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Introduction

According to *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, the word 'art' is defined as a 'creative work', and an 'artist' is 'a person who works in any of the fine arts, especially in painting, drawing or sculpture'.

But what actually is art? Even well-educated adults can't always agree about whether a creation is or is not art. This leaves the decision up to the viewing audience and the artists themselves.

The information in this book is meant to help guide a beginning artist. Different techniques and media are discussed and explored. Some of the activities feature ways to learn about new materials, such as *Fantasy Forest*, which uses pastel and crayons, and teaches about blending colours. Other activities focus on using unusual tools that might not immediately come to mind when making art, such as toothpicks and combs.

The most important idea in this book is to explore and expand your experiences as an artist. Use the activities as springboards for your own projects. Your imagination is the greatest tool you can bring to any of the activities proposed in this book.

Accompanying many of the projects in this resource book are websites, where you can find pictures of other artists' finished products. Compare your own self-portrait with those done by Goya or John Lennon. View landscapes by Van Gogh and velvet paintings by Japanese artists before embarking on your own attempts. Remember that websites change with frequency. Every attempt was made to choose current, long-running websites for this book.

Art is all around you! Keep your eyes open and you will see art everywhere!