

A Perspective Activity Guide
Common Core State Standards Aligned
Grades pre-K to 3



Sophia finds that art is hard when she is assigned to draw a picture of something she loves. After her teacher explains the use of artistic perspective to her, she finally manages to create a masterpiece. But convincing her family to hang the art on their new stainless steel refrigerator will take all her powers of persuasion.

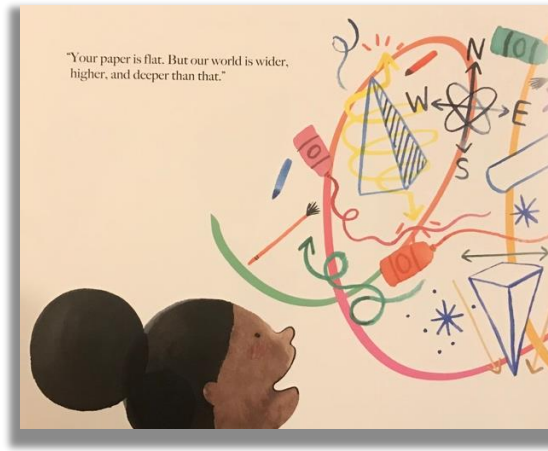
This tale by author Jim Averbeck and illustrator Yasmeen Ismail puts the “A” in STEAM curriculum, while telling the story of a young artist’s quest for understanding and approval.

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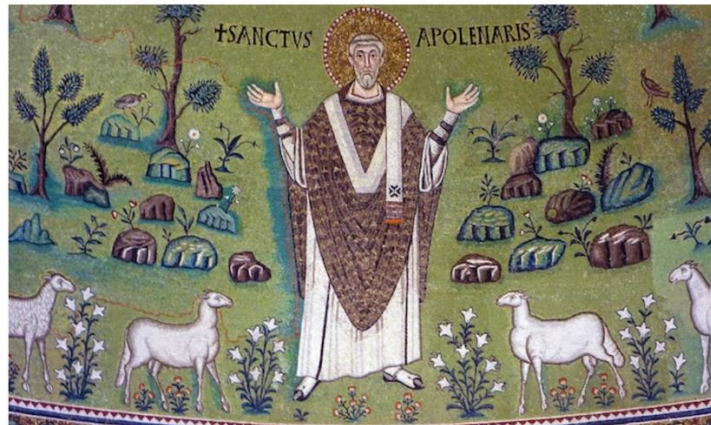
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What Is Perspective?

Perspective is the art of drawing things on a two-dimensional surface, like a piece of paper, so they appear to be in three dimensions. That is, the objects have height, width, depth, and position in relation to each other when viewed from a particular point.



Before artists figured out how to show perspective, art appeared flat, with no good way to tell relative size or position.



Mosaic in the apse of the Basilica of Sant'Apollinare in Classe, 6th century (Ravenna, Italy)

Use of perspective gives depth to a picture.



Pietro Perugino, *Christ Handing the Keys to St. Peter*, 1481-1482. Image via [Wikimedia Commons](#).

Prereading Discussion

About the Author



Jim Averbek is the author of several books, including *One Word from Sophia*, *Two Problems for Sophia*, *Love by Sophia*, *Except If*, and *Oh No, Little Dragon!* He lives in San Francisco, California. He likes to draw and often uses perspective to make things look real. But he also thinks art is hard. But he knows if he keeps trying and learning, it will become easier. Hard or easy, art is always fun! Jim can be found online at jimaverbeck.com

About the Illustrator



Irish-born, UK-based **Yasmeen Ismail** is an award-winning author and illustrator. Her illustrations are full of energy and movement. When Yasmeen is planning her picture books she must make sure that each illustration is interesting. This sometimes means adding in some 'perspective'. It can add excitement to an image and it can be a really fun way to see a story from someone else's point of view. When she is feeling a bit grumpy it's good for her to have a break, drink some tea and gain a little perspective of her own! Yasmeen tries hard to make her books fun to look at. Life is good, and she loves her job. That's having perspective! Yasmeen can be found online at <https://www.yasmeenismail.co.uk/>

Discussion

1. How do you think the author and illustrator make decisions on how to tell their story?
2. Who likes to write stories? Who likes to draw pictures?
3. If you like to write, but not to draw, how could you make a picture book? What about if you like to draw, but not to write?
4. If you had to draw a character for a book, how would you decide what that character looks like?

