
Daily Abstract Painting Prompts: Working Collaboratively with Pam and Jennifer

Chapter 1 - Daily Abstract Painting Prompts

Overview

(easygoing digital music) - Hi, I'm artist Pam Garrison. - And I'm Jennifer Mercedes. - [Pam] We're artists that love to collaborate together and we often do abstract paintings, and we wanna take you on a journey through abstract. We're gonna guide you from beginning to end, make it very simple, give you some approaches to add to your portfolio of tools and techniques. - We'll encourage you to let go of the end result and get into the moment, and really be present with the marks and colors that are there, and encourage you to react to them, and most importantly, have fun and find interest throughout your piece, and follow that feeling. - [Pam] As always, you can use whatever you have. It's not about the materials. We will be sharing our favorites, but it's more about joining us in the play and experimentation. (easygoing digital music)

Day 1 - Getting started

- You're welcome to use anything that you'd like, including paper, canvas. I prefer to draw and paint on wood. I prefer to use scraps of wood. You can get those from friends, maybe, who are carpenters, you can get it from a project that you may see happening in your neighborhood, sometimes dumpsters have extra pieces of wood, and it's perfect and great. Sometimes you'll get smooth surfaces, sometimes the surface can be a little rough, and that can change the process depending on what you are doing, what you want to create. You can also purchase cradled woods, so this is a piece here that was purchased, I believe, from Dick Blick. You get them at all kinds of art supply stores, and they'll have a little backing behind it to keep it off the wall. This one is a piece of wood that's actually been gessoed, so it's white and it's got a little rougher texture. All of them can make great surfaces for your painting. For this daily challenge, Pam and I are gonna be working on several boards so that we can be moving things around, and working on different boards at different times. That's honestly how I like to create. I always have several paintings going at the same time. It's just fun for me to have lots going on. But you definitely don't have to do that. Picking one board, one piece of paper, is totally fine for this project. So I'm gonna work with this large piece of wood, this cradled wood. You can see on the back here, it's got a frame, and it keeps it off of the wall a little bit. You can get them that are even thicker, and I enjoy that when you have a finished piece hanging on the wall. Now another thing to note about this piece of wood is it's not perfect. You can see it's already got some marks on it. It's an old piece that's just got imperfections and I'm okay with that, especially with this process that we're doing that's a layering process, all this should be hidden. So just something to consider, even if you have a piece of wood that's, like I said, not perfect, go for it. Actually, even better, 'cause then it's free and you can worry less about what you're doing to it. So I'm gonna go ahead and get started. This is one way that I like to start paintings, just taking a ballpoint pen, which is one of my favorite drawing tools. I started using a ballpoint pen when I was traveling, and I only had access to a few materials like a ballpoint pen, and scrap wood. So I just started by scribbling on the board. (pen scratching) Moving the pen around. This is one reason I really like wood, is because something like a ballpoint pen pressing into wood, you can really press pretty hard, and you're not gonna ruin the wood. It has something, it's pushing back at you. So I find that it's a great way to get some energy out. So I find if I'm frustrated, or just kinda need to move my energy, using a ballpoint pen is really satisfying. So you can move it

however you want, just get the pen moving around, and fill up the space as much as you want. I kinda of let the energy guide me. Sometimes it can be really tiring, and you get through and you're like, ugh, I'm ready. I'm ready to go to bed now. No, just, you've released that energy, you can notice pay attention to your breath. You might notice that you're relaxing as you do this, as you release some of your energy. I'm not thinking too much about where my marks are going. I'm just moving my pen around, filling up the space. And I'll just keep creating, keep scribbling until my energy kinda feels like, uh, I'm good, I'm done, or I feel that I've kind of touched a little bit, until I've touched every area of the board just a tiny bit. That feels good for me, for a first layer. So grab a good old ballpoint pen and get scribbling. You can have fun by just moving the pen around. Go fast, go slow, tap into your energy, and see how do you feel, and let that guide your scribbling. Have fun.

Day 2 - Scribbling with paint

- As Jen mentioned, we are going to be working on different surfaces, like four different pieces of wood so that we can show you, but actually we have more than that because this scrap piece of wood, we can use both sides, and you're welcome to do the same or do it on paper when you wanna practice and get more painting in. Another way we like to approach starting paintings is to use paint pens. I've got some here, they're great. You just shake them and they've got acrylic paint in them, and you press them to get them started. This one's already been started. So I'm gonna use that as a way to approach a blank board. Like Jennifer said with her scribbling, you know, you can really just release your energy and you can be fast and do a whole bunch of the board, or you can get very slow and do less and have more control, but still we're not thinking or planning anything. I'm just using the tool in different ways, like the different edges of it and seeing what marks I can make. You could draw with it, leaves, let's say, or anything. You could use it as a drawing. Again, this is just a layered. As with the scribbling, we're just getting a layer down, some information, some things to respond to. So I'm gonna call it good on this board and I'm gonna go ahead and pick up Jennifer's that she previously started and show you how we'll start building on this a second layer now. So I'm just gonna take, again, my pen, get some energy out, some big strokes. It covers a lot. They come in different sizes, too, which I'll show you. You can get these at any craft or art store. They've got acrylic paint in them. Oh, this one, so it's not working great, which happens, and it's part of it, so you just shake it and then press down and let it, there we go, get flowing again. These nibs sometimes, you can pull them out, if they get stuck you can pull that out and get a new nib or add some more paint even. So I am just using this. Obviously, a thinner point, a smaller nib just changes up the marks I make. You can add another color here. I'm just responding to what's here on the board as well as just getting another layer down. It's all about just adding layers right now, not about what's result. It's about having fun and discovering. So discover this, a paint pen. Use it and allow yourself to just play on the blank surface with a paint pen, and then even on top of your scribbles. (soft scratching) It's really fun.

Day 3 - Playing with paintbrushes

- Another great way to start a painting is to just get painting, so I have a couple of small, medium brushes here that I'm gonna choose from to start this piece, and I look at this, it's not too big, so I'm choosing, I'm gonna start with this medium-size one, and you can see I've pulled out a couple colors here. Now, these paints are great, 'cause you can really just go ahead and dip your brush right into the paint, and get movin' around, so kind of just scribbling with the brush, just dip right in. This paint is thick, and I actually kinda like that, it's fun, you have to keep dipping a lot when you've got really

thick paint. So again, like when you're scribbling, with a pen, or a marker, is moving your hand around the board, and kind of filling in the space with little dots, or whatever feels like fun way to move the paint. Like I said, this is really thick, so I'm finding it really fun to work with this thick paint. Another way you can apply some paint is to take a tube of paint, and squirt it directly onto the board, and then from there, you can kinda move it around. So again, this is kind of like line work. It's painting, but it's very line-heavy, so I'm just kinda using the brush to move the paint around in lines. I'm not thinking about the color that's below, but you can see that it is interacting with that color. The blue is blending in. Another thing too, is you can always use a palette, put it in your palette if you prefer, get the paint on your brush, and then move it onto the board. You see where the wood is, it's dry, so the paint just goes right on as the blue that it is, but then when I kinda run it through, the cream-colored paint is gonna blend in, so for me, that feels like I've covered as much as I wanna cover at this point, so I'm gonna put this aside, and I'm gonna choose one of the paintings that we've already started, and I think I'm gonna choose this one that Pam added some paint marker to, and as you can see, I chose some blue, and I chose this intentionally when I looked at these pieces. I was like, you know, it would be fun to add a little variety. What's gonna happen when I put the blue with the pink? That was interesting to me, so I chose to add blue, and so I'm gonna go ahead and start with this paint, and you can see, I'm dipping my brush right into the container of paint, and this paint is a lot runnier than the other container of paint, so it's a whole different experience, and you may have a preference. As much as I liked the thick paint, this is also really fun, and as you can see, I'm just kinda painting right over what Pam did with the paint pen. It definitely informed my paint color choice, and it kind of informs where I'm moving my brush, but not a whole lot. It's a little bit intuitive, just kind of moving my brush around, again, creating lines with my brush and the paint. Something you can vary is the size of brush that you're using, so I would like to try using this small brush, and I'm gonna grab my paint here from my palette, I'm gonna mix a little bit of the darker blue in with the lighter blue, just for fun, change the color. I'm fillin' my thin brush, and you'll see now I'm gonna add some more lines, but they're definitely a different size and they're a different color. What is it like for you when you use a small brush versus a medium, or a large brush, do you have a preference? How does the paint move for you? Do you enjoy a thicker brush in between your fingers? I'll tell you right now, I just, somehow I was enjoying the other brush more than I am enjoying this. It just doesn't, right now, I'm just not enjoying it as much as I was enjoying that. So, I think I'm good with that. So grab some brushes, grab some paint, and paint lines all over your piece. You can do this with a brand new piece, and you can also do it onto the layer that you've already started. Add lines, add paint, have fun.

Day 4 - Big brushes, big gestures

- Big brushes are another great way to start a painting and get those layers down. Remember, we're just thinking about layers right now, we're not thinking about result. These should probably end up mostly covered up, these first few layers. I've got an assortment of big brushes here, and the difference with big brushes versus Jen's smaller brush where she was doing more line work and scribbling is kind of a more bigger arm movement. It allows you to cover a lot more area. So I'm going to show you on this blank space how I'll just dip right into this can. A great tip is go to your local big box hardware store and ask for their returns, because they usually sell them for like 50 cents to a dollar, and you get the greatest colors, colors you would never choose and for very little. It allows you to experiment and find new things. But I just wanted to show you here how I am just sweeping my arm more. You could cover this whole thing, obviously. I'm allowing a lot of freedom,

and because it's just a layer, I'm going to switch colors so that I'm not only using this one yellow and covering the whole thing. I'm actually just going to take what Jen has left on the paint palette from the previous exercise and mix it together, again, kind of embracing working on what's there and adding to it. Instead of starting completely new with some idea, I'm letting the, what was existing, inform my decisions. I'm gonna go ahead and take a smaller brush 'cause this happens to be smaller. I'm not worried about keeping them, the paints separate, even though it's wet. I'm just putting it down, covering some space. I don't mind getting the sides. If you wanted to, you could tape off the sides, some people do using that blue tape. But I'm gonna go ahead and intentionally get the sides. So that's fun on this one. You can see I'm really getting a lot of movement, a little, a lot, when you're in a mood to get a lot of energy out. I'm gonna set this one aside, and I'm gonna go ahead and I'm gonna pick this piece to add to as well, some big brush strokes. So I think I'm gonna go back. It's okay, I just got some paint on there. This is how we just, you know, roll with it. I'm gonna choose colors based on this piece, though. I'm gonna choose this aqua color because it's a really nice contrast with this salmon and pink that we've got here, this light orange. Again, I'm gonna squirt this just right on the piece. I could put it in the palette, it doesn't matter with this big brush. I am gonna use this brush, two inch, just because one, it was clean, and two, I wanna get some bigger coverage on this piece. I'm not worried about what I'm covering up. It is subconsciously informing me in a sense, helping me choose where I'm going in some of the blank wood areas here you can see, and then alongside some of the color that I wanna see this contrast pop. But I'm not worried if it covers over anything that's there. This is again just layers. Embrace the layers, playing discovery part of this. (soft scratching) You can do it with a dry, this is now a more dry brush because obviously I've used up the paint that I first put down, and that's giving great background and interest to the piece that will be built on in the future. Also, you could apply paint right to the brush, which I do sometimes, and go ahead and just kind of drag it more than brush. With these bigger brushes, you can also get some really interesting brush strokes here. (soft scratching) It's all about playing and experimenting, seeing what you like and what causes you to feel more creative and joyful about the process and wanting to do more. So try some big brushes as well, try some big arm movements, you know, loose gestures, and covering a lot of space and also being mindful of leaving some space open, the dry brush and the wet brush. A lot of things to play with the brushes.

Day 5 - Scraping paint on

- Scrapers are another way I love to apply paint and especially on a blank layer. This is a actual scraper bought at the art store. However, I also really love scraps, any hard tags. This is obviously from a brush or sandpaper or whatever it was. Or even a hotel key or a used up, you know those Amazon cards? Those are great. Any sort of credit card, great for scraping. Scrapers are also great for big arm movements. But on this one I'm going to apply paint directly to the scraper to show you that. And I'm gonna mix it up for fun. Two colors. I'm gonna go ahead and just drag my scraper, getting those two colors on. And you can see how I'm pulling my whole arm. It's not really a wrist thing. You can put it on haphazardly. I can just be going be crazy with it. Oops. Well, that was going a little too crazy with it. You can just go crazy with it, or you could do it in a pattern like, say, a plaid. I'm gonna add some more, and this time I'm doing it more uniformly. I'm just gonna get that scrape so I can do a plaid design eventually. Of course, you could apply paint straight to the board and drag it down. Gonna add a little here. It really makes it smooth. I love the feel of a scraper on a board. It's so smooth. And that's one thing I really like about making art is I love the texture, the feel of the brush on the board or the pen on the board or the scraper on the board. So I'm gonna go

ahead and continue that plaid. Ooh, I like that. You don't have as much control, which is another way that it really lends to abstracts. All these exercises we're giving you is to intentionally be not planned out, to discover, to play, and to not have a heavy hand in the direction it's going. You're playing and causing it to go a certain direction by these different tools you use, but you're embracing the lack of control of the overall idea of where you're doing. We're just discovering it as we go, as we react. So I'm gonna go ahead and let this one dry, and I'm going to show you how I would add it as a layer to this one that Jen had previously started. Now, this is still wet, you can see a little bit, and so the scraper is going to impact that, and it's why I chose this piece. I wanted to block it down a little bit. It gives me something fun to change up on it. So I'm gonna go ahead and apply again right to my scraper. And I still even have some orange. You know what you can do is you can scrape it on the edge and kind of embrace those happy accidents of just cleaning your scraping tool. Just gonna blend it in a little with my finger. I've applied this right to the scraper, this color, and I'm gonna go ahead and do again a drag. And I'm knocking down. You can see I'm knocking down some of the texture that was from her paintbrush and that more fine line work. And I really love that. It's really interesting. You can go over it and over it and get a more transparent layer down and push it both ways and do some curves. Explore and experiment with how it impacts it. Do you like that? I really even love the sound. It's so soothing. So as you're playing with all these exercises, I hope that you will really challenge yourself and ask yourself, do I like that? Does that allow more freedom? Do I wanna do more? Does it give me new ideas? Pay attention to those sparks that you have with all these different exercises we're doing and let that kind of lead you into your abstract art practice. Just keep scraping away here, adding paint. Looking at this piece, I feel compelled to add just a little bit more. I loved how this orange looked, so I'm gonna add another scrape layer. And I like that it's going to be kind of transparent. I love the contrast and how it pops. So grab a scraper tool, whether it be from the art store, an official one, or a used credit card or some other hard form of paper. And try it on wood and try it on paper too and see the difference and see if you like it.

