



# PAINTING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S FALL COLORS



All of New England is famous for the beautiful colors of its fall leaves, which change from **green** in the summer to **red**, **orange**, and **yellow** in late September and October. Although many places have trees that turn colors in the fall, the colors are more vibrant in New England than anywhere else.

Before there were color photographs, not everyone believed the fall colors in New England could be as bright as they are. Many painters tried to capture how vivid the New England colors were by creating works of art.



One of them, a man named **Jasper Francis Cropsey**, became famous for painting the fall colors of New England. Some people even called him "America's Painter of Autumn."

Cropsey was from New York but he visited the White Mountains in New Hampshire twice in the 1850s and found inspiration for his art. He created over 50 paintings of New Hampshire scenery.

In 1856, Cropsey moved to England and began to show his paintings in galleries. At first people in England couldn't believe the bold use of color in Cropsey's paintings, and they wondered if New England really did have leaves that turned that color.

**A painting of a  
natural scene  
is called a  
landscape  
painting.**



# **NEW HAMPSHIRE STORY:**

## **PAINTING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S FALL COLORS**

One of Cropsey's paintings was more popular than all the others. It was called *An Indian Summer Morning in the White Mountains*, and he painted it in 1856 after one of his trips to New Hampshire.

It isn't a real place in New Hampshire, though. Cropsey combined several different scenes from New Hampshire and created his own landscape. The mountain might be from one part of the state, and the boulders might be from another, and so on.



People in England wondered whether New Hampshire really did have leaves that turned such bright colors in the fall, so Cropsey had a friend send some real New Hampshire leaves to him. He glued the leaves to the wall next to the painting when it was hanging in a gallery so people could see for themselves that his painting had captured the colors accurately. The leaves convinced everyone that he had gotten the colors right. Pretty soon, newspapers were praising Cropsey's painting and "the red and gold gorgeousness of those trees."



# **NEW HAMPSHIRE STORY: PAINTING NEW HAMPSHIRE'S FALL COLORS**

Many of Cropsey's paintings used an autumn palette, which means he used the colors of fall in his work. When Cropsey was showing one of his other paintings of autumn to England's ruler, **Queen Victoria**, he brought some leaves with him so she could see the colors for herself.

This story has been told in many different ways over the years, and it often changes depending on who is telling the story. Stories often change over time as people share them with one another. Storytellers add details or change the story to make it more dramatic. But most stories start with a tale of something that really happened, just like this one does.



## **Notice & Wonder**

First, identify the colors you will include in your autumn palette.

*—Which colors most remind you of fall in New England?*

Then, create something that captures the spirit of a New Hampshire autumn. Here are some ideas:

- You can paint a landscape picture, just like Jasper Francis Cropsey did.
- You can use colored tissue paper to create a collage of fall colors.
- You can write your own "New Hampshire Story" about fall. Your story can be from just your imagination (**fiction**), or it can be a tale of real events that actually happened (**nonfiction**).



***How would you show someone who had never been to New Hampshire what it is like in the fall?***

