

**LESSON TITLE:** My Shadow

**TEACHER NAME:** Sarah Brown & Lori Bertonazzi

**UNIT OF STUDY/TOPIC:** Where Do I Fit In?

**GRADE LEVEL:** 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades

**CLASS TIME:** 90Minutes 1Days/week 1 Session

### **RATIONAL/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In the following lesson, students will examine the use of the body as a way to express themselves. They have already analyzed the ways that colors and symbols can be used to express certain ideas and values, and will now apply the same rationale to the movement and posture of the body. In the process, they will be introduced to the use of positive and negative space, and will thoughtfully design a silhouette of their body, which combines personal expression, and interesting use of positive and negative shapes.

Body image is often beginning to become a concern for adolescents, especially females, as they tend to physically mature faster than males. For this reason, the lesson focuses on the body as a means of expressing the self and creating an interesting visual design.

### **MATERIALS/EQUIPMENT**

- Cut abstract paintings from lesson 2
- Acrylic paint (various colors)
- Brushes
- Computer
- Projector
- Pencils
- Dancer visual
- Gestalt visual (vase)
- Masonite (4- 2' x 6')

### **ROOM ARRANGEMENT**

The beginning of instruction will take place in the computer lab. Visuals will be shown on the projector. Once students have finished tracing their silhouettes the class will move to the painting studio.

### **VOCABULARY**

#### **Silhouette:**

- A cast shadow.

#### **Positive and Negative Space:**

- **Positive space:** The active space; the object you see.
- **Negative space:** Often, the inactive space surrounding the positive space (see visual)

### **REFERENCE/SOURCES**

- Gestalt visual (vase): <http://z.about.com/d/painting/1/5/d/W/1/NegativeSpace-Vase.jpg>
- Dancer visual:  
<http://media.collegepublisher.com/media/paper343/stills/j4a114q1.jpg>

## **STANDARDS/OBJECTIVES**

### **STANDARDS**

#### **1.1 Aesthetics**

##### **1.1.8 B. Skills**

3. Express how art is inspired by an individual's imagination.

*Students will use their imagination as a source in order to create an interesting silhouette.*

#### **1.2 Creation and Performance**

##### **1.2.8 D. Visual Art**

1. Incorporate various art elements and principles in the creation of works of art.

*The students will use positive and negative space when creating their paintings in order to create interesting, expressive shapes in both the positive and negative spaces.*

2. Explore various media, technologies and processes in the production of two and three-dimensional art.

*Students will use the projector as a tool in creating artwork.*

3. Identify form, function, craftsmanship, and originality when creating a work of art.

*Students will determine the how their bodies can be used to create interesting, abstract shapes (form/originality); how their body can be used to express (function). They will have to accurately trace the body and carefully paint in the silhouette (craftsmanship).*

#### **1.4 Critique**

##### **1.4.8 B. Skills**

1. Evaluate the judgment of others based on the process of critique.

### **Language Arts Literacy**

**STANDARD 3.2 (Writing)** All students will write in clear, concise, organized language that varies in content and form for different audiences and purposes.

#### **D. Writing Forms, Audiences, and Purposes (exploring a variety of forms)**

14. Maintain a collection of writing (e.g., a literacy folder, or a literacy portfolio).

*At the end of class, students will take five minutes to reflect on the lesson.*

### **OBJECTIVES**

***Students will be able to:***

- Distinguish the difference between positive and negative space.
- Apply the use of positive and negative space to create and interesting composition, which should include a variety of shapes.
- Explain how the body can be used in order to express our feelings, moods, and thoughts.
- Create an interesting silhouette using positive and negative space and explicitly expressive body movements. They will then transfer their silhouettes into an expressive painting.
- Evaluate the level of success in terms of composition, originality, and expression in each other's work.

