

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts Travelling Exhibition Program

Visual Learning and Hands-On Art Activities



Star Crop Eared Wolf
ssksinima'tstohki (Teachers) #1, 2018
Photograph
Private collection

What is Visual Learning?

All art has many sides to it. The artist makes the works for people to experience. They in turn can make discoveries about both the work and the artist that help them learn and give them pleasure for a long time.

How we look at an object determines what we come to know about it. We remember information about an object far better when we are able to see (and handle) objects rather than by only reading about them. This investigation through observation (looking) is very important to understanding how objects fit into our world in the past and in the present and will help viewers reach a **considered response** to what they see. The following is a six-step method to looking at, and understanding, a work of art.

STEP 1: INITIAL, INTUITIVE RESPONSE The first 'gut level' response to a visual presentation. What do you see and what do you think of it?

STEP 2: DESCRIPTION Naming facts - a visual inventory of the elements of design.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What colours do you see? What shapes are most noticeable?

What objects are most apparent? Describe the lines in the work.

STEP 3: ANALYSIS Exploring how the parts relate to each other.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What proportions can you see? eg. What percentage of the work is background? Foreground?

Land? Sky? Why are there these differences? What effect do these differences create?

What parts seem closest to you? Farthest away? How does the artist give this impression?

STEP 4: INTERPRETATION Exploring what the work might mean or be about

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

How does this work make you feel? Why?

What word would best describe the mood of this work?

What is this painting/photograph/sculpture about?

Is the artist trying to tell a story? What might be the story in this work?

STEP 5: INFORMATION Looking beyond the work for information that may further understanding.

Questions to Guide Inquiry:

What is the artist's name? When did he/she live?

What art style and medium does the artist use?

What artist's work is this artist interested in?

What art was being made at the same time as this artist was working?

What was happening in history at the time this artist was working?

What social/political/economic/cultural issues is this artist interested in?

STEP 6: PERSONALIZATION What do I think about this work? (Reaching a considered response).

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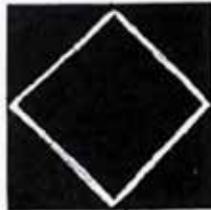
Elements of Design Tour

The following pages provide definitions and examples of the elements and principles of art that are used by artists in the images found in the exhibition [Aakí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Teacher/facilitator questions for inquiry are in **bold** while possible answers are in *italics*.

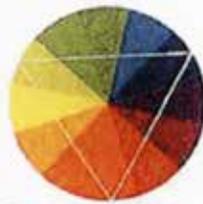
The elements of art are components of a work of art that can be isolated and defined. They are the building blocks used to create a work of art.



LINE !



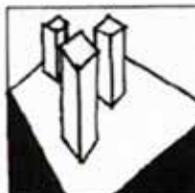
SHAPE!



COLOUR!



TEXTURE!



SPACE!

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Elements of Design Tour

LINE: An element of art that is used to define shape, contours and outlines. It is also used to suggest mass and volume and can be used to indicate direction and movement.

See: [Capture Rifle by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)

What types of lines are there? How can you describe a line? What are some of the characteristics of a line?

Width: thick, thin, tapering, uneven

Length: long, short, continuous, broken

Feeling: sharp, jagged, graceful, smooth

Focus: sharp, blurry, fuzzy, choppy

Direction: horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curving, perpendicular, oblique, parallel, radial, zigzag



Describe the lines you see in this image. Follow the lines in the air with your finger. What quality do the lines have? How do the lines operate in the image?

This image uses both curving lines and geometric lines. These lines create shapes and also direct the eye up and around the composition.

Geometric lines are used to create shapes, both positive and negative, and help direct movement or frame the composition. Diagonal lines and straight lines outline and create the shape of the teepee and teepee poles. Such lines also define the shape of the human figure and the rifle. A very thick black line, meanwhile, runs vertically on the side of the figure, framing the stencil images of the human figure and directing the eye from the bottom to the top of the image.

Curving lines are used to create shape and to direct movement. Curving lines, for example, create the shape of a circle, which is used to define the head of the figure. A faint black curving line, meanwhile, directs the viewer's eye from the top of the picture down to the bottom of the teepee, tying the various areas of the image to each other and giving movement to the composition.

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Elements of Design Tour

SHAPE: When a line crosses itself or intersects with another line to enclose a space it creates a shape. Shape is two-dimensional. It has height and width but no depth.

See: [sksinima 'tstohki \(Teachers\) #2 by Star Crop Eared Wolf](#)



What kind of shapes can you think of?

Geometric: circles, squares, rectangles and triangles. We see them in architecture and manufactured items.

Organic shapes: a leaf, seashell, flower. We see them in nature with characteristics that are free flowing, informal and irregular.

Static shapes: shapes that appear stable and resting.

Dynamic shapes: Shapes that appear moving and active.

What shapes do you see in this image?

The composition is composed of geometric shapes - rectangles/triangles/circular shapes - and organic shapes, seen in the figures and the animal skulls/bones/antlers.

How do the shapes operate in this image?

Geometric shapes, especially triangular forms, are repeated throughout the image. The shape of a diamond, for example (on the back decorative panel), runs from the left side of the image to the right. This repetition ties the image together. Triangular forms on both sides of the central figures help to create a sense of balance in the work (as does the way figures are arranged with two central figures and then two semi-circular arrangements of figures on either side) and this formal balance creates a very strong sense of stability in the work and unites the elements in this busy scene.

What quality do the shapes have? Does the quality of the shapes contribute to the meaning or story suggested in the work?

Geometric shapes are those that are man-made. In this image these contrast the irregular organic lines which create the mouse and the plant forms.

The man-made shapes appear static and stable while the organic/animal shapes appear more dynamic and the contrast between the two creates a very vibrant work.

