



About the Object



Featured here is a preliminary drawing for a children's book titled *Under the Window* (1879) by artist Kate Greenaway. The drawing depicts three children walking on a path toward a green gate with their backs to the reader. A black cat walks along the side of the fence. The children are shown wearing bonnets and ruffled outfits, something different from the time in which Greenaway was living and working. Her style of children's illustrations was that of the Victorian age.

Greenaway was exposed to the arts at an early age since her father was a book illustrator engraver (which is a type of printmaking). She studied art and graphic design in London and began her career as an illustrator for greeting cards and magazines. This work was a preliminary sketch for a drawing in her first book.

Here is the text written on the drawing: "Now all of you come / Listen to the story I'll / relate / about two little girls and / boy a cat and a / green gate. / Now since I did begin / to invite / you to hear what I did / say. / It clean has gone out / of my head. / So I wish you a / very good day."

More to Explore ...

WHAT'S THE STORY?

What would come next in this children's tale? The text says the author does not remember the story. Imagine what you think would happen to the characters (the two little girls, the little boy, and the cat). Write your own adventure for these children and the cat.

Helpful Terms:

Drawing – a two-dimensional artwork in which a tool is used to make an image on a surface, such as a sheet of paper. These lines can be made with a pencil or pen, or non-linear or tonal marks made with other implements, such as brushes.

Watercolor – (brush) There are two types of watercolors: Transparent Watercolor and Opaque Watercolor. Transparent Watercolor is a water-soluble paint; known for its transparent properties, it is incredibly versatile in its ability to create a variety of effects by being layered and pooled. Opaque Watercolor is a watercolor with a "body" (white filler) added to it to make it rich and dark; it is not transparent and creates a look like oil paint. View a watercolor set in The Huntington's collection from circa 1781: <https://hdl.huntington.org/digital/collection/p9539coll1/id/6243/rec/2>

Graphite – (pencil) A type of carbon; graphite pencils allow artists to make hard or soft marks, thick or thin or thin lines, and offer a range of values from light to dark

QUESTION CORNER

- After reading the story, do you think the illustrations are fitting? What would you add to the drawing? What would you remove? Why?
- What is your favorite children's story? Why is this your favorite? Do the drawings contribute to your love for this story?

LEVEL UP

Illustrate your story. Just as Kate Greenaway drew a scene to accompany her text, draw a picture to enhance your story. You can use watercolors and pencils like Greenaway or any other art-making medium you like.