

'My Outdoor Classroom' Lesson Plan

School Curriculum and Standards Authority (SCSA) Curriculum Links

- *Year 3 Visual Art:* Exploration of visual art elements, in conjunction with different materials, media and/or technologies, when creating artwork (ACAVAM111)
- *Year 4 Visual Art:* Use of visual art elements and selection of materials, media and/or technologies to create specific artwork (ACAVAM111)
- *Years 5 and 6 Visual Art:* Development and application of artistic techniques and processes with shape, colour, line, space, to create artwork (ACAVAM115)

Spraying Silhouettes

Activity 3

Resources:

- A3 paper or card
- Newspaper
- Spray bottles
- Water
- Food colouring (at least the primary colours - red, yellow, and blue)
Pro tip: use edicol dye for stronger colours

Introduction

The students may be familiar with shadow puppets or Victorian shadow portraits (named after Etienne de Silhouette, an 18th century French politician).

Whatever they know, the students will need to flip their thinking as they will be creating reverse-silhouettes! The students will collect items from the ground such as leaves, nuts, sticks, and flowers which have interesting shapes as it is the item's outline which is important.

Before You Head Out

Students should be purposeful in their selections and consider the shapes of leaves (e.g. simple or compound featuring two or more individual leaflets), the arrangement on the stem and the leaf blade edges which may be serrated or smooth with fine hairs, rounded teeth, smooth edges, sharp points, or wavy undulations!

Decide if the art activity will be completed "in the field" (take all your spray bottles, paper, and other resources) or return to class. Organise the students to prepare the spray bottles with water and a few drops of food colouring or edicol dye. Think about how the students will clean up especially if you are painting in nature.



Spraying Silhouettes Activity Steps

- ① Set the physical boundary for the nature search.
- ② Remind the students to follow the Forager's Rule: "If a lot, take one; if a little, take none". Students should gather items that have already fallen from trees and bushes rather than picking living leaves and flowers.
- ③ Students head off to find appropriate natural materials with a variety of outlines for their artwork and once everyone has enough items in their collection it is time to start the art!
- ④ Spread out some newspaper and lay down the paper. If it is windy, place some rocks on the corners of the paper to weigh it down or another student could hold it.
- ⑤ The artists create their designs by placing their found items on the paper and start spraying. Colour considerations may include using primary colours to make secondary colours (yellow + blue = green, yellow + red = orange, blue + red = purple), complementary colours such as blue/orange, green/red or purple /yellow, or a selection of warm or cool colours.
- ⑥ Once finished, students leave the items on the paper or card while the painting dries. They carefully lift off each piece to reveal the masterpiece!

Reflection/Discussion

Is the result what was anticipated? Which shapes created the clearest shape?

Ask students to reflect on the lines and shapes they created and the colours they used. What stands out? Were any special effects achieved? How did the negative shape (reverse silhouette) of the object balance with the rest of the artwork?

Decide as a class what to do with the artworks. Will you display them or use them for some other purpose?

Elaboration/Extension

Pour some paint onto a rectangular kitchen sponge on a plastic lid (otherwise the paint is too slippery). Dab a second sponge onto the first sponge that is soaked in paint then carefully press around the outline of the items.

Do some research about leaves and find explanations for these shapes: oval, truncate, elliptical, lanceolate, and linear. Draw some examples from plants you know or create a poster.

Make some shadow puppets to tell a story. The challenge is to make sure the focus is on the shape of the puppet rather than drawing details.

Teacher Observations

What worked well:

What would I do differently next time:

Curriculum Links

Extra detail relevant to year groups can be found by following the Curriculum link to SCSSA. Elaborate on, extend, and integrate this activity with other learning areas where possible.

- *School Curriculum and Standards Authority*
<https://k10outline.scsa.wa.edu.au/home/teaching/curriculum-browser/the-arts/visual-arts2>



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Print the Nature Passport Booklets for your students to use with this lesson!

