

Negative / Positive Space and Color

Making abstract landscapes with negative /positive shape stencils

Grade Level: 4th - 6th grade, adaptable to 7th and beyond.

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1 - 60 Minute workshop

Essential Question:

How do we use negative and positive space to make imagery?

Provoking Questions

What is negative space?

What is positive space?

What is abstract art?

Lesson Objectives

Learner will understand and identify negative and positive space.

Learner will understand what abstract art is via visual provocation and examples in their own work.

Learner will create an abstract landscape demonstrating use of negative and positive space.

Learner will create a collaborative poem describing his or her landscape.

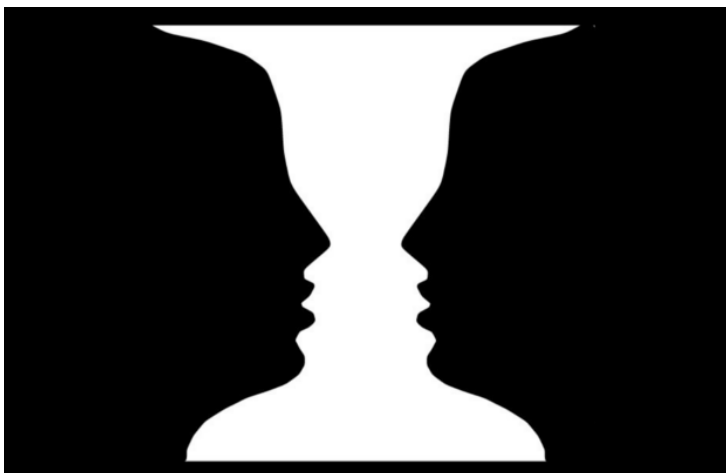
Materials

- + Pastel sets (2 students to a box of 24)
- + 11"x17" Charcoal Paper (1 per student)
- + Scrap paper (letter sized) to use as area to "charge" stencils with pastel (1 per student)
- + Various shape assortment of pre-cut stencils made of non-corrugated cardboard.
- + Box of tissues
- + Worksheet of writing prompts (see attached, one per student)
- + Paper for writing poem (1 per student)

Vocabulary:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| + Positive and Negative Space | + Movement |
| + Abstract Art | + Repetition |
| + Landscape | + Descriptive words (see attached worksheet) |

Visual Provocations:



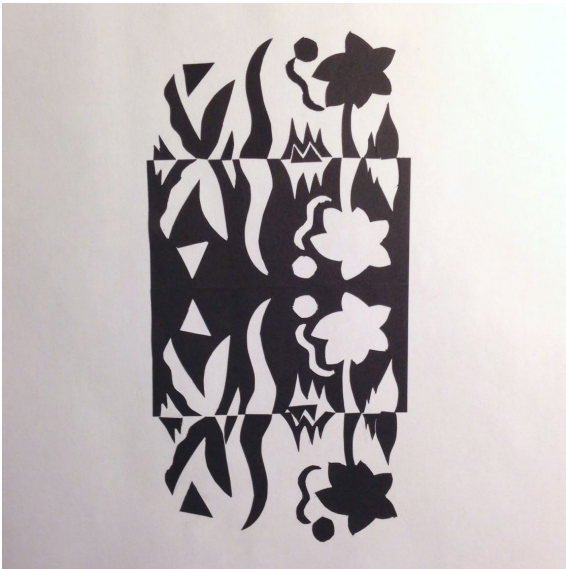
Example of Rubin Vase

Found: http://d3pr5r64n04s3o.cloudfront.net/articles/002_whitespace/Using%20Whitespace%20and%20Negative%20Space%20in%20Your%20Designs/vase.png