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Elements of Design Tour

COLOUR: Colour comes from light that is reflected off objects. Colour has three main characteristics: Hue, or its name (red, blue, etc.) Value: (how light or dark the colour is) and Intensity (how bright or dull the colour is)

See: [Two Elk by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)



What are primary colours? Do you see any? Point to them in the drawing. What secondary colours do you see?

Colour is made of primary colours, red, blue and yellow. Secondary colours are created from primary colours and include green, orange and purple. This image is made up of both primary colours, or tints and tones of primary colours, and secondary colours. Primary colours seen are blue and red while the secondary colour of green dominate the work.

Where is your eye directed to first? Why? Are there any colours that stand out more than others?

The viewer's eye may first be directed to the blue bar which runs from left to right in the image. This is because this area is placed directly in the center of the work, dividing the composition into thirds. The focus on this area is accentuated by the large white letters written on this element. Attention to this area is also heightened by the figures of the red elk stenciled on the area. Red is a warm colour which makes these shapes pop out from their background. As well, red is the complement of green and so these shapes, and the form they are on, stand out against the predominantly green background.

What are complementary colours? How have they been used to draw attention?

Complementary colours are those across from each other on the colour wheel and are placed next to each other to create the most contrast and to create focus in a work. As mentioned above, red is the complement of green which makes the two elk stand out against the green tones of the background. This use of complements draws attention not only to the elk but also to the message they are stenciled on.

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Elements of Design Tour

SPACE: The area between and around objects. It can also refer to the feeling of depth in a two-dimensional artwork.

See: [sksinima 'tstohki \(Teachers\) #5](#)
by Star Crop Eared Wolf

What is space? What dimensions does it have?

Space includes the background, middle ground and foreground. It can refer to the distances or areas around, between or within components of a piece. It may have two dimensions (length and width) or three dimensions including height or depth.



What do you see in this work? What is closest to you? Farthest away? How do you know this?

In this work we see two women, a teepee, a truck, and hills in the background. The woman in traditional dress is closest to the viewer and the focus of the work. She is the largest figure in the scene, placed directly in the center of the work, and cropped so that we only see the upper half of her, giving her a sense of prominence and the sense that she is just in front of the viewer. Overlapping of additional elements (the second woman, the teepee, and the hills) then take the viewer's eye back into space to the far hills in the distance.

In what other way has the artist created a sense of space?

The artist also uses line to create a sense of space in this work. This is seen specifically in the fence posts which run diagonally from left to right in picture and the path which runs diagonally from the right side behind the teepee. These linear elements direct the viewer's eye through the composition and back into space.

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Elements of Design Tour

TEXTURE: Texture is the surface quality of an object that can be seen or felt. Texture can also be implied on a two-dimensional surface through mark making and paint handling.

See: [Coyote and Spider](#)
by [Marjie Crop Eared Wolf](#)

What is texture? How do you describe how something feels? What are the two kinds of texture you can think of in artwork?

Texture can be real, like the actual texture of an object. Texture can be rough, smooth, hard, soft, glossy etc. Texture can also be implied. This happens when a two-dimensional piece of art is made to look like a certain texture.



Allow your eyes to 'feel' the different area within the work and explain the textures. What kind of texture do you think the artist uses in this work - real or implied? What about the work gives you this idea?

This work uses implied textures. The work is a photograph, and thus smooth, but the image is a photograph of a very rough surface. The background surface (metal?) is very pitted and surface paint appears to be peeling off so the overall affect is of a very rough (and perhaps sharp) surface.

Why do you think the artist chose this manner of presentation or chose to make the work look this way?

The artist stenciled her own graffiti over surfaces that had already been painted/targeted by graffiti and so the actual surface was chosen by 'chance' rather than artistic design.

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Reading Pictures Program

Grades 4-12/adults

Objectives:

The purposes of this program are to:

- 1/ Introduce participants to Art and what artists do – this includes examinations of art styles; art elements; the possible aims and meaning(s) in an art work and how to deduce those meanings and aims.
- 2/ Introduce visitors to the current exhibition – the aim of the exhibition and the kind of exhibition/artwork found.
 - the artist(s) - his/her background(s)
 - his/her place in art history
- 3/ Engage participants in a deeper investigation of artworks.

Teacher/Facilitator Introduction to Program:

This program is called **Reading Pictures**. What do you think this might involve?

-generate as many ideas as possible concerning what viewers might think 'Reading Pictures' might involve or what this phrase might mean.

Before we can 'read' art, however, we should have some understanding what we're talking about.

What is Art? If you had to define this term, how would you define it?

Art can be defined as creative expression - and artistic practice is an aspect and expression of a peoples' culture or the artist's identity.

The discipline of Art, or the creation of a piece of art, however, is much more than simple 'creative expression' by an 'artist' or an isolated component of culture.

How many of you would describe yourselves as artists?

You may not believe it, but everyday you engage in some sort of artistic endeavor.

How many of you got up this morning and thought about what you were going to wear today? Why did you choose the clothes you did? Why do you wear your hair that way? How many of you have tattoos or plan to get a tattoo some day? What kind of tattoo would you choose? Why.....? How many of you own digital cameras or have cameras on cell phones? How many of you take pictures and e-mail them to other people?

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Reading Pictures Program continued

Art is all around us and we are all involved in artistic endeavors to some degree. The photographs we take, the colour and styles of the clothes we wear, the ways we build and decorate our homes, gardens and public buildings, the style of our cell phones or the vehicles we drive, the images we see and are attracted to in advertising or the text or symbols on our bumper stickers – all of these things (and 9 billion others) utilize artistic principles. They say something about our personal selves and reflect upon and influence the economic, political, cultural, historical and geographic concerns of our society.

Art, therefore, is not just something some people in a society do – it is something that affects and informs everyone within a society.

