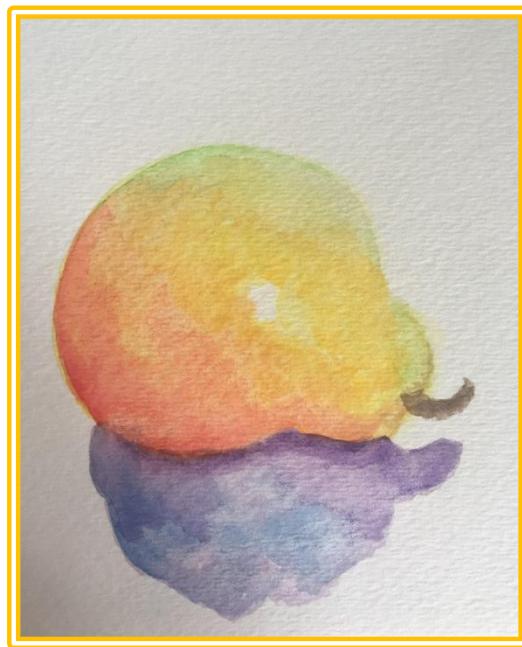


(but the resemblance is still pretty uncanny, don't cha think?)



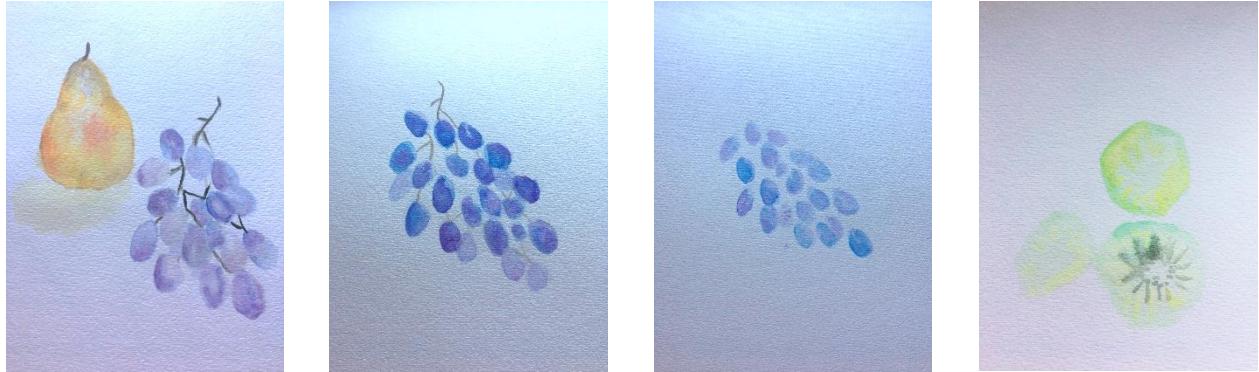
Step 5:

In this step, your own opinion will guide you on what to do. I felt mine was still missing a little something, so I added more yellow in the middle to make it more vibrant. I also added the stem of the pear with a grayish-green color and used it to slightly outline the top part as well. It's really up to you what you would like to add or improve. Don't be afraid to add color to random places. I promise it will turn out way better than you ever imagined.



Step 6:

If you felt your pear was finished without a shadow then congratulations! You've finished your watercolor pear! However, if you're like me and feel like your piece could always use a *little* something more, you may want to consider adding a shadow. It doesn't have to be perfect by any means and actually looks a bit cooler haphazardly painted. I created mine by using a wash of dark purple (with the most saturated color closest to the pear) and added hints of blue just to give it an extra something-something. I also decided to make my stem darker and wider.



(from left to right: a piece I had done previously; a somewhat successful duplicate of the original but I forgot to take pictures of steps; 2nd round of grapes that I was just not happy with; a sad attempt at kiwi that ended up looking like fried pickle chips/a bicycle spoke)

Step 7: Remember you are a human being and not everything will turn out perfect the first time around! In fact, it took me four tries before I finally got this step-by-step to my liking, and even then I wasn't completely sold on the pear. But after taking a step back, I it grew on me and I was proud that my 4th attempt was finally pretty good. Art is all about practicing and learning to appreciate your own style. So, if at first you don't succeed, try, try again!

"Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep." - Scott Adams

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Abstracts

¹ ***“art forms that don’t require you to be a good drawer”***: Believe it or not art isn’t just still lifes and sketches. Trust me, if that were the case, I’d never have even considered taking an art class. Thankfully that’s not true. Regardless of whether you were blessed as a perfect doodler or not, creating something you’re proud of is still within your reach. Don’t be that person who turns away from art just because “you can’t draw.” You don’t need to. And that’s exactly why I compiled a list together and broke it down into categories for you to dip your toes into. I’m hoping with options other than drawing, you will feel more comfortable in trying something new.

² ***“Interview Part 1”***: Meet Olivia Russell, a 2015 graduate and former art student at Granite City High School. I’ve had the privilege of knowing Olivia for about four years now and have always looked at her art projects in awe because of her effortless, cool-girl style. I wanted to ask Olivia some questions regarding her art experience knowing she would provide me with honest answers about just how taboo the subject seems to be in school.

³ ***“Interview Part 2”***: Meet Jack Blomme, a senior at Granite City High School. I’ve known Jack all four years and was surprised to see he was now in art class in his senior year after never having taken the subject in previous years. I thought it would be interesting to see what made him decide to take art and now looking back, how he would describe his experience and time in this new course.

“Don’t think about making art, just get it done. Let everyone else decide if it’s good or bad, whether they love it or hate it. While they are deciding, make even more art.” – Andy Warhol