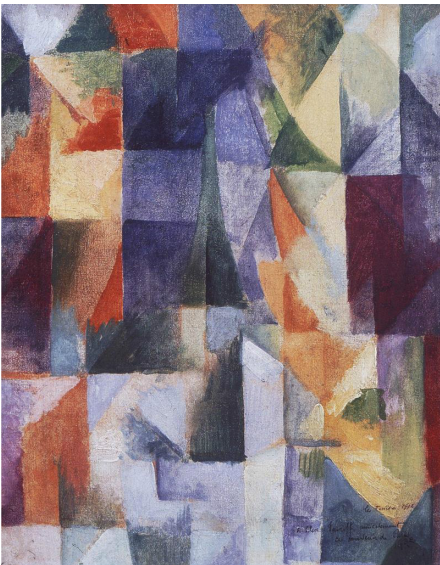
Roger Shepard - Sara Nader

<http://seattlecentral.edu/faculty/cmalody/eng-101hybrid/deceptionmain.htm>



Example of Notan Design

Image courtesy of Aimee Carmella



Windows Open Simultaneously: 1st Part, 3rd Motif

Robert Delaunay

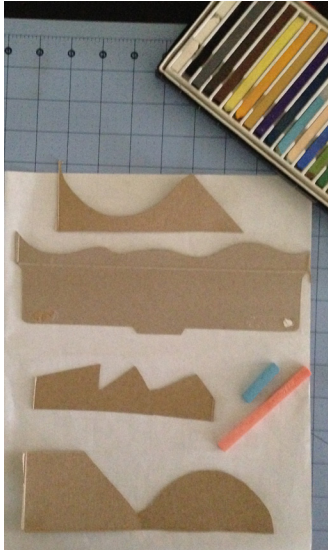
Oil on canvas, 1912

Artstor

Instruction:

1. Begin class with quick introduction and dive right into workshop: start with visual provocation (Rubin vase/two faces) and a question: When you look at this, what do you see? (Should see vase and two faces.) Discuss how we can see both and it depends on where your eye focuses. When you focus on the vase, you see the white vase as the object (positive space) and everything else is background (negative space). When you focus on the faces in black (objects: positive space), the space between them (the white vase) becomes background (negative space). Positive and negative space work together and one can't happen without the other. Show Roger Shepard example. Ask students to point out positive and negative spaces. Show Notan example, asking students to point out positive and negative spaces here.
2. Show them Delaunay example (don't tell them what the title is). Ask them what they see. (Squares, triangles, different colors, repeated colors, a lot of lines moving in different directions.) Tell them the title (*Windows Open Simultaneously*) What do they see now? (Windows, rooftops, etc.) Tell them: This is an example of abstract art. Ask: Does anyone know what abstract art is? (Wait.) Abstract art is art that might remind you of something, but it's not easily recognizable and you aren't sure that's what the artist intended. So we might see something that looks like a rooftop, but we're not quite sure that it is what we are looking at.
3. Show cardboard shapes to students. Show that there are shapes that are positive (like a triangle, a circle) and negative (the shape is cut into e.g., a jagged edge, a cut out circular shape). We are going to use these shapes like stencils to create a landscape with pastel on paper. But since we are only using these shapes to make marks on our paper, what do you think the end result will be? (Ask for ideas) ...There will be a lot of repeating (called repetition), your eye will have a lot to see all over the page - maybe your eye will move all over the page because of all the lines (movement). We'll be making these landscapes that are abstract.
4. I'll show you how to do it and you can get started: (Demo piece. Show how to "charge" a stencil in prepped area rubbing the outline area generously with pastel and then move it over to the bottom of the charcoal paper, then lay it on the area you choose and then take the tissue balled up and spread inward to outward, spreading the pastel towards the top of the charcoal paper. Repeat with different shapes and colors. Reinforce that the student should begin at the bottom of the page and work her way up the page.) Continue till you work your way to almost the top of the page. (You can have students fill the page if they prefer.) After students finish, tell them they can choose how to orient their work. Sometimes the effect of the piece changes when you turn it upside down.
5. Once students finish working (about 20 minutes of work time), you tell them they need to get up from their seats, leaving their work where they sat. (They can get up to wash their hands if they wish.) Place the attached worksheet of writing prompts at each drawing. Say to students that they will go around (starting at their neighbor's drawing) circling 2 or 3 descriptive words that they notice in the drawing. They are free to add as many other words at the bottom of the sheet that they'd like. Keep it positive. Once they've gone around to everyone's drawing (except their own), they can return to their drawing and using the words circled or mentioned on the worksheet, they will be given 10-15 minutes to write a poem using some or all of the words. At the end of the session, they are free to read their poems aloud and showcase their drawings to the group.

