

Class-Artists in Action  
Grades 3-5  
Lesson-Tree Art  
Teacher-Kaleen Chatigny

The purpose of this lesson to teach students how to paint an autumn tree.

Materials

1 pencil  
9 x 12 piece of construction paper  
1 set of paints, watercolors, tempura or acrylic paint will work  
1 black sharpie  
A few Q-tips

Introduction

September 22 is the first day of autumn. You may have noticed many leaves are starting to change color around this time of the year. Take a few minutes to either look around your yard or neighborhood to collect a variety of leaves.

I have included a read aloud of the book *Sky Color* by Peter Reynolds for inspiration.

Here is the link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehfb86HoEzA>

I have also included a short video with one idea for painting an autumn tree. Instead of a paintbrush try using Q-tips to dot the leaves onto the page.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VM2rg73gr9w>





Example shown above

#### Steps

1. Using your pencil draw the outline of a tree trunk and a few branches on your paper. Once you have your tree outline, trace over it in black crayon or sharpie.
2. Next you will either be shading in the tree trunk with brown crayon or paint.
3. When the trunk is finished using green, red, yellow, orange and any other autumn color combinations paint in the leaves using Q-tips to put the paint on the page. You can either use one color at a time or several together to vary the leaves.
4. When your tree is full of the leaves please add a watercolor wash for a sky background and green grass around the trunk.

#### Extension

You can also paint the leaves with thumbprints or any round paint brush you have at home. Try putting the leaves on your page in a quick repetitive motion.

#### Note

I would love to see your completed artwork. Feel free to send me an email of your art to [kchatigny@forestcharter.com](mailto:kchatigny@forestcharter.com)

Thoughtfully,  
Kaleen