Today we're going to look at art - paintings, prints, drawings, sculptures – and see what art can tell us about the world we live in – both the past, the present and possibly the future – and what art can tell us about ourselves.

Art is a language like any other and it can be read.

Art can be read in two ways. It can be looked at **intuitively** – what do you see? What do you like or not like? How does it make you feel and why? – or it can be read **formally** by looking at what are called the Elements of Design – the tools artists use or consider when creating a piece of work.

What do you think is meant by the elements of design? What does an artist use to create a work of art?

Today we're going to examine how to read art – we're going to see how art can affect us emotionally... and how an artist can inform us about our world, and ourselves, through what he or she creates.

Tour Program:

–Proceed to one of the works in the exhibition and discuss the following:

- a) The nature of the work - what kind of work is it and what exhibition is it a part of?
- b) Examine the work itself
 - What do visitors see?
 - How do you initially feel about what you see? Why do you feel this way? What do you like? What don't you like? Why?
 - What is the work made of?
 - How would you describe the style? What does this mean?

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Reading Pictures Program continued

–What is the compositional structure? How are the shapes and colours etc. arranged? Why are they arranged this way?

–How does the work make them feel? What is the mood of the work? What gives them this idea? Discuss the element(s) of design which are emphasized in the work in question.

–What might the artist be trying to do in the work? What might the artist be saying or what might the work 'mean'?

c) Summarize the information.

• At each work chosen, go through the same or similar process, linking the work to the type of exhibition it is a part of. Also, with each stop, discuss a different Element of Design and develop participants visual learning skills.

At the 1st stop, determine with the participants the most important Element of Design used and focus the discussion on how this element works within the art work. Do the same with each subsequent art work and make sure to cover all the elements of design on the tour.

Stop #1: LINE

Stop #2: SHAPE

Stop #3: COLOUR

Stop #4: TEXTURE

Stop #5: SPACE

Stop #6: ALL TOGETHER – How do the elements work together to create a certain mood or story? What would you say is the mood of this work? Why? What is the story or meaning or meaning of this work? Why?

Work sheet activity – 30 minutes

•Divide participants into groups of two or three to each do this activity. Give them 30 minutes to complete the questions then bring them all together and have each group present one of their pieces to the entire group.

Presentations – 30 minutes

•Each group to present on one of their chosen works.

Visual Learning Activity Worksheet * Photocopy the following worksheet so each participant has their own copy.

Reading Pictures Program continued

Visual Learning Worksheet

Instructions: Choose two very different pieces of artwork in the exhibition and answer the following questions in as much detail as you can.

1. What is the title of the work and who created it?

2. What do you see and what do you think of it? (What is your **initial reaction** to the work?) Why do you feel this way?

3. What colours do you see and how does the use of colour affect the way you 'read' the work? Why do you think the artist chose these colours – or lack of colour – for this presentation?

4. What shapes and objects do you notice most? Why?

Reading Pictures Program continued

5. How are the shapes/objects arranged or composed? How does this affect your feelings towards or about the work? What feeling does this composition give to the work?

6. How would you describe the mood of this work? (How does it make you feel?) What do you see that makes you describe the mood in this way?

7. What do you think the artist's purpose was in creating this work? What 'story' might he or she be telling? What aspects of the artwork give you this idea?

8. What do you think about this work after answering the above questions? Has your opinion of the work changed in any way? Why do you feel this way?

9. How might this work relate to your own life experiences? Have you ever been in a similar situation/place and how did being there make you feel?

Perusing Paintings: An Art-full Scavenger Hunt

In teaching art, game-playing can enhance learning. If students are engaged in learning, through a variety of methods, then it goes beyond game-playing. Through game-playing we are trying to get students to use higher-order thinking skills by getting them to be active participants in learning. *Blooms's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, which follows, is as applicable to teaching art as any other discipline.

1. *knowledge*: recall of facts
2. *comprehension*: participation in a discussion
3. *application*: applying abstract information in practical situations
4. *analysis*: separating an entity into its parts
5. *synthesis*: creating a new whole from many parts, as in developing a complex work of art
6. *evaluation*: making judgements on criteria

A scavenger hunt based on art works is a fun and engaging way to get students of any age to really look at the art works and begin to discern what the artist(s) is/are doing in the works. **The simple template provided, however, would be most suitable for grade 1-3 students.**

Instruction:

Using the exhibition works provided, give students a list of things they should search for that are in the particular works of art. The students could work with a partner or in teams. Include a blank for the name of the artwork, the name of the artist, and the year the work was created. Following the hunt, gather students together in the exhibition area and check the answers and discuss the particular works in more detail.

Sample List:

Scavenger Hunt Item	Title of Artwork	Name of Artist	Year Work Created
someone wearing a hat			
a specific animal			
landscape			
a bright red object			
a night scene			
a house			

*This activity was adapted from *A Survival Kit for the Elementary/Middle School Art Teacher* by Helen D. Hume.

28 *From Realism to Abstraction*

Observing and Thinking Creatively

Abstract art usually uses bright colors, sharp edges, geometric shapes, and interesting contrasts to create a mood. Sometimes abstract art simply shows an artist's emotional response to an object or idea. Details may be minimized, proportions **distorted**, and unusual color schemes used. **Nonobjective** art occurs when abstraction departs completely from realism.

Henri Matisse was a French artist who enjoyed changing the usual form of an object. His versions emphasized the pure idea of the object, and are a type of abstract

art. To create the cutouts for the snail shown here, he first picked up a real snail and examined it closely. Then he drew it from every angle possible, noting its texture, color, and construction.

