

ACTIVITY GUIDE

Cheryl LeClair-Sommer – Plein Air Painter:

Writing/Essay/Journal

Plein Air is French for a style of painting that is done outdoors. Cheryl LeClair-Sommer uses pastels, water colors, and oils to show the beauty and peacefulness she finds in nature. She especially likes pastels because there's nothing between her hand and the paper. She also enjoys mixing the colors and, because it's a dry medium, being able to go back and change what she's done.

To her, painting is like a puzzle. Although she appears to know a lot, she says that she only has some skill, talent, and technique, and she is intrigued by the challenge of continuing to learn more. Think of a goal you have had for a period of time. Write about the skills you already have and then describe what you still need to learn. Do you share her excitement at being an "emerging learner" or do you find it frustrating to keep working at your goal?



Activity

Cheryl LeClair-Sommer has trouble picking a favorite season to paint. Winter has interesting shapes. Spring and summer present the challenge of finding shape among all the green. Fall is rich in vibrant color. Pick your favorite season and then challenge yourself to find shapes, colors, textures, patterns and lines in an outdoor scene from that time of year. If you can't go out in the *plein air*, use your imagination. Try to paint and draw the same place in two or three different ways using pastels, chalk, water color, colored pencil, or pen. Put your drawings and paintings next to each other and see which medium best captured the beauty of nature.

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