



ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing

Shadow Tracing

**A Copyrighted Activity Re-Posted with Permission from
Cheryl Trowbridge
www.teachkidsart.net**

Objectives:

The participants will:

1. Observe the art elements of line and negative and positive space as seen in nature—in particular, shadows
2. Manipulate art materials and elements to create art based on their observations of shadows
3. Use their knowledge of the color wheel in adding color to their creations

Audience:

This lesson could be adapted for any age group and is “friendly” for all artistic skill levels. Aim for a sunny day for this activity and have some very bright lights on hand if staying indoors.

Learning Opportunity:

Positive and negative space play an important role in determining the overall composition in a work of art. Positive space is best described as the areas in a work of art that are the subjects or areas of interest and focus. Negative space is

area **around** the subjects or areas of interest and helps define the boundaries of positive space. Negative space brings balance to a composition.

Source: www.thevirtualinstructor.com/positive-and-negative-space.html

Shadow Tracing

Shadow tracing is a great way to get outside on a bright sunny day, explore positive and negative space, and have some fun with color at the same time. Shadow tracing is low stress for students (2nd grade and up) and requires minimal prep for teachers. Students can usually finish one of these paintings in a single class period, or you may want to let them do a few tracings the first day and paint them the next.

Supplies/Materials:

- White construction paper (whatever size you want — I usually use 12x18)
- Pencil & eraser
- Tempera paint
- A bright, sunny day (or very bright lights if inside)

Class Instructions:

1. Look outside for areas with strong shadow patterns—on the ground or even against buildings. *(All kinds of things make interesting shadows....fences, railings, chairs, trees and all kinds of plants, just to name a few. Once you start looking for shadows, you'll be amazed at how you'll be noticing them everywhere! This is a great exercise for learning to "see like an artist"!)*
2. Lay your paper over the shadow and turn it until you have a composition you're satisfied with.



3. Then, trace the shadow with a pencil. (You'll need to work quickly, as shadows change with the movement of the sun! Your tracing will show positive and negative shapes... the shadow is the positive shape and the space around it is the negative shape.)



4. Go back inside to paint your shadow tracing. Some possible ideas for color schemes are warm and cool colors, complimentary colors, analogous colors, tints and shades of a color, or your favorite color plus black or white.



Enjoy a classroom full of very unique abstract paintings—no two will be alike!

To see this lesson in its entirety, please visit
<http://www.teachkidsart.net/shadow-tracing-2/> .

*Special thanks to **Cheryl Trowbridge** for granting Hildegard Center permission to re-post this activity and for sharing a wealth of information, resources and ideas on her excellent website www.teachkidsart.net ! Cheryl has her art education credentials and has been teaching art to kids for over 20 years. She is inspired by watching children of all ages discover their ability to be creative. Her passion is to*

make successful art lessons accessible to help share the joy of art with all the kids in our lives. Visit Sheryl's on-line store

<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Store/Teach-Kids-Art> to purchase a variety of resources for helping kids create art.

If you have used this activity, we'd love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website www.hildegardcenter.org .

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