Name: _____ Date: _____

Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Circle group

Look at a photo of a long road. The edges of the road seem to move closer together as they go far away. For many centuries, painters in Europe did not show this. Their people often looked flat. Buildings seemed to float on the page. Then, in the early 1400s, an architect named Filippo Brunelleschi found a way to make flat surfaces look deep. He lived in Florence, Italy. We now call his method linear perspective.

The idea is simple. Think of every parallel line that runs away from you, like the sides of a road or the edges of a tiled floor. In a perspective drawing, those lines slant toward one spot on the horizon. That spot is called the vanishing point. Things that are far away are also drawn smaller. These two tricks fool the eye. A flat surface looks like a deep space.

Artists soon used the method. Leon Battista Alberti was a writer and architect. In 1435, he explained the rules in a book about painting. Later painters such as Raphael used perspective to make scenes with real depth. Raphael's The School of Athens was painted in the early 1500s. It uses the arches of a grand hall to lead the eye to the center of the picture.

Perspective is not the only way to show distance. Artists also make faraway things paler and less detailed. This trick is called atmospheric perspective. It matches how haze softens distant mountains. Today, video game designers, animators, and architects still use these ideas. They make worlds on a screen feel real.

Questions

1. Who worked out linear perspective in the early 1400s?

_____

_____

2. What is the vanishing point?

_____

_____

3. What does atmospheric perspective do?

_____

_____

4. Why did paintings before perspective look flat?

_____

_____

5. Why do video game designers use perspective?

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_____

Words to know

perspective: a way of drawing that makes flat pictures look deep
architect: a person who designs buildings
parallel: running side by side, always the same distance apart
horizon: the far line where the land or sea seems to meet the sky

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Triangle group

Look at a photograph of a long road, and you will see the edges of the road seem to move closer together as they travel into the distance. For many centuries, painters in Europe did not show this. Their figures often looked flat, and buildings seemed to float on the page. Then, in the early 1400s in Florence, Italy, an architect named Filippo Brunelleschi worked out a method that made flat surfaces look deep. We now call it linear perspective.

The idea is simple. Imagine every parallel line that runs away from you, such as the sides of a road or the edges of a tiled floor. In a perspective drawing, those lines slant toward a single spot on the horizon called the vanishing point. Objects that are farther away are also drawn smaller. Together, these two tricks fool the eye into reading a flat surface as a three-dimensional space.

Artists soon adopted the method. Leon Battista Alberti, a writer and architect, explained the rules in a book about painting in 1435. Later painters such as Raphael used perspective to create scenes with convincing depth. Raphael's The School of Athens, painted in the early 1500s, uses the arches of a grand hall to lead the eye toward the center of the picture.

Perspective is not the only way to show distance. Artists also make faraway objects paler and less detailed, a trick called atmospheric perspective that matches how haze softens distant mountains. Today, video game designers, animators, and architects still use these same ideas to make worlds on a screen feel real.

Questions

1. Who worked out linear perspective in the early 1400s?

_____

_____

2. What is the vanishing point?

_____

_____

3. What does atmospheric perspective do?

_____

_____

4. Why did paintings before perspective look flat?

_____

_____

5. Why do video game designers use perspective?

_____

_____

Words to know

perspective: a way of drawing that makes flat pictures look deep
architect: a person who designs buildings
parallel: running side by side, always the same distance apart
horizon: the far line where the land or sea seems to meet the sky
convincing: so believable that it seems real

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Square group

Examine a photograph of a long road, and you will observe that its edges appear to converge as they recede into the distance. For many centuries, painters in Europe did not depict this effect. Their figures often looked flat, and their buildings seemed to hover above the page. Then, in the early 1400s, an architect from Florence, Italy, named Filippo Brunelleschi devised a method that made flat surfaces appear to have depth. We now call this method linear perspective.

The underlying idea is straightforward. Picture every parallel line that runs away from you, such as the sides of a road or the edges of a tiled floor. In a perspective drawing, those lines slant toward a single spot on the horizon known as the vanishing point. Objects that are farther away are also drawn smaller. Together, these two techniques persuade the eye to interpret a flat surface as a three-dimensional space.

Artists quickly adopted the method. Leon Battista Alberti, a writer and architect, set out the rules in a book about painting in 1435. Later painters such as Raphael employed perspective to create scenes with convincing depth. Raphael's The School of Athens, painted in the early 1500s, uses the arches of a grand hall to guide the viewer's eye toward the center of the picture.

Perspective is not the only way to suggest distance. Artists also render faraway objects paler and less detailed, a technique called atmospheric perspective that mimics the way haze softens distant mountains. Even today, video game designers, animators, and architects continue to apply these same principles to make worlds on a screen feel believable.

Questions

1. Who devised linear perspective in the early 1400s, and where did he live?

_____

_____

2. What is the vanishing point?

_____

_____

3. What is the purpose of atmospheric perspective?

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_____

4. Why did European paintings from before this method look flat?

_____

_____

5. Why do video game designers and animators still rely on perspective?

_____

_____

Words to know

perspective: a way of drawing that makes flat pictures look deep
architect: a person who designs buildings
parallel: running side by side, always the same distance apart
horizon: the far line where the land or sea seems to meet the sky
convincing: so believable that it seems real

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Easier · 261 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.9

1. Filippo Brunelleschi, an architect in Florence, Italy.
2. One spot on the horizon where parallel lines seem to meet.
3. It makes faraway things paler and less detailed.
4. Painters did not yet have the methods that make a flat surface look deep.
5. It makes the worlds on a screen feel real and deep.

Triangle: Perspective Comes to the Canvas

This passage · 262 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.1

1. Filippo Brunelleschi, an architect in Florence, Italy.
2. A single spot on the horizon where parallel lines seem to meet.
3. It makes faraway objects paler and less detailed.
4. Painters did not yet use the methods that make a flat surface seem deep.
5. It makes the worlds on a screen feel real and deep.

Square: Perspective Comes to the Canvas

Harder · 268 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9.4

1. Filippo Brunelleschi, an architect from Florence, Italy.
2. A single spot on the horizon toward which parallel lines slant.
3. It makes faraway objects paler and less detailed to suggest distance.
4. Painters did not yet use techniques that make a flat surface appear to have depth.
5. It makes worlds on a screen feel believable and deep.