

# Calm Lines

Grade 1 – Lesson 2

(*Art Connections*, Level 1, pgs. 16-17A)

## Big Idea

*Horizontal and vertical lines can make a picture look calm.*

## Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

**Target 1:** Identifies and makes different directions of lines. (Arts EALR 1.1 *Elements of Art: Line direction*)

**Criteria 1:** Points out and makes horizontal lines.

**Criteria 2:** Points out and makes vertical lines.

**Target 3:** Repeats line directions to create a calm image. (Arts EALR 1.1.2 *Principles of Organization: Line direction for expressive effect*)

**Criteria 3:** Combines horizontal and vertical lines in one composition to make a calm image.

## Local Art Reference



**A Country Home**, 1854

*Frederic Edwin Church*

65.80

Seattle Art Museum

(NOTE to Teacher: See **Art Background** section at end of lesson for more information about this work of art.)

## Looking at Art Questions

(Note to Teacher: Show both Church's *A Country Home* above and the Kahn's Study for *Chesapeake and Ohio Canal in Spring II* from *Art Connections*, Level 1, pg. 16.)

1. When a line goes up and down we call it vertical. Let's draw invisible vertical lines with our hands in the air.
2. Where do you see vertical lines in these paintings?
3. When a line goes from side to side we call it horizontal. Let's draw invisible horizontal lines with our hands in the air.
4. Where do you see horizontal lines in these paintings?
5. Can you find a vertical or horizontal line outside our windows? If you see one, whisper it to a friend.

6. When our bodies are vertical, we are usually standing still. What are you usually doing when your body is horizontal? (Sleeping)
7. In the same way that standing still and sleeping are quiet, calm activities, vertical and horizontal lines in art can make a picture look calm. We are going to make calm pictures of our own favorite places today!

## Art Making Activity

(See the **Create** section *Art Connections*, Level 1, pg. 17)

### Make a Calm Line Landscape

*How can you use calm lines to make a picture of your favorite quiet place outside?*

1. Close your eyes and imagine your favorite quiet place outside.
2. Think of all the vertical and horizontal lines there.
3. Use calm vertical and horizontal lines to draw a picture of your favorite quiet place.
4. First we'll sketch our pictures. Then we'll make thick and thin dark lines with markers. Then we'll add color with paint.

#### Each Student Needs

- Calendar pages of landscapes for inspiration
- An 8x11 sheet of watercolor paper
- Laminated art mat
- Blue tape
- A sketching pencil (2H-4H are good light pencils for sketching)
- A thick Sharpie
- A thin Sharpie
- Watercolor set

#### Every Pair of Students Needs

- Soft watercolor brushes
- A water container
- Paper towels

#### Vocabulary

Horizontal                      Landscape  
Vertical  
Composition

#### Tips for Teachers

##### *Before class*

- Pre-tape watercolor paper to art mats with blue tape
- Set each place with watercolor paper and sketching pencils

##### *Prepare:*

- A cookie sheet tray for each table group, containing:
- Watercolor sets
- Water containers (one for every two students, filled half-full)
- Watercolor brushes
- Stack of paper towels

##### *During class*

- Some children will be able to draw from their imaginations. Others will need something to look at, e.g. photos of calm landscapes from a calendar.
- Don't hand out markers until children have completed their pencil sketches.
- Encourage children to try both thick and thin lines to re-draw elements of landscape, emphasizing calm lines.
- Paint when marker is dry, maybe day 2

## RE-Teach Suggestions

1. Review the concept of calm lines (horizontal, vertical), looking at a still life by local artist, Morris Graves. *You can view this image from the Seattle Art Museum online at:*  
<http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/SAMcollection/code/emuseum.asp?style=browse&currentrecord=37&page=search&profile=objects&searchdesc=morris%20graves&quicksearch=morris%20graves&newvalues=1&newstyle=single&newcurrentrecord=44>



**Summer Flowers for Denise, 1978**

*Morris Graves*

78.73

Seattle Art Museum

2. Set up still lifes of flowers in vases on cloths, and have students draw them, emphasizing horizontal and vertical lines.
3. Have students fill their compositions with chalk pastel, after demonstrating how to blend and soften chalk pastel by smearing it with a tissue wrapped around a finger – “finger ghost.”

