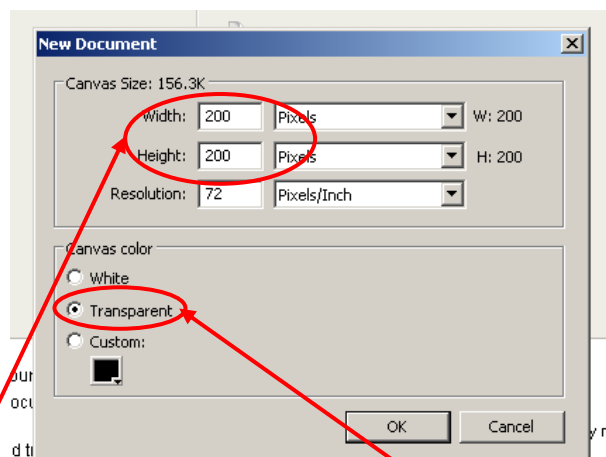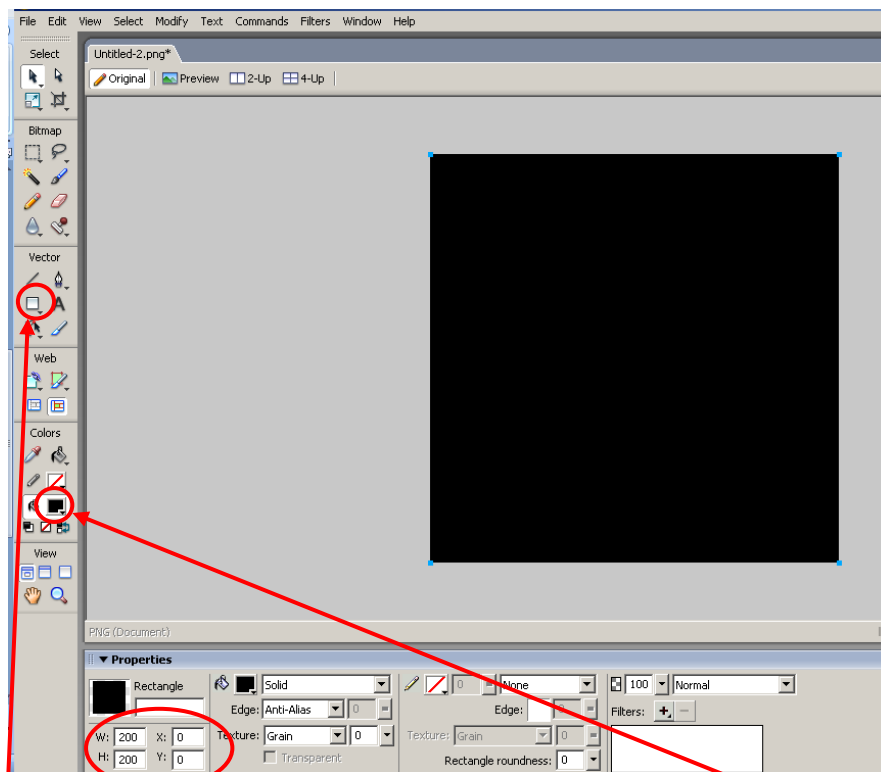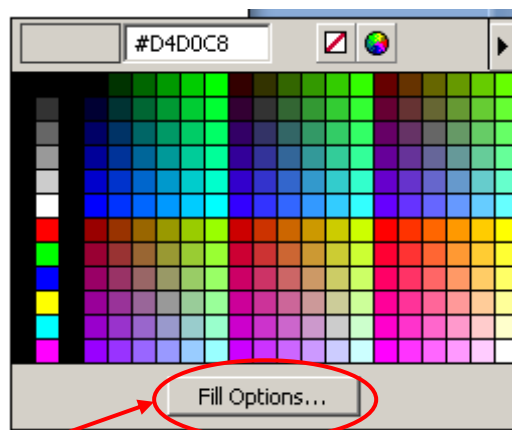1. Start up Macromedia Fireworks and select 'Create New Fireworks File'
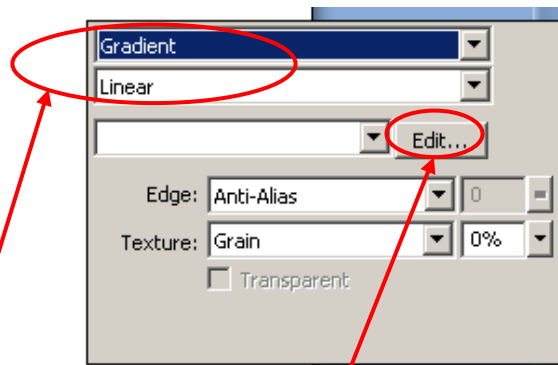

