



THE ILLUSION OF SPACE

EXPLORING LANDSCAPE

Three sessions of 45–55 minutes

This unit introduces some devices artists use in creating the illusion of space in two-dimensional compositions. Students will demonstrate knowledge by discussing paintings of the Hudson River School artists and by creating landscape collages. Students also will learn that artworks can express a society's values and worldview.

Students will

- Examine landscapes by American Hudson River School artists
- Understand the historical/social context of the Hudson River School
- Use construction paper to create landscape collages with foreground and background

How do artists create the illusion of deep space?

- Where does the artist show the most detail?
- Where are the overlapping objects? Which object is closer?
- Compare the size of objects in relation to where they are in the distance. What did you discover?

What is real?

- Imagine you are sitting in the background of your landscape. Describe what you see, hear, smell, taste and feel.

TEACHER LEARNING

Review and reflect upon Standards 9.1.A, 9.1.3.C, 9.1.3.E, 9.2.A, 9.3.3.B, 9.3.3.D, and 9.4.3.B.

Also consider the following ideas:

Research the history and philosophy of the Hudson River School artists. Read about the geographical and historical context of the movement

Prepare to discuss the idea of Manifest Destiny and its relationship to the Hudson River School.

Develop a structured approach for helping students analyze and interpret works of art. Ask a colleague to observe and provide feedback on how students responded to the approach. Finetune the approach for the future.

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LESSON 1

Lesson Goal

Students will explore landscape and how artists depict the visible world in art.

Content Indicators

Know how artists manipulate size, detail, and overlapping in foreground and background to create the illusion of space

Process Indicators

Identify and analyze size, detail, and overlapping in a work of art

Correctly use the terms horizon line, foreground, and background

Demonstrate compositional strategies for creating the illusion of deep space in a landscape sketch

CONTENT, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Key Standard 9.3.3.B

Know that works in the arts can be described by using the arts elements, principles and concepts.

Conduct Warm Up Activities

Show students two objects of the same size from two different distances and discuss observable differences. Ask: “What do you see? How do we know that one object is in front of the other? What makes you say that?” Then measure the actual height of the objects.

Ask students to look out the window and sight-measure what they see with their hands/fingers or pencils. Ask which objects are biggest and smallest and whether objects in the background are really smaller than those in the foreground. Discuss what causes the eye to be fooled with this illusion.

Key Standard 9.2.A

Explain the historical, cultural and social context of an individual work in the arts.

Discuss and Analyze Landscape

Using video and reproductions of works by Hudson River School artists, lead a discussion to enhance students’ understanding of landscape and the horizon line, along with differences in size, sharpness in detail, and overlapping.

Key Standard 9.1.A

Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.

Where is the horizon line? Is it the same in every landscape? What is in the background of this painting? What is in the foreground?

How does the artist tell you something is far away or close?

How would you walk around in this painting? Draw a path with your finger.

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Key Standard 9.3.3.D

Explain meanings in the arts and humanities through individual works and the works of others using a fundamental vocabulary of critical response.

Lesson 1 (cont.)

Discuss the History of the Hudson River School

Ask students to describe what they see in a group of Hudson River School landscapes. Ask:

- What do you see in this scene?
- Does the scene look wild or tamed?
- Are humans included in the scenes? If so, how large are they compared to natural elements? If not, is there any evidence of human civilization in the scene?

Discuss what made landscape a popular subject for artists in the 19th century and how landscapes of the Hudson River School influenced 19th century American society.

Key Standard 9.4.B

Know how to communicate an informed individual opinion about the meaning of works in the arts.

Engage Students in Critical and Aesthetic Response

Discuss Manifest Destiny—the belief in nineteenth century America that the United States was supposed to expand from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean. Ask students to discuss how the landscapes show that belief.

Ask students to share their thoughts about nature.

Key Standard 9.1.3.E

Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through creation of works in the arts.

Create Thumbnail Sketches

Direct students to create thumbnail sketches of a landscape with the emphasis on size relationships. Students may choose a familiar place, such as a nearby park or forest, or use their imagination with such choices as a distant planet, jungle, ocean bottom, etc. The sketch will be the basis for a collage.

Formative Assessment: Review sketches, checking for appropriate depth components.

