A LESSON IN DRAWING
SPACE
ELEMENTS OF ART SERIES

BONUS: PHOTOGRAPHY CHALLENGE
Space is one of the seven elements of art.

Space refers to the distances or areas around, between, and within components of an artwork.

Space can be positive or negative, open or closed, shallow or deep, and two-dimensional or three-dimensional.

Vocabulary:
- Positive space
- Negative space
- Linear perspective
- One-point perspective
- Two-point perspective
- Converging lines
- Vanishing point
- Horizon line
The main objects in a work of art take up the **positive space**. The area around these objects is then called the **negative space**.
SOME ARTISTS USE **LINEAR PERSPECTIVE** TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DEPTH OR DISTANCE IN THEIR WORKS. THIS IS OFTEN SHOWN AS **ONE-POINT** OR **TWO-POINT PERSPECTIVE**.

When we look at "Railroad Track" by William Eggleston, we see linear space shown in what’s called **one-point perspective**, meaning we can see where all the converging lines meet at one point on the horizon line.

![Horizon line and Vanishing point diagram](image)

William Eggleston, "Railroad Track," not dated, chromogenic print, 16 1/8 x 20 in. (40.96 x 50.8 cm), Mississippi Museum of Art purchase, 1997.095

In Eggleston’s work "Mississippi Delta (Cotton Image)," we see an example of **two-point perspective**. In this work, we see how converging lines meet at two vanishing points on the horizon line.

![Horizon line and Vanishing point diagram](image)

William Eggleston, "Mississippi Delta (Cotton Image)," 1978, chromogenic print, 11 in. x 14 in. (27.94 cm x 35.56 cm), Purchase,1985.017

**Vanishing Point:** a point at which something disappears or ceases to exist  
**Horizon Line:** horizontal line that runs across the paper or canvas to represent the viewer’s eye level or show where the sky meets the ground—typically placed about one-third of the way up or down the piece.
LET'S DRAW THE ILLUSION OF SPACE:

We’re going to create a simple drawing that combines overlapping and shading.

MATERIALS
- white paper
- pencil
- black pen or marker
- coloring utensils

BACKGROUND:
ARTISTS USE SEVERAL DRAWING TECHNIQUES TO CREATE THE ILLUSION OF DEPTH OR DISTANCE ON A FLAT SURFACE.
1 Begin with a white sheet of copy paper.

With your paper turned vertically, use your a pen, pencil, or black marker to draw 5 wavy lines across your paper horizontally.

Try to make them look like ocean waves. In the very top section, you will draw a boat.

What kind of boat will you show: a sailboat; a cruise ship; or maybe a pirate ship? What details do you see on this boat?

Remember that this boat is sitting in the water, so you will not see the complete bottom line of the boat!
Using crayons, colored pencils, or markers, you will color each of the new sections you created with 6 varying shades of blue.

**PRO TIP:**
If you don’t have different shades, you can simply use the same crayon, colored pencil, or marker and simply color/press down harder to make the darker values and loosen your grip/color lighter to make your lighter values.

Your darkest value should be the very bottom section of your paper. Gradually get lighter and lighter as you move up the paper.
Color your boat whatever colors you like! You can even add clouds, birds, or a sun in your top section because this one will represent your sky.

**NOTICE:**

The darker “waves” at the bottom seem like they are closer to you and the lighter “waves” at the top seem farther away. This use of shading darker to lighter blues shows distance. Covering the bottom of the boat shows that the top “wave” overlaps the view of the boat.

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PHOTOGRAPHY CHALLENGE:

We challenge you to pick one of the linear perspective techniques, one-point or two-point perspective, to capture in a photo and tag @msmuseumart on Instagram or Mississippi Museum of Art on Facebook.

Here are some examples we captured around our house and neighborhood:

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