



Olanna's Paper Sculptures

GRADE: 4 and up

TIME: 1 session

Developed by Jenifer Cameron, Art Specialist



KIT INCLUDES:

- lesson plan
- vocabulary board
- artist biography board
- artist image board
- paper scoring techniques board
- process boards (2)
- set of animal shape handouts (25)
- safety pins

MATERIALS:

- construction paper
 - 4" x 6" white (4-5 ea.)
 - 4" x 6" and 5" x 7"
- various colors (blue, yellow, black, lt. blue, purple,)
- assorted paper scraps
- oil pastels
- glue
- scissors
- black markers

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

Students learn about the Alaskan Native artist Melvin Olanna. His stylized sculptures reflect his Inupiaq culture. Students create simple animal shapes from paper, using a paper scoring technique to make them look 3D. Paper sculptures are mounted on a background based on an Alaskan landscape.

VOCABULARY:

contour line	sculpture
shape	carving
form	scoring

ART ELEMENTS:

☒ Line
☒ Shape/Form
☐ Color
☒ Value
☐ Texture
☒ Space/Perspective

ART PRINCIPLES:

☐ Pattern
☐ Rhythm/movement
☒ Proportion/Scale
☐ Balance
☐ Unity
☐ Emphasis

CONTENT CONNECTIONS:

Alaska studies

THEMES:

inspirational person

OBJECTIVES AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA: Students will:

- learn about the importance of Inupiaq artist Melvin Olanna.
- understand that contour line is the outline of a form.
- use a paper scoring technique to create a 3D look to a piece of paper.
- create a setting for their chosen animal.

PREPARE:

Make a sample if time allows. This is the best way to ensure student success!

Cut construction paper and place in central area.

white 4" x 6",

various colors 4 ½" x 6" and 3" x 6"

Students start with four pieces each of the white paper and a safety pin.

ENGAGE AND EXPLORE:

Display the artist visuals and biography information on the board before beginning discussion of Melvin Olanna.

Building on Strengths

Begin by asking the students if they ever thought about what their strengths and weaknesses are. Is there something they have to learn to overcome? We all can't be perfect at everything, but we do have strengths we can build on. Melvin Olanna was an artist who knew he would have to learn to focus on and accept what he could do, not what he couldn't do. (Idea: Students could do a quick pair/share here about their strengths and weaknesses, a writing activity, or research about an inspirational person could be incorporated.)

Biography of Melvin Olanna, 1941-1991 (Read and discuss with students)

Melvin Olanna was an Alaskan Native artist from Shishmaref, Alaska (find on map). He grew up living a subsistence lifestyle in Ikpiq, near Shishmaref. He was born with one leg an inch and a half shorter than the other. It became obvious to him that he would have to become successful with his hands, rather than his legs. He also contracted tuberculosis at a very young age. He spent a lot of time in and out of hospitals, and eventually was cured. To pass the time in the hospital, Melvin would sketch drawings of animals. Melvin's father was a carver (sculptor) in Shishmaref, and taught Melvin how to carve. In an interview, Melvin tells the story of how he pretended to be sick one Sunday so he could stay home from church and carve a piece of ivory he had found with his father's tools. He then sold the carving through his Uncle's store for seventy-five cents. He used the money to buy more carving material.

Melvin continued to be interested in art and earned a fellowship to the American Indian Arts School in Santa Fe, New Mexico. There he learned how to carve other materials such as marble and alabaster. He also learned from other American Indian artists at the school.

After New Mexico, he returned to Alaska and attended the University of Alaska-Fairbanks, enrolling in the newly formed Alaskan Native Arts Program. He continued to learn sculpting, printmaking, and carving. There he met another student, Karen Jenkins, whom he married.

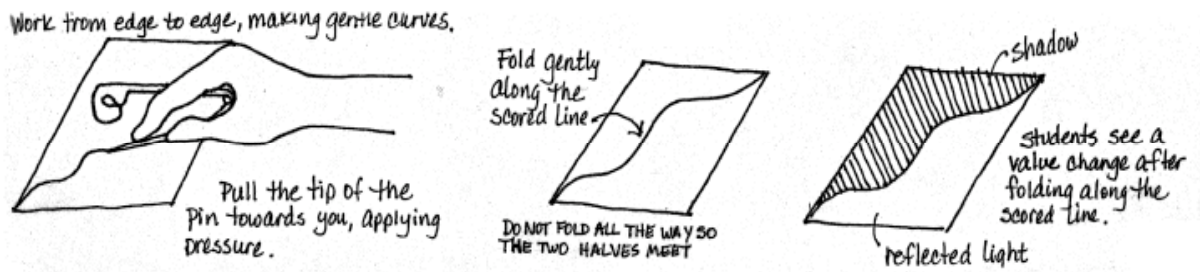
The couple returned to Shishmaref and raised three children. Melvin was now in the position of providing for his family through his art. He learned to look at himself as being both an artist and a business person. He needed to be closer to the fine art market so he could become better known. The family decided to move part-time to Suquamish Indian Reservation in Washington. Here Melvin could be closer to the larger art markets in Seattle, Juneau, and the West Coast. The family, however, still lived part of the year in Shishmaref. Melvin died of a heart attack at a young age in 1991 in Suquamish. During his lifetime, he created many beautiful and artistic sculptures, carvings, and woodcut prints. He has many sculptures in the museums around Alaska and many outdoor sculptures around Fairbanks.