2. select a size of 200 by 200 pixels width and height. Select Transparent canvas
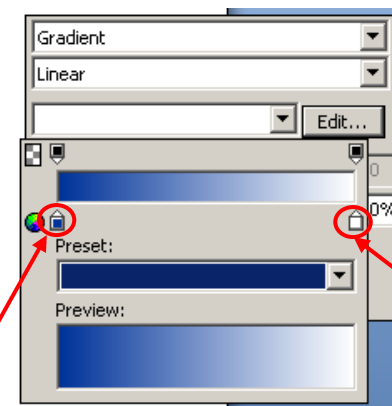
3. Select the rectangle tool and create a rectangle 200 by 200 pixels on top of the canvas. You can refine its exact size and position by changing the W H X and Y properties. Then click on the Fill-in button
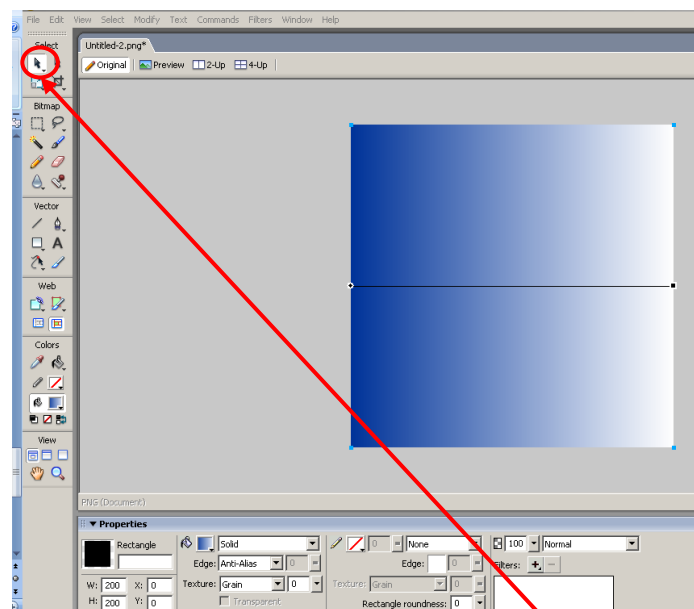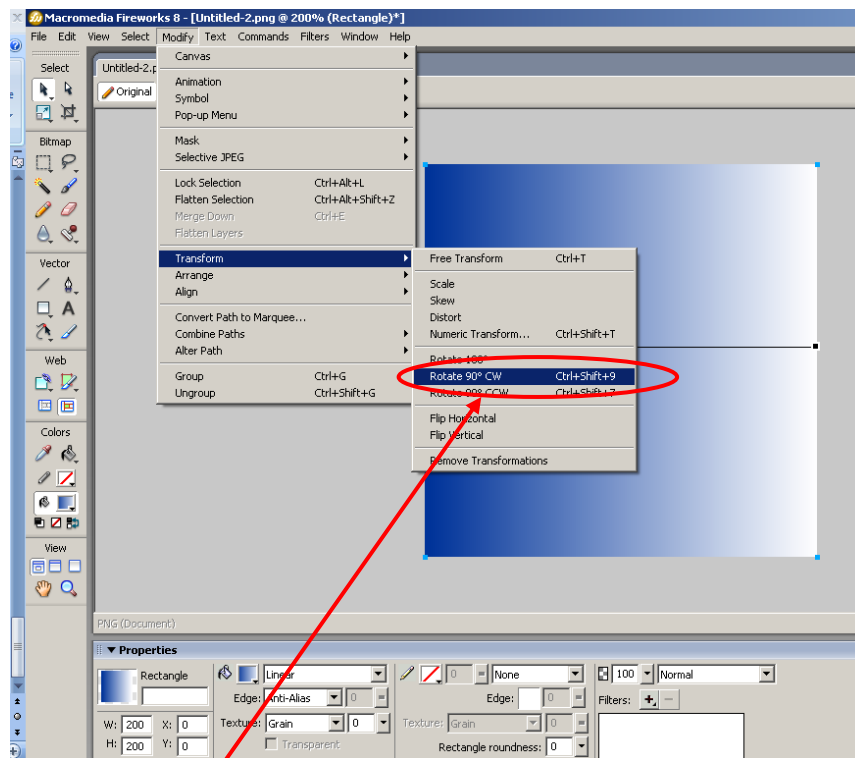

