

ILLUSTRATE IT

**CREATIVE
BRIEF**
≡ Week 2 ≡



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COASTAL CREW

Welcome to the Talent Tap workshop!

This workshop is based on a series of weekly themes, and for each of the themes, you will create a **mini collection**. There are 5 themes in total, (spread over 5 weeks), so you will end up with 5 pages of amazing, new work for your portfolio. These briefs are encouraging you to create artwork that we are actually looking for - so even if you don't get selected for representation with our agency, you will still have a body of relevant work to submit to other agencies/publishers.

Before we introduce the theme for this week, let's have a quick look at how to design in **mini collections**.

Creating a mini collection is a strategic way to showcase your artistic style while making your work more marketable for licensing and surface design. A well-structured mini collection typically consists of **3–5 key pieces** that work together cohesively but also stand strong individually.

A successful collection includes a mix of:

- Main Hero Piece(s): The focal illustration(s) that defines the collection.
- Supporting Designs: Complementary patterns, icons, borders, or lettering elements that enhance the main piece(s).
- Color Variations: Consistent yet varied colorways to add versatility.

Key Considerations:

- Cohesion: All pieces should share a unified color palette, line quality, and style.
- Variety: Ensure a mix of simple and complex elements so the collection has depth.
- Commercial Viability: Think about how your designs could be applied to different products.

Presenting Your Mini Collection:

Your final presentation should be polished and easy to understand for potential clients or buyers. Your presentation will be carefully arranged on a single sheet of A4 paper, (or U.S. letter size). If you have not done this before, there will be an example presentation sheet at the end of this brief.

Final Tips for Successful Mini collections:

- Keep it manageable. Start small - 2 to 3 strong, well-thought-out pieces are more effective than an overwhelming set.
- Think like a buyer. Would this work on multiple product types? Could different elements be licensed separately?
- Refine and polish. Presentation matters! A well-designed portfolio page can elevate your work significantly.

Now for the exciting part - let's move on to the brief.

Week 2 - Coastal Crew

This week's brief invites you to join a lively crew of coastal adventurers where salty air, weather-beaten wood, and splashy waves set the scene. Coastal Crew is about the joyful spirit of beachside life beyond the clichés — no mermaids or sandcastles here, but instead an authentic celebration of the coastal ecosystem and seaside fun. It's fresh, playful, and perfect for kids' products that capture the magic of the shore with a hint of exploration and wonder.

Your challenge is to create a collection that feels breezy and energetic - where natural seaside textures meet whimsical marine characters, and every piece sparks curiosity and delight. Think tide pools brimming with tiny treasures, shells tucked in seaweed beds, and cheerful crabs scuttling across weathered docks.

Inspiration & Direction

1. Mood & Atmosphere

Bright, breezy, and full of youthful energy with a handcrafted, textured feel. Designs should evoke the coastal environment authentically through shapes, marine life, and natural forms but remain versatile for a broad range of children's products - nursery, toys, stationery, apparel, and gifts. This is about celebrating the coast's vibrant life with style and heart, not kitsch or fantasy.

Draw inspiration from:

- Rippled seaweed strands and softly swaying kelp
- Starfish resting on pebbly shores
- Cheerful crabs, playful hermit shells, and curious seagulls
- Driftwood textures and weathered fishing nets
- Tiny tide pool creatures and frothy wave patterns
- Nautical ropes and washed linen fabrics

2. Visual Motifs & Elements

Main Motifs: Crabs, starfish, shells, seaweed, seagulls, driftwood pieces, tide pool creatures (like small fish, sea urchins), subtle nautical rope loops

Textures & Patterns: Weathered woodgrain, linen weave, frothy wave swirls, netting, pebble clusters

Compositions:

- Gentle, flowing repeats inspired by underwater currents and seaweed tangles
- Friendly coastal creatures arranged in charming scenes or simple icon clusters
- Rope and net borders combined with soft natural elements
- Playful horizontal scenes showing a day by the shore—from morning tide to evening calm

Tone Variation for Kids Markets

- Use cheerful mid-tones brightened with soft pastels and cool ocean blues
- Balance playful characters with clean, simple patterns for versatility
- Let textures and natural forms shine, avoiding overly busy or “cartoonish” motifs
- Keep it approachable and engaging for little ones, with gentle movement and softness

Application Ideas & Markets

Nursery & Kids Décor

- Crib bedding and blankets with soft seaweed or shell repeats
- Wall decals featuring coastal critters and rope border accents
- Plush toys shaped like crabs, starfish, and hermit crabs

Toys, Games & Puzzles

- Wooden puzzles with tide pool scenes or friendly sea creatures
- Stacking toys inspired by shells and rocks
- Board games featuring coastal crew adventures