Melvin Olanna traveled around Alaska giving carving workshops and working to support the artistic development of young people in rural Alaska. The Melvin Olanna Carving Center has been established in Shishmaref to provide a well-equipped workshop for local artists.

CREATE:

Pass out the animal handouts, 4" x 6" white practice papers (4-6 per student), black markers, oil pastels and safety pins.

- A. Display the "Paper Scoring Techniques" board. Demonstrate how to open and use the pin safely.
- B. Have students practice holding the safety pin and pulling it across the surface of one of their white papers. Pressure should be firm and even as they pull the point across the surface. The tip should not poke into or tear the paper. It should lay parallel to the surface of the paper. This takes some practice! If students are cutting through their paper, they are pressing too hard.
- C. Gently fold the paper along the scored line. Do not try and fold the paper completely in half. Students will notice that the paper will reflect light differently, giving it a 3 dimensional look. Have students practice making gently curved lines and folding along these lines. Try mixing some lines...straight and curvy!

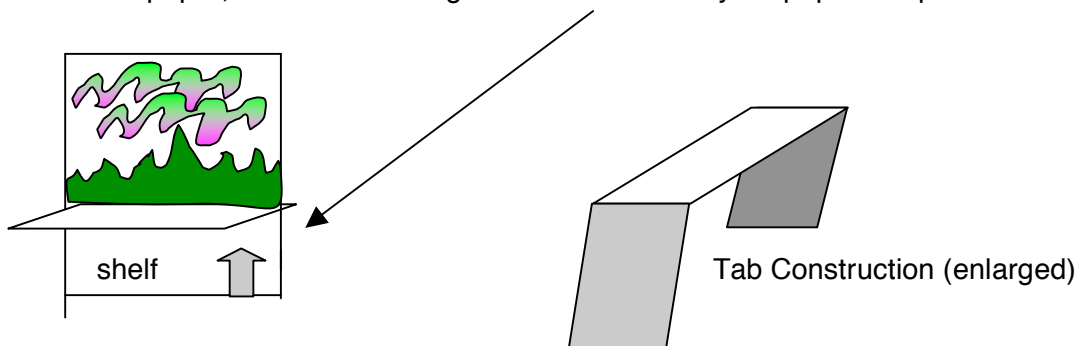


Making the Animals

When students have finished practicing, have them use one of the non-scored pieces of paper and draw an animal from the handout. **Students should draw only the outline of the animal. This line is called a contour line.** Encourage students to draw lightly. Some students will want to trace the animals from the paper. This is an acceptable process and one artists use frequently.

Display Animal Process Board

1. Have students cut out their drawn animal. Demonstrate how they may choose to put 2 pieces of paper together to cut out two animals at once.
2. Using the pin, students will score a line on their cutout animal. Some suggested lines are shown in white on the handout.
3. After the lines are scored, have students gently fold along the score lines.
4. Students may use their black markers to add some details to their animals. They may add eyes, nose, claws, ears, and whiskers. Keep it simple! No fur, muscles or all over textures. We want the paper sculptures to appear as if they are carved from stone.
5. Students can now select **two contrasting pieces of colored paper, one large, and one small**. On the smaller piece, students use oil pastels to create a background for their paper sculpture. This may be a habitat for their animal or an abstract environment. Some ideas are: northern lights, Alaskan landscape, trees, arctic ice, water, etc.
6. Fold up 1 inch along the lower edge of the background. Glue this to the larger piece of construction paper, so the folded edge makes a shelf for your paper sculpture.



7. Cut a strip from the practice paper used for scoring. Fold it to make a tab as shown. The tab should look like a little table.

8. Glue one side of the tab to the background where you would like your sculpture to be. Experiment with the position of your sculpture before gluing. You may use more than one tab!
9. Glue animal and any other shapes to tabs. Paper sculptures should appear 3D by popping out from the background and by how the light reflects on the different planes.
10. Sign your artwork in the lower right hand corner with a pencil.

CLOSE:

Have students share what was challenging for them in this lesson. Discuss how they solved their problems. Relate their experiences to how Melvin Olanna had to overcome his challenges. Encourage them to be inspired by his story whenever they feel challenged by something new.

Teacher administered assessment tool

DN	OK	UP	Lesson_____ Teacher_____
			Grade_____ Date_____ Number of Students_____
			Using the thumbs up, ok, and down technique, ask your students the following questions and record their answers. (K=knowledge, S=skills, C= creativity, A=attitude, E=engagement)
			1. Can you name 3 facts about Melvin Olanna's life? (K)
			2. Can you name the line that creates the outside edge of a shape? (K)
			3. Did you use a paper scoring technique to create a 3D form? (K)
			4. Did you create a background for your animal? (S)
			5. Did you add an imaginative touch to your art? (C)
			6. Did you actively listen and follow directions?(A)
			7. Did you do your best during this lesson?(E)

Teacher self-critique

8. My teaching of this lesson:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
needed improvement							was highly successful		

9. What would I do differently next time?

ALIGNMENT:

Alignment of Standards:

ART: A 1, 2, 3, 4, B 4, 5, 6 C 4, D 5, 6 SCIENCE: SA 3, SC 2, 3, SF 1

MATH: M2.1.1, M3.2.1, M7 2.2

READING: R2.6, 7 R2.10, 11

CREDITS:

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