

Elementary Lesson Plan

LESSON TITLE:

FAMOUS ABSTRACT ARTIST LANDSCAPE (Inspired by Susan Lechner)

ART TEACHER:

Wynne Harrison, Glenwood Elementary School
Waukegan Community Unit School District #60, Waukegan, IL

GRADE LEVEL: Elementary, Grade 4

OBJECTIVES: This art lesson was inspired by Susan Lechner's philosophy in creating abstract art that is not what we see in reality but recognizable.

1. I will learn about Susan Lechner who is known for her abstract style in her artwork that combines bright colors and textures in images that are not real but recognizable.
2. I will create landscape artwork that is inspired by all three famous artists abstract style by using their similar bright colors, shapes and form.
3. I will use color, shape and texture to create emotion in my artwork instead of creating what the eyes sees.

LESSON SUMMARY: Students will learn that the modern abstract art movement was born early in the 20th century and that the artists focused on other visual qualities like color, form and texture. There will be discussion regarding a pairing of recognizable natural forms found in landscape which has been changed to abstract shapes, colors and forms that have been inspired from the famous artists they learned about in class.

STANDARDS:

Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas

VA:Cr2.1.4 a. Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Va: Cr3.1.4a. Revise artwork in progress on the basis of insights gained through peer discussion.

Anchor Standard 7: Perceive and analyze artistic work.

VA:Re7.1.4a. Compare responses to a work of art before and after working in similar media.

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Va: Re.8.1.4a Communicate feelings when engaging works of art and describe subject matter, formal characteristics, and art-making approaches to discuss meanings of artwork.

MATERIALS: Examples of Lechner's artwork, Chromebook, notebook paper, copy paper and/or drawing paper, HB Pencil #2, colored pencils, markers, black sharpie and/or crayons

NEW VOCABULARY: abstract art, representation, form, texture, monochromatic colors, primary colors, cool colors, warm colors, organic/geometric shapes, foreground, middle ground, background, horizon line, concentric circles

PREPARATION: Have students take several photos of themselves (portrait style) to figure out which picture best describes who they. Before the portrait drawing happens talk to students about what symbols or imagery comes to mind when they want to say something about themselves.



Artwork by Ansley Kirby, a student at Glenwood Elementary School.

SEQUENCE: Five 45-minute sessions (25 minutes of instruction, 20 minutes asynchronous) due the remote learning environment.

Day 1: Understanding the concept of the abstract movement

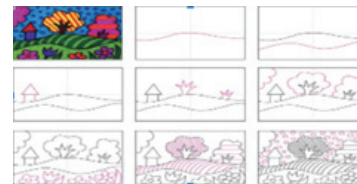
- Introduction to Susan Lechner's approach to her artwork.
- Talk about the meaning of abstract art which does not show things that are recognizable such as people, objects or landscape. Discuss how abstract artists use colors, shapes and textures to achieve this effect. However, these images are recognizable due to their shapes which is familiar even though the color and size is not like that in real life. Talk about Susan Lechner quote, "it's an opportunity to express the world in your eyes, the way you want to see it."
- Show examples of Susan Lechner's artwork and have a discussion. For example, in one of her paintings, the leaves are very colorful and the raindrop is larger than normal. The students recognized this right way due to the familiarity.

Day 2: Learn about the three famous artists and their approach in creating abstract art

- Show YouTube videos on the concept of abstract art so students can learn about famous abstract artists and their techniques such as Piet Mondrian, Paul Klee and Wassily Kandinsky.
- The first artist they will learn about is Piet Mondrian. He only used the primary colors blue, yellow and red with white and black. The only shape that was used in his paintings were squares in different sizes which were outlined in black.
- The second artist Paul Klee used the magic squares to explore movement, visual weight and rhythm through the use of colors and shapes. His shapes created recognizable images, i.e. castle, cityscape and/or bridge.
- The third artist Wassily Kandinsky used concentric circles in his artwork which is a repetition of circles inside all the circles. Students experimented in using different art materials in this project.

Day 3: Tutorial on drawing an abstract landscape

- Draw a ground line (i.e. straight, wavy, zig zag).
- Draw another ground line above.
- Draw a third ground line above the second ground line.
- Draw one more line and this is the horizon line.
- Add a sun or a moon, this could be a night/day theme.
- Add a pattern that is inspired by all three famous artists, Mondrian, Klee and Kandinsky.
- Draw this final copy in pencil and then outline with black sharpie or black marker.



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Day 4: Create their own abstract landscape inspired by all three famous artists

- Students will brainstorm from all three of their in class assignments on learning about each of the famous abstract artists, Mondrian, Klee and Kandinsky.

They will have to decide:

- Which artist technique will they be using in their own abstract artwork?
- How would they create an image and use each artistic style they learned in class would illustrate their understanding of each abstract artist's technique?
- What colors, shapes and textures would they use to recreate an image that is recognizable and yet not what it looks like in reality.

Day 5: Students will finish their art project and reflect on the following:

- Did they use all three artist's abstract styles in their landscape?
- Did they use geometric and organic shapes in their landscape drawing?
- Did they use similar colors and shapes as each artist? They should refer to the examples of their drawings they did in class for reference.
- Did they include the foreground, middleground and background in their landscape? Did they utilize the horizon line as their guide?

TWO ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS:

1. How did the artist Susan Lechner influence you in creating an abstract landscape using famous artists approaches in creating an image?
2. How do abstract artists use colors, shapes and textures to achieve this effect in making their images recognizable?

Artwork by students at Glenwood Elementary School. Top image by Itzel Gallardo. Bottom image by Jaylene Morales.



THANK YOU!

TO OUR LESSON PLAN CONTRIBUTORS



Elementary Lesson: Wynne Harrison is a mixed media artist who has taught art at a private/public school, summer art camp and at a maximum security prison. She has been teaching at the Waukegan School District since 2018. Ms. Harrison lives in Lake Bluff, Illinois and enjoys her free time with her two daughters. She will be getting her Masters in Special Education with a focus on ADHD, Autism and Behavior Disorders this fall.



Middle School Lesson: Elizabeth Farnesi earned her undergraduate degree in Art Education at Northern Illinois University then went on to get a Master's degree in drawing and painting from Governors State University. Elizabeth is in her 16th year teaching art at Wilkins Jr. High in Justice, IL. Her love and enthusiasm for art is not only seen in the classroom but also how her students respond. She creates an open relaxed atmosphere for students to create and achieve more than they thought possible. Outside of school, Elizabeth creates large-scale pieces that bring out the natural raw beauty in the moment that is captured through the use of light and shadow. Although Elizabeth primarily uses charcoal, she also uses various media to bring her work to life. Her work is often inspired by her own personal thoughts and experiences, allowing each piece to tell its own story.