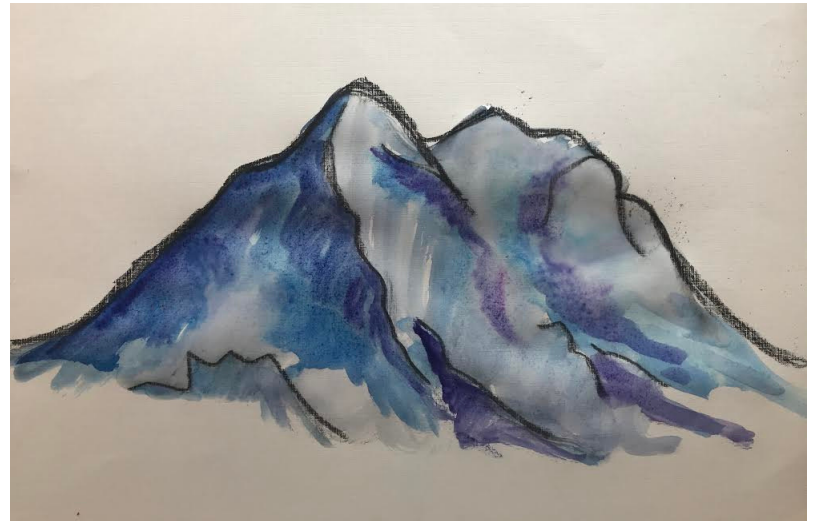


## Artistic Landforms in Washington State

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY  
DESIGNED BY BEVERLY BOWEN  
OF FIDALGO ELEMENTARY



*Student Example*

*Image Source: Museum of Northwest Art*

### Materials

- *Mt. Rainier from Vashon Island* by Abby Williams Hill (included in this lesson)
- Videos on using blind contour, contour drawing techniques, and the fundamentals of design
- Photos of Mt. Rainier
- Drawing paper
- Watercolor paper
- Drawing pencils
- Watercolor paints
- Water cups
- Paint brushes
- Paper plates (optional)

### Description

During this lesson, students will develop their understanding of perspective, color, form, and their sense of landforms as nature's work of art. Students will learn about contour drawing by creating blind contour drawings and then create a watercolor painting of Mt. Rainier inspired by Abby Williams Hill's artwork.

## Instructions

### Day 1:

- 1) Introduce the students to the lesson by showing them the attached video on blind contour drawing.
- 2) Show students *Mt. Rainier from Vashon Island* by Abby Williams Hill and use VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies) techniques to explore the painting.
  - VTS is an inquiry-based method of facilitating discussion. Tips and resources on VTS are included at the end of this lesson.
- 3) Hand out drawing paper and drawing pencils to students.
- 4) Instruct students to create blind contour drawings of Mount Rainier using the technique we saw in the video.
  - If the students have trouble not looking at their paper, you can give them paper plates to cover their hands as they draw.
  - To find photos of Mount Rainier, use the National Parks Service website.

### Day 2:

- 1) Review the blind contour drawings we previously made.
- 2) Use the attached video on the fundamentals of design to discuss line, form, background and other art elements in the students' works.
- 3) Pass out drawing pencils and paper.
- 4) Instruct students to create a second contour drawing of Mt. Rainier using pencil on watercolor paper. This time they can look at their paper while they draw.
  - If students need a refresher, watch the attached video on contour drawing.

### Day 3:

- 1) Hand back contour drawings from the previous session.
- 2) Set up watercolor brushes and water. Students will now finish off their contour drawing by adding watercolor paint to them.
  - If students need inspiration for colors, refer back to the National Parks Service collection of photos of Mt. Rainier.
- 3) Once students have finished their watercolors, allow time for them to present their works and discuss them.
  - What did they like about their art?
  - Allow them to compare their blind contour drawings with their finished works.

### Relevant Vocabulary

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| ✓ Contour     | ✓ Landscape   |
| ✓ Background  | ✓ Color       |
| ✓ Balance     | ✓ Perspective |
| ✓ Focal point | ✓ Watercolor  |
| ✓ Line        |               |

### Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr2.1.4** (Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches)
- **VA:Cr2.3.4** (Document, describe, and represent regional and constructed environments)

# Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art, encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

*What's going on in this picture?*

*What do you see that makes you say...?*

*What more can you find?*

## Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to use in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: [www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators](http://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators)

# About the Artist: Abby Williams Hill



Abby Williams Hill  
Image Source: Wikipedia

Abby Williams Hill (1861-1943) was an American landscape painter and activist who was primarily based in Tacoma, Washington. Her paintings were produced *en plein air* (outdoors) in natural spaces from national parks to gorges. She is well known for her feat of painting every national park in western America. Outside of art, Williams fought for children's rights and founded the Washington Parent-Teacher Association.



Zion National Park, Abby Williams Hill  
Source: Puget Sound University





*Mt. Rainier from Vashon Island, Abby Williams Hill*  
Image Source: [Paintingstar.com](http://Paintingstar.com)