Support Literacy

To support students' critical response and language arts learning, instruct students to write a descriptive paragraph using one of these prompts:

- What feelings about nature do you want your landscape to communicate to your viewers?
- Imagine you are sitting in the background of your landscape. Describe what you see, hear, smell, taste and feel.

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LESSON 2

Lesson Goal

Students will construct a landscape collage that will include both foreground and background. They will use variation in size, overlapping, and detail to create the illusion of space.

Content Indicators

Know how to use pictorial devices for depicting three-dimensional space on a two-dimensional surface in a landscape

Process Indicators

Use variation in size, overlapping, and detail to depict three-dimensional space in a landscape collage with foreground and background

CONTENT, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Key Standard 9.1.A

Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.

Key Standard 9.1.3.C

Recognize and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.

Introduce Foreground and Background

Arrange objects on a table and direct students to describe which items are in the foreground and background. Allow students to manipulate objects to demonstrate further their understanding of foreground and background. Ask students to view objects from a distance versus close up and describe observed differences.

Introduce Illusion of Space

Explain that students are observing the same way the Hudson River painters did when they made sketches in the landscape. They used strategies for depicting space such as diminishing size, overlapping, and diminishing detail to show distant and close objects. They created an “illusion of space” on a 2D surface.

Ask students to describe how artists effectively created an illusion of deep space in several additional Hudson River School landscapes or similar works.

As objects get farther away from you, how do you see them?

Are there parts of objects hidden from view?

Where does the artist show the most detail?

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Key Standard 9.1.A

Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities.

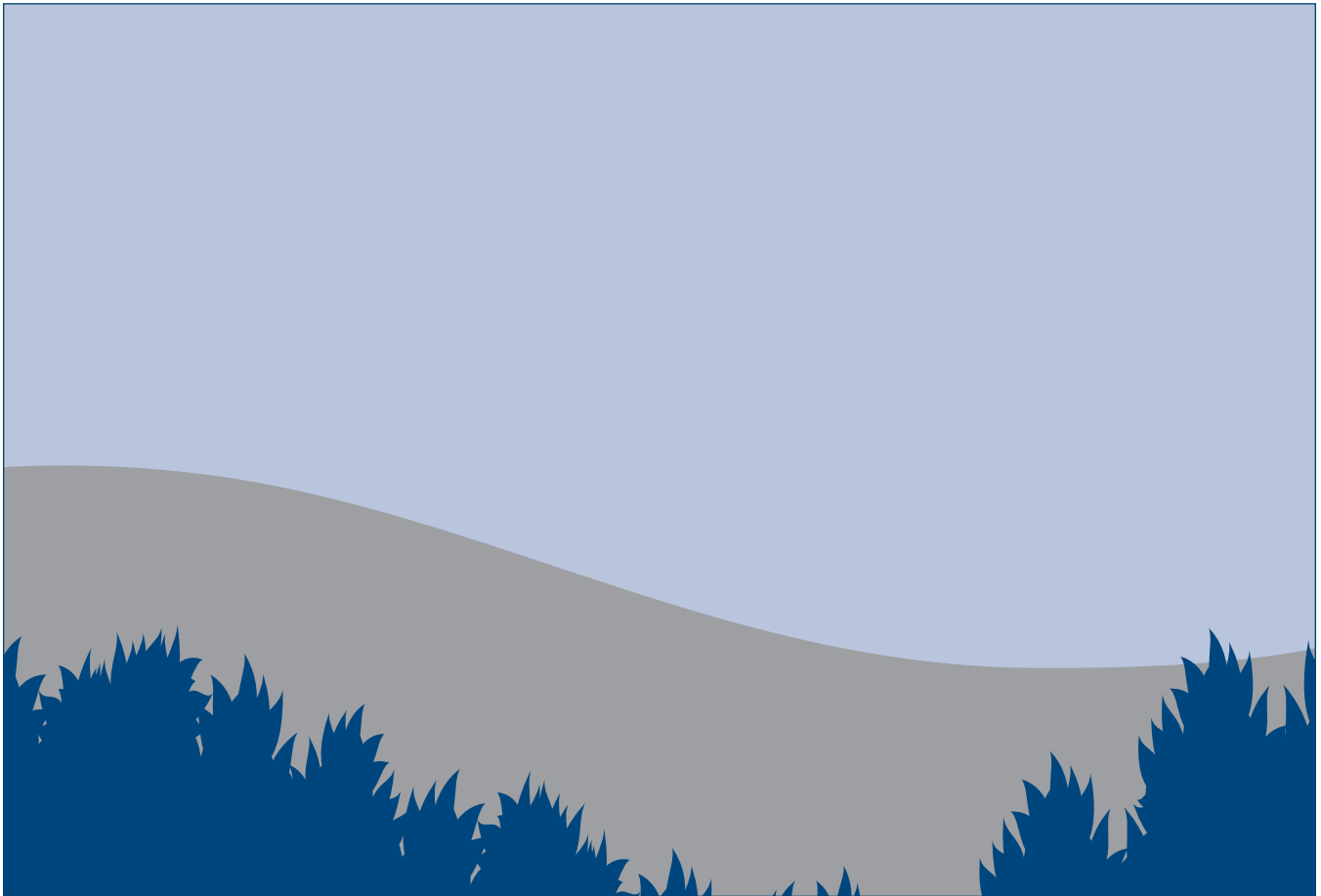
Lesson 2 (cont.)