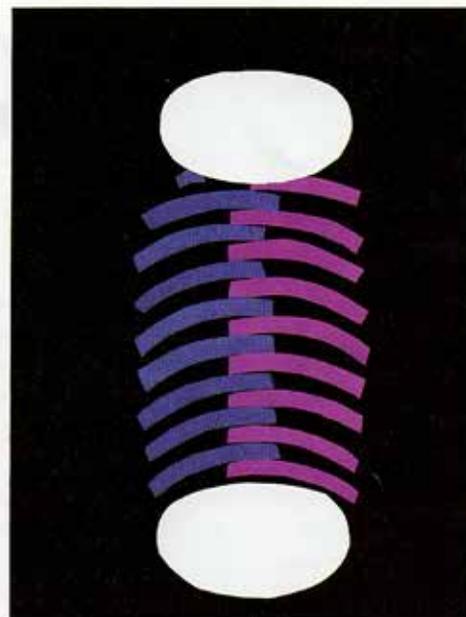
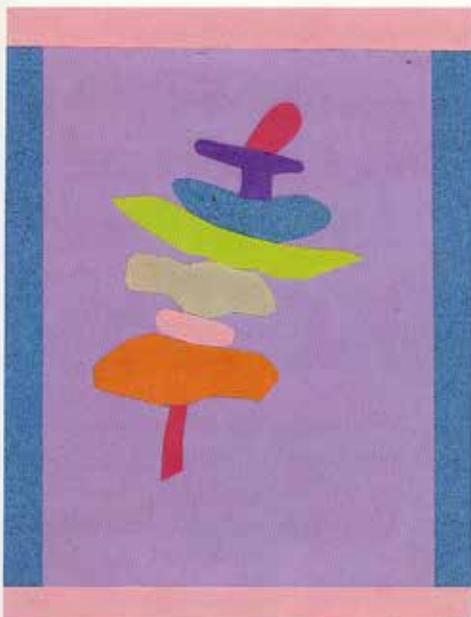
Observe the cut out paper shapes Matisse used in his snail of many colors. Can you see how the simple blue rectangle represents the foot of the snail? Notice which parts of a snail Matisse omitted, and which parts he thought were essential.

In this lesson, you will create an abstract cutout design of an object.



Henri Matisse, The Snail, 1952, Tate Gallery, London.

Abstracting from the Real continued



Instructions for Creating Art

1. Choose an object with an interesting shape and study it. Sketch it from several angles. Examine how it is built. Does it have a center? What basic shapes compose it? Observe the texture and colors of your object.
2. Now draw the general outer shape of your object. What idea does it give you? Next, draw only the inside parts of your object, without any outside lines. Think about what color reminds you of the feeling or idea of the object. Notice curved and straight lines, light and dark values, and small and large shapes.
3. When you find a shape that seems to capture the idea of your object, practice distorting or changing it to make a more pure, simple shape.
4. Choose one or more colors for your shape, and cut it out of colored paper. Mount the shapes on a sheet of a different

color, and display your abstract cutout design. Can your classmates guess what the real object was?

Art Materials

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| A variety of objects such as a shell, spoon, corn cob, flower, leaf, model, toy, piece of fruit, etc. | Pencil and eraser |
| Sketch paper | Colored construction paper |
| | Scissors |
| | Glue or paste |



Learning Outcomes

1. Name two ways of making *abstract* art.
2. Describe how you distorted the shape you made of an object.
3. What parts of your object did you leave out of your cutout design? How did you decide which parts to keep and which parts to omit?

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Geometry Animals Grades K-3

Objectives:

Geometry Animals is a good project for young students to identify colours, textures, forms, and subjects in the environment and understand simplification/abstraction. Students are expected to construct recognizable animals from shapes using a variety of colours, forms, and lines as well as use their imagination and creative expression to invent new forms.

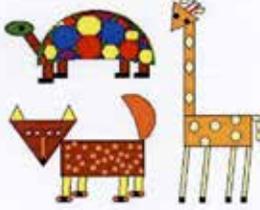
Materials:

- Glue
- Coloured paper
- Paper shapes
- Crayons, coloured pencils or markers
- Example reproductions of animals

Objectives:
Geometry Animals is a good project for young students to identify colours, textures, forms, and subjects in the environment and understand simplification/abstraction. Students are expected to construct recognizable animals from shapes using a variety of colours, forms, and lines as well as use their imagination and creative expression to invent new forms.

Materials:

- Glue
- Coloured paper
- Paper shapes
- Crayons, coloured pencils or markers
- Example reproductions of animals



<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathScienceArtLAMDGeometryAnimalsK1.htm>

Procedure:

1. Get materials ready before lesson starts.
2. Introduce photographs or reproductions of recognizable animals and introduce basic shapes of the animal with students.

<http://www.lessonplanspage.com/MathScienceArtLAMDGeometryAnimalsK1.htm>

Procedure:

1. Get materials ready before lesson starts.
2. Introduce photographs or reproductions of recognizable animals and introduce basic shapes of the animal with students.
3. Point out shapes and ask kids to identify them.
4. Show them the example animal you made.
5. Discuss materials and proper gluing technique.
6. Tell students that they will now be constructing their own animals using shapes.
7. Hand out materials or have students grab them from your small group table or another table in the room.
8. Allow time for students to work on their animals.
9. Walk around the room asking students about their animals and encourage students to add texture onto their shapes using coloured marker.
10. Have students count and write how many shapes they used and what colour they are.
11. If you would like to, have students share.

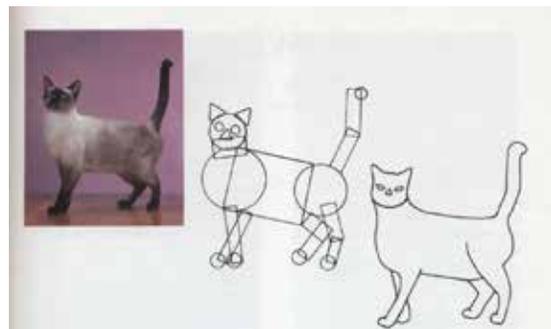
Closure:

- Ask students how many shapes they used.
- Ask them what colours they used.

