
1st Grade LWSD Art Docent Project: Composition Collage

Element of Art: Space

Objective: to create a collage that follows the rule of composition known as the **rule of thirds**, encouraging students to focus on how they distribute shapes in the **space** of their artwork.

Artistic Influence: Local photographer Audrey Guidi (www.audreyguidi.com)



Elements of Art:

Space

Materials:

- **9"x 12" construction paper in all available colors**
- **Origami paper, rice paper, patterned paper or any other kind of scrap paper you can find**
- **8 ½" x 11" transparencies printed with the rule of thirds** (template on last page of this doc, 1 per student)
- **Scissors**
- **Glue sticks**
- **Baby wipes**

Instructions and notes:

1. It is helpful to have construction paper backdrop color options sorted on a side table for students to choose.
2. You can buy plastic transparencies that can be sent through a photocopier or inkjet printer or simply draw the rule of thirds on overhead transparencies with black Sharpies. 2 students may share 1 transparency.
3. Students just need one pencil to write their names. Put away all crayons and markers to eliminate the temptation for students to spend time coloring instead of cutting out shapes.
4. To use less paper and expedite setup, prepare baskets with smaller sized scraps of paper in a variety of sizes, textures and colors. Have student desks arranged in clusters, and place one basket at each cluster of desks.
5. Go through the slides, focusing on how major elements are arranged in the space of each photo's frame.
6. Pause on slide 25, have students choose their backdrop paper and then begin their cutting and arranging.
7. Students may create a realistic or abstract scene, all colors, shapes and ideas welcome, as long as they follow the **rule of thirds**.
8. Remind students not to cut or glue the plastic transparencies, so that they may be reused in other classes.
9. Remind students to start with 2 or 3 major shapes and to look through their transparencies to help them arrange their shapes under the black guidelines.
10. Do not hand out glue until you or another parent volunteer has reviewed each student's arrangement through the transparency guidelines, suggesting slight adjustments if they are not following the rule.
11. When students finish, ask them to clean up their space and pick up scraps of paper from the floor.
12. Remind them to tightly cap all glue sticks.
13. Distribute parent information page for students to take home, and print an extra page to post on your bulletin board with the finished art. See following page.
14. Please complete the brief [LWSD Art Docent Program Feedback Survey](#) for this lesson.
15. Thank you for supporting our elementary students' visual arts education.

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The goal of this 1st grade lesson was to introduce the concept of composition in photography and art.



Yodobashi Camera, Tokyo, Japan © 2001 Audrey Guidi

WA State Visual Arts Standard

Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art. (VA: Cr1.2.1)

In this art lesson taught by volunteer art docents, students learned about the **rule of thirds** and applied a fresh awareness of **space** to their creation of a mixed paper collage. After being introduced to the concept of composition through photographs taken by local photographer Audrey Guidi, students were given plastic transparencies printed with rule of thirds gridlines, (shown in white over the photo above), to help them follow this popular rule of composition. Students looked through the gridlines while arranging shapes they cut out. Creative use of colors and shapes was encouraged, with the option of creating a realistic scene or an abstraction, so long as the rule of thirds was followed.

The development of this Lake Washington School District art docent lesson was made possible by a grant from the Lake Washington Schools Foundation.

