

Shadow Drawings: An Abstract Composition in Black and White



Target Grade: 9

Goal (Terminal Objective): Students will create an abstract black and white charcoal drawing.

Objective: By using shapes created by shadows as resource material, students will arrange an abstract composition and complete it as a black and white charcoal drawing.

National Standards:

Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media techniques and processes

Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions

Visual Arts Grades 9-12 Content Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas. **Science Cross Curriculum Connection**

Purpose: By observing and documenting how light creates shapes through shadows, students will compose an abstract representation of their observations. Students will demonstrate creative use of charcoal in order to enrich their compositions in values of black and white. Students will visually demonstrate their understanding of rhythm, path of movement, unity, variety, focal point, and subordination by completing an abstract composition.

New Vocabulary: abstract, principles of design: rhythm, path of movement, unity, variety, focal point, subordination, contrast

Materials: white drawing paper; tissue, blending stump, fixative, and the following Sargent Art medium:



#22-4115 12 ct. Charcoal Square Pastel



#22-4116 12 ct. Graytone Square Pastels



#22-7244 Graphite Pencils



#36-0009 Eraser Set



#36-1015 Cap Eraser Blister Pack

Time: approximately 3-4 class periods

Introduction and Motivation (Set):

As a child, did you ever wonder about your own shadow as it appeared on the ground on a sunny day? Have you ever observed the way light falls on an object and thus creates wonderful shapes in the form of shadows? Provide a few direct light sources (like small clip on desk lights) for the students and turn the overhead lights off in the classroom. Have the students record some of the interesting shapes they find in their sketchbook. Do the shapes look like anything imaginative? Take the students outside and have them do the same exercise with natural shadows. Discuss the relationship of non-objective abstract art to the shapes that they observe.

Instruction:

1) Have students lay their white drawing paper down on top of shadows they observe and allow them to trace the contour of the shapes.



2) Using a full value scale of black to white, students proceed to begin adding tone to their abstract composition. Encourage students to use various blending techniques: finger, tissue, blending stump for tight areas, and subtractive (eraser).



adding tone with charcoal



blending charcoal with finger



blending charcoal with tissue



pulling out lighter tones with an eraser

3) When students are happy with their finished composition, spray the drawings with fixative or hairspray to prevent excess smudging.



completed abstract drawing

Activities:

(1) Guided Practice:

- a) As a group activity, find interesting shapes made by shadows in the classroom and out of doors in nature.
- b) As a class, have students document shapes they find in their sketchbooks.
- c) Discuss the relationship of the non-objective shapes students find with those found in abstract art.

(2) Independent Practice and Check for Understanding:

- a) As students work, teacher circulates room to help with individual questions dealing with layout of the composition, and technical issues with the medium.
- b) Teacher offers individual assistance with students' composition layout and handling of new material.

3) Closure:

- a) Conduct a class critique and discussion of the completed abstract compositions.
- b) View from a "3-giant steps back" distance to be sure that a wide range of

values is visually distinct -- good balance and plenty of contrast.

Evaluation:

Grade final compositions using a teacher-created rubric scored 1-10 (10 being the highest) based on the following criteria:

- composition (path of movement, unity, variety, balance)
- use of value (full range and contrast)
- technical use of medium
- individual creativity
- craftsmanship and effort

Resources:

<http://www.kenjanuski.com/birds2.jsp>

http://www.linesandcolors.com/images/2006-09/brace_450.jpg

<http://www.nwe.ufl.edu/~gulmer/longman/1/kandinsky.jpg>

<http://pub.ucsf.edu/missionbay/imagedb/images/2003-05-08-07a.jpg>

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