Basic Shapes - Grades 3-5



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf
Capture Rifle, 2010
Photography of installation
Collection of the artist



Art in Action, pg. 12

Almost all things are made up of four basic shapes: circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. Shapes and variation of shapes - such as oblongs and ovals - create objects. The stencil images in the photographs of Marjie Crop Eared Wolf are created by reducing objects to their basic shapes and using colour and line to define objects. In this lesson students will practice reducing objects to their basic shapes and then filling in the areas with colours 'natural' to the central object and complementary to the background.

Materials:

- drawing paper
- pencil and eraser
- magazines
- paints and brushes
- mixing trays

Instructions:

1/ Have students look through magazines for pictures of objects made up of several shapes.

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Basic Shapes continued - Grades 3-5

2/ Direct students to choose **one** object and determine the basic shapes which make up that object.

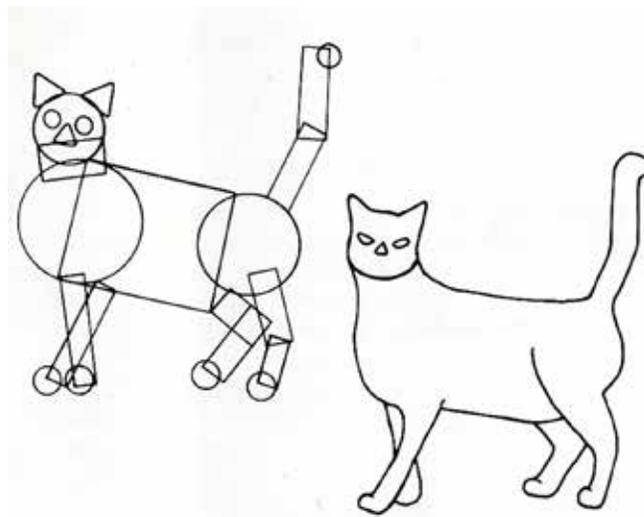
3/ Have students draw their one object using the basic shapes which make up the object.

4/ Students to simplify their drawing further - removing any overlapping/extraneous lines so that the object is broken into simplified shapes/forms. *see works by Jason Carter for clarification

5/ Students to decide on colour scheme for work. Review the colour wheel and the concept of complementary colours.

- what is the dominant colour of your object? - use tints/tones of that colour to paint the object, keeping shapes separate through the use of heavy black lines.

- what is the complementary colour of your main object's colouring? - paint the background area the complement of the objects colour.



Art in Action, pg. 12

Extension (for older students)

- when students have completed their first painting have them re-draw the basic shapes of their object again, but this time have them soften the edges, change shapes and add connecting lines where necessary so their drawing resembles the original magazine image.

- have students paint this second work using 'natural' colours for both their object and for the background.

- display both of students' drawings and then discuss.

Discussion/Evaluation:

1/ Which shapes did you use most often in your drawing(s)?

2/ Explain how identifying the basic shapes in your object helped you make the second drawing.

3/ Which of your paintings appeals to you most? Why?

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Experiments in Colour - Grades 3-9



When artists create a composition, they plan their colour combinations very carefully. Colour can serve many functions in a work of art. It can be used to create the illusion of space; it can be used to provide focus and emphasis; it can be used to create movement; and it can be used to create a certain mood. In the works in the exhibition the artists use colour to serve all of these functions. In the following project students will examine the use of colour relationships to create the illusion of space and mood within a painting.

Materials:

Colour Wheel Chart
Paper
Paints and brushes
Mixing trays
Water container

Paper towels
Pencils/erasers
Still life items or landscape drawings
Magazines/ photographic references

Experiments in Colour continued



Marjie Crop Eared Wolf
Two Elk, 2018
Photography of installation
Collection of the artist

Methodology:

1/ Through an examination of the colour wheel provided, discuss with students the concepts of **complementary colours** and **split-complements**.

Questions to guide discussion:

- What is the lightest colour on the colour wheel?
 - yellow
- What is the darkest colour on the colour wheel?
 - violet
- What is the relationship of these two colours? - the colours are **opposite** each other.

Colours that are opposite each other on the colour wheel are called **complementary colours**.

- What are the colours next to violet?
 - red-violet and blue-violet

These colours are called **split complements** because they are split, or separated, by the true complement of yellow. Complements can be split one step further to become a **triad**, three colours **equally spaced** on the colour wheel.

Complementary colours can be used to create focus, emphasis, and the illusion of space. Brighter (warm) colours in the colour wheel tend to appear in front of - or come forward on the picture plane - compared to darker (cool) colours.

Instructions for Creating Art

- 1/ Distribute paper, pencils and erasers to students
- 2/ Instruct students to make several sketches of ideas for their painting - they may base their work on a still-life arrangement or create a landscape based on magazine or photographic sources
- 3/ Have students choose a sketch they like and then plan their colours by first examining the colour wheel. Students to first choose their **dominant or main colour** and then pick the **split complements or triad** to that colour.
- 4/ Students to use their colour scheme to paint their painting.

Experiments in Colour continued

Questions for discussion

- 1/ What are the split complements and triad colour schemes used in your work?
- 2/ What is the colour relationship of the colours used in your painting?
- 3/ Why have you used these particular colours?

Colour Me a Story

Grades 3-9

Many of the artworks in the exhibition **Aakí isskská'takssin (Woman - thought)** focus on stories and story-telling. In this activity students will design and create mixed media works on paper inspired by the exhibition and conversations surrounding it. Students will be challenged to tell their own stories in styles reminiscent of artists in the exhibition. They will think in terms of perspective, colour selection and enhanced narrative while working in a 2D format.