Day 6 - Using brayers

- Applying paint with a brayer to wood surfaces is another favorite of mine and it brings up a good point. Embrace using tools in an unexpected way. These are generally used to press out like in bubbles in collage or print making but I love it in abstracts and on wood and it just reminds me to encourage you to try things unexpectedly and see what you discover. I'm gonna go ahead and apply paint to the palette here and then I'm going to get it on my brayer by rolling it in it and I'm going to, whoop, it's kind of getting a little bit stuck 'cause I'm using this slick surface. It'll take a minute to get the brayer rolling. You could use a piece of paper, a piece of glass is great for it or even a piece of cardboard. I'm mixing the paint right here with my brayer letting my brayer roll, to kind of get an unexpected result. And now I'm just going to go ahead and apply it right to our wood board. It's a great way to cover a lot of surface but you also can do a more of a design choice and you can start it by putting it right on the board instead of on the palette. Anything like this in abstracts that lends you to an unexpected result with less control using your tools in a way really really makes it so that you aren't thinking too hard. It's kind of getting your brain out of the way. So I encourage you to really try things like these techniques that are planned to have a surprise show up. You can't go into it controlling it. We're embracing what we discover. So, I'm gonna go ahead now and intentionally put down a contrasting color, a lighter color, and use the brayer, I'm just gonna put some splotches, and I'm gonna use the brayer and see what happens. Go ahead and roll it

out. Get some fun shapes here. You can see as it's starting to dry, it's picking up the grain of the wood. Just some real interesting, it can be more transparent as well like the scraper was, or you can be thick, not go over it, and have it have more opaque and really nice variety here. As you can see, I'm tryin' to let you see it with the light of paint and texture. So I'm gonna go ahead and push this piece aside. I chose to work on this one because it's so big. I feel like the brayer really lends itself to a big area and more of that arm movement and big gestures like we were saying. And I'm going to this time, go ahead. I'm just gonna actually clean my brayer off, dry it off by just putting it here. Sometimes you get a fun result and I'm going to put paint right onto the brayer this time. Just three dots. But actually, I didn't think about it and I picked up a color the was so similar so I'm going to at least add a slightly contrasting color. Oh, I'll use this light one. I'm gonna go right in between. Kind of do a curve here. See what we think. Move that out of the way. Eh, that wasn't very exciting to me so I'm gonna go ahead and try a different color, and see. And this is what I mean by exploring and discovery. You never know. Oh, that's fun. Now that is setting myself up and Jen up for something to react to in the future. Getting a big unexpected result like that is definitely adding to the layers and interest and information that's there on the piece. Even if it never, even if most of it ends up disappearing in the future. Gonna go ahead and put it right on this board. Just do a bigger stripe. Ugh. (brayer thudding) That's another one, I love that sound. And now I'm just gonna add this color. Let's see. Where it looks really parched is what's helping me to decide where to place it. The wood and the paint seems very dry and soft and not a strong element so I'm, that's causing me to wanna add to it there. Go ahead. (brayer thudding) And I'm just gonna add a little more paint onto the brayer with a brush this time. See what happens. You can get really weird patterns which is fun. Since I have the paint here I might as well use it up. Just rolling it onto this so I get it on the brayer. You can already see how it's interacting with her scribble marks, the pen marks from the very beginning, the ball point. They're still showing through. Because it's a brayer and it's a rolling flat surface it's not getting into the grooves. It's keeping the paint on top which is really fun and interesting. Brayers are generally associated with print making so you'll find it in that section of your local craft store. Go ahead and try it and try some different techniques both on your blank slate and as a layer.

Day 7 - Scraping paint off

- At this point in this series, we're gonna be focusing on building layers and textures with the pieces that you've already started. Today we're gonna focus on scribbling into wet paint and removing wet paint. So if you have wet pain already on your piece, then you don't need to add some, but I need to add some wet paint because it's dry. So I'm gonna go ahead and add some of this thick cream color. Start by scraping. So there's so many things that you can scrape into wet paint with. For example, you can use a shish kebab stick, a toothpick, you can grab something like a stick from outside. So I'm gonna start with this shish kebab stick, and it's really great how one end is pointy. You can get a really fine line as you go ahead and scrape away. Kinda how we started off with scribbling is a very similar technique where you just get to move the stick around however feels fun and just move that paint away, and it's so cool because it's revealing what is below, all the layers that we've added previous to this one. The other side is clearly a flat side, so it's gonna be a little bit thicker, and a different experience. Encourage you to try both. And you can take something like an old pencil that the tip is broken off or the eraser's broken off and you can go ahead and scrape and make lines with that. Look, and it's interesting how that's kind of bouncing. So many unpredictable things that can happen when you're doing this, and just to discover what happens is really fun. (scraping canvas

with pencil) So then sometimes you get a lot of extra paint. You can just take that paint off, and apply it somewhere else on a dry spot of your painting. I grabbed a stick from outside, and you can easily do that. You can grab it. Ah, it broke! It's kinda interesting. So now you've got a different piece to work with. You can see it can go really fast. You can get your energy out or you can go slow. I tend to, if I have something thicker, I just wanna move fast. But here look, if I have this toothpick, I would image it'd be really fun to go slow. Maybe a little more dainty with it. Make a little more detail. I feel like I wanna add some more paint just to have some more spaces to scrape. You know, there's a lot going on underneath here, and while, of course, I am responding to it by this color choice I thought would be fun on top of this blue, I'm also responding in a little bit of ways that I choose where to scrape, but I'm also not really thinking about it very much. As you can see, just like a pen cap. There's so much that's just lying around us that we can pick up and use as art materials. It's free, and some from nature, some from our trashcan. So it's really great to be able to utilize what you have to make awesome and fun art. You can use the back of your paintbrush. So if you kind of stick with one area, you can see you make a really dense, dense spot versus moving your arm wild. I'm gonna do a little bit more. Oh, you see, right there I just rolled off 'cause I obviously wanna have the end of my brush kinda be clean, so I just like I'll roll it off on painting, and I can either use my finger and smear this in, or I could just leave it and have more texture. I think I'm gonna grab another piece and do this one more time on one of our other collaborative pieces. I'll just choose this one 'cause it definitely needs some love. It's kind of still at the basic stage. And let's see, I think I'm gonna add this blue. It'd be fun, so I'm actually just gonna take this paint and pour it right on here. (mouth sound effects) Again, take my brush. It still has some of the white paint, but I'm okay with that. It's really thick. I got a lot of paint on here. Actually, there's more paint than I want, so what I'm gonna do is take some of that paint and get rid of it by putting it over here in my palette. If I had another painting, in fact, since I had too much paint on this one, and I don't want that much paint, I'm just gonna go ahead and offload it over here unto this other painting. Just clean it off, just get there. I don't really care where it goes, I'm just kind of moving it around. My main objective is here, it really makes them, make this less thick. I just didn't want it that thick. Now, I'll just set this over here, just set to dry. And get to scraping. You can do something like a palette knife, kind of scrape in here. And this is interesting, just to see like the way you can be thicker here. So again, tap into your energy, and see what your energy dictates. Where do you want to scribble, how do you want your hand to move, are you feeling stressed at all. Just get it out on your painting. Yeah, so just have fun moving your scraper around and revealing what's below.

Day 8 - Writing into wet

- Today we're gonna continue scribbling into wet paint. This time though we're gonna do a little more pattern work and design with shapes. So you'll take your piece and you're gonna need to add some wet paint. We're gonna add paint using the scrapper as Pam showed you earlier. So I'm just gonna squirt it on and then take your scrapper and just kind of move it around, get wet paint. Some areas will be a little thicker than others. Now you've got wet paint. I'm gonna take my shish kebab stick 'cause I really love drawing with this. And go ahead and just make some shapes. You can start out with something simple like a circle. Just a little more intentional this time around, less kind of wild like the scribbling can be. You see how it reveals the red above? And in some areas it doesn't, so that's just kinda left open to kinda chance. How thick is the paint, how deeply are you moving your stick through. So you can see I take this paint from the stick and just smear it onto the board in another spot. So just patterns, playing, moving around. My energy is a little bit softer here. At this

point you might feel inspired to write something like a word. Anything that might come to you. When I add words to my artwork, it's very random. I don't tend to have pre-thought out words that I put into my work. I am very much in the moment. So some thought will come or I'll be listening to a song or a conversation I'm having and that word will be come and it'll just come right through me and end up in the painting. It's usually very random. So I encourage you to play with words if you're inspired to. So this is another fun way to add layers and texture. You can see as you create it, a lot of texture is created as you move the stick around and you see kinda clumps of paint. So I'm gonna take another one of our pieces and go ahead and scribble into wet paint on that. This time I'm gonna squirt this turquoise right on top. Then use the same scrapper I had so some of that paint will mix. And you can see as I scrap it around, it's really fun because the layer I'm working on top of has a lot of texture. It's very thick in areas and thin in others. It's got kinda bubbly stuff so it's really creating an interesting design. So I'm gonna create some more thick areas so I can scribble into that. And reveal what's below. So another thing you can scribble in with is something that's going to leave another mark. For example, a colored pencil. Take this and as you scribble or you doodle and make your patterns and designs, you're gonna see it's removing the wet paint and it's also adding color. You can see here as I scrap away, it's removing some of that thick paint. And also leaving a red mark. You can do that with something thicker like a crayon. This is a watercolor crayon. Just gonna peel some of this clumpage away. The fun thing is when your paint is still wet, you can take your scrapper and kinda scrap over some of the designs that you may have just drawn, and they may still remain and they may not. It just adds interest. That's another great way that you can dig in to wet paint, reveal what's below, and also leave pattern, design, shapes, letters, words, things like that into your layer.

Day 9 - Lifting paint

- As you're going along and creating lots of layers and adding things, it's also really fun to take paint away. So today, Pam and I are gonna show you different ways that we like to do that. So I'm gonna add some paint as if that was part of my layer. Just go ahead and move it around however I want. This color is super bright. It's also really translucent, so it's fun to see what's showing through below. So now, if you want to, you know, if you're going along in your layer, and you're like, okay, it'd be fun to see what happens if I take some of this yellow off. You can, say, use a paper towel that's dry and go ahead and just lift some of it off. And you see kind of how that yellow is still there, but it's leaving an interesting kind of ring where it was darker, so I'm gonna try it over here. And you're moving it around, you're almost like painting with that paper towel, and you're just making it dry. It's actually another way to dry your painting if you need your layers to be dry. You could also use a rag that's out of cloth and that's gonna have a different feeling. And you may prefer using a paper towel, or it's kinda nice to use a rag. It's not using a disposable. You can use something that you can then wash. So you can also add some water. Kinda let it sit in your wet paint. And then you can go ahead and just see what happens when you blotch that up and pick it up. What's interesting for this one is actually I've got some texture from the paper towel. Just because I just press instead of rubbed, it's kinda cool, kinda unexpected. I didn't really plan for that to be a part of this, but look at that, it's kinda cool. And then you've got paint on your paper towel. So what happens if you press it somewhere else, it's a little bit like a stamp, which we'll get into later. But there's so many serendipitous discoveries as you're going along this process that's really fun. So I'm gonna go ahead and just wipe off the rest of this yellow 'cause it looks fun to do. But I really do like that, the way that the paper towel affected the paint, so I'm actually gonna leave that. I enjoy that spot a lot.

