

Shapes All Around Us

Grade 3 – Lesson 4
(*Art Connections*, Level 3, pgs. 36-39)

Big Idea

Contour lines show the inside and outside of form. Gestures can express something about the character of the subject.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target 1: Observes and draws organic (free-form) form of a hand (Arts EALR 1.1 *Elements of Art: Organic (free-form) shapes*, 1.2 *Skills and Techniques: Observational drawing*)

Criteria 1: Approximates the proportions and shapes of the human hand.

Target 2: Uses expressive gesture (Arts EALR 3.1 *Art Express Meaning*)

Criteria 2: Poses and draws own hand in a gesture that suggests something important about self (explains meaning in writing).

Target 3: Uses contour line (Arts EALR 1.2 *Skills and Techniques: Contour line drawing*)

Criteria 3: Draws a continuous line to show the inside and outside edges of the form.

Local Art References



Contour Line Drawing of a Hand, 2008
Beverly Harding Buehler



Miniature: Line Drawing of Artist at Work, ca. 1600

Persian

62.205

Seattle Art Museum

Looking at Art Questions

(Note to Teacher: Show the two contour line drawings above as well as the two portraits from *Art Connections*, Level 3, pgs. 36-37.)

1. A portrait is a picture of a person. The three portraits all have both **organic** and **geometric** forms in them. Can you find an example of each kind of form in each image?

2. Let's **compare and contrast** these portraits. The oldest is the contour line drawing of an artist, made by a Persian artist (present day Iran) about 400 years ago. Next oldest is the portrait of the little boy by American portrait painter, John Singleton Copley; it was made around the time of the American Revolution. The portrait of the man in the chair is a tinted photograph made by the African American artist, Allen E. Cole, about 80 years ago. What **similarities** can you find between the three portraits? What **differences** can you find?
3. The way a person holds his or her hands is called **gesture**. What are each person's hands doing? What do the gestures of these people tell you about who they are?
4. The portrait of the Persian artist is a **contour drawing**. A contour is the outside and inside edges of a form. Who can come up and trace the contours of the artist's turban, arm, pants?
5. Today we are going to make our own contour line drawings of the organic shapes of our hands.

Art Making Activity

(See the **Create** section *Art Connections*, Level 3, pg. 39)

Make a Contour Line Drawing of Your Hand

What do you want your hand to say about who you are?

1. In your sketchbook, let's practice drawing hands. Look carefully at your hand before you start to draw it. Notice the different parts and where they are connected to each other.
2. NOTE to Teacher: Use hand mannequin to introduce the proportions of the hand: the palm is approximately as long as the middle finger; each of the fingers has two joints, making three parts; the thumb has one joint, making two parts; the thumb comes out approximately half-way up the palm.
3. Remember, to trick your brain into drawing what you are really seeing, try to move your eye slowly around each part of your hand while you move your pencil at the same speed.
4. Also remember to look WAY more at the hand you are drawing than at your page.
5. Try placing your hand in several different gestures, or poses. Which one says something about you?
6. Choose the gesture you want for your hand in your finished drawing, and then do a contour line drawing of it on the nice paper. Go over your lines with fine line marker.
7. Finally, use chalk pastel to fill your hand and the background with color.

Each Student Needs

- A sketch book
- Sketching pencil (HB)
- Thin black markers
- An 8x11 sheet of watercolor paper
- Tissue

Every Pair of Students Needs

- A Staedtler eraser
- A set of chalk pastels

Vocabulary	
Organic shape	Portrait
Contour line	Gesture

Tips for Teachers

Before class

- Set each place with sketchbook and sketching pencils

During Class

- Ask students to consider both what gesture they want to place their hand in, and where they want to place their drawing on the page (center? from the left? from the top? etc.)

After class

- To preserve the chalk pastel drawings, take them outside and spray them with spray fixative (or hairspray), so they won't smear.

Self-Assessment

Name _____

After you finish your image, pretend that you are in a café and the only thing you can see about the person behind the corner from you is his or her hand.

What does his or her gesture suggest about the mystery person?...

Reflecting on Our Art (from *Art Connections*, Level 3, pg. 27)

- **Describe:** Where did you place your hand in the composition? What kinds of geometric shapes did you use in the background?
- **Analyze:** How do the contour lines of your hand and the lines of your geometric shapes contrast?
- **Interpret:** What does the gesture you placed your hand in say about who you are?
- **Decide:** Did your drawing turn out the way you wanted? If you did it over again, how would you change it?

Art Background (for **Miniature: Line Drawing of Artist at Work**, ca. 1600, by an anonymous *Persian* artist)

Some Islamic manuscripts feature members of the court at work. A royal court was filled with a variety of people, including soldiers, scribes, doctors, magicians, entertainers, artists, cooks and pages. Artists such as the one depicted here in great detail played important roles in court life. Through their work, artists entertained and amused the ruler and his entourage and demonstrated the ruler's worldliness and sophistication as a supporter of the arts. The importance of painters, particularly those who created illustrations for books, can be seen in the large number of illuminations that exist to this day.

In this image, we see a contour line drawing artist at work in a landscape setting. The artist copies the work of another master, with the original propped up before him. Copying works by others was not considered derivative or unimaginative in the Islamic world. Aspiring painters were required to perfectly copy the works of known masters before they were allowed to branch out and develop their own styles.

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

<http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/emuseum/code/emuseum.asp?style=single¤trecord=55&page=collection&profile=objExplores&searchdesc=WEB:CloseUps&newvalues=1&newprofile=objects>

Cross-Curricular Connections

Science – Botanical illustration

Assessment Checklist

Student	Approximates the proportions and shapes of the human hand	Poses and draws own hand in a gesture that suggests something important about self (explains meaning in writing)	Draws a continuous line to show the inside and outside edges of the form.	TOTAL 3
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
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28.				
29.				
30.				
31.				
Total Points				
Percent Comprehension				

Teacher Notes:

Letter Home

Dear Family,

*Today we learned that 3-D shapes are called forms in art. Forms with names – like spheres, cones, rectangular prisms – that are made according to math rules are called **geometric forms**. We learned that free-form forms are called **organic forms**. We noticed that an artist can **overlap** forms in a composition to make it look like it has **depth**.*

*We looked at **still lifes** (by 18th century Dutch painters Rachel Ruysch and Abraham van Beheren, and 20th century American painters Janet Fish and Guy Anderson). In all of the paintings, the artists used organic and geometric forms as well as overlapping to suggest the things in the still life. We arranged and drew our own still lifes with geometric and organic forms and overlapping.*

At home, your child could practice drawing what s/he sees by setting up small still lifes of fruit, plants or a few favorite toys and looking for organic and geometric forms in them. Ask your child to show you how s/he can trick his/her mind into drawing just what s/he sees by moving his/her eye at the same speed as his/her drawing hand.