



## **SAMPLE LESSON PLAN**

### **ART IMAGE EARLY YEARS SHAPES, COLORS, AND STORIES**

**Teacher's Guide by  
Christine Thompson**

#### **Activity four : PAUL KLEE, *Red Balloon***

**ARTWORK:**

**KLEE, Paul, *Red Balloon* (Catalog #1.17)**

#### **OBJECTIVES**

Children will:

- Respond to a painting which uses shapes to tell a story by imaginatively entering and elaborating upon the scene depicted.
- Explore points of view by investigating one scene from several vantage points and recording their observations.

#### **CONCEPTS**

- Texture, point of view

#### **MATERIALS**

- Reproduction of Paul Klee's *Red Balloon*
- Tape recorder and audio tape
- Camera and film
- Portable drawing materials

#### **PREPARATION**

Locate a setting that permits children to compare various perspectives on the same scene: an observation tower, a nearby building several stories tall, a glass elevator, a structure with a balcony or atrium, etc. Gather equipment to record children's observations.

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## THINGS TO TALK ABOUT

Ask children to describe what they see when they look at this painting:

- What is that red shape in the middle, near the top of the painting?
- What could those shapes around it be?
- What time of day do you think it is in the world of this painting?
- Where are the people who live in this city?
- What sounds would you hear if you were standing right next to this building? (Point to a building in the foreground of the painting)
- Where would you look if you wanted to watch a big balloon floating overhead?
- What would you see if you were inside this balloon looking down?
- What would you see if you looked straight ahead?

You may choose, instead to introduce this reproduction with a story such as the following:

One morning, very early, when everyone in the town was fast asleep, a big red shape floated silently to the edge of the village square. No one saw it at first. Even the children were snuggled deep in their beds, still dreaming. Suddenly there was a strange sound: **WHOOSH**. Some of the villagers woke up when they heard this odd whooshing sound, but they thought it was something in their dreams. All over the village, sleepy people looked at their clocks, and decided that it was too early to get out of bed. But as they pulled the covers over their shoulders and settled back to sleep, the sound came again: **WHOOSH!** Some of the villagers wondered what the sound might be. Were the cats riding paper bags across the kitchen floor again? Did someone leave the TV on? Was that broken window screen flapping in the wind? They wondered, but they were just too tired and too cozy to bother to investigate. **WHOOSH:** there it was again, louder this time. Finally, puzzled people all over the village stumbled out of bed and walked cautiously around their houses, checking their children and their pets and all the appliances they could imagine making a noise such as the one that continued to interrupt their sleep. They scratched their heads. Nothing seemed to be wrong inside their houses. But now it was almost time to get up anyway. As the villagers went to their windows to watch the early morning sun rise in the sky, they heard the mysterious sound once again: **WHOOSH**. When they looked out their windows, there it was – the thing that had disturbed their sleep – hovering – right outside their windows. What do you think it was?

In the discussion to follow, you might ask:

- If you lived in this village, inside one of these houses, where would you go to get a better look at the red balloon?
- What would you see if you were riding inside the basket of the balloon looking down?
- What would you see if you were up in the air, looking straight ahead?
- Do you know why this balloon was flying so early in the morning?
- What was that whooshing sound that the villages heard?
- Have you ever been awake in the morning before anyone else in your house?
- What sounds did you hear ?
- Did your house become noisier as people began to wake up?
- What do you think our school is like in the morning before anyone arrives?

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## THINGS TO DO

Explore different points of view by taking children to a site where they can view the same scene from several vantage points: on the ground looking up, from an elevated position looking down. What changes do they notice as they look at the scene from different locations? Record children's observations on tape, take photographs, or encourage them to document the experience through drawings.

## MORE THINGS TO DO

### *EXPLORE POINTS OF VIEW*

Read or retell the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. Encourage children to imagine how the giant looked to Jack, and how Jack looked to the giant. Provide long sheets of drawing paper, and invite children to draw supersized giants, with heads that touch the top of the paper and feet firmly rooted at the bottom of the page. Provide small sheets to paper for companion drawings of Jack. Display the drawings in pairs.

