



# Sky Paintings

Explore use of painting tools and learn to mix colour tints while looking at the work of van Gogh. There are two stages to this task so it could be done over two lessons or extended further by working with other colours and artists.

## Materials

Ready mixed paint – warm & cold blue plus white  
 Powder paint - warm & cold blue plus white  
 Cartridge paper  
 Paintbrushes  
 Glue spreader, lolly sticks or palette knife  
 Van Gogh 'Starry Night' images.

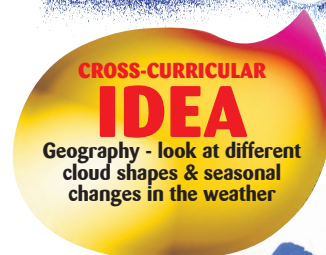
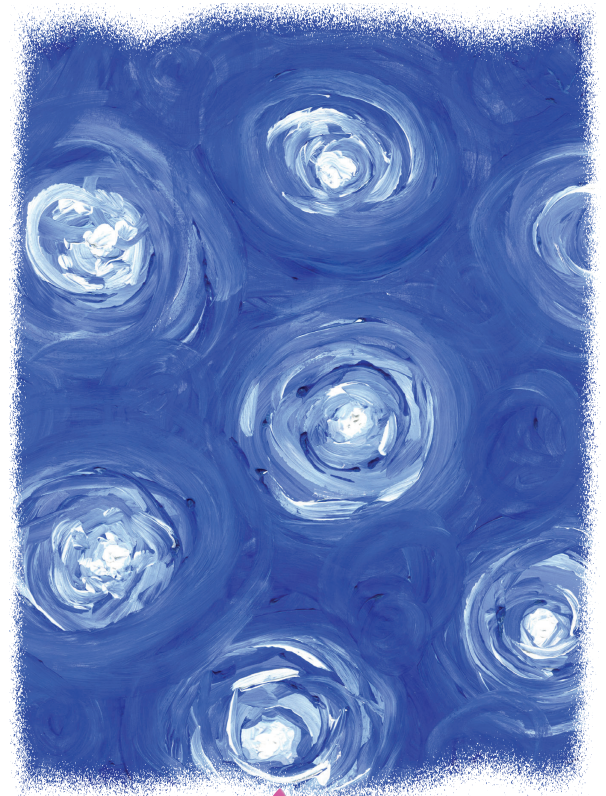
## Method

### Stage 1

- Mix white ready mixed paint with a little blue then paint onto paper.
- Continue to mix more blue into the white and paint on paper until a range of tints has been produced.
- When dry, cut the range of blue tints out and rearrange them in order, light to dark. Discuss the range of tints and ask the children to say what they think about them.
- Glue the tints into sketchbooks and annotate.

### Stage 2

- Now that children have experience of mixing a range of blue tints show them van Gogh's 'Starry Night' and encourage them to talk about the range of blues used in the sky.
- Look closely at the brush strokes in the picture and how thickly the paint has been applied.
- To make paint thick enough for the impasto technique mix ready mixed paint with powder paint. Alternatively work with normal ready mixed paint and focus on colour mixing rather than texture.
- Prepare by mixing a range of blues, some warm blues that lean towards red/purple, some cold blues that lean towards turquoise and some tints mixed with white.
- Ask the children to paint a sky inspired by van Gogh. Paint can be applied with glue spreaders or other tools. As well as drawing through the paint with the tools encourage the children to apply the paint by dabbing it on.
- If thickened paint is used it will retain the peaks, troughs and textures when dry.



Formal mixing of tints (adding white) and tones (adding black) are a good way to help children develop accurate colour mixing skills. The structured nature of the exercises helps build confidence and with confidence comes the courage to experiment.