

# Value Contrast

Grade 5 – Lesson 3

(*Art Connections*, Level 5, pgs. 36-39)

## Big Idea

*Strong value contrast can create a mood and suggest the setting of a story.*

## Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

**Target 1:** Analyzes expressive use of values. (Arts EALR 1.1 *Elements of art: Value contrast*; 2.3 *Applies a responding process to the arts – art analysis*)

**Criteria 1:** Describes and interprets how strongly contrasting values can create a specific mood and suggest a story.

**Target 2:** Creates an expressive value drawing. (Arts EALR 1.2 *Skills and techniques: Value drawing*; Arts EALR 3.1 *Art as Communication: Expressive use of values*)

**Criteria 2:** Uses strongly contrasting values next to each other in a composition to express a specific mood (explains meaning in writing).

**Target 3:** Writes a diamante poem about art. (Arts EALR 1.2 *Skills and techniques: Value drawing*; Arts EALR 3.2 *Art as Communication*)

**Criteria 3:** Uses antonym diamante form to express two contrasting aspects of his or her landscape.

**Target 4:** Selects media for expressive intent. (Arts EARL 2.1 *Creative Process*)

**Criteria 4:** Chooses and/or combines the drawing media to best express the mood s/he wants to create (explains choice in writing).

## Local Art References



**Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast, 1870**

*Albert Bierstadt*

2000.70

(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 the two photographs from *Art Connections*, Level 5, pgs. 36-37.)

1. Where do you see the darkest and lightest values in these works of art?
2. Do you see any areas where a highlight is right next to a dark shadow? This is called **value contrast**. Where are the areas of highest value contrast in each of these images?
3. How do the values tell you about time of day or the **setting** of the scene?
4. How do writers create the setting of a story?

5. If you were to write an opening line of a story for each of these images, what would be? (Take a moment to jot them down in your sketchbook, and then share with the class).
6. How do the values in each work of art create or emphasize a mood?
7. When an artist uses strong value contrast to evoke a certain feeling or mood, we call the art **expressive**.

## **Art Making Activity**

### **It Was a Dark and Stormy Night...Expressive Landscapes**

*How can you use strong value contrast to create a mood and suggest a story?*

1. We're going to create landscapes that both suggest a poem and a specific mood. You get to choose the drawing media you think will best express the poem and mood you want to create.
2. You can go about starting your creative process in several different ways. In your sketchbook, you could:
  - a. Jot down some notes about a story line
  - b. You could work on some small quick sketches for possible compositions
  - c. You could experiment with the drawing media and let the media begin to guide your imagining
3. Steps for Teacher:
  - a. Facilitate the students' conceptualization/brainstorming process, either as a full-group discussion or circulating and engaging individual students about their ideas. Remember that some students will need visual starting points, i.e. photographs of landscapes to work from.
  - b. Remind students that they can choose any drawing media, including combinations of media, to express the mood and story they want to suggest. Encourage students to experiment with the media before making their final choices.
  - c. Make sure students have a preliminary sketch in their sketchbooks before they go on to the final paper.

- d. Circulate while students are working, engaging them in discussion about where and how they are creating strong value contrasts, what mood they are trying to evoke, and how the artistic choices they are making might inspire their poem.
- e. Guide students in writing a diamante poem (antonym style) in response to their landscape.

**Diamante Poem Format (Antonyms)**

Line 1: Your first topic (noun) about the setting

Line 2: Two adjectives about the setting

Line 3: Three –ing verbs about the first topic

Line 4: Four nouns, or a short phrase, linking your two contrasting parts of your setting

Line 5: Three –ing verbs about the contrasting topic

Line 2: Two adjectives about the contrasting part of the setting

Line 1: Your contrasting word for the setting (noun)

Example:

Day  
 Bright, sunny  
 Shining, glaring, piercing  
 Up in the east, down in the west –  
 Setting, darkening, misting  
 Quiet, dark  
 Night

**Each Student Needs**

- A variety of calendar pages of landscapes for inspiration
- Sketchbook
- One 12x18 piece of white or toned drawing paper
- Sketching pencil (2H-4H)
- A Staedtler eraser

**Drawing Media from which Students Select**

- Charcoal (vine, block)
- Conté crayons (black, brown, white)
- Drawing pencils (full range – 4H, 6B-6H)
- Fine line markers
- Oil pastels (black, white, neutrals)
- Chalk pastels (black, white, neutrals)
- Trays for supplies

<b>Vocabulary</b>	
Value contrast	Expressive art
Setting	

**Tips for Teachers**

**Before Class**

- Gather calendar images of landscapes. Some students will want to work from their imaginations and others will want to use a photograph as a starting point for their composition.
- Set up a materials station with the diverse drawing media (list to the left) from which students can select.