Supplies:

- pencils & erasers
- rinse buckets & brushes
- watercolour paint
- thin markers/sharpies
- 2x Mayfair
- mixing trays/watercolour & ink trays

Objectives

Through the studio project the students will:

1. Discuss “what is a narrative”. What does it mean “to narrate”?
2. Discuss and review what a protagonist and an antagonist are. Reminding the students to keep the protagonist (themselves – their story) in mind as the focal point of their work
3. Discuss the elements of design; line, shape, colour, texture
4. Discuss simple aerial perspective
5. Discuss the concept of “mixed media”

Procedure

- 1.a. Keep in mind the protagonist or focal point (person, place or thing) in their story
 - b. There are 3 steps to this project: pencil drawing, marker drawing and watercolour painting
 - c. Have students focus on a season. Choose SEASONAL COLOURS = brighter colours for spring and summer, muted colours for autumn
 - d. Keep in mind perspective: foreground / middle ground / background =
 - Things in the foreground are large, bright and in focus
 - Things in the background tend to be smaller, duller and are overlapped or partially blocked by closer items
2. In class distribute paper and pencils and erasers to students.
- 2.a. Pencil Drawing: Have students do a light sketch on the paper. This sketch will tell their story. They will also be going over their drawing in pen and then in watercolour – so draw lightly = easy to erase lines.

Introduction and drawing = 25 minutes

Colour Me a Story continued

3. Marker Drawing: While students are doing their pencil drawings, hand out the thin sharpies. Remind students they are not to touch or use the markers until asked to do so.

When everyone is ready, have students retrace their drawings in pen.

When their whole drawing is “re-drawn” in pen they can count to 5 – then erase all pencil marks (this waiting ensures no ink will get smeared!)

Re-draw & erase = 10 minutes

4. While students are re-drawing in ink, hand out the brushes, rinse water and watercolour paints

5. Watercolour Painting: Remind students to choose SEASONAL Colours – they are invited to dilute their paints on a mixing tray.

Again, choosing clear bright colours for the foreground and dull or diluted colours for the background

Painting = 15 minutes... then clean-up

If time allows/studio ended early have a critique – have students choose a work that is not their own and discuss 2 things they like about it:

- Talk about the colour choices. Do they make us “feel like winter”/like summer etc.?
- Talk about the colours the artist selected: dark, bright, cool, hot, dull, bright
- Talk about the mood or atmosphere of the work: dark, sad, happy, loud, quiet
- Does this artwork convey a story or narrative? Are we able to “read it” ourselves? What are our visual clues?

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Documentary Portraits - High School

This project is based on the various documentary photographic works in the exhibition and the work of Dorthea Lange for the FAS project in the 1930s.

Objectives

Students will determine what information is unnecessary to a photograph for it to portray the most powerful image.

Students will tell how they feel when seeing works from the exhibition and Dorthea Lange's *Migrant Mother* series and talk about their own lives in relation to those images.

Students will use a computer to crop an image.

Materials

Digital Camera(s) (one per student if possible)

Magazines with images of news going on today for look and talk sessions

Images from Dorthea Lange's *Migrant Mother* series for discussion purposes

Mat board for cropping and displaying images

Procedure

1. Discuss with students the idea of **portraiture** and **social documentary and straight photography**. Study images by the artists in the exhibition and by Dorthea Lange to facilitate discussion.

Focus Questions: What is a portrait? What is social documentary? In studying these images, what factors do you think might go into a photographer's decision to crop or not to crop an original image? Does cropping an image make a difference in how we read/feel about the image?

note* Dorthea Lange's work: Lange happened upon this family by their tent in a pea pickers' camp in California. She took six photographs of the family, starting from forty feet away, moving closer and closer to them with each photograph. Do you think seeing this family from forty feet away would be different from how you see them up close? Why or why not?

2. Students will take this issue of capturing social commentary and translate that into a contemporary photograph. They will

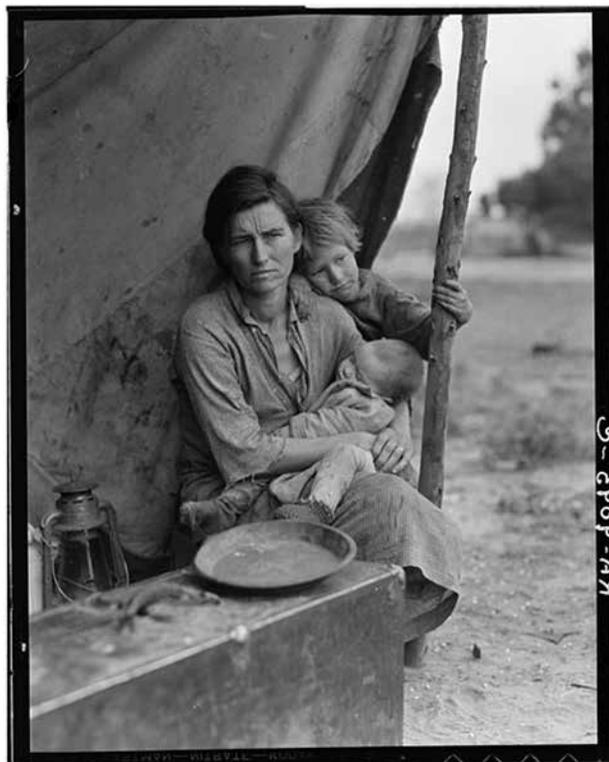
- choose a photograph from a magazine
- have to present their photograph with information on who/what it is, why they chose it, and what speaks to them in the piece. They will also explain how the photographer may have decided to crop the piece and what makes it a strong/weak composition.

