

through an OPENING

Submitted by Sharon Richards
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School District #73

BIG IDEAS

- Growth as an artist is dependent on perseverance, resilience, refinement, and reflection.
- Visual arts reflect the interconnectedness of the individual, community, history, and society.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Develop and refine an original artwork using the concept of “seeing through an opening.”
- Apply principles of composition, perspective, and contrast to enhance the illusion of depth.
- Use creative problem-solving and technical skills to communicate an idea visually.
- Reflect on your artistic choices and process through discussion and self-assessment.
- Intentionally select and combine materials, processes, and technologies to convey ideas

MATERIALS

- **Drawing:** Pencil, erasers, charcoal, ink, or pastels
- **Painting:** Acrylic, watercolour, or mixed media
- **Collage:** Magazines, textured materials, glue, other
- **Ground:** Canvas, illustration board, or heavyweight paper
- **Tools:** Rulers, compasses, and stencils if students are creating geometric openings

PROCESS

Exploration

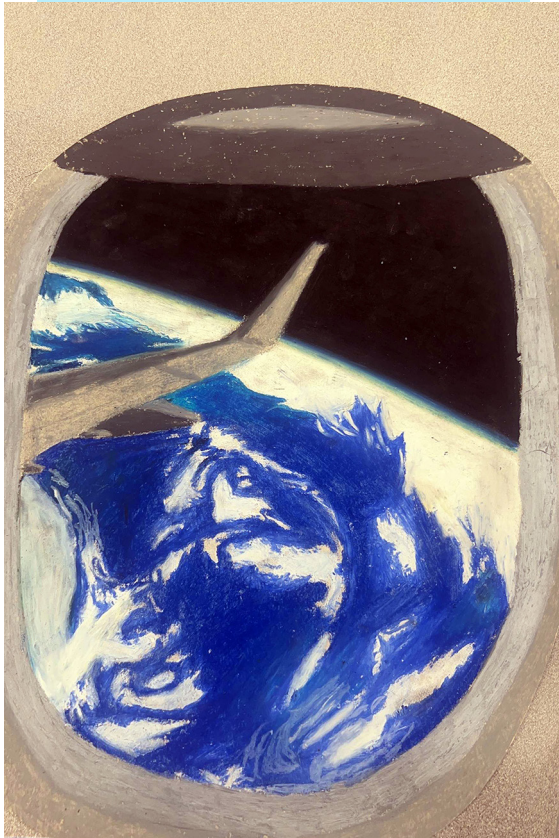
- With your students, examine artworks that play with openings (e.g., keyholes, windows, fences, natural openings). Some examples: Magritte’s *Le Savoir* and *The False Mirror*, Matisse’s *Open Door Brittany*, Armstrong’s *The Open Door*, Friedrich’s *Woman at the Window*, de Chirico’s *Visit to the Mysterious Baths*, Escher’s *Convex and Concave*, Dalí’s *Young Woman at a Window*, and Hopper’s *Rooms by the Sea*, etc.
- Have them think about how framing influences storytelling.
- Discussion questions:
 - How does an opening change our perception of a scene?
 - What emotions can be evoked by limited visibility?
 - How can an opening create a sense of mystery, nostalgia, or curiosity?
- Sketching Activity: Brainstorm 3–5 thumbnail sketches of different openings and the scenes behind them.

Composition & Perspective

- Give students a demonstration of simple linear perspective (1-point, 2-point) and how it helps to create depth. Explain foreground, middle ground, and background, and then give them time to practice their perspective skills. There are plenty of perspective tutorials in YouTube that they can use as references to practice more complex drawings.
- Students then refine their chosen thumbnail sketch, focusing on composition, perspective, and contrast.

Execution & Refinement

- Have the students begin their final artwork following some guidance on their techniques. Encourage them to use layering, texture, and shading to enhance depth. You can have students select their materials, or assign specific ones as you see fit. Demonstrate the use of specific materials where appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for peer feedback and teacher critiques.



Oil pastel by Hudsyn M., Grade 11,
Westsyde Secondary School, SD#73



Graphite by Zaiya B., Grade 12,
Westsyde Secondary School, SD#73

Final Touches & Reflection

- **Final Adjustments:** Following teacher and peer review, have students refine details and contrast, and add their finishing touches.
- **Artist Statement:** Have your students write a short write-up about their artistic choices and the message behind their work.
- **Gallery Walk:** Hold a classroom exhibition where students present their work, giving and receiving peer feedback.

ASSESSMENT

PROFICIENCY	DESCRIPTORS
EMERGING	Uses simple imagery and ideas; minimal effort in depth and perspective.
DEVELOPING	Experiments with imagery, composition and depth, but lacks refinement.
PROFICIENT	Effectively conveys depth and perspective, with thoughtful composition and well-developed imagery.
EXTENDING	Demonstrates advanced technical and conceptual execution, with strong personal expression.



Watercolour by James H., Grade 12, Westsyde Secondary School, SD#73