Construct Foreground and Background

Direct students to follow these steps:

- 1) Choose three different colored construction papers for their collages—one for sky, one for background, and one for foreground.
- 2) Tear or cut background and foreground papers before aligning and gluing them on top of the sky. (See illustration.)
- 3) Begin to draw main objects on smaller papers, referring to the thumbnail sketch created during Lesson 1.
- 4) Save drawings for further collage application in Lesson 3.

Formative Assessment: Observe correct alignment of landscape layers.



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LESSON 3

Lesson Goal

Students will complete their landscape collages and write about them.

Content Indicators

Know how to use strategies to depict space in a landscape, including atmospheric perspective and overlapping

Process Indicators

Use diminishing size, overlapping, and diminished detail to create the illusion of space in a landscape collage with foreground and background

Use appropriate vocabulary when describing how space is depicted in own landscape

CONTENT, INSTRUCTION, AND ASSESSMENT

Key Standard 9.1.3.E

Demonstrate the ability to define objects, express emotions, illustrate an action or relate an experience through creation of works in the arts.

Add Objects to Landscape Collages

Direct students to follow these steps:

- 1) Complete drawing of objects that belong in their landscapes using colored paper scraps. Cut the objects out.
- 2) Arrange objects in the appropriate ground area using size and overlapping to imply space. Glue objects in place.
- 3) Add detail by degrees, depending on placement in space.

Formative Assessment: Check for understanding of spatial concepts during construction. Also, provide a self-assessment form (such as page G3-9).

Display Students' Work

Allow students to mount their work for display.

Key Standard 9.1.3.C

Recognize and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms.

Write about the Work

Instruct students to write three sentences describing their landscapes using words from the vocabulary list.

Summative Assessment: Assess students' layered landscapes and written work using the rubric on page G3-8. Explain any differences between students' self-assessments and the ratings shown on the rubric.

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DIFFERENTIATION

Special Education Students

Adding Objects to Collage: Consult with students as they arrange objects. Check for understanding of size, detail, and overlapping and appropriate placement in grounds.

Production Techniques: Allow students to sketch edges of foreground and background before tearing or cutting papers. Reinforce proper alignment of the bottom and side edges of layers before gluing together.

ESL/ELL Students

Using Vocabulary: Provide basic vocabulary in students' native languages on an information sheet or wall chart.

Adding Objects to Collage: Consult with students as they arrange objects. Check for understanding of size, detail, and overlapping and appropriate placement in grounds.

Extension/Enrichment

Adding Objects to Collage: Encourage students to develop the area between the foreground and background (the middle ground).

Integration Opportunities

The following questions could link the unit to social studies or science units:

- Where do you think we would find a scene like this in our country today?
- What can we do to preserve our landscape?

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SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Students will identify the elements of a landscape that convey the illusion of depth on a two-dimensional surface using appropriate vocabulary and will analyze art reproductions to associate depth perception with spatial illusion strategies. The teacher will monitor understanding through discussion.

