



Fun Facts

A Ground breaker for Girls in Art:

In Grace's time not many women were known for their art, she kept painting and became one of Australia's most famous artists. She helped open the door for more girls to become artists too!

Tiny Brushstrokes, Big Impact:

Grace painted using lots of little, colourful rectangles. This made her pictures shine and sparkle with light—like they were glowing!

Loved Bright Colours: Grace used bold, bright colours that really stood out. Her paintings were full of energy and emotion, even when showing everyday things.

About the artist

Grace Cossington Smith AO OBE (1892–1984) was a trailblazing Australian female artist and pioneer of modernist painting. She was influential in introducing Post-Impressionism to Australia. Inspired by European styles, she used short, colourful brushstrokes to create bright, light-filled scenes. Her paintings often showed everyday life, like rooms, people, and buildings. With her bold use of colour and expressing brushwork Grace turned them into powerful works of art. She was one of the first Australian women artists to gain wide recognition, and her unique style continues to be celebrated today.

About the work

Still life with white cup and saucer, 1971, is an oil painting by Grace Cossington Smith that shows everyday objects like a cup, saucer, and fruit on a table. Grace used bright colours and small, square brushstrokes to make the picture shine with light and energy. This special post impressionistic style made her paintings look lively and full of movement. Even though the objects are simple, she makes them look beautiful and important. The painting shows how colour and light can turn ordinary things into something magical.

Bright Blocks Still Life Painting

Question: What everyday things around you would you like to turn into a colourful painting like Grace?



Materials

Paper, canvas, or thick drawing paper

A pencil to sketch your simple object before painting.

Small paintbrushes (flat or square ones work best)

Bright, bold paint colours

A palette or plate for mixing paint

A cup of water to rinse brushes

Optional: Sponge, stick and tape to make own rectangular brush.

Instructions

- 1 Pick some simple things to paint, like fruit, cups, or bowls.
- 2 Choose bright, bold paint colours you like and put these on a palette or plate.
- 3 Lightly draw your picture with a pencil on your paper or canvas.
- 4 Use a small square brush or make your own brush by cutting a sponge into a rectangle and taping it to a stick.
- 5 Paint lots of little rectangle brushstrokes to cover the whole picture.
- 6 Paint over some strokes with new colours to make it look bright and full of light.
- 7 Keep painting until your picture looks colourful and sparkling—just like Grace's!

→ Take it further

Mix Your Own Colours: Experiment by blending two or more bright colours on your palette to create new tints and shades.

Paint a Series: Make a few small paintings of different objects using the same brushstroke style and display them together.

→ **More resources** Scan the QR Code below. Grace Cossington Smith's work, *Still life with white cup and saucer*, is currently on display in Gallery 4.

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We would love to see your work! Ask your parent or carer to post a photo on Instagram and tag the Art Gallery of South Australia. Or you can email your photo to us at public.programs@artgallery.sa.gov.au

