

## PAINTING THE FIRE

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A storytelling art & play therapist and a writer with a teaching background have teamed up to create a powerful story about feeling and imagination. The story offers insight into the power of imagination and creativity through a journey into the magical world of self.

Ryan might be any elementary school age child with an anger as volatile and explosive as a volcano. Ryan's emotional responses to peer teasing have overpowered his sense of self control. As each new incident occurs, Ryan becomes more frustrated and exasperated and reacts in a like manner. The snowballing events bring him to the principal's office for disciplinary action. While waiting, Ryan's anger energy spurs him to leave the office. Moving down the hall, he is drawn into the art room. In the art room, Ryan experiences the power of his imagination and creativity. The opportunity to express his explosive feelings and thoughts through painting and color bring him to the awareness of the power within himself. The imaginary Mrs. Murgatroyd gives Ryan authority to paint whatever he wants. Ryan's experience with the paints and brush encourages children to acknowledge their anger and express it in a positive way. Ryan discovers *his* power to be in charge, change and positively affect others.

*The text is 17 vividly illustrated pages. The book is a powerful resource for older elementary age children. Long for reading with children younger than eight or nine, using only the illustrations for discussion with younger children can be effective.*