3. Students will then have one week to find and produce their own photograph that speaks to 'us' today. In their work they will explore ideas of cropping, composition, and elimination of unnecessary information as both Bromley and Dorthea Lange did in their works.

credit: <http://www.lessonplanspage.com/ArtSSCIPhotography-DortheaLangeMigrantMother912.htm>

revision of above: Shane Golby

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Documentary Portraits - continued



Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*



Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*

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Documentary Portraits - continued



Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother*



Dorthea Lange, *Migrant Mother* (published image)

Stencil Printmaking

**** Please note: The following project is most suitable for grades 9-12 but may be modified in numerous ways where students create simple stencils related to plant motifs, animals etc. A simple cut out stencil project would be suitable for grades 3 to 9. For high school students this could also be translated into a silk-screen project.**

STENCIL PRINTMAKING – POSITIVE NEGATIVE DESIGN NAME: _____

A stencil is a template used to draw or paint identical letters, symbols, shapes, or patterns every time it is used.

Stencils are formed by removing sections from template material in the form of text or an image. This creates what is essentially a **physical negative**.

The **template** can then be used to create impressions of the stenciled image, by applying pigment on the surface of the template and through the removed sections, leaving a reproduction of the stencil on the underlying surface. Aerosol or painting stencils must remain contiguous after the image is removed, in order for the template to remain functional.



Bob Dylan Stencil

Sections of the remaining template which are isolated inside removed parts of the image are called **islands**. All islands must be connected to other parts of the template with bridges, or additional sections of narrow template material which are not removed.



Happy 1984* - Stencil graffiti found on the Berlin Wall in 2005. The object depicted is a DualShock video game controller.

Stencil graffiti

Stencils have also become popular for graffiti, since stencil art using spray-paint can be produced quickly and easily. These qualities are important for graffiti artists where stenciling is illegal or quasi-legal, depending on the city and stenciling surface.

The extensive lettering possible with stencils makes it especially attractive to political artists. For example, the anarcho-punk band Crass used stencils of anti-war, anarchist, feminist and anti-consumerist messages in a long-term graffiti campaign around the London Underground system and on advertising billboards.[1] Also well known for their use of stencil art are Blek le Rat from France, Banksy, a British artist and New York artist John Fekner.

STEP ONE: Decide on a significant historical figure in which to create your stencil out of. Try to get a high contrast photo.

STEP TWO: Begin by drawing the **reverse** outline of your subject matter on the flat top of the piece of paper. **REMEMBER:** to draw the outline of any text backwards as the print will print frontwards. Carefully consider how you design your positive/negative space.

STEP THREE: Next begin by cutting out around the sections you have defined – these will be your blank sections which will not be filled with ink when pressed. The outline will appear as you cut away the sections around your subject matter. Consider a variety of texture and detail in your cutting technique.

STEP FOUR: Once you have finished cutting your paper using a roller dipped in ink roll across the surface of block to create a mono or test print.

STEP FIVE: REFLECT: Answer the following questions using the elements and principles of design and hand them in with your completed drawing for evaluation.

1. What part of your finished project did you find most successful and why?
2. What part of your finished project did you find least successful and why?
3. If you had to do this project again what part would you change?

Stencil Printmaking continued



Japanese Woodcut
Katsushika Hokusai (Japanese, 1760-1849)
South Wind, Clearing Skies, from the series Thirty-six Views of Mt. Fuji, ca. 1829-33 color woodblock print 10 1/16 x 14 7/8 in. (25.5 x 38 cm)

Stencil History

Stencils may have been used to color cloth for a very long time; the technique probably reached its peak of sophistication in **Katazome** and other techniques used on silks for clothes during the Edo period in Japan.

In Europe, from about 1450 they were very commonly used to colour old master prints printed in black and white, usually woodcuts. This was especially the case with playing-cards, which continued to be coloured by stencil long after most other subjects for prints were left in black and white. Stencilling back in the 2600 BC's was different. They used color from plants and flowers such as indigo (which extracts blue). Stencils were used for mass publications, as the type didn't have to be hand-written. The first book to be printed using stencils was the bible.

Stencil Examples



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Stencil Printmaking: Identity Flag Gr. 7-12

Graffiti artists often make use of symbols or script to identify themselves or identify their relationship to a place or group. In this activity students will create their own symbolic identity flag; a stencil flag which through word and colour allows students to declare how they see themselves/want to be seen by the larger society.

This activity is related to the stencil images created by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition [Aakí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Please note that the following project uses very low tech. materials/methodologies. If silk-screens are available this project can be adapted into a silkscreening project.

Objectives

Students will, through the studio activity, gain an understanding of:

- a) what a print is (multiple images)
- b) how to create a stencil print image
- c) discuss concepts of symbols; identity
- d) consider word/font and colour in the creation of their imagery

Materials

- access to computers/photocopier to create initial flag design
- heavier card stock (for stencil making)
- fine x-acto knives
- putty adhesive or tape
- heavier paper/matt board (for actual print backing)
- acrylic paint
- sponges, brushes or rags for paint application

Methodology

Step 1: Have students determine a word which could be used to describe themselves/how they feel about themselves or how they wish to be seen.

Using computers/word program, have students create a flag design using their chosen word and showing the general layout of their flag design. Instruct students that the areas to be cut out of their design should be printed in black.

Print the flag design on heavier card stock at 8 inches x 10 inches or if desired, for older students, at legal size.