Yeah, and so as you kind of, you can use this almost as a brush, as a way to spread your paint a little bit. And that's one way that I like to remove paint. - I like to remove paint using a brayer. So I'm just gonna apply some paint by squirting some on. I want to also just brush some on. I don't wanna use the brayer to apply it right now because I'm gonna leave my brayer dry and go ahead and lift some up. So I've got some nice thick paint here. And you can see, the brayer's dry. I'm leaving nothing on it. I'm gonna go ahead and kinda lift. And I might need to do it a few times using a piece of paper to clean my brayer off on. You'll start to hear a noise as it goes. You can start to hear it wicking, wicking up the paint. (paint wicking) And I can move it around. I think you can probably hear that. Hopefully the mic is catching that because it's definitely a difference in sound. So the more you roll, the more it's lifting. It's like when you paint your house with a paint roller on your walls, you wanna apply it, but you don't want to keep going over it, or you will just start lifting up that paint again. We're intentionally doing that here. Another option instead of cleaning my brayer off onto the paper is I could have taken my brayer, picked up this paint here, and cleaned it off on one of our previously started paintings. Yet, adding more interest and another layer. Totally not controlling it. Totally using it as if it's a scrap piece of paper, but it'll give us something to respond to later on that one. So now back to this one. One more thing that I often do is I've got some wet paint down, and you can actually use paper, just like Jen was the towel or the paper towel, to lift it up. Just pick up some of that. Again, you're gonna get a different texture, depending on the paper you use, and you're also creating some fodder for yourself for future stages to use on that paper. Nothing's scrap, ever. Okay, one more thing is, just like Jen with the water, I'm gonna go ahead and plop some drops down. We're gonna let the water just sit for a minute because it's gonna actually act like a resist a little bit. It's actually like an opposite resist. A resist is something you put down before you paint and it protects that area and doesn't let the paint get on it. But we're actually gonna do the opposite and remove it. I'm sure there's a more proper term, but it doesn't matter, right? We're playing and having fun. And you don't have to know how something works to enjoy doing it. I'm gonna take the brayer and just roll over it. And you can see here how we've got some really interesting effects. Just using the brayer to clean up the water and smooth it out, you can see what interesting texture and interest it's led to our piece. So those are some ways that we play around with lifting up paint. - Give it a try.

Day 10 - Wet collage

- Another fun way to add interesting texture to your layer is to use collage paper. The fun thing about adding collage is there's so much information already on the piece of paper that then you add it to your painting and it just adds a whole new dimension of information. For you collage fodder you can use art that you've made. So you can take something from a sketch book, you can use an old business card. You can use something from a show card and rip this stuff up. You can also use some lettering that you've done. So this is just some examples of my art work that I'm gonna use for collaging. This is something left over from what Pam just was working on in a previous day and here's some printed paper, that's really fun. I'll be using a wet and wet technique to add collage paper. So basically you're just gonna get some paint onto your piece. And spread it around. And you are going to just go ahead, I like to rip my pieces. I don't really worry too much about them having perfect edges. So you're just gonna stick the paper right on to the wet paint. So let's see, what else can we do here? And I like to get the edges. Make sure everything kinda sealed down. Sometimes you might want to paint a little bit on top of the paper, just to kinda hold it down a little bit. I like to clean my hands onto the painting. And use some of Pam's blue paper. Something fun

you can also do when you're adding paper, is kinda create patterns. So little repetitive stripes of paper. (paper ripping) You can take another color if you want and use that to paint along the sides and edges. And I'm sure you might wonder hm, like you're painting over this collage you just put on. Why are you painting over it? To me I'm not really thinking too much about that. Some of it's gonna still be there and some of it will disappear. It's part of the layering and I'm okay with that. I'm really excited about using one of these letters. I think it would be really fun. So I'm gonna, I know it says happy right now but I'm not, I'm letting go of that and just gonna use some letters 'cause it'd be really fun to throw a letter in here. So I'm just gonna rip it kinda close to the edge but I'm kinda not too worried about the look of the edge. I do wanna get the whole letter in there. Here's even a little layering you can see that some of this paper is layering on top of the other paper and I just noticed it looks like some of the pen that I used to create this H is bleeding which is creating an interesting effect, something totally unexpected and I'm okay with. So that's one way you can use a collage. Just adding wet onto wet and another thing that's really fun to do is play with tape. So you can take tape and kinda create whatever you want. You can thin out your tape, and kinda create interesting shapes. So this can be collage. You can also do this onto wet as well and use the tape as paper. Gonna stick it in there. The adhesiveness of the tape doesn't really work but it still is, can be used it and it can be really fun 'cause there's some really awesome washy tape out there. And it can be really fun to add those patterns and designs into your layers. Another fun thing with tape is you go ahead and you're creating your painting and as you create layers, so just gonna go ahead and imagine I was painting on top of this layer. And at some point through the process, you can go ahead and remove a piece of tape, and voila. You reveal something from an old layer. So I'm just gonna tuck that one down. So tear out a page from your old sketch book, find some fun paper and experiment with wet on wet collaging.

Day 11 - Dry collage

- As Jen said, collage can add a great layer of texture, but I also like to add it for the graphic nature, the print and the interesting patterns that it'll put on your piece. So I'm gonna go ahead, I've got this piece that Jen had started, and I'm going to be collaging with a dry technique, more of a traditional technique, which is just taking dry paper and putting glue, either a glue stick or gel medium, on the back of the paper and putting it onto dried paint. So, I just wanted to mention here, I've added some more resources for collaging materials, is gift wrap, or I really love vintage papers, like ledger papers or old music paper. You really get some great graphics and it has a very nice, different weight to it, which will also add that texture Jen was talking about. So, I have this piece here, and because of that, it makes me want to, I see what Jen's done here with this letter, and it makes me want to use more of these, but I, instead of using letters like she has done, I'm gonna go ahead and cut into this. Don't worry, I have her permission to cut into her artwork anyway I'm inspired to. And I wanted to show you how you could take something really graphic like this and change it, so that you didn't necessarily recognize what it was before. So I've just cut a scallop. You can cut a shape in your collage paper. And I wanted to talk a minute about placement. So, when collaging, what I do is, I tend to move it around the piece, and when I feel that I've found the right spot, it just, you know, I recognize it, like that's starting to feel good, that could work in my mind. Maybe trimming this a little bit. And I really let my instinct kick in here, and try different things, and just see. I am thinking about where this is. It's not super thought out, but it's just kind of like a balancing thing. I'm definitely gonna add at least one more of this print, so that I've kind of got this balance. I like to do threes, like many people do. Threes or fives are good. So, I kinda like it here along this edge of this

white paint here. So I'm gonna go ahead, just put a little of the gel medium on the back, and I am careful to go all around the edges, so it won't lift, especially since we're going to do more layers on these pieces. So I wanted to go ahead, and you can tell, I didn't worry about going over the edges. It's okay to get that gel medium on your painting. I'm just gonna use my fingers. I could use my dry brayer to go ahead and press this down, get any wrinkles out. I'm not going over it with the glue, because I want to be able to still draw on this, or use crayon, and I don't want it to act as a resist and not let those paper soak in. I'm gonna do one more. And maybe I will go ahead and do a letter like she has here, but I'm going to use it, well, this is a letter that works either way. I was gonna say, I'm gonna use it unexpectedly, so you know what, I'll do it sideways, so that it doesn't have to be exactly what it is. Embrace your collage pieces and let them be something different than what they originally started out as. So I'm doing my thing of just trying it in different locations. A triangle is always a pleasing shape to add with your elements, because it keeps your eye going around. I kinda like how it's playing off this pink, leaving a little bit of the blue showing. I'm gonna remove just a little more of the paper here, and yeah, I like that. So I'm gonna put that down there. If you were worried about getting the glue over, of course, you could just get your glue on it off your painting. I don't worry about things like that, and I hope you won't either. I hope you just keep playing. Whatever makes it more fun to play. And I wanted to talk about, kind of, incorporating this collage piece into your piece. The way Jen did wet on wet, she ended up causing it to really look like part of the layer, blend them together. But these that are dry and put on top really seem on top, and not connected to the piece. So I wanted to go ahead and take a pen, you could do this many different ways, but one way I like to do it is to take a pen, just ballpoint pen, and I'm just gonna go ahead and mark on both sides of the paper, getting the paper and my painting, and kind of incorporate it into it that way. You could also use paint. And I'm just adding a little bit of paint, and it kind of just incorporates it more into it. I think of it as kind of blurring those lines, or those layers. As I look at this, I can't resist this other pieces of Jen's that is calling to me, and belongs on this painting. And that's the way I hope you'll approach this, is just letting inspiration take you away. See where it leads you. This just looks so fantastic on here to me, so I want to include it. So I'm just trying it around. That's kind of interesting. But this is a lot of graphic element, and so maybe I'll put it over here to balance. Over here. Mm, this is a place that most, you know, I feel a little flutter in my heart when I put it here, so I'm gonna go ahead and include that right there. I'm looking for that flutter, that's what's guiding me as I go along. And include this piece. And I can incorporate, this one doesn't seem as, you know, disparate element that the others did, but I can go ahead and incorporate this later, in a later stage, too, so I can leave this here, for myself or Jen to respond to as we go on. So what I'm gonna do is turn this piece over, because this is a piece that Jen had started quite a while ago, and I really like to take collage pieces like this, and kind of fill in shapes. It's another way, if you feel overwhelmed at where does it just go down? I don't know where to put it. This is a great way to get yourself started, and I find that if you just sometimes find a way in, then you'll be able to discover more. So this is an easy way in to adding collage to your piece. I'm gonna find a place where I think it goes, in the shapes that are existing. So I'm gonna do this one, and I'm doing it loosely. It's not perfect, but it's the concept, it's the idea. We can get it started and then perfect it as I go. I like this placement, so I'm just kind of, I said perfecting, but I don't want to say that because it's not about perfect, but it is putting it in this slot. So I'll go ahead and use a glue stick just to show you a different, oh, maybe not, it's a little dry. That's what you get for letting your kids grow up. You get dry glue sticks. Okay, I'm gonna go ahead and do the gel medium. And put that down right here in that space. And then this one, as I look over here, looks really pretty to me, real striking, picks up

a little of this dark color and complements it. So I'm gonna go ahead and maybe put that in this spot here, 'cause it has this natural curve already torn, which is fun. You can, of course, tear it, but I like both. I like both torn and scissors, and, of course, I have more control using the scissors, so fitting it into the shapes is easier for me. And I'm just gonna clean that so it fits. I find if I'm gonna err on the side of cutting it, I'd rather make it small than big, so you get that effect of it being inside the shape. Mm, I love how that really pops. So I'm gonna add another little piece, maybe right in here, this tiny little piece. This is such a great use of scraps. I have a saying, "no scrap is too small." Fun, unexpected. And I think I'll do a third piece of this somewhere. Maybe, I really like it in here. So I'm going to, well, let's see if this one works. Sure does, perfect. This is embracing the unexpected, discovering, play. And let's add just a little bit more. Gonna use this vintage paper. So pretty. You can search vintage ledgers on eBay or Etsy. Get one. It's dated 1868. Gosh, lovely, and we're gonna treasure it and give it new life by adding it to our abstracts. And just stick this right down in that shape. Fun. So I'm gonna go ahead and do a little bit of the pen mark. I'm gonna tear this little edge off, 'cause I want it to be completely inside. There you go. And I'm just gonna do a little bit of the pen mark I mentioned before. It's kinda just making this part of the piece, in my mind. And we'll do a little bit here, filling in the rest of the space where the paper wasn't, and here, just to kind of incorporate it with the piece. Just a little bit, it doesn't need to be much. Just a tiny bit that kinda gives it a kickstart as to becoming all part of the next layer. Using collage can be a really unexpected addition to your abstracts.

Day 12 - Playing with paint

- Today we're gonna revisit a technique we already learned. We're going to add another painting layer on top of these rich layers of paint and collage and scraping that we have going so far. So we're gonna go ahead and do some more paint scribbling. So I'm gonna use some of this pink, put it on my palette and get a medium size brush. I think I'm gonna use this one for now, and go ahead and make line work. So it's similar to what we did earlier however now you're doing this on top of so much is going on. (brush rustling) I'm gonna try some of this metallic color. It looks really fun. And at this point we don't necessarily have a top or bottom for our piece, so you can feel free to move your piece around. Maybe this is the top. We don't know yet. I really like to use a dry brush which means that I don't tend to put my brush into water very often even when I'm going between colors. For example, right now I have metallic on my brush but I'm going to switch to the pink. So for me, I like to just go ahead and grab the pink and I tend to mix that metallic color in. So that creates a whole new color. It's a color in which the metallic and the pink are related. And I just keep my brush dry and move the paint around. Same thing here. When I'm at home, my paint containers tend to get pretty messy because I just take my paint filled brush and put it into the container. So you can see I've got this glob of dry paint from inside this green paint and I just kinda work with it. I may enjoy keeping it on as texture or I may not and I'm actually gonna take it off. (brush rustling) So, you can, at this point I'm mildly responding to what's below still. I'm still not worried about it too much. I'm not preserving any part but it's there and I can help but take in what is there, what colors are there what lines are there, the texture that's there and how it effects my brush and my choices. So you can kinda blend a little bit too while you're in there so you can see like a huge large blob there. Just wanna blend that in. (brush rustling) So I'm really feeling I wanna add a little bit of white. So I'm gonna grab my white. Just something about this peach color, makes me want to add white. So I listen to that when I hear it inside. I also wanna add a tiny bit of brown and the only brown I have is in this old dried up tube. So what I'm actually gonna do is cut my tube. This will definitely end the life of

this tube for the most part. I mean there's ways to protect it. You can put it in plastic but once you cut it and it's open to air, it's not gonna last very long but it wasn't coming out of the top so I just chose to move forward with its life. You can add patterns. A little bit of stripes. Some linear shapes. I'm not too worried about picking up, you can see it picks up some of that wet paint there from other lines. Just moving around the whole board, not thinking, just moving, and responding. Yeah, that feels great to me.