Students will create a sketch and then a final landscape using strategies to convey depth. The teacher will observe production and check for understanding. Students will self-assess using a teacher-designed form or the form on page G3-9. Upon completion, the teacher will evaluate each student’s process and product by reviewing sketch, landscape, and self-assessment.

Criteria	Advanced	Proficient	Basic	Below Basic
Understands sky, foreground, and background in a layered landscape collage.	Correctly places sky, foreground, and background papers with little or no teacher guidance.	Correctly places sky, foreground, and background papers with limited teacher guidance.	Correctly places sky, foreground, and background papers with significant teacher guidance.	Incorrectly places sky, foreground, and background papers even with teacher guidance.
Understands and uses pictorial devices for depicting 3D space (overlapping, diminishing size, and less distinct detail) to create the illusion of space in a layered landscape collage.	Uses all three pictorial devices for depicting 3D space to create a very effective illusion of space in a layered landscape collage.	Uses two of the three pictorial devices for depicting 3D space to create an illusion of space in a layered landscape collage.	Uses one of the three pictorial devices for depicting 3D space in a layered landscape collage.	Demonstrates no understanding of pictorial devices for depicting 3D space.
Uses appropriate vocabulary to write sentences describing layered landscape collage and pictorial devices for depicting 3D space.	Describes collage and pictorial devices for depicting 3D space with consistent use of appropriate vocabulary.	Describes collage and pictorial devices for depicting 3D space with fairly consistent use of appropriate vocabulary.	Describes collage and pictorial devices for depicting 3D space with somewhat inconsistent use of appropriate vocabulary.	Describes collage and pictorial devices for depicting 3D space incorrectly or without use of appropriate vocabulary.

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Student Assessment – Landscape

Name _____

What are the parts of a landscape?

1. _____

2. _____

Answer these questions about your landscape:

I made a landscape with a foreground, background, and sky.

4 3 2 1 0

Objects in my foreground are larger than those in the background.

4 3 2 1 0

I overlapped some objects to show they were in front of other objects.

4 3 2 1 0

My foreground has more details than my background.

4 3 2 1 0

/16
Student Total

/16
Teacher Total

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MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Art Reproductions

Use a variety of 19th century American painters, such as Thomas Cole (1801-1848), Asher Brown Durand (1796-1886), Sanford Robinson Gifford (1823-1880), John William Casilear (1811-1893), Jasper Francis Cropsey (1823-1900), Frederic Edwin Church (1826-1900), John Frederick Kensett (1816-1872), Thomas Moran (1837-1926), and Albert Bierstadt (1830-1902).

May also use reproductions of other landscapes by Georgia O'Keeffe (American, 1887-1986), Ansel Adams (American, 1902-1984), Grant Wood (American, 1891-1942), Andrew Wyeth (Pennsylvania, b. 1917), Jamie Wyeth (Pennsylvania, b. 1946), Rosa Bonheur (French, 1822-1899), Edward Hicks (Pennsylvania, 1780-1849).

Posters

Elements and Principles of Design (Crystal Productions)

Reference Books

America the Beautiful: Masterworks of the 19th Century Landscape from the Wadsworth Atheneum (published February, 2004)

Student Books

Artist Workshop Series-*Landscapes*

Off the Wall Museum Guide for Kids: American Art by Ruthie Knapp and Janice Lehmberg, Davis Publications

Videos

Painters of the American Scene: Benton, Wood, Hopper (Who Is This Artist? Series)

Behind the Scenes, Penn & Teller

Artists at Work, Landscapes Art Adventure-Country (Lesson 4), Wilton 100 Series, teacher manual, pg. 9

Web Sites

Locate history and theory of Hudson River School (for teacher reference) at www.nyhistory.org/web/ and www.albanyinstitute.org/.

See Mark Harden's Artchive (www.artchive.com) or Artcyclopedia (www.artcyclopedia.com) to locate electronic reproductions of most of the works cited.

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Student Materials

Pencil
Colored pencils or markers
Sketch paper
Colored construction paper
Scissors
Glue

VOCABULARY LIST

arrangement	landscape
background	overlap
depth	patriotism
diminishing detail	sketch
diminishing size	space
distance	<i>topographical terms as appropriate</i> (examples: mountains, valley, cliffs, etc.)
foreground	
horizon	
Hudson River School artists	