Stationery & Gift

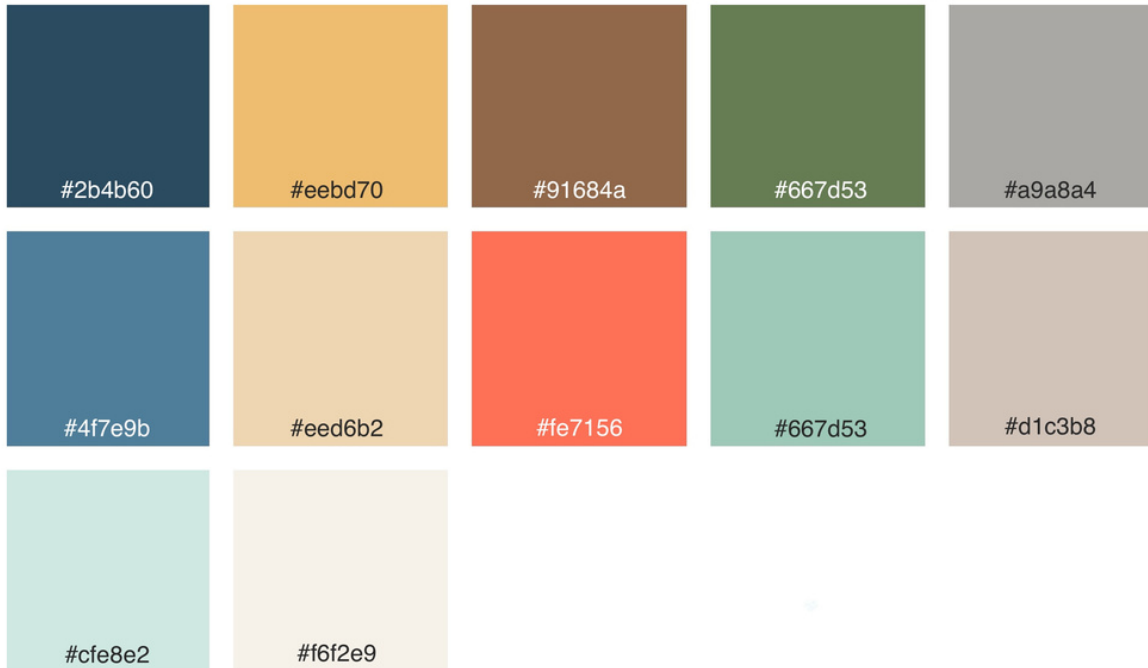
- Notebooks and journals with linen-textured covers and gentle coastal patterns
- Gift wrap with subtle starfish and wave motifs
- Greeting cards with emblem-style crab or shell icons

Apparel & Accessories

- Soft cotton onesies with seaweed and pebble prints
- Lightweight hats and scarves featuring rope loops and tiny sea critters
- Beach tote bags with driftwood textures and nautical touches

Extended Color Palette

Feel free to add your own colours to this palette



Moodboard:

You will find our Pinterest 'Wild Country' [moodboard here](#)

Inspiration only - please do not copy work seen here.

08:52 Sat 13 Sep

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Final Thoughts & Creative Challenge

This theme is about capturing the fresh, friendly, and endlessly fascinating world of the coast - not fantasy or beach clichés, but the real life of coastal creatures and textures that inspire children's curiosity and play.

Ask yourself:

- Does my work invite children to explore and engage with the coastal world through lively, tactile designs?
- Are my textures and natural forms as important as my character motifs?
- Could these designs feel at home in a nursery, a toy chest, and a child's backpack all at once?

Your goal is to create a mini collection that celebrates the coastal ecosystem's charm with warmth, energy, and playful authenticity - ready to inspire a new generation of little explorers.

This is your chance to capture the magic of the shore, with a hint of exploration and beachside wonder.

Week 2 Submissions:

- All work submitted to us on this workshop is carefully considered for artist representation.
- This submission must be new, human-made work in response to this brief - No reusing old pieces or drawing inspiration from others. Definitely no AI images.
- There will not be a **public** gallery - **if we choose to represent you, this work needs to be exclusive.** If you want to show this work on your socials, it should only be sneak peeks or work in progress shots, **(not the entire presentation page!)**.

Submission Deadline:
Sunday 21st September '25

Please ensure your presentation page/submission is posted into the TT3 Discord gallery for this practice round by **9pm (GMT/UK time)** on the deadline day. You can find the gallery here:

[TT3 Wk2 Gallery](#)

Don't forget to put your name/logo on your presentation page!

We Can't Wait to See Your Creation!

Best of luck, and remember to make it your own. Let your imagination run wild while staying true to Flight Club!

You can also tag us, (please no collaboration requests), on your social posts so we can see your beautiful creations:

@illustrateit_agency
#talenttapcoastal

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out in the Discord Group, or message Mel on Instagram.

Mel

Illustrate It Agency

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Example presentation page - Mini collection:



SEA LIFE - BLUE CRABS

SKU: MA24075

Repeat 12x12"

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