
3rd Grade LWSD Art Docent Project: Geometric vs. Organic Shapes

Element of Art: Shape

Objectives: Explain the difference between geometric and organic shapes and use a variety of paint techniques to create a Kusama-inspired pumpkin.

Artistic Influence: Yoiyo Kusama



Element of Art: Shape

Materials:

- Pencil
- Black sharpie
- Paint brush, about size 8 standard
- 9x12 Watercolor paper
- Scrap paper
- Paper plates
- Paper towels
- Watercolor pan set
- Black tempera paint
- Corks
- Pencil (eraser end only)

Definition(s): (see definitions on last page)

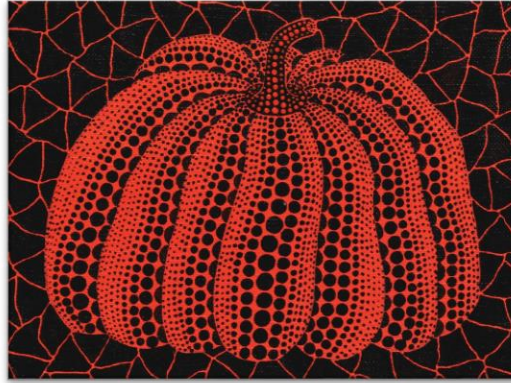
- Geometric: shapes and/or forms that are based on mathematical principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, or pyramid.
- Organic: shapes and/or forms that are irregular, often curving or rounded, and more informal than geometric shapes.

Instructions and notes:

1. Study the paintings in the PowerPoint beforehand so you can bring some of your own insights and questions about them. It is always a good idea to do a sample of the lesson so you have experienced the process of the project yourself.
2. Slide 2: Have this slide up while students are transitioning and getting ready to begin art.
3. Slide 3: Briefly explain the artistic element of shape.
4. Go through the steps in the PowerPoint slide deck.
5. Slide 10: What kinds of shapes do you see? Give definitions and ask the question again.
6. Slide 13: Remind students to leave enough space between the lines. They need space for the dots!
7. Slide 12: It's important that students understand how to properly use art materials. Make sure you emphasize they move in circular motions and not smash the paintbrush hairs.
8. Slide 14: Tell the students to go in long, smooth strokes. This will allow them to paint the edge by the lines and color it evenly. Also that they don't want their art to get too much water on it so it can dry!
9. Slides 16-19: The watercolor needs about 5 minutes to dry. You can have them hold it with both hands and raise it up and down in the air if desired. You can talk to them about dot variety and placement at this time while volunteers collect watercolor trays, paintbrushes, and water cups.
10. 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.
11. Please complete the brief [LWSD Art Docent Program Feedback Survey](#) for this lesson.
12. Thank you for supporting our elementary students' visual arts education.

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The goal of this 3rd grade lesson was to create a Kusama-inspired pumpkin using geometric and organic shapes and a variety of paint techniques.



Pumpkins, 2006, Yayoi Kusama

WA State Visual Arts Standard

Create personally satisfying artwork, using a variety of artistic processes and materials. (VA: Cr2.1.3)

In this art lesson taught by volunteer art docents, students learned that shape is a closed space made when a line connects to itself. They also learned to differentiate between geometric and organic shapes.

The students used watercolors and tempera paint as well as a variety of tools—paintbrushes, pencil erasers, Sharpie markers, and corks. They focused on drawing organic shapes to form a pumpkin and adding geometric shapes (circles) for their design.

The inspiration for this project was Yayoi Kusama's art, who uses many types of mediums in her paintings, sculptures, and art installations, etc. She uses many dots to express herself and has said, *"Our earth is only one polka dot among a million stars in the cosmos. Polka dots are a way to infinity."*

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