4. Select Fill options

5. Select Gradient then Linear and finally click the Edit button

6. Select Blue on the Left Hand Side (by clicking on the little picture symbol). Select White on the Right Hand Side.

7. This should now give a black line across the image. Now select the black pointer tool.

8. From the menu's select modify > transform > rotate 90°CW. This should then put blue at the top and white at the bottom. This will form your basic sky background.
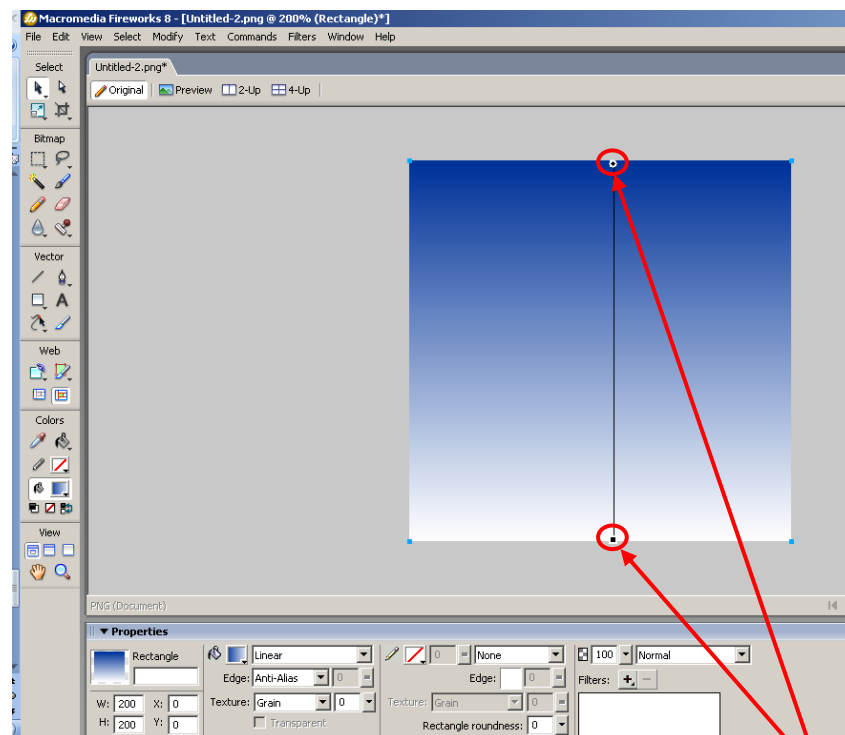
9. With the black pointer tool selected you can move the black marks at the top and bottom of the black line to fine tune how blue and white your sky background will look.