Day 13 - Painted layers

- Revisiting an earlier stage, painting with a big brush, and do more of a loose, expressive line, using my whole arm, not wrist. I'm gonna go ahead and show you how I would re-approach some paintings. I picked these two. They've got bigger surfaces, so I'm gonna use these. And this one, I see a little masking tape here, so I'm just gonna go ahead and pull that off. Actually, now that I've started, I'm gonna wait because I'm gonna put some of that big paint on and go ahead and peel that off afterwards. So I'll have a little bit there. You really wanna not control it. As Jen mentioned, we're still not getting attached to anything. We are embracing what's happening, they're still really evolving, we're not getting close to wrapping these up. So allow yourself real freedom and don't hold to anything precious. I like getting my brush wet first and having a really wet brush because what it does is it make the paint much looser, you know, watery, of course, watered down acrylic is going to flow more and I want it to be very fluid when I apply it on using these big strokes. If it was dry, it might slow me down, is what I feel. Again, you can see, I'm really not being careful or making anything precious of what's there. I'm simply doing as my instinct says. I am mindful of it, yet it's not controlling my choices, it's not stopping me, I'm not limiting myself because of that. And what I wanted to show you is, if I try to protect, like let's say this is my favorite area and I've done something that I really love, part of this abstract exploration is allowing yourself to take risks, you know, trusting that you can come back to that, you can do it again, it will always be there, you're never gonna lose that piece, even if it gets covered up. You know, we're trying to embrace exploration still, so if I kept this separate and really saved it and did something all over it, you see how it really stands out. You can never incorporate it again, really. I mean, it's very hard. It's not that you have to cover the whole piece, it's that don't hold anything precious and separate it out because it will always ring, it will ring inauthentic to that organic development we're going for with these abstracts. So go ahead and allow yourself to lose something that you love. Once you let go of that control and stop trying to be very careful, it really can free up your art, so embrace that. And I'm gonna go ahead and go over here. I've started peeling up some paint. Let's see, eh, I'm gonna dip in to this. And my brush is already wet. So I'm gonna go ahead and do some of those big strokes from this paint. Again, another sample, you can get it very inexpensively, samples, just like the return paints at the hardware store. And I'm just going, I'm mindful that there's stuff here, but I'm not protecting it, like Jen suggested. We can turn it and see what happens. And now that I've gone over this tape, I'm gonna peel it up because it wasn't staying down. Go ahead, I can pick up some of this white that was on the paint palette. And you can also, with a big brush, put down some intentional strokes, like I tend to like to do three lines, for some reason, or dots like that. Just give it a little second color like this. And sometimes, you know, as Jen was mentioning in the very, very beginning, it's nice to have a few pieces going because then, you know, when you have an idea on this one, you go ahead and do it, and then you can also get an idea for the other piece without overthinking it. So I'm gonna go ahead and do that just to show you, practice what I preach here. That color is looking really yummy to me. Again, I just put those marks, but nothing's precious, so

I'm kind of, I tend to go faster with these big brushes than a smaller brush might do. And, you know, you can use any of the other techniques like earlier, oh I don't wanna lose that really neat color she had there, so I'm just gonna wipe off, like Jen was doing earlier, and kind of, you know, allow that to remain without making it protected and precious. It's just like, okay we can bring it back and that kind of maybe helps you embrace loosening up, knowing that, okay, if you really want to, you know, back it off a tiny bit, you can. This is when we start adding all the days. You know, you can at any time incorporate anything that we've done before. As we go through these exercises, these are all yours to use on any layer. And I'm good with that. So I'm gonna go ahead and call it there for this little layer of using the big brush.

Day 14 - Spray paint

- A great way to add some excitement to your layering is to use spray paint. You can spray paint in a variety of ways. I like to use spray paint from the hardware store, art store, there's great indoor versions like this is an ink spray. What's fun to do is you can try to just spray it, and it creates these little dots all throughout. You can practice going close. What does that look like? Or if you're far away, and do it from high up, and how does it react to what's below? So let's try something else here. We've got another kind. So you can go ahead and just spray the paint around and get those little splotches. It's really fun. What can I create? Sometimes you might wanna actually hold your board up to spray. Add some color and texture that way. One thing I like to do with spray paint also to get some splotches is you can use like a piece of paper, and you put some of the paint in there, and then you can flick from here down and get more splotches that way. If you don't actually have any spray paint, you can feel free to make some really watered down acrylic and do a similar thing. So just go ahead and put some paint. Add some water. Mix that up. And do a similar thing, put your really watered down paint into the paper, and then go ahead, this one's really wet and really drippy, so it's just kinda dripping already, but you can also still flick what's left. You can do it on top of the wet already. (paper clicking) Let's see, I can put it onto this one that already has color. (paper clicking) (paint spraying) You can also take your brush after you've used the paint, the spray paint, and kind of rub that in if you want to in some way, use it. So if you kinda wanted to protect a certain area, like if I didn't wanna get any spray paint over here, just wanted to see what would happen if I did that, you're gonna kinda you can use a piece of paper and just kind of block it and spray. You'll have an edge there, kinda could create some shapes in a different way. And as you're creating these layers, remember you can bring back in the techniques we've been working on from previous days. Like for example, if I, this paint is wet here, this spray paint is wet, and if I feel like I just kinda thought it would be fun to scrape into it while it's still wet. It's not doing a whole lot, but just wanted to try it. (wood scraping) Spraying paint can be an exciting way to add random texture throughout your piece. You never know where the paint's gonna land. Go for it.

Day 15 - Spray paint and stencils

- Stencils can be a really great jumpstart into putting new marks and interest on your painting. If you're feeling slightly intimidated and you don't know what to do this is something that already just gives you a boost. You can get stencils at any craft store or online. There's all sorts of resources for premade stencils for artwork, but also I like to use nontraditional items, doilies, we've got a more crocheted doily here, and this was even one of those coin savers or lots of times playing games when you first get the board game and you pop out things they have a neat pattern. If you really start looking there's stencils everywhere. So I wanted to show you, I picked these two boards to

work on, because they were dry and also because right now it's still very muted backgrounds and not a lot of pop of interest. We have some here and in these marks, but they still really need a lot of fun and this is looking a little parched to me and that's always like a place where I start to add more. So I'm just gonna lay down my stencil and I'm going to use a different color. Take this, which is just like an acrylic ink that's been very watered down. You can also put acrylic inks into a little spray bottle. And I'm going to go ahead and spray lightly and you can see, you get that pattern really quickly. And it's fun to see what will happen if you turn it upside down, maybe nothing or maybe it will act somewhat like a stamp and you'll get a little bit. And the great thing about these is it's super organic development, you can't really, it's not perfection, you're getting a lot of information, interest, pattern down, but it's still not controlled, it still has a much more abstract appearance and if you don't like it you just wipe it in as if it's paint. So I'm gonna go ahead and, hm, let's do a little bit more of this one over here. Just like Jen was saying, if you wanted to protect an area, like let's say I didn't want the stencil to go over here, although being abstract, so we don't really do too much of that, worrying about that, but you lay down your paper and that little area was protected and didn't get the stencil over it. I'm gonna just toss it down on this one just to see. Eh, it's all right. But again, we could just do any of our other days reactions and we could wipe that up, we could blot that up. Let's go ahead and try the doily over here. This one is pretty fine, so I'm not sure how much. But again, this is what's fun about it is we're embracing experiments. I'm gonna hold it down pretty tight. You could use even the back of your paintbrush if you wanted to kind of keep it taut to the board. Just a little light spray. Oh, that's cool. I think that's a really cool interest point, so I'm gonna do another one right here. I'm just gonna kind of hold it down with the end of my brush. That's fun. And I think with the three things it's strong enough that I don't need to add another. Another way that you can add stencil, let's take this one, this is fun, is. Now I'm not paying real attention too much to where I'm putting it down, again, because this is abstract. I'm thinking of this as a layer, we're just adding interest to respond to in the future. But I'm kind of more reacting to what's here, like I said, this seemed parched, so I wanna put something on this versus like a composition. I'm still not thinking about composition at all. But this is a dauber it's called. You literally just daub it and that's one way. And then, of course, since I like to use tools in weird ways I'm gonna just rub it. And on that same note, I'm gonna lift it just to show you, it's kind of cool, and then on that same note you could take paint, I'm just gonna take a brush and kind of really quickly paint here with a stencil. Or the difference is if I take it and let's just put it down on this one and now I'm gonna paint more carefully. I'll do both at the same time. It's kind of part of the fun of working on many at a time is you really don't think about, I don't get too bogged down in the overthinking and just keep kind of moving, which is fun. So yeah, I love those, because that is totally abstract to me. You really can't tell that that's part of a flower, but we're really setting ourselves up for the future to react to something else. So anyway, I could do this on and on, but I don't want to have it be too much. On these abstracts we wanna allow lots of different playing, so we wanna save some room. For those that are intimidated by abstracts or mark making stencils can be a great way to take care of that.

Day 16 - Drawing with stencils

- Today I'm gonna use stencils to draw in letters and shapes and patterns. So I'm choosing some lettered stencils and you can choose stencils of any size or thickness. And when I use a thinner stencil like this it's fun to use something thin like a ballpoint pen. Now I like to be really random in my choices, so I'm just gonna go ahead and place this down and as far as where I choose to place it, honestly it's random. It's like okay, I have this space right here, this fits here, let's go for it. And I'm

just looking at the G. The reason I'm choosing the G is also really random. I do not have a word in mind, I am just picking a letter. And I'm just gonna go ahead and color it in with this pen. And I'm not worried about filling the whole thing. You can see there's space empty here in the letter. And I'm just gonna go ahead, you know, sometimes I enjoy, oh wow, that was kind of fun, I really actually enjoyed drawing in the G, so I'm gonna go ahead and add another one just because it was really enjoyable. And I just kind of, sometimes it feels good and relaxing to do something kind of repetitive. And I'm not saying you need to do this. You may want to add a word and that's totally great and fine. I'm just gonna continue with what seems interesting to me and that is creating some kind of pattern with this G just because I'm enjoying the process and I'm liking how it looks. So almost as if it was just this repetitive pattern. You'll notice that I fill it in in various amounts and you don't have to fill it all the way in. So what if I stopped my G like that? And I also enjoy going down off the page, just let that pattern, as if it was say a piece of paper that had a bunch of Gs on it and I ripped it off and glued it on. So I find that really fun just to be random with letters. It's almost as if it's just an element, it's just a shape element, it doesn't necessarily mean anything, it's not related to words. Like I said, you could also go ahead and add a word in if you feel inspired to do that. You can also take your pen and use some of the patterned stencils that Pam mentioned earlier and just go ahead and color those in. So you can see that I'm not like precise. You could be, you could kind of come in here and just outline. But I just kind of, if I'm feeling in this mood, I just slop it in there. You could choose to use something else, like a watercolor crayon. What happens if you use a crayon? It's a little bit different, you see? Or if you go ahead and use a marker. I'm gonna use this orange marker, it'll show up a little bit. Now you don't, I'm not worried about getting the whole stencil, I'm not really worried about where I am stenciling, I just kind of move around in an organic, free way. Kind of random, you can skip over here. You can see I'm not too worried about what's underneath, I'm just going wherever looks interesting as I move. It's almost as if I don't have a say sometimes in the movement, it's just my arm just moves and I just do. So that's another way to handle stencils. You can always just do the outline of the stencil and not color it in at all, like that.

Day 17 - Stamping

- Using rubber stamps is another great way to get a lot done if you're intimidated by mark making onto your paintings. I'm going to take some rubber alphabet stamps. I really like how they have an opening or outline shape. So I'm just going to put a word on, let's do art, since we're making some art. Maybe we'll say make art. You could do anything. It doesn't have to make sense. That's not what abstract is. You could be venting, you could be anything. Feel free to put whatever you want down. So if I'm gonna do make art, first I'm gonna do more traditional way, which is just using a stamp pad, ink pad. And I'm gonna go ahead and get my word. I'm not gonna worry about holding them all at once, because that would be too worried about keeping them evenly lined up. I'm just going for it. You can tell I didn't, all I thought about when I was putting it down was an area where it would show. That's all I was looking for very quickly, I'm not worried about making a straight line. I like how free and silly it looks that way. And another way that I could ink these is to take a pen, this is a Copic sketch marker, and I could take the sketchbook, the sketch pen end nib, and go ahead, Tombows work for this too. I'm sure lots of markers. Whoops, I did the R first, I don't know why. I'm just gonna put that down and let's find that A again and you can see that it will ink it just as well. I could change it up, I could have changed it up. And you know what, to clean my stamps it could be fun to just put them in any order anywhere around. I'm not a great stamp cleaner. They make little clean your stamp off pads and all that type of thing. So we're just getting, now I'm just using it

totally haphazardly, randomly. I don't want them to be even legible or read as anything. And that's cool, that's something that we can react to and we draw someone's eye in. Like wait, make art, but then there, what? Just ways to engage the person who's looking at it afterwards. So another stamp that I like to use is to, I made these handmade stamps, but you can buy ready made stamps. And I'm gonna actually, I'll show you what it looks like here, but what I'm gonna do, and you can kind of just keep pressing. You can do it in a pattern or you can overlap, which is really nice. But also you can go ahead and just put it in your palette if you have any paint there. Again, I'm really just kind of looking for places where it might show up. I'm not really loving the way that's so, so messy, so I'm just gonna whoop. And I'm gonna go ahead and apply it a little bit more carefully to the paint to my stamp. Let's try it over here for a fresh start and see. Oh, it's still pretty messy. Although here you're getting a lot of texture, because I put it on that way, which is kind of cool. Depends on what you like and what, try them both. I'm gonna put a little on both of these. When doing a stamp I do tend to want to put it on a few different areas moving around the painting, so do a little going off. These are abstracts, you don't have to go one direction. Embrace the freedom that abstracts bring you. There's no right, because you decided to do it, it is right, that's the definition of it. Because you have the idea, pursue it, and we're continuing to just add these fun things, interest and layers, and we'll help you tie it all together later. Don't worry about that now. I really loved the way it looked on the brown, so I'm just looking for another area like that, like maybe right here. That's cool to me. And then maybe I'll do the same on this painting on this brown. Just for fun you could color in some of these letters like with a colored pencil where you have some nice control, or a pen. It's not really showing up a ton unless I push really hard. I'll show you using a pen instead, a marker. I'll pat it just to tone it down just a tiny bit, pick up some of that ink on my finger. And there you go, rubber stamps. They're a great way to add interest, whether you use them with an ink pad, or a colored marker that you're putting on the ink, or paint even, add those to your paintings.