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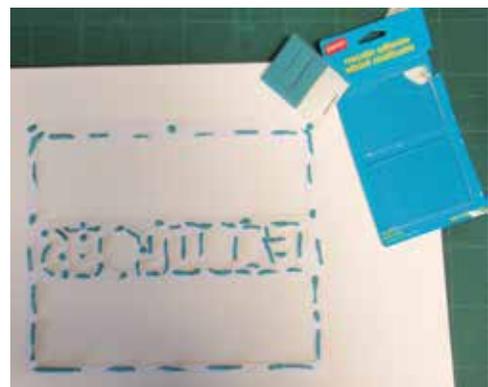
Identity Flag continued

Step 2: Using a fine x-acto knife, have students carefully cut out the black areas of their design (both letters and flag bars) to create their working stencil.



Step 3: Once all the black areas are cut away, have students flip their stencil over and apply adhesive putty or tape pieces to the back edges of the design, making sure that all borders and letter edges are securely fastened.

* also make sure the stencil is flush with the paper to be printed. Otherwise, when paint is applied, it will leak underneath and create uneven/blotted edges. If the adhesive putty does not work well, simply tape the stencil down on the paper.



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Identity Flag continued

Step 4: Apply the stencil (good side up) onto matt/board or heavy paper and press down all the edges so the stencil is securely attached to and flush with the backing paper.



Step 5: Have students consider the colour(s) they wish their image to be. Colour choice should reflect mood of their word.

Using sponges, rags or a paint brush have students carefully dab paint into the open areas of their stencil.

* if more than one colour is used, have students block out with paper the area(s) that are different from the first colour used. When the first area is dry, have students block that area from the next area(s)/ colour to be used.



Step 6: Once paint is completely dry have students carefully remove/peel the stencil from the backing paper to reveal their completed print. If necessary, have students use a small brush and paint to touch up any blotted areas of the print.

Evaluate the finished print in terms of neatness of work and relationship of colour to word choice and overall design.



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My World Stencil Project - Grades 7-12

This activity is a further take on the photographic stencil images created by Marjie Crop Eared Wolf in the exhibition [Aakíí isskská'takssin \(Woman - thought\)](#). Please note that the following project uses very low tech. materials/methodologies. If silk-screens are available this project can be adapted into a silkscreening project.

In this project students will find and produce a photographic image upon which they will put their own 'imprint', claiming the space as their own, much like Marjie Crop Eared Wolf has re-claimed territory/spaces for her people.

Objectives

Students will, through the studio activity, gain an understanding of:

- a) what a print is (multiple images)
- b) how to create a stencil print image
- c) discuss concepts of symbols; identity
- d) combine photographic imagery with graffiti methods to create a mixed-media work

Materials

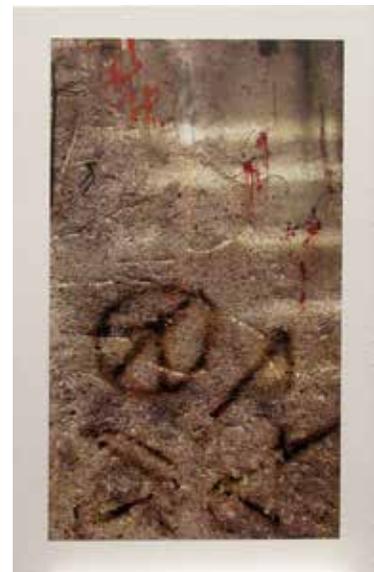
- access to computers/photocopier to create and adjust photographic images
- heavier card stock (for stencil making)
- fine x-acto knives/scissors
- heavier paper/matt board (for photographic backing)
- paint (tempera or acrylic paint)
- sponges, brushes or rags for paint application

Methodology

Step 1: Have students find and photograph a place in their community. This could be a wall, a sign post, a mail box etc.
- some place which will serve as the 'canvas' for their stencil imagery.

Once the photograph is taken, have students adjust it using photoshop and print the image at about 11 x 17 inches and 325 dpi.

Paste the printed image onto heavier cardstock/bristol board/matt board to fit. (using glue or spray adhesive)



Mounted original wall
photographic image

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My World Stencil Project continued

Step 2: Have students design a simple image which represents themselves or has meaning to them in some way.

Have students draw the symbolic image onto card stock and then, carefully using a fine x-acto knife, cut out the center of their design to create a stencil.



Step 3: Apply the stencil (good side up) onto the prepared photographic image from step 1.

Step 4: Have students consider the colour(s) they wish their image to be. Colour choice should reflect mood of their symbol as well as consider the colour of their background photographic image.

Using sponges, rags or a paint brush have students carefully dab paint into the open areas of their stencil.

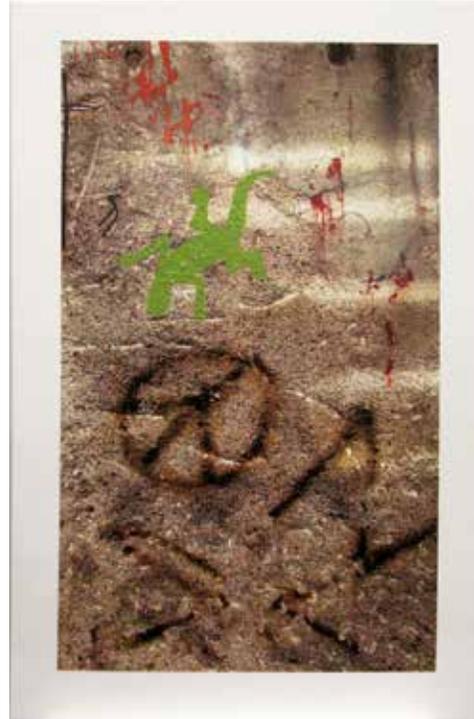
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My World Stencil Project continued

Step 5: Once paint applied have students carefully remove/peel the stencil from the photographic image/backing to reveal their completed print.

If necessary, have students use a small brush and paint to touch up any blotted areas of the print.

Evaluate the finished print in terms of neatness of work and relationship of colour to symbol and overall design.



Completed image - painted lizard stencil design on photographic image