Perspective and Postreading Discussion about *Love By Sophia*

Read *Love by Sophia*



Discussion

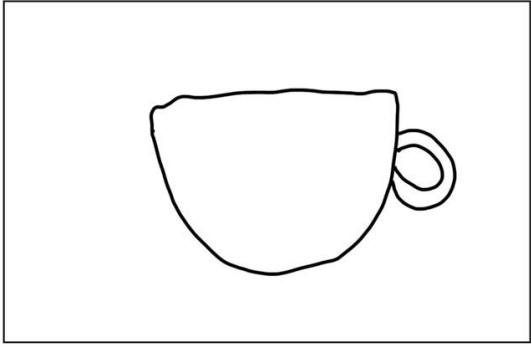
- What problem does Sophia have?
- When her first artworks don't feel right, what does Sophia do?
- Why do you think Sophia refused to add carrots to her picture?
- How does Sophia help her family see art in a new way?
- When you draw something, does everyone like it? What do you do if they don't?
- When your art isn't looking how you want it to, what do you do?

PERSPECTIVE ACTIVITIES

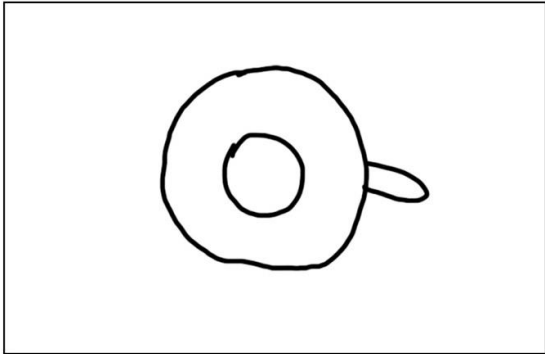
All activities require drawing supplies, such as paper, markers, and crayons.

Activity 1 – Viewpoint

Sometimes perspective means looking at things from a different direction.



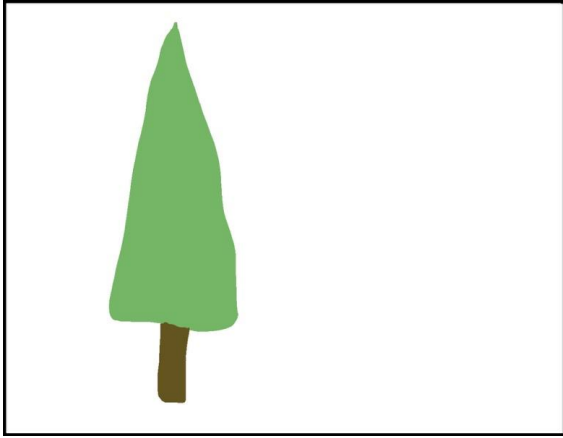
Look at an object (like a teacup) from the side. Draw what you see.



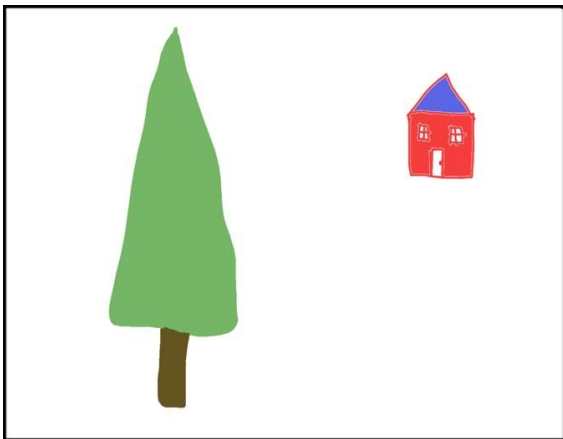
Look at the object from above. Draw what you see. Does it look different even though it is the same object?