Day 18 - Paint drips

- Today I'm going to be dripping globs of paint onto the painting. So I'm gonna take some watery paint, and I'm actually just gonna kinda squirt it along the top here and just let it drip on its own. Check it out, you know. I mean, you could just let that go. It's thick and interesting if you just kinda let your painting stand up. That's one way to kinda let your paint drip. To assist that, and if you wanted to get a little more watery, you could spray some water. Check it out what happens there. It's picking up some of the paint from below. So you can kinda add that on there and just do a little more. What happens if you get close and you spray? What I think I'm gonna do is you can see down here below, it's dripping onto the table here, which is fine, but what would happen if I put it on top of another painting? So I put this painting here, and I allow this to drop onto a painting. You're gonna have some random responses that are gonna happen down here that I'm really not looking at at all. So if I put my spray bottle real close, check that out. You kinda even make a mark in there. Or you can be farther away, get the whole thing wet. That is one thing you can do. So I'm gonna get, you can also get some paint on your, put it on your palette. I like to take a big wide brush. And you can take, get some water in there so you have some wet paint, and then you can kind of play with that. So this clearly wasn't a lot of paint. Didn't really drip. I'm gonna get some more paint. So you got a huge glob there, and you can kind of let it roll. I'm gonna use this painting down here actually as my palette. Easier for me to access at this point. So grab some paint. Get it up there. Get some thick, thick paint. Again, you can add some water if you want to get it rolling. You can still move it around and blend it. You see how it's dripping down there? Now, what you also can do is you can

turn the orientation of your piece. What happens when you do that? And you put some water. Now you're gonna have drips going the other way. And again, you can see I'm not really concerned what's going on underneath here. You can see Pam added some words. She said, "Make art." You would think that could limit you to staying in that orientation, and you could choose to do that, but I'm kind of ignoring that right now and continuing to just experiment and see what happens and not think about what's below here. These globs just kinda dripping around. So I'm gonna get this pink as watery as I can. This big wide brush. So I get a lot of water and paint on the brush, and then I just press the brush into the painting. And you can kinda see how it drips down. So now you can also see what's happening to this painting down here. It's totally morphing. So I'm gonna put this one aside for a minute. And I'm just gonna take this up and just add a little bit here. I'm just gonna grab some more water. Press it in up here and get some drips in this painting. Again, you can try to move the board. See what happens to the drips as you move. What if I add just a little bit of this cream color? Just let it drip in. Going to take a smaller brush. Get some more water. If you want to try and stop some of the dripping, you can put your board down and kinda just blot it like we've done before. And you'll find some interesting things. Where you had the drips, there's still information there, just a little bit lighter. So even as it's dripping, you can put your paper towel, stop it from dripping. So dripping can get really messy, so be prepared. And it also can add some really interesting, unexpected designs and patterns, so go for it.

Day 19 - Paint splatters

- Today's approach to painting on our abstracts is a messy one and I love it for that very reason. So I'm gonna take a brush and I'm gonna use a stiff brush. I'm splattering by the way. And I'm gonna go ahead and dip it in the water just a little bit, get this acrylic very wet on my brush. And then I'm gonna flick it with my finger. And if you go down, it's messy like I said, and if I go down it does one thing, and if I pull the bristles up, it does another. A toothbrush is a great thing for this as well. I love how totally organic it is. You can see that I really had no control, except for just a general area where the flicks started. But the size and all that is impacted by how close or how far I was, but what great interest. What a great layer that is. Okay, now I'm gonna take this painting, and I'm gonna do a little bit on here. And I'm gonna put a new layer of wet, kind of just where it was on yesterday, Jen's work on it. I just wanna show you adding to wet. And now I'm gonna use a softer brush. (water splashing) I'm going to get it wet, so there's lots of water, so that, that acrylic's really fluid. You can see it really being fluid. And again, I'm gonna flick, although that was too similar of a color. Let me show you with a different color. And I'm gonna flick into wet. That was a nice blob that dropped. Let's get a little more. Let me get a little more wet. I was trying to use a contrasting color so you could see, the impact. So it's much... (brush flicking) Can you see these globs, because of the soft brush, they come off in bigger amounts, sometimes, and then sometimes they'll bleed into the wet. But again, you can't control. So I'm unable to control. You get some more of these marks, because of the softer brush. It's almost more splattered, and more of a crazy marking. Love it. I love it into the wet. I love it there. I might take my dry brush, and do a little more flicking right here, (brush flicking) just to incorporate, blend that area. And then one more thing I wanted to show you with the brushes is a flick of your wrist to get a real splatter. This one, I'm gonna go ahead and use that loose one again. Gonna get it nice and painted up. And then I'm just gonna literally tap and flick my wrist. It's really a quick flip of the wrist. And it's very, very out of control, but really nice organic splatters. And I'm just covering this piece 'cause we've neglected it for quite a while. And I'm gonna add some more to it, in case we wanna play on that. It's always good to have a lot going or to turn

your pieces over and try a new idea. You don't have to do all these ideas (pan rattling) on every corner of the piece. You can do all that on that one, and not do it on another, each technique. It's up to you. So splattering. I'm telling you, it is really out of control, and can be very messy, but it is so worth it, the affect you get on your painting.

Day 20 - Heat gun effects

- Today, I'm going to be drying wet paint with a heat gun. This is great to do if, say you're working on one piece and you really want a layer to dry quickly, you can use something to heat it and set it so you can move on to something else. It's also a fun way to experiment and play with wet paint. So, what I'm going to do, since I actually don't have any wet paint on these pieces right now is create a wet surface. You might have a wet painting and you can go ahead and work right with that, but I'm going to add some paint here. Put it down, brush in this area. Just to show you different things. I'm going to add a little bit of this yellow, just to show what happens if you have different colors. And then, I'm going to turn on this heat gun. So, this is a simple heat gun. It's used for embossing and you can buy it at a craft store. You can even try your hair dryer and see if that works, just whatever you want. Experiment and play. So, let's go ahead and turn it on. You can keep it at a distance and that's going to have a more even coating and probably not affect your paint too much. But, if you bring it closer, you'll notice how it actually kind of moves the paint. So, this is a way to play and just explore and let things happen by chance, while simultaneously drying your paint. So, this paint is pretty thick and it will take a little while to dry. You can dry it all the way. You could dry it partially. You can see strange effects that happen. But, let's say I add a little bit of water to this and have wetter paint going on. You can see what happens when you put the gun. It actually moves the water around a lot more. Kind of interesting. Who knows where it will go? You can put another painting over there to kind of catch what comes off. What's going to happen when it bleeds? Getting it really close, holding it in one spot. And, you'll notice, so if this section is partially dry what happens when you break that bubble and continue to dry. So, once again, this is a great way to add randomness and chance to your painting.

Day 21 - Whitewashing

- Today I'm really excited to do a layer of dry brushing. So as I choose my color that I'm going to use, I look at this piece and I think, what do I feel like would be fun to add on top? And I'm kind of feeling like a light color would be great, so I'm gonna start with little bit of white and I would like to mix in some of this peach color, kind of mix those together. So my brush was totally dry and I kinda don't wanna put a lot of paint on, so I am kind of wiping it off either on the palette or you can take another painting and just kind of dry out your brush a little bit. And then, you can go ahead and move onto the painting you're working on. So I'm gonna grab some more paint. Just move this dry brush all around the board. You'll notice it's kinda interesting, here we have something that's a little bit wet, this hardened on top but it was still wet below and you might run into that as you do these layers, that the paint from below is gonna bleed in even if you've let it dry a little bit. And I'm not worried about what's below. I'm not really trying to save anything. I'm moving around, just kind of haphazardly. I might add some more paint. This time, previous days I may have added the paint right to the board and I still can do that and I still might, but right now, I'm feeling like adding it to the palette 'cause it just gives me a little more control on how dry this can be, and I'm gonna take some of this pink that's bleeding and just move it over here. So here you can really see how a lot of your previous layers can really just kind of disappear, and while they disappear, they're still very

important to the process because you can see there's lots of texture. Here's a point, it's a dried point of paint that is, it's important. It creates, even though if it's painted over white, it's still there, and it still show through a little bit. So that's what happens when you do a lot of layering painting. You just create a history, that creates the whole painting and what it's about. Still wanna do a little bit more, squeeze some more white. Think I'm gonna throw in some yellow here. See how dry my brush is? I can just kind of flit it around. Really change the painting a lot by doing this, and sometimes it can be scary if you are attached at all to what's below. I really encourage you to take those risks and try something like this, even if you might feel a little attached. You might be really interested to discover what's on the other side of taking risks like this. So go ahead, take a risk, grab a brush, and surprise yourself.

Day 22 - Removing paint

- Today we're gonna spend some time removing some of the layers that you've built by scraping, peeling, and sanding away. - It's funny how when you're actually removing paint, we're actually forwarding the process of our paintings, though, the development. One of my favorite tools for scraping is the box cutter. And you just have a razor in here. Even sometimes when they break, they're great a little bit dull. But I'm gonna take it and literally just, I'm looking for these spots on here that are sticking up, a lot of texture, maybe bumps, as a starting point. And I'm going to just rub and peel some of that up. Ah, and you see it's such a surprise what is revealed. It is so yummy. And don't worry if you get down to the wood. That doesn't bother me. We can react to it, or it can be a cool texture effect. So I'm gonna go ahead and do some more here. It doesn't have to be only where there are lumps and bumps of paint, but it's a helpful start. So you can see you just never know. I'm gonna try this area, and let's just see what gets exposed. Never know what we're gonna reveal. Have to give it a little bit of pressure. But look at all these layers that are kind of coming back to the top, being re-exposed, and taking your painting and kind of merging it all together too by bringing some of that background right back up to the top. So you just do that. You could do it over the entire piece and get that effect or just in sections. I do like to use a pretty big sweeping motion when I do this or hit a few areas. Oh, look at that. That is so pretty. So I'm gonna stop on that area just 'cause I think that's really beautiful. Gonna scrape it a little bit more, and then I'm gonna do, I've got a bunch here, so I'm just gonna kinda do a sweeping line, curved line, and look at that, beautiful. All these different colors and interests. And again, still setting us up for things to react to. To sort of mimic this curve, I'm gonna do one right down here. Whoops, that really came up nicely. Oh, and that one. You'll find it gets stuck. And keep your hands out of the way. Very important. These are serious tools. You can scrape it more like this too. Instead of always going from under, you can scrape on top, and it'll reveal some things. And now I feel like I have many spots where I've used this scraper. I also wanted to show you using a paint can opener. Back to the beginning how Jen was scraping into wet paint, this is now scraping into dry paint. But we could use this to make some marks. And this is setting myself up for a stage that's coming. So again, not really thinking too much about it, but I wanted to show you how you can just get some finer line and scrape detail. You could write a word. You could do any of the things that she has showed you before with scraping. This is into dry paint instead. And this has such a nice edge on it, a fine line, so that's fun as well. So I'm just gonna do one more spot with this thick box cutter, pulling it down scrape. And then I'm gonna head over to this one and just do a little bit. I saw these blue marks, and I wanna just see what happens if I give them a little scrape. Eh, it's not. You never know what you're gonna get. This is a little bit more of a nothing thrilling happening under here for me right now, but that's okay. You have to try it to

find out. It did tone these down, and it still gives us something to respond to in the future. So try using a box cutter or a paint can opener, even a flathead screwdriver. Anything like that is really fun to experiment and see what marks you can make into your dry painting. Jen, what do you like to use to scrape? - One thing that's great to use is some sandpaper. You could use something like a sandpaper block. This is actually a little finer versus this coarser paper I have. And just go ahead and sand onto your board. Again, like Pam was saying, it's really kind of a gamble. You have no idea really what's gonna be revealed or not revealed. And so that's a little bit finer. And then if I use the coarse, how does that change things? Is it different? You get some scraping lines going on in there. If I come over here... It kind of blends things together in a way so it creates some kind of smoothness. If I did this across the whole thing, it would almost have an underwater kind of look, I feel like. And look at some of that, it was actually still wet. To me, it kind of resembles even something like encaustic where it's just underneath some kind of wax. Really blends it and settles it. Now, something, if you remember, at one point we added some tape. So something you can do at any point really is kind of what happens if you peel back that tape? You have revelation from the previous layers. And who knows what's down there? So that could really change your piece. I can't even quite figure out where the spot is to pull, but you get the idea. You just can kinda grab. You might even pull up some collage pieces that you had. Then there's kind of interesting information for you to work with going forward.

