

# Artful Activities for Early Learners



**MoMA**

These activities for children ages four and up can be done with teachers, parents, and caregivers, at home or in a classroom.

## Look closely

- What colors do you see?
- What do the colors and lines make you think of?
- Using an imaginary brush in the air, show how you think the artist moved her brush to make different marks.
- Where do you see the most marks? Where do you see the fewest?

## Learn

Joan Mitchell carefully layered each color in her large paintings. She paid close attention to how the colors looked together and the thickness of each brushstroke, often standing back from the canvas to make sure the painting looked right to her. “The freedom in my work is quite controlled,” she once explained. “I don’t close my eyes and hope for the best.”

## Layer lines and colors

*Suggested materials:* Thick white paper, paint, a paint brush, a container of water, something to protect your work surface

1. Choose one color that reminds you of summer.
2. Experiment with making marks with your brush. Try a few of these techniques:
  - Paint quick, repeated marks.
  - Create long curvy lines.
  - Make marks with a little paint on your brush.
  - Make marks with lots of paint.
  - Paint marks close together or on top of each other.
  - Paint marks farther apart.
3. Add a second color that reminds you of summer, and continue to try out different kinds of marks.
4. Add two more colors to your painting.
5. Share your painting with a friend or family member. Tell them why your colors remind you of summer and some of the techniques you tried.



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Image: Joan Mitchell. *No Rain*. 1976. Oil on canvas, two panels. Gift of The Estate of Joan Mitchell. © Estate of Joan Mitchell