Activity 2 – Near and Far

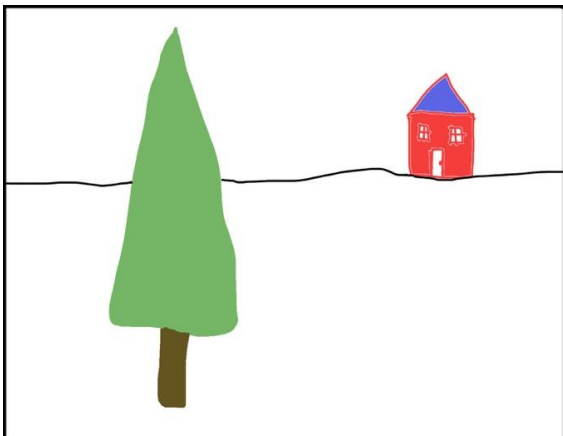
Show perspective by varying size: draw things close to you very big, and things faraway very small



Draw a picture of a tree on one half of your paper, off to the side. Make the tree very big.



Now on the other half of the paper, near the top, draw a picture of a house. Make it very small.



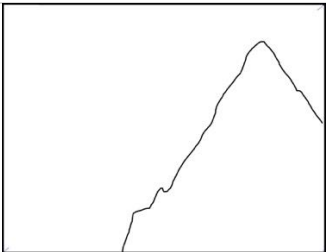
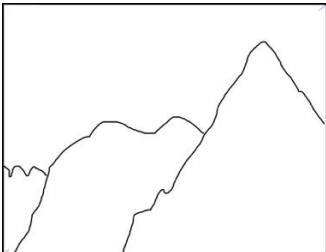
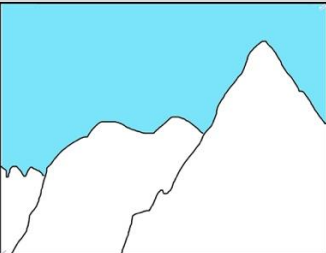
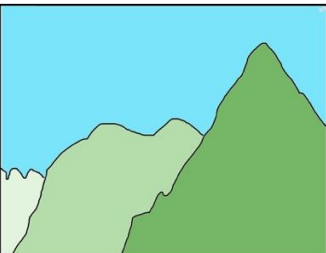
Draw a line across the paper, even with the bottom of the house, but don't draw it over the tree. Make it look behind the tree. Does it look like the tree is closer to you than the house?

Activity 3 – Atmospheric Perspective

Look at these photographs. What differences do you see between the faraway hills and those that are close by?






When objects are farther away, they appear lighter and grayer than objects close by. You can make something look farther by coloring it lighter and grayer. This is called atmospheric perspective.

	Draw a picture of a big mountain on one side of your paper. Make it stretch almost to the top.
	Now draw a smaller mountain behind it. Don't let the line of the rear mountain cross the line of the front mountain.
	Color the upper half of the picture blue for the sky.
	Color each mountain in green, but use a darker green for the first mountain you drew. Then use lighter and lighter colors, or press more lightly, as you color each mountain that is behind the dark green one.

Activity 4 – Foreshortening

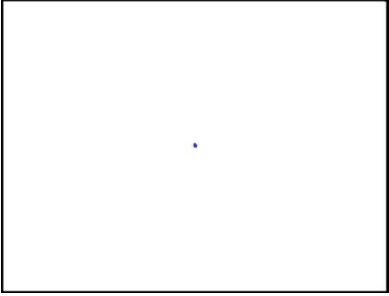
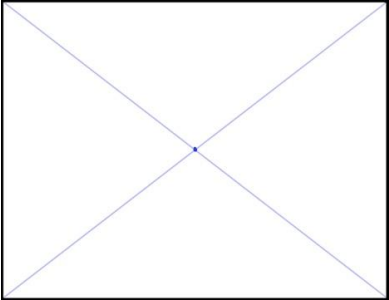
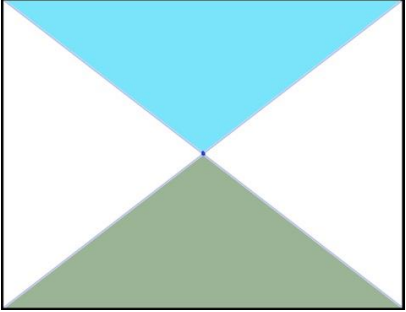

Foreshortening is a way to make what you are drawing look like it's coming toward you.

	<p>Pick up your crayon. Look at it from the side.</p>
	<p>Now slowly turn it so you are looking at it head-on. See how it looks shorter head-on than when you look at it from the side? Foreshortening is what Sophia used when she drew her family from above—literally head-on.</p>
	<p>Can you draw a picture of your crayon from the side? And then draw it head-on? That's foreshortening! Foreshortening is very hard to do. Sometimes even great artists can't do it well.</p>

But that's what makes art fun. The more you try, the better you get. And every drawing is fun, even if it isn't perfect!