Day 23 - Glazing

- Since we've just done some scraping and sanding on these pieces, I'm just gonna go ahead and use a dry towel and just kinda wipe any residue off. Gonna go ahead and scrape any of the little particles off, any of the little paint globs that were stuck on. And I'll do the same here. There we go. So they're nice and clean and will take to whatever I do on them. So I'm gonna actually add a very light watery glaze to show you. So Jen did a dry brush, like a whitewashing or a rubbing coating, and you can do the same effect with a very wet, very thin paint, a similar effect, I should say. Similar, yet different. And going over this. Keep getting your brush yet. This ends up being a very translucent layer, a coating, which is cool as it is, I think, but then you can also rub off. And as you rub it, it really gets sort of a vintage look and a very muted. You can really get some muting going on, colors here that, just gonna do that a little bit. Those spots that I rubbed down to wood, you can get some more paint on them. And I'm gonna go with a light hand so that I'm not taking it all off. And we have some variation. And one thing I wanted to point out is now we've got, you can kind of see some of the scrape marks even more because of that translucent glaze on top. I'm gonna go ahead and take Jen's remaining tube of paint that she cut open in the other lesson and use that. It's a nice dark brown. We don't want it to go to waste. And this application is perfect for it because all I'm gonna do is stick my rag in and get a nice amount on it. And then as I rub onto my painting, I'm really rubbing it in some of these lines. If your painting isn't totally dry, you may rub off some more, which I think is cool. Embrace all those happy accidents. That's what we call them as if we intended it from the beginning. But with abstracts, everything goes. There's no mistakes. It's all just discovery. Just trying to get in these grooves with this paint so that it highlights them. And then I'm gonna rub off so that the paint just stays in the grooves mostly or makes them really stand out. Goes into the grooves, and then you wipe off the top part. You just get a deepening of that color and layer and texture and interest. I mean, I think right here, if you look right here, we have so much interest now just from, I mean, we did anyway, but then we added the pink. And then adding that, almost like a stain. It really does add a vintage or kind of just like this. It really evolved. Organic evolving of our

pieces. I'm gonna go ahead and set this one aside and take this piece and just do the same rubbing, but I'm gonna use this orange that's neon. On these more inexpensive craft paints, you really do need to shake them well because their binding medium that's in it sometimes will separate. So just shake it. Give it a good shake before you use it so that you get the best result. And then I'm just going to put it right onto my rag. And I'm gonna go ahead and again go right into some of the lines that we've made. And you can see how it, the lines really grab the color. And just kind of glaze it. Just getting it to just kind of soap in those areas in a... Can really show the brushstrokes that you've done previously. Just adds a lot of interest.

Day 24 - Mark making

- Today we're gonna be doing some mark making with some of our very favorite drawing tools. - We realize we've been throwing a lot at you, a lot of different techniques for abstracts. Just remember, practice makes progress. We've been doing this a long time, and if you keep exploring and playing, you're going to make discoveries. You can't not make discoveries. - So, I'm gonna start out by making marks with my ballpoint pen. So kind of how we did before, you're kind of just scribbling, moving your pen around. You can kind of scribble bigger, if you want, or you can make marks that are smaller. You can use anything to trace shapes that are already here that have been created from different layers. You can use shapes and kind of make marks inside of them. It's also really fun to pull out your paint pen. So this white, I'm loving, because the contrast is so, so strong, you can see. It's really fun to use the paint pen, because if you pick the right color to contrast with the color that is below, it really pops. Just experiment with colors and see how does this one pop. Do I prefer something subtle? Because you might want something a little more subtle, and you might pick up a pink, and you would make marks on the pink, and you barely see it. You can think about how are you moving. Are you moving, quick, fast, are you moving slower? You can see the way that all of this texture below here is really affecting the way that I'm able to move my pen. It's kind of choppy. And the one last thing I wanted to show you that I like to use is colored pencils. Same thing, just move it around. Make your marks. My color choices are still random, and at the same time they are informed. So, sometimes I am choosing a color that I want to see pop, and sometimes I'm just choosing a color that is close by and available. So, these are some ways I like to make marks at this stage in the painting. - I also love this stage, this mark-making stage. And another favorite of both of ours are these Caran d'Ache, oh my gosh, watercolor crayons. They're so great. These are the Neocolor II watercolor crayons, and they are so soft, very buttery. They are water soluble. So, if I did put a whole bunch on here, like made a bunch of marks, I could take a wet brush and activate them. You can see it moving some of that around. Or, you can actually, if you're very careful, since they're expensive, dip it really quickly and it really softens it up. You can see it applying in a softer way, more malleable, and then it's hardening up now that it's getting dry again, which I really like the dry feel onto this board. And again, as Gem was saying, we're not being too worried. I'm not as worried, I'm not worried at all, yet, about composition or toning anything down or tying it together. I'm really reacting to what feels good, what is fun, and what's here. Like, I want to see this green against this mint right here. I'm just interested to find out what happens. I like it. You know, what about this brown now, next to that. Oh, I like that too. If I didn't like it, then, you know, you could water it down, wipe it up, even, remove some of it. But I encourage you to just explore and see what does make it pop. What makes you happy. Just like Gem was saying, you can go ahead and outline some things, like these are the stencils that I had done. I'm gonna go ahead and change colors, just for fun. You know, you can all of a sudden get faster and less perfect with

that outlining. I tend to like a lot of stripes or marks, almost like scribbling, but with the crayon. Another favorite, I mean, that's the Caran d'Ache crayon. But another favorite is a good old pencil. I love pencil. And I really like to make small, delicate detailed marks, a lot of repetitive. You'll see these kind of dots in my paintings, a lot, but they're very, very subtle. This is a lot of the things that you might not see until you get up close on an abstract. But they can really add a playfulness and a freedom to the piece. I feel really free when I use it. And you know, the question is, do you? Do you like it? Do you like, how does this tool impact how you want to work on the piece and how you feel about the look of it? You know, you may hate pencil, but I hope you'll try it, because I love it. It's absolutely one of my favorite things. And then, lastly, one of my other go-tos is the gel pens. One thing that's really important with these gel pens is to have a dry area. You don't want to wreck your expensive gel pens, and they just won't show up in a wet area. So, I'm just going ahead. I'm liking the way, much of this, for me, is kind of meditative, relaxing and also reacting to color. What color is below? What color do I want to test next to it? That's really pretty to me, this purple with this yellow. Trying to stay away from the crayon, though, because the waxiness of the crayon will not work with the gel pen. A bit of fun, so you can see how that really stands out. It's a really fine line, and you can get even finer. Not worried about what's underneath, really, just letting it cause me to react, like outlining or filling in the center of the flowers there, some scribbles. We can do this for hours, and I hope you will, too. Mark making is really captivating, and it's also a great way to play with a friend.

Day 25 - Doodling

- Today we're gonna do some doodling. Pam and I love to doodle. One of my favorite tools to doodle with is a simple ballpoint pen. I love how smooth it flows. It's an endless flow. It doesn't really stop, like say a colored pencil you may have to sharpen at some point. This just keeps going. Doodling tends to be smaller, more compact. Lots of repetition. When I doodle, it tends to feel very meditative, calming. So allow yourself to get into that space. Just relax. Turn on some of your favorite music and just let your pen kinda lead the way. When I doodle, I don't have an end result in my mind. I just kind of do whatever seems like it would be fun to do. So say, for example, I had an idea of these little dots and I wanted to go all the way down to the bottom, but before I got there, I got kinda bored, decided I wanted to stop that and go do something else. I listen to that. I don't make myself continue all the way down if I'm not really feeling that. So I just follow what seems fun. Like now, I'm like oh, it would be great to be up here on this light pink. Look how that dark pen really pops. Pay attention, as your doodling just pay attention to how it affects your mood, your body. I notice that I personally breathe differently. It's very relaxing for me. You'll notice there's like little patches of interesting elements that you can add throughout the painting. I really could doodle for a long time. So I prefer to doodle with a pen, but sometimes it's really fun to try something else, like let's say I took this marker. A simple Crayola marker, something that you have at your house probably, or a Sharpie. It's a different effect using a fatter tip like this than the ballpoint pen, which is really thin, and it shows up differently. So you can experiment with different colors, different thicknesses. You might want to have a really subtle, subtle color. So, for example, if I take this watercolor crayon, and I doodle over here with this, you can't really see it, but it is there, and it is adding to your piece. So for me, the doodle process is a little bit slower, more, I'm not thinking, like I said I'm not trying to figure out what am I making, what is this gonna be? I really don't know. It's definitely a slower process, and more, like I said, calm, gentle, slower. You can even kinda create something that you know what it is, like a flower tip. You can do a little drawing in there at this point

if you want to throw this little flower in there. As you do this, you can pay attention to, as you doodle or mark-make in any kind of way, how does it feel on the board? Do you enjoy doodling on top of something rough? 'Cause look at all this texture right here. It's very bumpy, you can notice as I run my crayon over. Is that fun for you, do you enjoy that? Or does it frustrate you and you'd rather work on something smooth where your crayon can glide around. It may depend on the day. Just pay attention to how that feels for you and what you prefer, 'cause that gives you a lot of information about how to develop your voice as an artist. Because I feel like this style of art is a combination of following that which is really comfortable for you and fun for you and feels right and natural, that kind of helps develop your voice, and it's also about pushing your comfort zone and pushing the boundaries so that you are trying things that you've never tried before, and discovering new things, and those new things that you discover may be part of your voice.

Day 26 - Filling in shapes

- After doing some mark making and doodling it's really great to go in and fill in some of the shapes with paint, or marker, or crayon. So, I'm gonna do that. I brought back this piece which we haven't seen for a while and I'm going to fill in some of these spaces. I think I'm gonna start right here. I mean this piece is great because of all that line work Jen had done with the paintbrush. It really lends itself to filling in spaces. So, I'm gonna go ahead and do that. I'm just picking a color that I know will look good next to it or that I believe and then I'm seeing because you'll start to realize what colors really excite you. I'm gonna go ahead and fill this area but I like this pink here so I'm gonna leave it and maybe I'll just fill this little pocket in with some dots here going off the dots that were already there being influenced by what is as to how to proceed. So, I see some stripes up here, I'm gonna add to those and then maybe switch up colors, maybe this darker burgundy wine color raspberryish and some pink with it. Not worrying about cleaning my brush in between. I like this color, it resembles some of the splatters, so I'm gonna go ahead and pick an area maybe right here and fill in this area. This is really slow and more intentional. I am thinking now about the piece in the sense of I want to start to use my color in a way that is sort of balancing. So, for me setting it up as we go forward as we're trying to slow down and make less big changes. I'm trying to be you know, slightly mindful that I'm using it a few times if I use it on a piece right now. I'm not analyzing what is as far as balance I'm just mean with what I put down right this second. I'm trying to add two, add like three at least of each color. I like how that's not perfectly blended, I think that's very interesting so I'm gonna leave that. Let's see. Perhaps over here on this wood. Now again, you can just lift up if you don't like that, but it's not about staying in the lines perfectly or anything like that, it can still be interesting, it's just a starting off point, seeing these as blocks of color or areas that could be filled in. We're just looking for shortcuts for you, little tricks with where you can take your brush without having to think too much and react to the piece that's there. I really like the graphic nature of this line work that she first did with the paintbrush, and I like how adding these colors in blocks are just bringing that all right back to the front and back to life again, emphasizing it. So, now, I'll go ahead with some paint pen or markers. Let's do a marker first. We'll take this Permapaque and go ahead and fill in some spots here. It's a nice light touch. Pretty subtle but still adding a finishing sort of detail, you know, it's not, I mean I'm not working towards finishing the piece, I mean kind of finishing by filling in these holes, these areas. Even on the wood it's sheer, it's transparent, you see the grain but that can be interesting. Let's find another spot. Maybe here, I'll go ahead and do some more copying these blue marks that are there, and now I'll do some with paint pen. Ah, maybe this will be a pretty color. Ah, this one, I love these Posca paint pens are great. Just filling in this whole block