### Each Student Needs

- An 11x17 sheet of watercolor paper
- Laminated art mat
- Blue tape
- A sketching pencil (2H-4H are good light pencils for sketching)
- A thick Sharpie
- A thin Sharpie

### Every Pair of Students Needs

- Vases with silk flowers
- Set of chalk pastels
- Tissues

### Tips for Teachers

#### *Before class*

- Pre-tape watercolor paper to art mats with blue tape
- Set up vases with silk flowers
- Set each place with a sketching pencil, and chalk pastels shared between 2 artists

#### *During class*

- Before students draw, demonstrate two “tricks” for drawing what you see:
  1. Stare at the thing from which you are drawing WAY more than at your paper.
  2. Draw slowly. Make your drawing hand match the speed at which your eye travels around the edges of the form.
- Remind students of the drawing tricks while they are working.

## Self-Assessment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

I made horizontal lines for \_\_\_\_\_

I made vertical lines for \_\_\_\_\_

I think my landscape looks calm because

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Reflecting on Our Art (from *Art Connections*, Level 1, pg. 17A)

- **Describe:** How many vertical lines did you make in your landscape? How many horizontal? Which parts of your landscape are made with vertical lines (trees, etc.), and which parts with horizontal (clouds, water, ground, etc.)?
- **Analyze:** Which is the calmest part of your composition?
- **Interpret:** Which part of your picture reminds you the most of your favorite place?
- **Decide:** What do you like best about your calm landscape?

### Art Background (for *A Country Home*, by Frederick Edwin Church)

The subject of *A Country Home* clearly held enduring personal meaning for Church, and this particular painting proved to be critical to his early success. The painting was first exhibited in the same year that Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862) published *Walden; or, Life in the Woods*, the account of his months of seclusion in a cabin on the shore of Walden Pond in Concord, Massachusetts. The sentiments that Church and Thoreau expressed in their respective celebrations of the solitary life were conveyed as well by other thoughtful artists and writers in this period as they became more aware of the implications of the country's rapid urban and industrial growth.

What was it about rural scenery that Church and his enthusiastic audience found so compelling? The settled landscapes of old New England were the first expressions of a population's pioneer spirit. They offered a congenial view of America as a land of enduring peace and plenty, of self-reliant country folk piously devoted to nature. "The hand of man generally improves a landscape," one observer declared in 1851, writing in the popular magazine *The Home Book of the Picturesque*. "The earth has been given to him, and his presence in Eden is natural; he gives life and spirit to the garden."

The strong horizontal elements of the composition – the gently rolling mountains of rural Vermont, the smooth-as-glass lake at the foot of the hills, and the bands of softly-illuminated clouds – create a sense of timeless calm to the scene. The quiet reflection of

the setting sun on the still water adds to the aura of tranquility that infuses the composition.

**Excerpted from Seattle Art Museum's *Close-Ups* online at:**

<http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/emuseum/code/emuseum.asp?collection=5618&collectionname=WEB:CloseUps&style=browse&currentrecord=1&page=collection&profile=objects&searchdesc=WEB:CloseUps&newvalues=1&newstyle=single&newcurrentrecord=2>

## Assessment Checklist

Student	Points out and makes horizontal lines	Points out and makes vertical lines	Combines horizontal and vertical lines to create a calm composition	TOTAL 3
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
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29.				
30.				
31.				
<b>Total Points</b>				
<b>Percent Comprehension</b>				

*Teacher Notes:*

## Letter Home

*Dear Family,*

*Today we learned to recognize and make **horizontal** and **vertical** lines. We learned that horizontal and vertical lines can make a picture look **calm**. We looked at two landscapes in which the artists (Frederick Church and Wolf Kahn) used horizontal and vertical lines to create a calm feeling. Then we made our own calm pictures of favorite quiet places outside.*

*At home you could look for more horizontal and vertical lines both in photographs of nature and out on a walk. You could also make more calm landscapes with horizontal and vertical lines by using watercolor pencils and a soft brush on a Kid's paint pad (available at Target or Northwest Art and Frame in the West Seattle Junction).*