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE

### INTRODUCTION

- Topic Question: (Gestalt image will be projected on the screen when students enter the computer lab)
  - Write down the first thing you see when you look at the screen. (*Vase, two faces, black and white shapes*)
  - If you saw the vase first, when you look closely at the image, can you make yourself see the two faces?
  - Why do you think we were each able to see a different image/or both?
  - Can you see both of the images at the same time? (*No- it's only possible to see one at a time*)
- Association: The reason that you are unable to see both images simultaneously is because of the way we perceive positive and negative space.
  - When you see the vase in the image, that becomes the positive space- it is the object or thing on the page. The space around it becomes the background, or negative space.
  - Is there more positive or negative space in the image of the vase?
  - If you saw the two faces when you looked at the image, the black space that makes up the faces becomes the positive space and the white space in between no longer reads as a vase, but as just a space.
- Visualization: (Show visual of dancers)
  - What is the positive space in this image? (*Dancers*)
  - (To aid students in distinguishing positive and negative space, a black and white image of the dancers' silhouettes will be shown simultaneously)
  - What is the negative space? (*The studio you can see around the outside of the dancers' bodies as well as the spaces they have created in between each other and their body parts*)
  - How do you know? (*The dancers are the predominant figures that my eyes read when I look at the image*)
  - Pay attention to the shapes that are created in *both* the positive and negative space. What shapes do you see? (*Triangles, organic shapes*)
- Transition: (Continue to show dancer visual)
  - Now I want you to focus on the positions of the dancers' bodies in terms of their expressive qualities.
  - What does this pose suggest? (*Clearly you can tell that the women are experienced dancers, they are close to each other*)
  - Does their pose seem rigid/geometric? Or does it seem to flow organically/freely/naturally?
  - What does this suggest emotionally? Expressively?
  - How does the pose of the dancer on the left compare/contrast with the pose of the dancer on the right?
  - How does the expression of their individual poses differ from the expression of their cumulative pose?
  - If you were asked to create a pose that helped us identify something about you, or allowed you to express something about yourself, what would you do? (*Examples: A runner would pose like so [assistant poses]; I am an*

*artist, so I chose to pose with my paint brush in the air [show teacher examples])*

- Today you are going to be creating paintings of your silhouettes that are going to express something about you.
  - To think about:
    - Different body positions suggest different moods- for example, if I slump over, what does that tell you about how I'm feeling? If I do a jumping jack, what does that tell you? You want to capture an expressive movement.
    - Consider the use of positive and negative space. Your silhouette should be an interesting positive shape. You also need to consider making interesting negative shapes that interact with the positive ones as you observed in the image of the dancers.
    - Remember, this is about you! I want your silhouette to scream Shanet! or Bree! You can use props if you'd like, but they must relate to you- something you love to do, something you want to be when you're older, the way you feel, etc.

## SEQUENCE OF ACTIVITIES

1. The first thing you are going to do is brainstorm about your poses. Think about the things I touched on above. Try out different body movements and pay attention to the silhouettes they create.
2. Once you decide on a pose, you will position yourself in front of the projector (with assistance from the teacher) to create a shadow.
3. Using a pencil, your classmate will trace your shadow onto your abstract painting from Lesson 2. Carefully trace, as it will be difficult to erase lines.
4. Once you have your tracing complete, you should begin to consider color use.
  - What color are you going to paint your silhouette- it does not have to be black.
  - How does the color relate to your expression? To you?
  - How does it relate to the painting? Does the color make sense given the background/negative space colors?

### Demo:

- The assistant's project has been started but is not complete.
- The teacher will finish tracing the assistant so that students can see how to do it.
- As she traces, she will discuss the positive and negative spaces that the assistant has created with her pose.
- Once the tracing is complete, the assistant will "think out loud" when deciding the color that she will chose for her silhouette.
- She will begin to fill in the tracing with paint.

## CLOSURE/CULMINATING EXPERIENCE

### Informal Critique:

- Student work will be displayed on the walls and the following questions will be discussed:
  - Why did you choose this pose?
  - How does your piece tell me about you?
  - What kinds of positive and negative shapes did you create?
  - How did you decide which color to use?

## ADAPTATIONS/MODIFICATIONS

If a child had a physical disability, such as being confined to a wheel chair, and was unable to physically pose, we would have to photograph them and project their picture on the screen to create an interesting silhouette. One-on-one teacher assistance would be necessary.