with these little squiggles, I mean it's like doodling too. There's no hard fast rules of course, you can do anything that we've been doing or anything you can discover. Okay, I'm gonna switch to this piece now 'cause Jen did some great doodling on it that would be very fun to fill in. So, I'm gonna use this crayon and do some of these areas, her doodling segments. You can think of it too as highlighting an area like I see these subtle lines, so now, I'm gonna fill in in between, and it really kind of draws attention to highlights this mark and kinda can push you along as to what you wanna redefine or make you know, more visible. So, it made me wanna bring those back up as I did that. Let's see I'm gonna use a Faber Castell paint pen with a nice soft brush tip, covers a lot of area at once, and you can see these grid lines that I had made before while we're doing the glazing or rubbing of color exist so I can use that as a impetus to keep going where to put my pen down, or even this great big line she did, I love it, it's squiggly. That is a really fun doodle to highlight, bring attention to and maybe I'll even add to some of her little squiggles here so they don't get lost. And this how, you know, her idea is causing me to get an idea and continue on, and I'll just continue on with this until I kinda lose that interest and I'll move over here. Listen to your instinct, you know, try to hone your intuition and feel what it's saying. Now, this is just a little mark making over here. I just had to. It's not really filling in but I'm gonna go ahead now, paint, fill in with some pretty color here. I feel like this kind of lavender will be very pretty between these, these were drip marks because the painting was turned a different way. Totally unexpected, not a plan, and that's how these abstracts develop by being open to discovery and by listening to what was and kind of getting spurred on to the next idea, one technique at a time, or one layer at a time is a better way of saying it. I like doing this just it's a pretty quite stage for me, slow, kinda thoughtful in the sense of just enjoying it and paying attention to that, how much I enjoy it and just you know, losing myself in it, the filling in of these marks and lines, discovering new ones that I really hadn't paid attention to before, bringing them to life. I see lines a lot of the time so I tend to fill those in. I see these lines from the scrapes I've made, so I'm gonna go ahead and fill some colors in, and also, you can look at it, instead of filling in a shape, you can highlight it, draw attention to it, clean it up by going around the opposite, you know the contour or outline of a shape, bringing this one more to attention and life by filling in the opposite and not the shape but the outside of it, all of these right here, which really causes them to pop out, and you can see how it does start to push it more towards your still evolving the painting, but you're not making such a big changes. These are subtle but they still are adding up to forward progress on your painting. I'm gonna repeat this exact same process on another piece. I'm gonna go ahead and fill in some of these cute little squares Jen made and maybe some of these circles. I could go on forever with this one color so I wanna add some others so let me force myself to pick up, let's do a pen and fill in some shapes, let's see, we can do some more of these, and let's see, maybe some of these lines, this was our collage piece, and then I'm gonna do the outlining like I mentioned. That tended to get carried away so I'm just gonna kinda smooth it out with my finger, well or spread it. (laughs) Whatever may be, whatever happens is what happens, right, embrace it. Okay, so, now I'm going to take my brush and I'm gonna outline this flower a little bit, it's like editing you know. We're gonna kinda mask it, we're gonna make it pop, highlight it, kinda tone down some of the information that's there. Not being too careful because I don't wanna make anything precious still, I want it to all blend together, look natural, maybe I'll do some highlighting here, this piece, specifically. And introducing I was just going back because I was seeing a little bleed through and I thought it would be more interesting if it wasn't or more pleasing to myself. Whatever idea you get, give yourself permission to follow it. So, now I have done two areas pretty large so I wanna be sure to do that somewhere over here. Maybe I will outline kind of this area, some of these, this pattern

that was made with a stencil, and maybe I made that look a little too precious so I'm just gonna let that go, letting go is always a good idea because you learn so much. This is about embracing and learning. This is your abstract art so if your marks are truthful coming from a true place I feel that you'll connect with it you know, it'll make sense, if you're following that instinct, your instincts. Allow yourself permission. I'm gonna go back up because this is too iridescent looking for me and my taste. So, I'm just gonna go ahead and add some of this darker color where I have before, I just personally like that better. I might sand a little bit of that when this is dry as Jen had done before, kind of extending this color now, and going ahead to outline that. I let it just fall away as it naturally does as my paint sort of runs out. It can be a nice natural blur. I like the way these flowers are showing up so I wanna allow this one to as well, but I like how this paint is just not smooth the way I applied it just haphazardly so I'm gonna leave it like that. Little over here on this side just to kind of balance. Just kinda cleaning up with this outlining right now and maybe I'll fill in these little beginnings of this letters that look like half circles to me. So, you know, you can go on forever filling in these dots but I won't. That's good, that shows you how outlining and filling in spaces can really progress your painting.

Day 27 - Editing and narrowing

- We're 27 days in to our daily abstract painting series. We've given you lots of techniques, lots of prompts. Now we're at the point, for the interest of time, where we need to narrow it down, so we can show you how we bring some to completion. So Jen, what's one way you pick which ones to complete? - [Jen] Well, as I look at all four of these right now, I'm just, definitely feeling a certain balance in this one, and this one, and I'm also really loving this one. So these three are kind of calling to me that I feel like I could bring them to completion sooner. So to me it's a lot about the feeling and the balance that I see. There's a balance of color or energy. For example, this one here has got a lot going on. It's still very dynamic, and I'm not quite sure that I could finish this in the next couple of days during this series. But this one here only needs some subtle changes, so I feel this would be a good choice to move forward with. What about you? - [Pam] I like to look at them and see what ones are calling to me with ideas. So which ones do I really have a desire to work on? And I constantly am thinking, "Oh, I see ideas." For example, this one, I could really get into the outlining and filling in lines for quite a while, and work on a lot; I have a lot of ideas on this, I'd like to make some marks on this. But I wanna do more than we probably have time for on camera in this daily series, so that will take more time. So this one I love, I really love where it's going. I feel a lot of sparks of ideas and inspiration, so definitely this one. This one I love, but I don't feel as clear of a... I would have to allow myself to explore more, I'm just not sure where it's gonna go. The next marks could lead me, you know, the next layers that I put down, or marks or things that we've done before, could lead me somewhere great, or it might not. I'm just not, I feel like it's not a sure thing. But I do with this. I really love this too, I love the colors, I love the feeling, and I see a lot of ideas come to my head when I look at this and think about what have we done in the last 27 days that I'd like to repeat and do again on this piece. - [Jen] Great, so let's go forward with this one, and this one, sound good? - Perfect, perfect! - So earlier in the painting process when we got started, we were working really bold. We just didn't think too much about what was going on beneath what we were doing, we just kept being wild, adding colors. And as we progressed through the process, we begin to slow down, and you'll notice that. We've kind of gradually been making less bold movements. We're slowing down, we're adding small details, we are using crayons and making thinner lines. We're not taking a bunch of color and changing it dramatically at this point. So I like to think about that as I

begin to kind of bring a painting to closure, and I'll be responding to color, which, by the way, is our favorite thing to respond to. So I'm gonna focus on this piece. I just wanna move this out of the way, put this center, so I can really see the colors that are going on here. We've got this kind of mauve color, and I'm drawn to add a little bit to this, just because it's kind of basic, as in it doesn't really change a lot. So what I'm gonna do is create a color that is similar to that, but isn't that. Okay, and I definitely want some white. And I'm trying to see what happens here. That's way more maroon. Okay, so I would like to add some of this color on here so you can see, it's subtly changing this color. It's adding information, it's adding another layer, but barely. So to me, this is actually, if I put this white here, it's a little more contrast than I actually want, so I'm gonna darken it. And I wanna darken it with some brown, so I'm using this. Actually this is burnt sienna I believe; add some of that in there. (bottle banging on tray) So now really, if I had another painting here, I'd probably wipe it off onto that painting, but I don't at the moment, so let's see how this. Yeah, look at that! See, it's just a slight difference, and it kinda creates just some texture in here, it changes this up just subtly, gives me that variety that I was hoping for. And I can even make a whiter version of that. During this phase I do like to use pretty much a dry brush, but you could also get your brush wet, and that would be also very subtle, and you could still do some of the other things that we talked about, even dripping. So that's as far as paint goes. But let's see if I wanted to bring in any colors from my watercolor crayons. I would probably also be looking for kind of a peach color. Or here is this, like a light, light yellow. (crayon tapping canvas) I actually probably would like to wait for that to dry, so I'm not really gonna play with it too much more. So I can find a dry area. This brown kinda would be nice with it. So I'm definitely looking now, which colors seem interesting? Which colors would work? So I'm gonna go ahead and take this piece now, and do a similar thing. I'm looking at the color, I see this really light, light blue, and I'm going to play with that. (tube hitting tray) So I wanna make a mint. So what I'm gonna do to make a mint is add a little bit, just think a mint would look really pretty, like a very subtle change. I'm gonna add a little bit of this light blue, and lime yellow, neon yellow. I personally love playing with neon colors, it's just the neon affects the paint in such a different way than non-neon colors will. So I'm gonna take this color. You can see it's such a subtle change. I can go ahead and play inside these shapes. As I look down here I'm like, oh, I really wanna kinda bring a little of this neon in here. If you'll notice, it's not really changing the whole composition very much, just subtly changing things. Now even, you can take some contrast, like for example, if I take this colored pencil that I find really beautiful, this orange, this bright orange, looks awesome against the turquoise and with the, you know, it's right here you can kinda see it popping through, you can see it popping through over here from previous layers, so it's quite a contrast, but you can actually still be subtle, very subtle when the crayon doesn't even show up. But even at that, you can see it showing up a tiny bit, and blend it, so there's that way to kinda be subtle with something that actually is quite contrasting. But you could take something that's gonna pop a little bit more like this gel pen should pop a little more. See that? You can see it, it's showing up, but it's still so soft. But these gel pens, you definitely wanna work on dry. You can see, so you're having fun, and you're still playing, and I'm not stressing, I'm not worrying about how do I get this painting to finish? I'm still playing very much and enjoying the process. I'm just making choices that are subtle. Gonna come in here, add some of this color. You can see that, that's actually quite a pop, right? I like it! Just blending it in with my finger, there. Super simple, subtle, I think it's really beautiful. And I'm gonna go ahead and switch to the other piece and do something similar. So I think this color would be really fun. Now I want a little bit bolder, so I'm gonna look for my paint marker. So you can see it's making a little bit more bolder of a mark, but you can kind of just blend it in so it doesn't show up

too much. But again, because I'm feeling like this area here where Pam added the paint, it'd be nice to put a little more detail in there to kinda match some of this detail that's going on, so I'm just thinking of the color choices that I can make on top of this to achieve that without really changing things too much. Kinda reaching into our toolbox here, just doing some doodling, mark making, scribbling, with markers or paints. (lid snapping on pen) And also you can go ahead and do some scribbling, but super light. What if I take this and just lightly add on top? It's really gonna change things up. Grab some white. Really soft. Just a little bit more. Mostly, as I looked at this piece, I've been mostly called to work, like I mentioned, on these kind of maroon, coraly kind of areas. And who knows when Pam gets ahold of this what she'll be interested in and how it will change when she works on it. I really encourage you to find the areas in the piece that you're called to play with and just go there and work there. And always find that if you get lost a little bit, just look at the piece and think, "Well, where do I want to add a mark?" "What pen or paint do I want to pick up?" And pick that up and just do that until you no longer want to do that, and work on that piece until you actually don't want to work on that piece anymore; pick up another piece. And go ahead and continue on that piece.

Day 28 - Composition

- I'm going to approach a light composition discussion. Composition with abstracts is a little bit funny to talk about to me because it's not as classic. But there are some basic rules you could look at. My general thing, that I think is super-important is where does your eye go? Does your eye go off the painting? We don't really want that. We wanna keep the interest here. Is there a central point? Is there a focal point? It might not be in the center, asymmetrical. At this point, I'm going to commit to which side is up? Which direction is the painting going to go? So with abstracts, anything goes really. It's an instinct, it's a feeling. So I'm looking at this piece, let's say. And I do feel because these Gs, it's just a strong identifiable letter element that we all recognize, this could be down. But I'm gonna go ahead and turn it and look at it, and it definitely doesn't feel like this is the direction. And I'll tell you why. Because my eye is drawn here, strongly, and then goes off in a sweeping motion. Hopefully you can see that. But that isn't where I want the eye. I don't want it to leave this piece, just doesn't feel right. I'm approaching this very instinctually. This is actually very pleasing to me. I like this strong element here. It's asymmetrical, we have a little bit of balance. So this could be it. It also is more like a cross. You've got a lot of interest in a cross shape, which is a classic composition. I like this. So let's keep turning it, one more. Nope, again, this is just taking me off the painting. So, I'm gonna stick with this. And you might think, wait, those Gs are upside down, which I think is great. Because it makes them less recognizable as a G, if you don't focus on that as much. They have a lot of weight now. It's just a balance thing for me. And almost like these triangle points of interest. So I'm gonna go ahead and keep this one, this way, and work on it a little bit to hone that composition. Sometimes you might find in an abstract that you still wanna add more of an icon or a focal piece. I really like these flowers, and I'd like to add one more. So I'm gonna take that stencil and put one more down. Or, what I could do right here, is just use a crayon, instead of using a stencil, be inspired by this, and just draw another. Which actually I like better because it's more imperfect. It's tied in. So now I've got these three balanced by this, but these tend to really pull me in. And I still feel balance-wise and compositionally, that I need to strengthen this element to tie it in with these, so I'm gonna add a little bit of this deeper color of orange in here. (paper scraping) And that was a lot, so I'm just toning it down by lifting it a little with my finger, blending it. (paper scraping) Just trying to give that eye a focal point. Gonna just use my finger with a little bit of this orange. And make it of

