

# MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art

**Age:** First Grade

**Lesson Duration:** Four 30-Minute Blocks

**Subjects:** English, Literature, Language Arts, Social Studies, & History

## Watercolors & Writing Inspired by Joan Govedare

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY DESIGNED BY CAROLYN HILLIER

### Materials

- Images of Joan Govedare's ceramic works (included in this lesson)
- Watercolor paper (one full sheet per student)
- Watercolor paper cut into strips (two per student)
- Watercolor crayons or pencils, you can also use regular watercolor paints
- Brushes
- Pencils and erasers
- Water cups
- Black permanent markers
- Writing paper
- [Value Song by Scratch Art](#)
- Optional: Journals and a Children's Book with excellent illustrations



*Image credit: MoNA Educator example*

### Description

Students will look at Joan Govedare's ceramic works to observe how an artist can use color to tell a story. They will practice using value to create a painting that will serve as inspiration for descriptive writing. They will blend tints and shades and use them to create a scene.

## Instructions (Four Sessions)

### **Session 1:**

- 1)** Introduce Joan Govedare by sharing some of the biography information included at the end of this lesson.
- 2)** Show the artworks and practice using VTS (Visual Thinking Strategies) to facilitate an observation and inquiry based discussion of Joan Govedare's celestial ceramic artworks. Full size images and a VTS appendix (with tips & resources) are included at the end of this lesson

### **Session 2:**

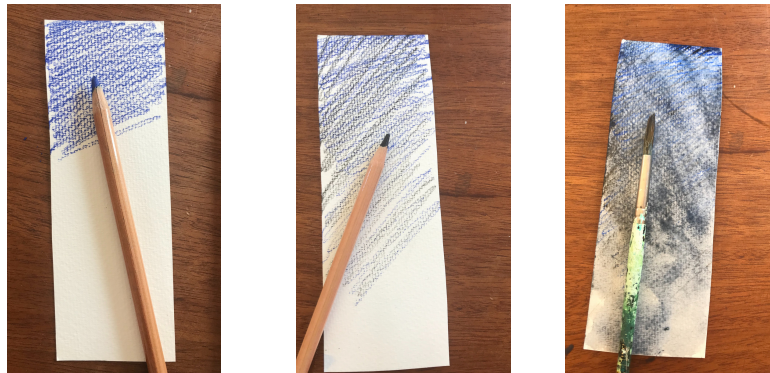
- 1)** Discuss how artists can create pictures to inspire stories, just as writers use words to paint pictures in our minds.
- 2)** This is an excellent opportunity to share a children's book that demonstrates the ability of images to tell a story. Choose a story with illustrations that tell the story without much help from the text. Invite the students to talk about how the illustrations support the text and visa versa.
- 3)** Show the artworks and ask the students to describe the setting. What clues do the artist give for the scene taking place? How do the colors the artist used help create the story? What time of day is it? If you were in this picture what would you hear, feel, smell, see? This is a great time to record students' descriptive responses and save for later writing. If it's feasible, you may wish to have students respond to piece in their journals.

### Session 3:

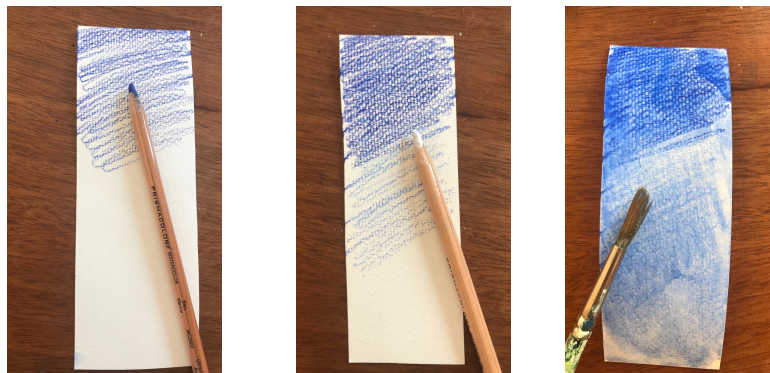
1) Introduce/discuss the vocabulary: value, shade and tint. [This Value Song by Scratch Art](#) has a short, fun overview to get you started.

2) Demonstrate how to create strips of shades (adding black to one color) and tints (adding white to one color) using watercolor crayons or pencils. Have each student create two strips, one of shades and the other of tints. This is a good opportunity to have students practice adding water to their drawings to transform the watercolor pencil/crayon into paint.

#### SHADES



#### TINTS



3) Bring class back together to discuss what they've learned so far and to ask students to create their own scene, encouraging them to blend watercolor crayon/pencil to make shades and tints to create the background, setting, and mood. Encourage them to first draw out their idea in pencil on watercolor paper, trace it in permanent marker, and then add color using the watercolor crayons and pencils.

## Session 4:

- 1) Model descriptive writing using the art pieces as a writing inspiration. First, ask students to brainstorm ideas about how they could describe their own art and whether it tells a "story."
- 2) After the brainstorming discussion, encourage students to write down a description or a summary of a story elicited by their painting. Or, you could gather the entire class to write one based on one of Joan Govedare's celestial ceramic artworks.

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### Relevant Vocabulary

- ✓ Values
- ✓ Shades
- ✓ Tints



### Learning and State Standards

Fulfills [Washington State Arts Learning Standards](#):

- **VA:Cr1.2.1** (Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art)
- **VA:Cr2.1.1** (Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design)
- **VA:Cr2.2.1** (Demonstrate safe and proper procedures for using materials, tools, and equipment while making art)
- **VA:Re8.1.1** (Interpret art by categorizing subject matter and identifying the characteristics of form)

# About the Artist: Joan Govedare



Portrait of Joan Govedare with her work  
Image source: Rob Schouten Gallery

Joan Govedare is a ceramicist living and working in Whidbey Island. She makes vases and vessels of all kinds. She is inspired by her father, who was an astronomer. For more on her life and work, please read [this article](#).



Window Pot  
Image Source: Rob Schouten Gallery

**"MY LIFE IN THE STUDIO IS AN  
OFFERING EVERY DAY. EVERYTHING I DO  
IN HERE I DO WITH A LOT OF  
POSITIVITY BECAUSE I THINK WE NEED  
AS MUCH OF THAT AS WE CAN GET  
RIGHT NOW."  
-JOAN GOVEDARE**

# 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 that...?*  
*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 VTS in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: <https://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators>



# *Window Pot* by Joan Govedare

Image credit: Rob Schouten Gallery



## *Cityscape* by Joan Govedare

Image credit: Rob Schouten gallery





# Untitled by Joan Govedare

Image credit: Northwest Art Alliance