In-Process Documentation:



Above: Finished Work



Above: Same finished piece, flipped 180 degrees

Clean Up:

Pastels put away, workstations neatened, and tables wiped of dust.

Assessments:

- + Final discussion of work looking/listening for the following criteria:
 - connections from the artwork to the descriptive words
- + Worksheet with descriptive words to analyze individual works

Modifications:

- + Students can wear gloves if they prefer to not get hands dirty.
- + Students can be given smaller paper “canvas” if time is limited.

Instructional Resources:

- + Worksheet (attached)
- + Visual Provocations (See sources embedded in images)

Maine Learning Results:*A2 - Elements of Art & Principles of Design (6-8)*

Students compare features of composition both within an art work and among art works.

A3 - Media, Tools, Techniques and Processes (6-8)

Students explain the effects of media and their associated tools, techniques, and processes, using elements, principles, and expressive qualities in art forms and genres.

B2 - Composition Skills (6-8)

Students use Elements of Art & Principles of Design to create original artworks that demonstrate different styles in paintings, three-dimensional objects, drawings from imagination and real life, and a variety of other media and visual art forms.

E5 Interpersonal Skills (6-8)

Students demonstrate positive interpersonal skills and analyze how interpersonal skills affect participation in the arts.

c. Working as a team/ensemble.

(e.) Accepting/giving/using constructive feedback.

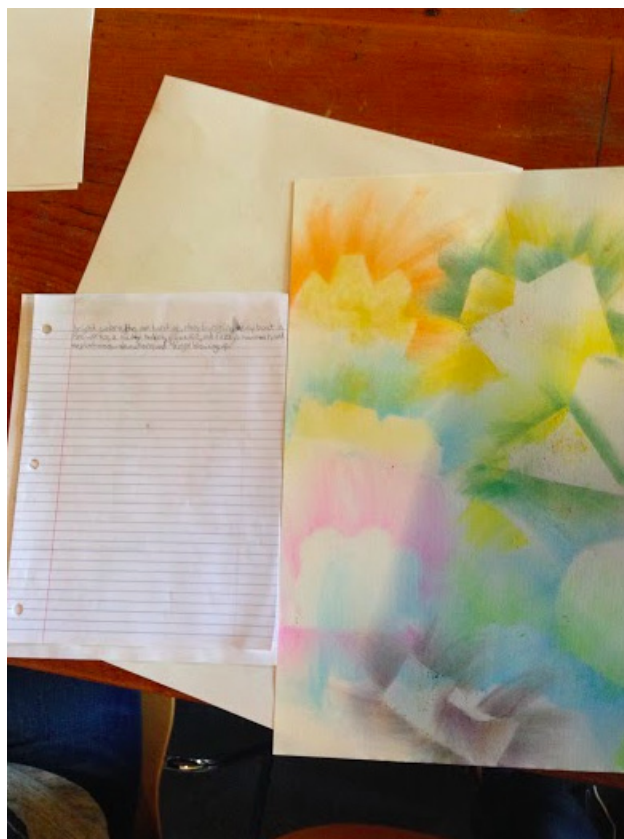
Common Core State Standards:*CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.3.d*

Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.6.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1-3 above.)

Student Work Examples



In this drawing, I notice...

Sharp	Straight	Triangles
Thick	Bright	Angular
Jagged	Soft	Hard-Edged
Heavy	Strong	Rough
Choppy	Dark	Hard
Vertical	Warm	Dull
Horizontal	Cool	Dark
Graceful	Neutral	Medium
Diagonal	Opposite	Light
Fuzzy	Circles	Shallow
Thin	Rectangles	Deep
Curved	Curved	Flat
Smooth	Soft-edged	Rounded
	Squares	

I also notice... (please use kind words)