Read the poem, «*One inch tall*», from Shel Silverstein's book. *Where the Sidewalk Ends*. Talk about how the world looks to ants or cats, babies crawling or small children reaching for doorknobs or faucets. Provide sturdy cameras for children to produce photographic essays depicting the world from a child's point of view. Challenge older children to draw what it would be like to be one inch tall as they go through their day. Provide long thin strips of paper such as adding machine tape to encourage thinking and drawing in miniature.

Use hula hoops or brightly colored yarn loops to isolate a patch of playground or garden for close inspection. Ask children to lie down and watch everything they see within their circle for a short period of time, perhaps three minutes. After discussing the movements of insects, windblown plants, and tiny details the children notice in this initial viewing, encourage them to look again to see more. Older children might record their findings in drawings.

Collect boxes and paper tubes. Cover them with plain paper or offer them to children in their original state. Show children how to cut doors and windows, attach boxes with glue, build side-by-side and vertical structures. Encourage children to construct cities with boxes, embellishing them with collage and drawing materials. Explore these miniature cities by standing above them, and by viewing them at eye level.

### *DISCOVER TEXTURES*

Provide rough surfaces such as oatmeal paper, sandpaper, watercolor paper, burlap or canvas for children to draw on with crayons or oil pastels, or place drawing paper atop textured materials (window screen, sandpaper, burlap, asphalt, ceramic tiles) to create special effects in drawings.

Show children how to make rubbings of textured surfaces by placing thin sheets of paper over the treads on the bottoms of their shoes and stroking evenly with an unwrapped crayon flat on its side rather than on its tip.) Continue searching for textures to rub in the classroom or playground: pebbly sidewalks, grainy wood, bumpy fencing, patterned radiator grills, license plates, signs, etc. Children might incorporate texture rubbings in drawings or collage. You may also label and classify some as specimens of objects in their environment. Use this collection to create a texture gallery.

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Add texture to tempera paint with sand, salt, rice, or sawdust. Make thick paint by mixing soap flakes and a small amount of water with paint or food coloring. Provide tongue depressors or popsicle sticks and light cardboard for thickly-applied pigments.

Roll out a large flat slab of clay or plasticene. Provide objects to impress into clay surfaces: kitchen gadgets, small cars, toys, blocks, hardware, old jewelry, natural objects, etc. After some exploration of this technique, children may wish to create more permanent texture slabs in ceramic or baker's clay.

Find and classify rough and smooth objects. Ask children to collect objects in the classroom or on the playground and place them in appropriate containers – perhaps a plastic tub for smooth objects and a wicker basket for rough items. Rub objects against children's cheeks or pass them around the circle as children feel and describe them with eyes closed. Objects placed in paper bags or in shoe boxes with hand-sized holes can be explored in much the same way.

### ***INVESTIGATE THINGS THAT FLY OR FLOAT***

Arrange for tethered balloon rides to allow children to inspect a hot air balloon closely. Encourage the owner of the balloon to share the experience of flying as vividly as possible.

Explore objects that fly or float on air: dandelion puffballs, kites, helium and regular balloons, rockets, flying discs, paper streamers, feathers. Watch the sky; compare windy and still conditions. Construct machines or outdoor sculptures that float or fly on windy days.

### ***RESOURCES***

#### **Books to share with children**

Hoban, Tana (1984). *Is is Rough? Is is Smooth? Is is Shiny?*  
New York: Greenwillow Books.

Hoban, Tana (1992). *Look Up, Look Down.*  
New York: Greenwillow Books.

Lamorisse, Albert (1957). *The Red Balloon.*  
Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday.

Silverstein, She (1974). *Where the Sidewalk Ends.*  
New York: Harper & Row.

### **QUESTIONS ?**

**Call Rachel Ross, Art Education Consultant, at 1 800 361-2598 or write to [rachel.ross@artimagepublications.com](mailto:rachel.ross@artimagepublications.com).**

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