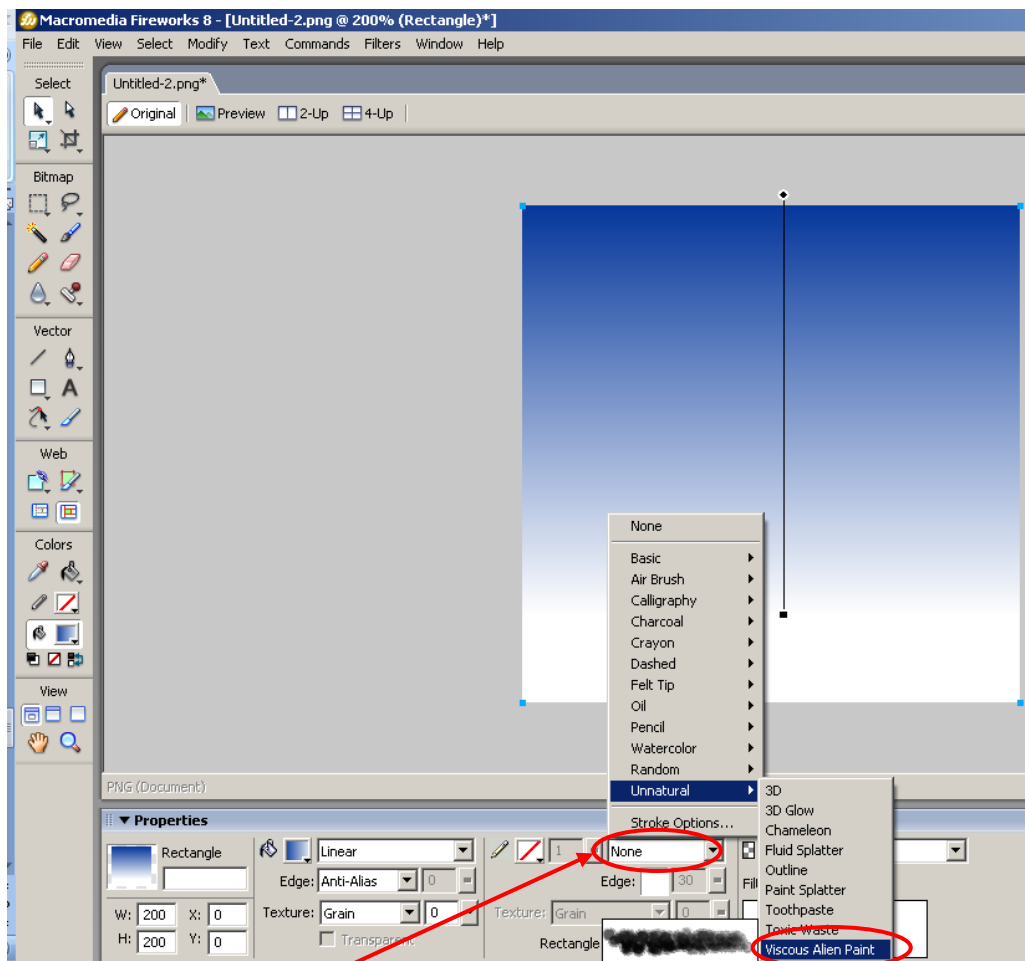
10. For the Stroke category (which currently should be showing none) select Unnatural > Viscous Alien Paint. This is what we will use to draw our clouds.
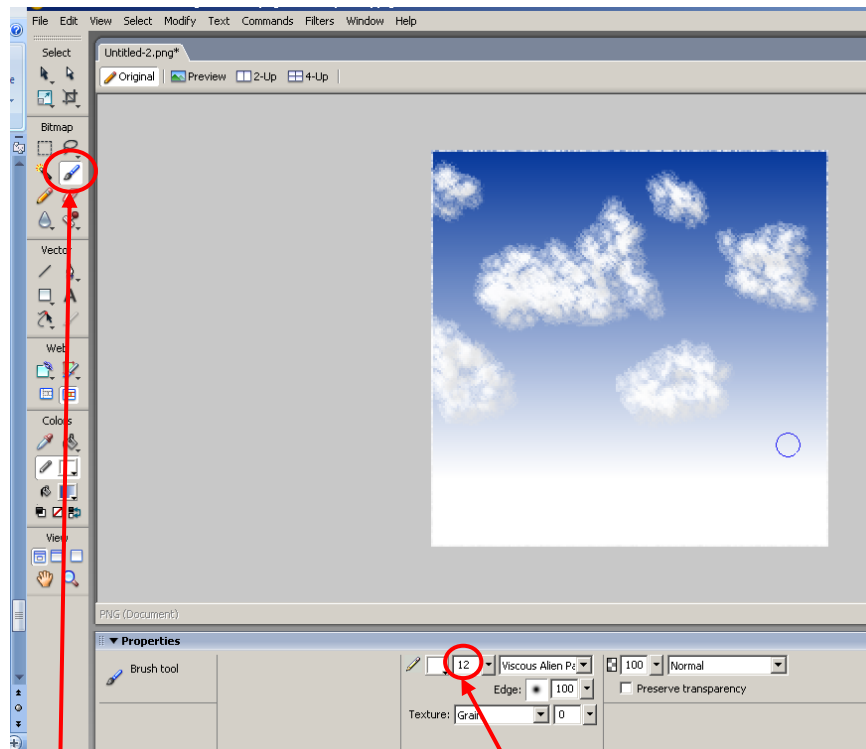
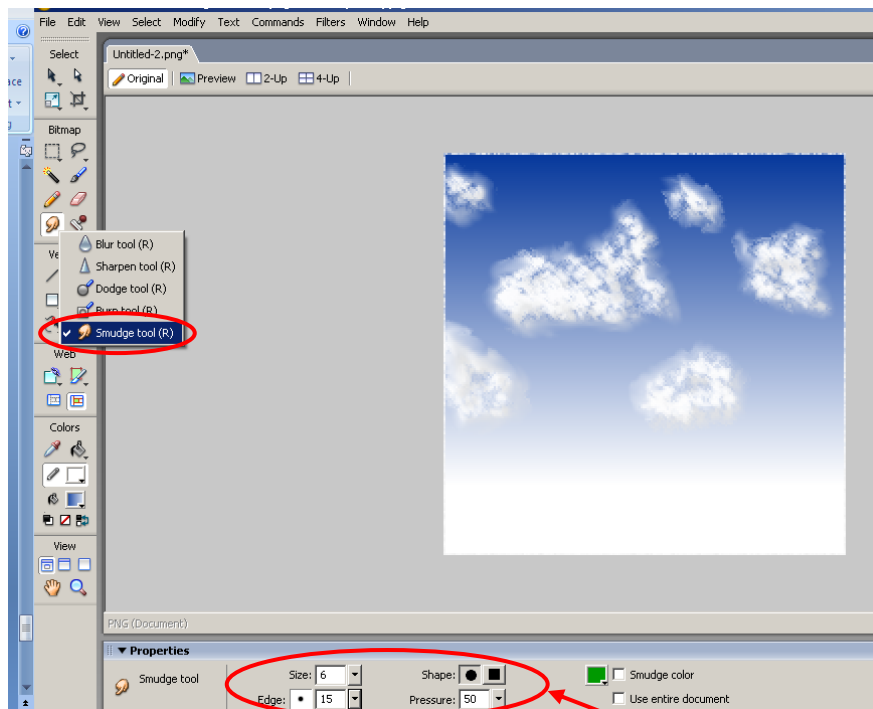11. Select the Paint Brush Tool. Set the brush size to a suitable value (probably greater than 10). Draw the clouds of your own choice.

12. Select the Smudge Tool (you may need to select the little black triangle to the bottom right of the blur tool). You will almost certainly have to change some of the smudge tool properties, such as size edge and pressure. Now simply smudge the edge of the clouds until you get the desire effect

13. Finally remember to save the image (best to save it as a PNG file type)

Extension - optional

14. To get an even more realistic effect for the clouds we need to put some grey into the middle of the clouds. The easiest way is to :-

- Create another layer
- For this layer repeat steps 10 through 12 but using a grey colour for the stroke and smudge colours, placing the grey towards the central bottom of the clouds to give a more realistic look.

15. Indeed you could repeat the effects in step 14 again but using an even darker shade of grey which is within the lighter grey just previously added.

Extension - optional