# Lines and What They Express

Grade 3 – Lesson 1

(Art Connections, Level 3, pgs. 16-19)

Big Idea

Using different directions of lines can create a mood or feeling in a

drawing or painting.

Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

Target 1: Identify and use line directions. (Arts EALR 1.1 Elements of Art: Line

direction)

Criteria 1: Describes and draws at least three directions of line – e.g. vertical,

horizontal, diagonal, zigzag, curved.

Target 2: Uses line direction expressively. (Arts EALR 3.1 Communication through the

Arts: Line direction for expressive effect)

Criteria 2: Combines various directions of line to express the mood of a

specific kind of weather (describe mood in writing).

Local Art Reference

 Anooralya (Wild Yam Dreaming), 1995

Emily Kame Kngwarreye

2000.157

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 Kngwarreye’s Wild Yam Dreaming ab

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2. Line direction means describing the way a line moves across a picture –

horizontally, vertically, diagonally, zigzag, curved. What line directions do

you see in these three paintings? (Have students both point out visually and

describe with words.)

3. Horizontal lines can make us feel calm (because they remind us of lying

down). Vertical lines can look steady and powerful. Diagonal lines often make

us feel excited or anxious (because they remind us of falling down). What

feelings do you get from curvy lines? Or zigzags?

4. What kind of mood or feeling do you get from Burchfield’s Orion in

December? Monet’s Bridge over a Pool of Water Lillies? Kngwarreye’s Wild

Yam Dreaming?

5. How do the line directions each artist used give you that feeling?

6. We are going to make our own compositions of lines to express the mood of a

certain type of weather.

Art Making Activity

(See the Create section Art Connections, Level 3, pg. 19)

Make an Expressive Weather Drawing

How do different kinds of weather make you feel? Use a variety of

line directions to make a weather scene that shows that feeling.

1. Close your eyes and imagine the different kinds of weather

we have, and how each makes you feel.

2. Pick a type of weather and decide whether it makes you feel

calm or active. Write some feeling words in your sketchbook

that describe the mood of that kind of weather.

3. In your sketchbook, experiment with different line directions

to express that feeling.

4. Make your expressive weather drawing, using at least three

different directions of lines.

Each Student Needs

• A sketch book

• Sketch pencil (HB or 2B)

• Two 6x9 pieces of tinted paper (Canson Mi-Teintes)

(Have a range of tints of paper to choose from)

Every Table Group of Students Needs

• Vine/willow charcoal

• Block charcoal

• Conté crayons: black, white

• Chamois cloths

• Tortillions

• Vinyl erasers

• Tray for each table’s supplies

Tips for Teachers

Before class

• Set each place with sketchbook

and sketching pencils

• On each table group set trays with

various kinds of charcoal, chamois

cloths, and kneaded erasers.

During Class

• Before students experiment with

the charcoal, demonstrate some of

the different qualities of line you

can make with different kinds of

charcoal.

• Tortillions (tor-tee-yon) are used

on their side. They softly blend

the charcoal without erasing it.

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Self-Assessment

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Did you make at least three different directions of lines in your

expressive weather drawing?

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

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

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

The mood I was trying to express was

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

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Reflecting on Our Art (from Art Connections, Level 3, pg. 19)

• Describe: Name the different kinds of line directions and line qualities you used in

your weather drawing.

• Analyze: What kind of feeling were you trying to express about the weather? How do

the lines show this feeling?

• Interpret: If you were to change the lines, how would the mood or feeling be

different?

• Decide: If you could do this drawing over again, how would you change it?

Vocabulary

Line Direction Diagonal

Horizontal Zigzag

Vertical Curved

Expressive

Tips for Teachers (cont.)

• Chamois (shă-mee) cloth gently

blends charcoal (our fingers have

too much oil on them to do that

well), and lightens the marks a

little.

• Vinyl erasers can make light lines

through charcoal.

• Model that children should never

blow charcoal dust off their

pictures. Instead, have students

tap extra dust off into a tissue.

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Art Background (for Anooralya (Wild Yam Dreaming), by Emily Kame

Kngwarreye)

Through this painting, we are transported to the center of Australia, to a flat, windswept

settlement where outsiders might see only an expanse of red dirt. Our guide is an eightyfive-year-old

woman whose eyes are full of observations and who has years of

experience painting bodies for ceremonies. Emily Kame Kngwarreye discovered the lush

fluidity of acrylics in 1988, launching her extraordinarily prolific career that is full of

bravado in handling paint. The swirling network in this painting directs us underground

to explore a maze of roots produced by an anooralya, the name of the yam plant whose

vigorous growth is evident here. Kngwarreye was a custodian of knowledge of this

resourceful plant.

For thousands of years, Aboriginal painting appeared primarily on the human body, on

the ground, on trees or rock walls or on ceremonial objects. Such art conveyed sacred

laws derived from Dreamings, when ancestral beings animated the world. This artistic

legacy is the longest continuing artistic tradition on Earth, twice as old as the cave

paintings of Lascaux.

In the latest generation, Australian Aboriginal artists have contributed significantly to

world art by adapting their knowledge and applying it to painted canvases. These

paintings offer a new look at life on the vast stretches of the Australian continent. It also

brings viewers closer to a coded system of beliefs, where some of the smallest creatures

might have the biggest stories, as seen in paintings by other Utopian artists. This new

episode in art history also explores the parameters of abstraction in a way that can be

compared to other paintings in SAM's collection.

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

http://www.seattleartmuseum.org/emuseum/code/emuseum.asp?collection=5618&collect

ionname=WEB:CloseUps&style=browse&currentrecord=1&page=collection&profile=ob

jects&searchdesc=WEB:CloseUps&newvalues=1&newstyle=single&newcurrentrecord=

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Cross-Curricular Connections

Science – Identifying types of weather and what causes them

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Assessment Checklist

Student Describes and draws at least

three different directions of

line

(3 points – 1 point for each

different line direction)

Combines various directions

and qualities of line to

express the mood of a

specific kind of weather

(1 point)

TOTAL

4

1.

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31.

Total Points

Percent Comprehension

Teacher Notes:

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Letter Home

Dear Family,

Today we learned that a line can be named for the direction in

which it moves – horizontal, vertical, diagonal, zigzag, curved. We

learned that you can combine lines of different directions to create

a specific mood in a work of art. We looked at landscape paintings

(by Charles Burchfield and Claude Monet) and a Dreamtime

painting by Australia Aboriginal painter (Emily Kame

Kngwarreye). In all three paintings, the artists chose certain line

directions to create specific moods. Then we combined various

directions of lines to make pictures of the way a certain type of

weather makes us feel.

At home, your child could keep a sketchbook in which s/he records

interesting line directions s/he comes across in illustrations in

children’s books. Your child could make a new cover for his/her

favorite book, with colored chalk heavy paper, using different

directions of line to express how that story makes him/her feel