

## Like Michelangelo's Ceiling Art

*An activity of "The Sistine Chapel: where faith and art meet".*

Read **"The Sistine Chapel: where faith and art meet"** and **"Michelangelo's masterpiece"** (page 9–10, *What's Up* June 2025). The artwork in the Sistine Chapel has awed millions of visitors. If you were to step in, you would notice that tourists spend a lot of time looking upwards at the spectacular ceiling. What would it be like to paint a mural on a ceiling? Carry out this activity to get a little taste of creating overhead art.

1. Go for a walk around your school or neighbourhood. Carry a sketchbook and a pencil with you. Carefully observe the things that you come across, instead of simply passing by them. Sometimes, things look different when you look at them close-up or from another angle.
2. Choose a scene that you like. Make a detailed drawing of it in your sketchbook. Refer to your sketch to create your painting.
3. Set up your art space under a table! You can use your desk or even a table in the school canteen or at home. If you need to, clean the floor first. Using masking tape, attach your art paper to the underside of the table. Prepare your medium. Use either water colours or poster paint. Have your palette ready before you start. You may find it useful to have a rag or wipes on hand as well. Place a large plastic sheet on the floor under the table.
4. Lie down under the table, facing the art paper. Staying in that position, paint the scene you had sketched earlier.
5. When your mini mural is dry, detach it carefully and display it in class. When everyone has displayed their mini murals, have a gallery walk. Write and place post-it notes of appreciation for at least five of the exhibits so that your classmates can read your observations and appreciate that artwork even more.
6. For reflection: What did it feel like to be painting while you lay down below your paper canvas? In what ways might your experience have been different from Michelangelo's when he painted the chapel ceiling? In what ways might it be similar? What is your main takeaway from this activity?

