



## Negative and Positive Space

In this package you will find an engaging activity that you can do at home using materials found around your house and included in this package. This workshop is typically reserved as preparation for a visit to our makerspace where students would learn the basics of screen printing and negative space. It has been modified for at home learning.

This lesson focuses on visual arts and is connected to the Ontario Curriculum for Grades 3-8. We hope you enjoy this lesson and are awed, inspired and enlightened.

### CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

This aligns with the Ontario Elementary visual arts curriculum.

Students must also take into consideration the elements and principles of design which is the foundation of evaluating art in school. Which is part of **DI**. Creating and Presenting: apply the creative process to produce a variety of two- and three-dimensional art works, using elements, principles, and techniques of visual arts to communicate feelings, ideas, and understandings; students will be asked to think of something that has meaning to them. Even down to the simplest answer of "I like the shape of a heart" you could challenge them to think of why they chose that? Why a heart? What does a heart mean?

### NEGATIVE SPACE

#### *60 minutes*

In this activity child(ren) will learn what negative space is. They will learn to cut shapes from the centre of a piece of paper without ruining them and reposition them to learn about negative space.

#### Materials

- Black construction paper cut into squares of 6" x 6"
- White paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pencils/erasers

## **Pre Lesson Set Up**

Cut black pieces of paper into squares to approximately 6" x 6".

You may choose to display the attached images or print out samples so your child(ren) may see positive and negative space in action. See attachment.

## **Instructions**

### ***Introduction (10 minutes)***

Ask the child(ren) if they know what negative and positive space and to give you an example. They might have to draw it out to illustrate their point.

- Negative space is the space around and between the subject(s) in an image.
- Positive space is best described as the areas in a work of art that are the subjects, or areas of interest

### ***Development (15 minutes)***

Show the first attached image. Ask your child(ren) to look at the image quickly then close their eyes. If you have multiple children participating in this activity, you can make it a vote.

Ask if they see a vase or if they see two faces. Child(ren) can only vote on one.

Show the second attached image and initiate a discussion to see why they saw one image over the other. It's interesting how changing the colours can change perspectives and the focus of the image.

Neither answer is incorrect however there are theories as to why one sees one image over the other. The main idea is that negative and positive space can change based on shapes and colour. Many of us perceive "negative" space as the white shapes over the black.

### **Further Exploration (25 minutes)**

**Explain to** your child(ren) that they will be creating a negative and positive space image. They will get a black square of construction paper, draw and cut out shapes (without ruining them) to make a flipped image. See examples below. Based on the age of the child(ren), you can increase complexity.



### **How to do it**

- All images should be cut starting on the edge of the black paper.
- The child must design on the black paper with pencil. It will be faint but the pencil marks will show up.
- Children will cut out their pieces being sure not to ruin the cut pieces in the process. They will need these to glue down.
- Next, they will glue down the largest remaining piece of the black square in the centre of the white paper.
- From there, children will create flipped images of their cut-outs by gluing the black pieces down in the place they were cut from.
- Some children may struggle to cut out pieces from the centre of the page. Explain that if they slightly fold the paper, they can cut pieces from the centre.
  - For older children, you could introduce exacto knives.

### **Conclusion (10 minutes)**

Ask child(ren) to review the terms negative and positive space. You may ask them why they chose the designs they did.