## LESSON ANALYSIS

### STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- See rubric.
- Journal Entry 3: At the end of class, students will take 5 minutes to reflect on the following:
  - What did I learn from this project?
  - Do you think that facial expressions or body gestures are more affective in expressing a mood or thought? Why?

## SELF-REFLECTION

I. ***Learning Environment*** – *Teacher candidates understand individual and group motivation and behavior and create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.*

**(6.4) Creates a positive classroom climate, which is socially, emotionally and physically safe. (NJPTS 6.9)**

Throughout the lessons, our students moved from classroom to classroom for a change of environment, as well as to provide sufficient access to various tools needed to complete art projects. For this particular lesson, a space was needed that could not only create an environment to utilize the project, but an environment that would excite the students learning process. To warm-up, students were asked to create quick figure gesture drawings. To break them of possibly being hesitant in the main portion of the project (which involved them posing for a long time) I posed in various positions for 30-second intervals in different, unusual and some “silly” positions. It was important for me as the teacher to show that I was not afraid of acting in a silly way in front of the group. I needed to show that I was comfortable so that in turn, they would be comfortable too. When the gesture drawings were completed, the students were then asked to create poses signifying different emotions or characteristics of themselves. When it came to the students creating different poses, they came up with wonderful ideas that connected with their identities.

Upon the students’ first entrance into the classroom, there was not much excitement. The classroom was literally the lounge, fully in tact with loud, humming vending machines. To distract their attention from our physical location, the projector

single-handedly changed the classroom environment. When the lights were out, and the blue light from the projector was lighting the room, the students were intrigued. There was little hesitation about beginning the process of posing and tracing.

***9. Collaboration and Partnerships – Teacher candidates build relationships with parents, guardians, families and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being.***

**(9.2) Establishes respectful and productive relationships to develop cooperative partnerships with diverse families, educators and others in the community in support of student learning and well-being. (NJPTS 9.8)**

Until this lesson, students were spending a majority of their time working individually in the aspect of physically creating art. It was time to shift the lessons from intrapersonal skills to interpersonal skills. In this project, students and teachers had to help one another through various tasks. Students and teachers were responsible for helping one another keep a pose, help trace the shadows of one another, and give one another positive “coaching” during uncomfortable stances. During the process, it was important for each of us to communicate with one another. For example, if someone posing began to shift, the students and/or teachers needed to communicate to the rest of the group so the piece did not become distorted. The process of everyone working together made the group form a new bond. The classroom community was definitely devoid of the traditional teacher to student pedagogy. Everyone in the group was an artist.

II. Initially, the students were shown the Gestalt image. Both students had never seen the image before which came to me as a surprise. With luck, the concept of positive and negative space was new to both students. They were intrigued by the fact that they could see two images but not simultaneously. When the image of the Dancers was presented to the students, the confidence of understanding positive and negative space disappeared. The image was of real people and contained more than two colors. To help them understand, I went back and forth between the two images to help them understand the relationship of positive and negative space in 2-D and 3-D forms.

At the age level of the students, they often like to watch rather than participate. When the students were asked to pose themselves, they were slightly hesitant. It was important for the students to break from that notion of being a viewer to an active participant. Artistically, the lesson focused on the students comprehending the use of positive and negative space as well as creating cohesiveness to the background of their piece while not forgetting that the pose had to represent their identity. Both students captured their personalities in their poses as well as keeping up with the theme of their abstract backgrounds. For instance, one of the student's backgrounds was based upon Edgar Allen Poe's, *The Raven*. To keep the darkness of the painting/theme, the student executed a pose that consisted of her crouching down, hair covering her face, with an arm reaching out into nothing. The other student's abstract painting/theme involved a dance she had participated in. For her pose, she held a dance move.

The lesson ended with an informal critique with teachers and students as participants. Each student/teacher gave interpretations of one another's work. To assess the students' work, they were to complete a journal entry. Unfortunately, there was no time at the end of the lesson. I was sure to ask the students the questions I had planned

them to answer in the journal orally the next lesson. If I were to change anything about the lesson, I would have paid more attention to time as well as had more positive and negative images for the students to examine.