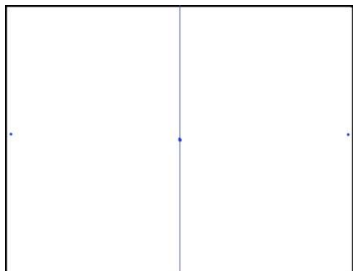
Activity 5 – One-Point Perspective

You can draw a row of things that get smaller and smaller, until they appear to vanish at one point in the center of the paper. This is called one-point perspective.

	Draw a dot in the very center of your paper.
	Now lightly draw an X from one corner of the paper to the other, crossing the dot that you drew in the center. Now there are four triangles on the paper.
	You can color to top one blue for the sky, and the bottom one green for grass.
	In each of the white triangles draw three or four trees. Make the top of each tree touch the top line, and the bottom of the tree touch the bottom line. Does it look like you could walk into the picture, going down the lane between the trees?

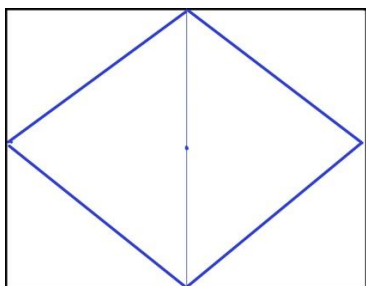
Activity 6 – Two-Point Perspective

In two-point perspective the picture vanishes into two different points. Things get smaller and smaller in two directions, and vanish at two points on the side of the paper.



Draw a line up and down in the very center of your paper.

Draw two points, one on each side of the paper in the middle.

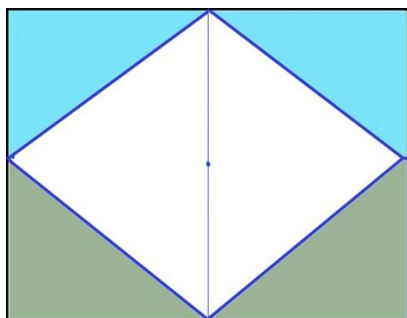


Draw a line from one point to the top of the line you drew in the center.

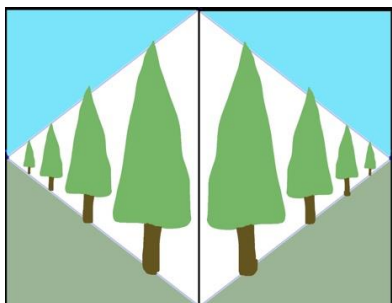
Draw another line from the same point to the bottom of the line you drew in the center.

Draw a line from the *other* point to the top of the line you drew in the center.

Draw another line from the same point to the bottom of the line you drew in the center.



Color the top triangles blue for the sky, and the bottom ones green for grass.



In each of the white triangles draw three or four trees. Make the top of each tree touch the top line, and the bottom of each tree touch the bottom line. Does it look like you could walk into the picture, and see two rows of trees stretching into the distance from the corner of a white wall?

CLOSING ACTIVITY **MAKING A PICTURE BOOK**



Preparation:

- Supply pencils, markers, crayons, drawing paper, and stapler.

Class Instructions:

- Ask “Who likes to write stories?” or “Who likes to draw?” or “Who likes to build things?”
- Divide the class into teams with at least one writer, one drawer, and one builder.
- Instruct the class to write a 4 to 16 page story with illustrations and a cover.
- Instruct everyone to participate and contribute their skills.
- Encourage students to use *Love by Sophia* and other picture books as models for their books. They should try to use perspective in at least one drawing.

Discussion:

- Have students read their stories and show the images.
- Have students share the story behind the story by talking about how they made the book.
 - How did they each contribute? What skills did each person bring?
 - If someone's idea didn't get used, how did they deal with that?
 - Did they discuss the story first?
 - Was it easy or hard to do this together?
 - Did they discuss different solutions to the story problem?
 - Did they get stuck, and, if so, what did they do?
 - How did they decide to build the book? Did they consider different ways?
 - Why did they choose the story they did?
 - Why did they make the book as they did?

Most Relevant Common Core State Standards Anchors addressed in this Activity and Discussion Guide

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.