**During Class**

- As you circulate while the students are working, engage them in discussions about why they chose the media they did, and how they are using them to express the specific mood they are trying to suggest.

## Self-Assessment

Name \_\_\_\_\_

*After you finish your expressive landscape, in your sketchbook write a diamante poem that expresses some of the contrasts you were able to show in your landscape. How did your choice of media, and drawing techniques you used create these strong contrasts?*

### **Reflecting on Our Art** (Adapted from *Art Connections*, Level 5, pg. 27)

- **Describe:** Describe the objects and spaces you created in your landscape. Where do you have the greatest value contrast in your composition?
- **Analyze:** Which drawing media did you choose to create your mood landscape? Why did you choose those media?
- **Interpret:** What mood and story were to trying to express in your landscape? How does your strong value contrast suggest that?
- **Decide:** Do you think your message – mood and story – is clear?

### **Art Background**

(for **Puget Sound on the Pacific Coast** by *Albert Bierstadt*)

*It is, we are told, in all essential features, a portrait of the place depicted, and we need the assurance to satisfy us that it is not a superb vision of that dreamland into which our much admired painter has made at least as many visits as he has made among the material wonders of the West.*

—On Bierstadt's painting of Puget Sound, from "On the Easel; Return of the Artists to their Studios," *New York Evening Mail*, October 24, 1870

Albert Bierstadt was a great adventurer and made many trips to the United States' western frontier regions, which is why one enthusiastic New York reviewer believed this painting represented the artist's faithful "portrait of a place." But Bierstadt had likely not yet traveled to the Washington Territory in 1870. The painting was possibly a commission from a New York shipping magnate who had made his enormous fortune on the Pacific coast. Enterprising artist that he was, Bierstadt did not shy away from the challenge of painting a place he had not yet seen.

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

<http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/SAMcollection/code/emuseum.asp?style=browse&currentrecord=46&page=collection&profile=objects&searchdesc=WEB:CloseUps&newvalues=1&newstyle=single&newcurrentrecord=50>

### **Cross-Curricular Connections**

Reading and Writing – Setting, Expressive mood

## Assessment Checklist

Student	Describes and interprets how strongly contrasting values can create a specific mood and suggest a story	Uses strongly contrasting values next to each other in a composition to express a specific mood (explains meaning in writing)	Uses antonym diamante form to express two contrasting aspects of his or her landscape	Chooses and/or combines the drawing media to best express the mood s/he wants to create (explains choice in writing).	TOTAL 4
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
18.					
19.					
20.					
21.					
22.					
23.					
24.					
25.					
26.					
27.					
28.					
29.					
30.					
31.					
<b>Total Points</b>					
<b>Percent Comprehension</b>					

*Teacher Notes:*

## Letter Home

*Dear Family,*

*Today we learned that artist can use strong **value contrast** (bright light next to deep shadow) both to create a mood and suggest the **setting** of a story. We looked at two photographs by two 20<sup>th</sup> century American photographers, Jerome Leibling and Ralph Steiner, and at a landscape painting by 19<sup>th</sup> century American painter Albert Bierstadt. All three artists used strong value contrasts to inspire a diamante poem (a diamond-shaped poem, using antonyms) and create a specific mood.*

*We made our own **expressive** landscape drawings, using strong value contrasts. We got to choose the drawing media we wanted to use that we thought would best express the poem and feeling we wanted to evoke.*

*At home, you could look for more examples of strong value contrast in images, especially those from advertising that are meant to evoke certain feelings and suggest certain stories or characters. Art and reading are deeply tied here, since both artists and writers of all kinds use the same tools to create powerful stories.*