

# Elementary Art - Week 5

April 27- May 1, 2020

Dear Artists and Families,

As you pursue creative work and art projects, please consult my resources below for ideas.

Learn to draw: This week I am offering an online resource full of books and videos to help instruct you in your drawing. I'm sure you'll find something that will interest you among the many choices.

I also explore the Japanese idea of *notan* (the balance of light and dark shapes in a work of art) with a paper project that uses positive and negative space in a very cool way. Try it out!

I look forward to seeing you in art class. I will continue to send email reminders with links to our class sessions each week.

Have fun creating,

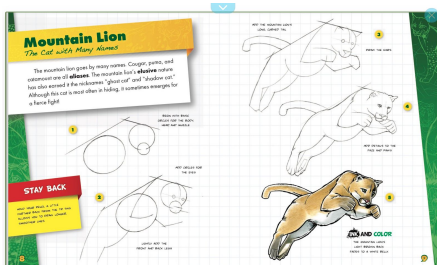
Ms. Skor

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## Drawing - Choose Something from Our Online Resource

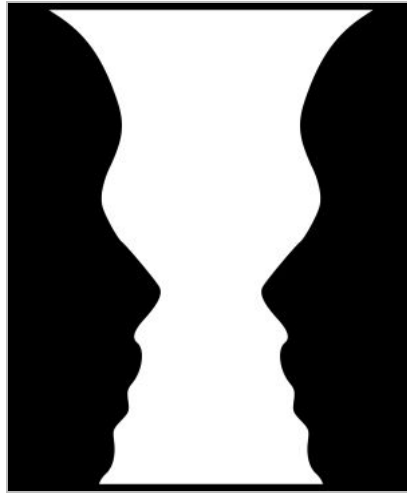
I have created a collection of online drawing instruction options for you to choose from when you want some ideas for drawing. I created the collection on the [Epic website](#) (a good resource for online books). The collection includes online drawing books with many different subjects (animals, monsters, planes, fairies, there are tons of options!), videos of illustrators giving lessons on how to draw specific things, and a video series by a comic book artist on how to create and draw comics. I've also included a book on comics that gives the history of comics and shows how they are made. It's really interesting! Please check out this resource. With all the options I'm sure you'll find something interesting you'd love to learn how to draw.

[Ms. Skor's drawing instruction book and video list](#)

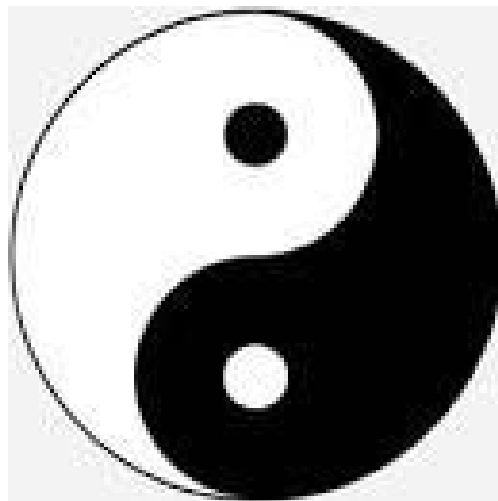


## Lower Elementary - Notan Art Project

*Notan* is a Japanese idea that refers to the balance between light and dark shapes in a work of art. The way they interact affects the way we perceive the artwork. In art we usually refer to the dark parts of an artwork as the **positive space** (the things painted, drawn or added by the artist), and the white or light space left in the background as the **negative space**.



What do you see in the positive space? What do you see in the negative space?



The yin yang symbol is an example of a design with perfectly balanced positive and negative space.

You can create your own design using cut out paper that uses both positive and negative space to make a cool, symmetrical, balanced composition like this:



**You will need:**

- Two pieces of paper the same size in different colors. You can do black and white, or any two colors you want.
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue

**Instructions:**

1. Cut one of your pieces of paper in half, the other paper will be your background.
2. Take your half piece of paper and draw a shape on it in pencil. The shape must begin and end on the same long side that will go in the middle when you glue it down.
3. Cut out your shape
4. Glue the outline that's left on one side of your background paper.
5. Flip your cut out shape and glue it on the opposite side of your background paper, making sure the edges line up.
6. If you want to paint one side of your background you can (as I did with my black and white designs on paint paper).

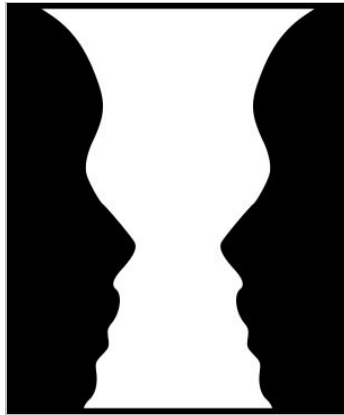
If you would like more of a challenge, watch this video and you can attempt the exercise known as “expanding the square” (but it doesn’t actually have to be a square!)

[Expanding the square cut out exercise](#)

## Upper Elementary - Notan Art Project



*Notan* is a Japanese idea referring to the balance between light and dark shapes in a work of art. The first type of art in China and Japan was ink painting, and thus the word notan actually comes from two Chinese words associated with how you create different values with the ink: *nong*, meaning concentrated or dark, and *dan*, meaning watery or weak. These words refer to how dark or light the ink was that was being used for painting. Artists in Japan valued a harmonious balance between the dark parts of a painting (the positive space) and the background, or resulting light shapes (the negative space).



What do you see in the positive space? What do you see in the negative space?



The yin yang symbol is an example of a harmonious design where the positive and negative space are equal.

Arthur Wesley Dow was an American artist and teacher. One of his famous students was Georgia O’Keeffe. He studied Japanese art and was the first American art teacher to introduce Japanese ideas of design, including this emphasis on notan. In 1899, Dow developed an exercise based on these ideas called “expanding the square”.

[This video](#) gives a basic introduction to the idea of positive and negative space and a simple version of the square exercise.

[This video](#) gives a simple demonstration of the traditional square exercise using a more complex cut design.

Materials you need:

- Two pieces of paper in different colors. You can do black on white, or any color combination you want.
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue

Instructions:

1. Cut out the square or shape that will be your base for your cut outs.
2. Draw the shapes you want to cut out on the paper first. Remember each shape must begin and end on the same side of your shape.
3. Cut out each and every shape, you may have layers of shapes within shapes.
4. Arrange them before you glue, and then glue in place by place shapes on the opposite side of their cut out space with the edges lined up.

Here are some examples of the traditional square exercise for inspiration.

