

OPTIONAL STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS

If you really want to experience growth, try stretching a little and painting something that is outside of your comfort zone. Below I have listed several exercises that will provide opportunities for you to learn various art principles. You might pick one for fun – or try several. Give it a try!

1. Pick a reference photo (color) from your personal library and paint a copy of it on a small canvas using only **black, white, and shades of gray**. This is an exercise to help you learn value.
2. Bring a very **small object** (that fits in the palm of your hand) to class and paint an image of it “larger than life” on a square (or rectangle) canvas anywhere from 8” to 10” square. Examples: a ring, marshmallow, piece of candy, utensil, matchstick, dice, hair clip, wooden block, postage stamp, etc. Be creative! This exercise will help you to learn to paint from life and to “see” better.
3. Find a reference photo and paint it on a small canvas using definite strokes (no blending or blurred edges). **Must be completed within the two-hour class time.** This will help you to learn how to avoid painting a muddy, fuzzy mess!
4. Select a reference photo (a simple landscape) and complete a **1-hour painting** using ONLY alizarin crimson, ultramarine blue, cadmium yellow and white (this is a **limited palette**).

Then put the photo (and your painting) OUT OF SIGHT and render the exact same painting from memory – **within 1-hour**, using ONLY this new palette: Yellow Ochre, Cadmium Red, and Black (or Payne’s Gray). This will help you to see that objects can be represented correctly with good value and form – no matter what colors are used!

5. Select a reference photo (a landscape) and paint three, **quick color studies** from it. Make each painting no larger than 5” X 7” using brushes that are at least 1” in diameter or larger to complete each painting. This is a good composition exercise.
6. Bring a mirror (big enough to capture your entire face) to class with you. Select a canvas about 11” X 14” and paint a **self-portrait** of your face. You can hold the mirror in one hand while you use your free hand to paint... This exercise will really test your powers of observation!