course, go back over with crayon. And I do like these marks that Jen made, but I would like to see that tied in more to the piece. So I'm gonna go ahead and make it a tiny bit bigger, and then add another here, 'cause that would seem to me part of this swoop. So I'm gonna add. Of course, if you decide, oh you know what, I added that piece, and really it drew my eye off or something like that, you could then paint over it, and do any of the stages that we've done. What I'm doing is using our previously learned stages to compositionally edit now. I've got that, and I think what I'll do, is now we have this strong cross, so I need to just tone this down, I feel a little bit, so it's not quite competing so much. So I'm gonna go ahead grab a brush. And I'll start light, with a light touch. Well it was pretty strong 'cause it was white, but I'm just laying my hand down lightly, and I could even then wipe with a towel if I wanted. I'm trying to take some of the G still and tone it down. I don't wanna lose all the interest and the information that's underneath all this work, that we really like, but I wanna make this the focal point, this T-design in my composition. So I'm having to mellow that area out. And then I just wanna get a little bit of this subtle green in there. So I think the best way would be to take one of these crayons, and just do a little bit maybe on the edges. Just tying these all together, making them related. And I'll actually use the exact same color, (paper scraping) that was used. But it's random markings. It's just so your eye picks it up and recognizes that, and ties them all together. It's amazing how your eye is processing so much information subconsciously, you're not even aware of. Whoops, couldn't help but doodle in those. That's what happens. And I do tend to keep going which you don't have to do. So it is good to always remember calm down. You don't have to readdress every single spot. (paper scraping) So I'm pleased with this one compositionally. I really like this classic cross shape as our main and I like the side that I decided is the top. And hopefully Jen will too. We'll see how she reacts. Now this piece. I'm gonna look at it. I do like this. I feel like this is almost like, it feels very balanced already to me. I do like how it's causing my eye to sweep this way. I like this strong element here. This keeps you going. It doesn't take you off. So I actually really like it that direction. That's how I'm feeling. This direction, it could be. But it just feels much more unfinished to my eye, my gut, I should say. This one, it doesn't feel balanced. This piece up here tends to take me off, and all of sudden, I'm seeing these lines taking me off more than I was before. And this isn't really feeling strong enough to anchor it. This one as well. I mean, it could be, but it feels like it would take a lot more work, when I really responded this way. So you'll find if you take a piece and try it all different ways, I really believe that you'll feel one way feels right, feels like you want to commit to that being up. So now that I've done that, I wanna strengthen this element here. I really like it. I like this asymmetrical design here. So I'm gonna do that, strengthening these marks that she made with her stencil, and give that some ummph! And then I think on this piece, I'm gonna do some subtle pen work to almost have a toss, just a true abstract where it's not for rhyme or reason necessarily, just a gut feeling. So I'm gonna do some of my, I see some flowers, some unresponsive painting type or doodling type, where I'm seeing things, shapes in the painting. So I'm going to define those. I'm going all around the painting, including lots of parts. I don't wanna just have it in on spot with this. And this is all just committing to a direction, can really help you progress your piece, and then start seeing what areas are calling to you, just like Jen was saying. What areas stand out as needing tying in, addressing? I love this black here, so I wanna strengthen that element. I'm just going to use my pen to engage it. It bridges the gap in my mind between this dry paint and these stencil marks with the pen. (paper scraping) So I feel like that's tied in now. Maybe this spot here is feeling a little bit bland and blank, oh and right here. I see flower, so I'm going to go ahead and do that. And then I was always love to make these random circles when I see something that could be outlined. And so back to this spot here, that was a little

bit dry. I feel that if I went in and added some more line work with pen, it would incorporate it more and get rid of that feeling of it was standing out in reverse, not because it was drawing my eye in, I mean it was drawing my eye, but not because it was a area of interest, but more like a area that was lacking interest. It's good to have places for your eye to rest, of course. I really love this. This is interesting, but it's soothing. So you have a lot of information here, and then it's calmer, and more sparse. But there's some places like here, where it looks like, hmmm, for me, I just get that feeling where it could just use a little more. It looks a little unfinished for lack of a better word. It's just an area that I want to give a little attention, and have my eye pulled there for a second longer. And then let's see. Let's really look at it. I like to step back, and you can see, I've got a lot of things, but it falls off right here, so I'm gonna add just a little bit more right here. Maybe find some circles here. Let's see, a flower. You can think about it. You don't wanna overthink but you're allowed to take a step back and reflect and feel the piece, get in touch with the piece. Don't rush yourself so hard at this stage that you are just making choices to keep moving. You can slow it down now. So if I look all over this is there any place, just some little bits here that seem to call and want some attention to balance it. And now if I step back and look at this, is my eye, it seems to keep moving. There's interest, but there's still a more heavy focal point here, so I'm just adding a little bit here, but as I look at this piece now, and have added all these, I feel like my eye is continuing to move around, using what was there and what I've added, and I have more of a focal area here, but it is just a general toss design, but it's very pleasing to my eye. So at this point, it really is good to slow down, allow yourself to generally take in your whole piece, after you've committed to a direction, and I'm looking around and I see, a heavy interest, almost like a focal point here, but balance. It's moving around. My eye just keeps engaging which is great. I can't encourage you enough to listen to your instinct. You really wanna grow that skill, and it won't let you down.

Day 29 - Finishing touches

- As we're nearing the end of this daily series, I'm going to look at composition based on energy and feeling that I feel when I look at the piece. As I look at this piece, I notice how Pam turned it upside down and put the Gs upside down which is totally great, I mean, as you collaborate, your partner makes different choices that you might not normally make and you kind of accept that that's gonna happen and she can also accept that. If I decide that actually, I would prefer the Gs to be the other way 'cause to me when I look at this, it feels, I feel like it's off balance to me, I just need to turn it so I think I'm gonna turn it back and it's almost as I look at it, I feel like-- (sighs) I can rest, it feels less unstable to me I suppose I'd say. So I turn it back and I have the freedom to do that and she can also change it as she sees fit. For now I can go ahead and work with it this way. So first thing I feel like doing is outlining these circles. Now I'm basically just making my choices based on my gut interest, what speaks to me, what says oh please do that to me. Right now like I said, these white circles, please outline me with a ballpoint pen and then they feel better like ah, thank you, you're outlining me. Just really listening to what speaks to you and giving yourself the permission to do that. I just wanna take this moment to address the fact that your piece may not feel like you're almost done and that's okay, you don't have to be right where I am or Pam is in this process. That's totally fine. So you can be where you are and work as you are. So respond to the energy and feeling, really tap into any of the techniques that we've played with and more if you think of something you'd like to try as you play with your piece. I wanna add onto here some white. I just felt like oh that'd be really fun so I'm going to look for my, it's almost white, it's like a light yellow. And see it's scraping away and I don't really like that. It's still a little wet so it's kinda tacky and it pulls it away so

I'm like no, I don't really want that effect so I actually will just stop because it's not as I would like it to be but when I look over here I'm like okay, these are cool and I want to play with them and I have a vision and it's basically I have this thought I want to fill these in and I want them to be very similar to this color and have subtle changes as I fill them in, kinda like a rainbow so I'm gonna use a small brush and I love using small brushes for final details towards the end of the piece. I'm gonna go ahead and mix up that color. Just go ahead and fill this in. So now as I do the next layer and this little upside down rainbow, I'm going to change the hues a tiny bit with a value. Very subtle change. Just adding tiny bit of other colors into this maroonish, salmony color. Change it, adding a tiny bit of the hot pink or a tiny bit of fuchsia. As I've mentioned before, sometimes you get an idea and you have a vision, right, I had this vision to come over here and do this. Now as I'm doing it, I'm losing a little bit of interest in filling these in, so on one hand you could think, wow, I had that idea. I should fill it all out but the cool thing is you don't have to. Even I could stop right there, halfway filling this shape and just let it be. That's what's really cool, you set the rules so you know what, I don't feel like doing that anymore and so I'm gonna let that be at halfway filled, halfway not filled and actually I do, when I look over here I'm like oh yeah I still wanna put some over here so I can just move over there whenever you feel like it. I still feel like even throughout this entire process, it's about following that joy, following what is really fun for you and stopping when it's no longer fun. And as I look back I'm like oh yeah, I actually do wanna come back over and so, we'll come back, complete this. Or maybe not complete it, do more for now. Add a little more blue. So for me when I'm responding, I saw this color right here and to me it kind of had a purpley feeling to it so it inspired me to pick up the blue and add a tiny bit of blue to make this color a little more purpley. We'll see how it looks but that's where I got the inspiration for the color. It's something that I saw already on the painting so blend it in and now take this color and maybe move it around. Let's see where else might it be interesting. What if I come back here and put some in the G. So use my finger to lighten that up. What's really fun about this process too is there's so much information to respond to, I mean, who knows when this happened. I believe this was from the stencil and I'm not sure what that's from but it's there and it could have been you know, 15 layers ago. It's still there and showing through and we get to respond to it now. So for now I think I'm going to rest on this piece. And for me in terms of finishing a piece and deciding when it's done, I do rely a lot on how I feel when I look at it so is this piece done for me? As I look at it and I see how I feel, I'm a little unsure honestly so I think I'm just gonna set it aside and sometimes I will do that, I'll set a piece aside and then return to it or sometimes it'll be sitting in my studio at the corner and I can kinda glance at it occasionally and think, oh, I have an idea, let me throw it on there or maybe it'll never come to a place where I feel like it's almost done so it'll become a layer and then I'll just go ahead and go kinda wild on it again at some point, but for now I'm just gonna set it aside and we'll get to work on it a little bit later and I will go ahead and pick this piece. So I definitely have some thoughts about what would be fun to do for here. Pam drew these beautiful flowers. I'm gonna clear my paint brush. So I have all that red and I really wanna go ahead and just, like I just know, I look at this and it speaks to me. I really wanna fill these petals in. I know immediately so I'm gonna go ahead and just trust that and there's no reason to question it. When you know, you know. So I'm gonna make a little bit of mint which is one of my favorite colors. Take a little yellow and a tiny bit of the blue and mix it in with white. You'll see I like to roll my brush to get off any paint that kinda globs up towards the top. As I'm mixing and then I roll that to get it off and I continue to mix that in. It's not changing things very much but I'm okay with that. I really kinda like this subtle filling in. I'm just gonna add some white to really brighten up that color and make it pop a little more like I originally had envisioned. To me this piece has kind of

a soft, a softness to it when I look at it, I feel soft and relaxed and it relaxes me actually to paint on this piece so it's really kinda maintaining that soft, gentle feeling. So my color choices, you can see the way that I'm delicately adding paint. So you can kind of go back and forth between that whiter color and then you can mix a mint so just kinda changing the shade of the mint or the white a tiny bit kinda creates interest so they're not all exactly the same color. I really enjoy doing that, having a white next to just a tiny bit off-white. So occasionally I'm kinda looking back and looking at this entire piece and just kind of moving my eye around and seeing how it makes me feel and that kinda dictates a little bit of my choices, continuing to fill these flowers in. Do I feel like I filled it enough and I just keep seeing that I want this statement to be bigger, I want more of these flowers to pop so I just keep going. Definitely is a slight analyzation of the overall piece. I say analyze but I really want you to still really be enjoying this process. It's kind of like a step back, kinda take a little snapshot of the piece in your mind, like oh, do I wanna keep doing this? Yes, boom, go keep doing it, really quick. So to me this kind of has a feeling of like, I don't know, a field of daisies or even a snow field or a snow storm with little flakes going down, so it inspires me to think about flicking some white paint. I'm actually gonna go ahead and do that, I'm gonna get some just plain white paint over here. Get a brush, a clean brush, some water, get my paint, my white paint on my brush pretty wet. You'll see what happens. So I'm kind of inspired by what already was happening. There already were some flicks but now I'm just gonna make some more because I really like that feeling. And it kinda softens things even more. Now that I look over, oh, that'd be really a great addition to this piece too. I'm gonna go ahead and flick. This kinda pushes everything else back a little bit and I really love it, and it also kinda works well with these dots we already have going on. For now I feel really good about where these pieces are, so I'm gonna let them rest for a little while.

Day 30 - Wrap up

- We're here on our last day of our abstract prompt challenge. Thank you so much for playing along with us. We want to emphasize it's really about play, exploration, discovery. Keep discovering, keep adding to your practice. You wanna add anything? - Yeah, I just wanted to talk about, you may not be where we are. You may not be at a resting place, a finishing place, and that's totally okay. You also may be almost done, but then your painting may evolve into another wild journey. So you may take it to another place where you go and you paint big and bold, and that's okay. There's no right or wrong way of approaching this process. - We gave you a bunch of prompts, but it's not a formula. You don't have to do one stage before the other. Any of those prompts could happen at any time. You can begin a painting any way, add layers in any way, and finish it using any of those steps. We're gonna go ahead and do that. I just wanted to emphasize that as proof that there's no right or wrong, Jen has gone ahead and turned this back over and changed the composition so that this is the top, and that just goes to show you. What I felt was organically right, she feels different. Neither is right or wrong, we're just going with our feeling and we're gonna complete the paintings now and continue to wrap these up. - And another quick point I wanted to make that I feel I want you to know is that as we get towards the end here and we talk about composition and we talk about color, and we're kind of stepping back and looking at things, and you might consider a little bit of analyzing, I really want you to make sure you stay out of your head. You're still very much present with the painting, responding to what's there, and having fun, and following that joy. So if you find that you get a little stuck in your head, just step back and remember to look at your piece and say hm, what looks fun to do? And do that. Similarly, we've had each other to balance things off. So Pam would show up and do something and then I would respond to that. And you may or

may not have a buddy to do that, and that's totally fine. And if you want an element of surprise to respond to, I suggest maybe closing your eyes. Even put a blindfold on or use your non-dominant hand. That'll give you something that's really unpredicted. - [Pam] So now we're going to each work on these and try to wrap them up. (orchestral music) - We've come to a resting place now where we both feel like the pieces are done. Right? - Mm hmm, yep. Which means you could continue on. And we could even, which we have many a time, add so much that we're farther away from finished. But right now, we're at a place that we both feel these could be finished. - Thanks so much for playing along with our daily challenge. I really hope you enjoyed yourself and discovered that abstract can be really fun and it doesn't have to be scary.