PAINT MT. VESUVIUS

For a complete video demonstration, go to (www.youtube.com/user/eejm63/videos?view=1) and click on the "Project Demos" playlist. (Or search YouTube using key words: "Ellen McHenry how to paint Mt. Vesuvius")

This is a quick and easy way to paint a simple landscape of Mt. Vesuvius. I used this project as a supplement to a unit that some of my students were doing on ancient Rome.

You will need:
• at least one picture of Mt. Vesuvius (just use Google image search)
• a canvas panel (if you can't get one, you could use a piece of mat board or card board)
• brushes (one large flat, one medium-size flat, one medium-sized round, one small round and optional tiny round one if you want to add small details in the foreground-- I show these brushes in the video)
• acrylic paints (either bottles or tubes) Recommended colors: white, sky blue, royal blue, red, yellow, light green, dark green, possibly black
• a container of water
• paper towels
• paper plate for a palette (or use a piece of cardboard)
• optional: hair dryer to speed dry time

How to proceed:
Lay down some kind of paper or cloth to protect your work surface, then lay out your supplies. The first thing you will paint is the sky. The video will show you how to "grade" your sky so that it gets lighter as you go down toward the horizon. Let the sky dry before you start the mountain. (Acrylics dry quickly, but if you want to speed up dry time even more, you can use a hair dryer. A hair dryer will reduce drying time to only a few minutes at most.)

NOTE ABOUT ACRYLIC PAINT: Acrylics are not like watercolors. You do not need to add water to them unless you use the kind that comes in a tube. Even with tube acrylics, you should not have to add much water. Acrylics are put on thickly, not in thin coats like watercolor. You will use the water mainly to rinse your brushes.

Video clip 2 will show you how to add the mountain on top of the sky. Acrylic paints are opaque, so you should not see any blue under your mountain. Take your time when mixing the mountain color. Be patient and keep working with it until you get a color that matches your picture. (Squinting is helpful in determining if your shade is too dark or too light.)
The sense of depth in this painting comes from "atmospheric perspective." This technique uses only color to give a sense of depth (background and foreground). Video 3 will show you how to mix your greens in order to achieve this.
Don't be afraid to make your painting look different from the one in the demo. You are the artist!