Landscapes in Art

This lesson is intended for 3-5th grade but may be adapted for other age groups. It was designed for use with a selection of landscapes. Landscape examples may come from teacher resources or the following Museums by Mail programs:

- *19th Century Maine* (MBM 1)
- *Scenes of Our State* (MBM 2)
- *Schildknecht's Rural Watercolors* (MBM 5)
- *Watercolors of Maine by Doris Holman* (MBM 24)

Begin this lesson by looking at the art from a MBM exhibit (or other landscape examples). Spend at least 30 minutes looking at and discussing the artwork. Encourage students to express their thoughts on what they are seeing. Guiding questions such as "Where do you think this is?" or "What time of year does it appear to be?" will help students to look at and discuss the artwork.

The three activities that follow will emphasize artistic choices including: *mood* and how that is conveyed using color, season, setting, etc.; *perspective* and how that is conveyed using color, shadow, space, scale, and most importantly, foreground, middle ground , and background; *composition* and how that affects the overall feeling of the landscape. Encourage students to discuss those specific ideas while looking at the landscapes.

Maine Learning Result achievements are located on page 13-15.

Key Landscape Terms

Style
Technique
Texture
Atmosphere (weather)
Season
Time of day
Location
Point of view
Composition
Scale
Horizon
Perspective
Foreground
Middle ground
Background

Activity 1

Have students list at least ten things they might include in a landscape. Discuss results as a group while refering to page 3.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Possible Components

Trees (think about type, which depends on location, season, size)

Water (ponds, streams, rivers, lakes, ocean, puddles, pools, waterfalls)

Mountains (think about location: tall mountains in the west, smaller, rounded mountains in Maine, and remind them that mountaintops have snow only in winter and when they are especially high, like the Rockies or the Alps.)

Ground cover (this could be anything from hay to grass to wheat to flowers to dirt to rocks or boulders to crops on a farm; it could be old, dead leaves or it could be snow…don't forget which season it is!)

Objects for scale (people in the landscape, animals, boats, fences, houses, barns, bridges)

Weather (this could include clouds, fog, rain, snow, etc.)

Sky (consider that a blue sky is not always blue, sometimes it is hazy; consider that there are not always puffy white clouds in the sky, sometimes there are wispy clouds and sometimes there are none; consider the time of day and how that affects the way the sky looks).

Remember to think about how you would show things that are nearly invisible. For example what techniques could you use to show fog? What about rain? How about wind?

Depth in Landscapes

Depth is the measurement or sense of distance from an observation point. Artists use different techniques to show depth in landscapes. These can be divided into two categories, *Linear Perspective* and *Atmospheric Perspective*. The use of perspective was developed during the Italian Renaissance in the fifteenth century by architect Filippo Brunelleschi, and artist Leon Battista Alberti.

Linear Perspective

Linear perspective is based on orthogonal lines that recede to a certain point on the picture plane. This technique can be used to show objects that recede in space, providing a structure that the artist can use to determine the size and placement of objects.
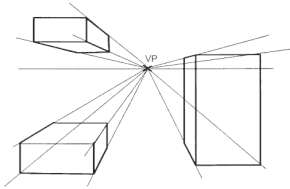
One-Point Perspective: All lines that are parallel to the viewer recede to a single point on the horizon called the vanishing point. If you are looking down a long, straight road the edges appear to move at an upward angle until they meet at the horizon, landing on the vanishing point.
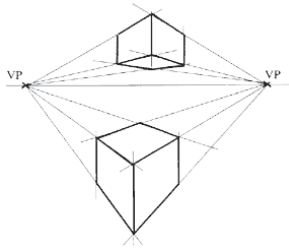
Two-Point Perspective: Essentially 2 vanishing points, one on the left side of the object and one on the right. All lines that are parallel to the viewer recede to one of these vanishing points. When an object is at an angle and two sides of the object can be seen, we must rely on two-point perspective.

Atmospheric Perspective

Atmospheric perspective describes different methods artists can use to show depth that do not rely on linear perspective, but instead on the relations of each object to one another.

Object Size: smaller objects seem farther away. If you looked out across a field dotted with trees, you might notice that the tree closest to you looks much larger than the tree furthest away. Even though in reality, those two trees could be exactly the same size.

Overlapping: by partially covering one object with another it gives an appearance of depth. You know from experience that if you can see all of one object but only part of another, then the object you see whole must be in front of and partially blocking the other object.

Focus: objects lose detail as they recede into space. It is easier to see the texture of the bark on a tree that is close to you than it is to see the same detail on a tree further away.

Position on the Picture Plane: objects that are closer to the top of the image appear further away than objects that are closer to the bottom.

Color: color intensity is much greater closer to the viewer and tends toward medium gray as it recedes.

Shade and Shadow: darker shadows seem closer especially if overlapping other shadows.
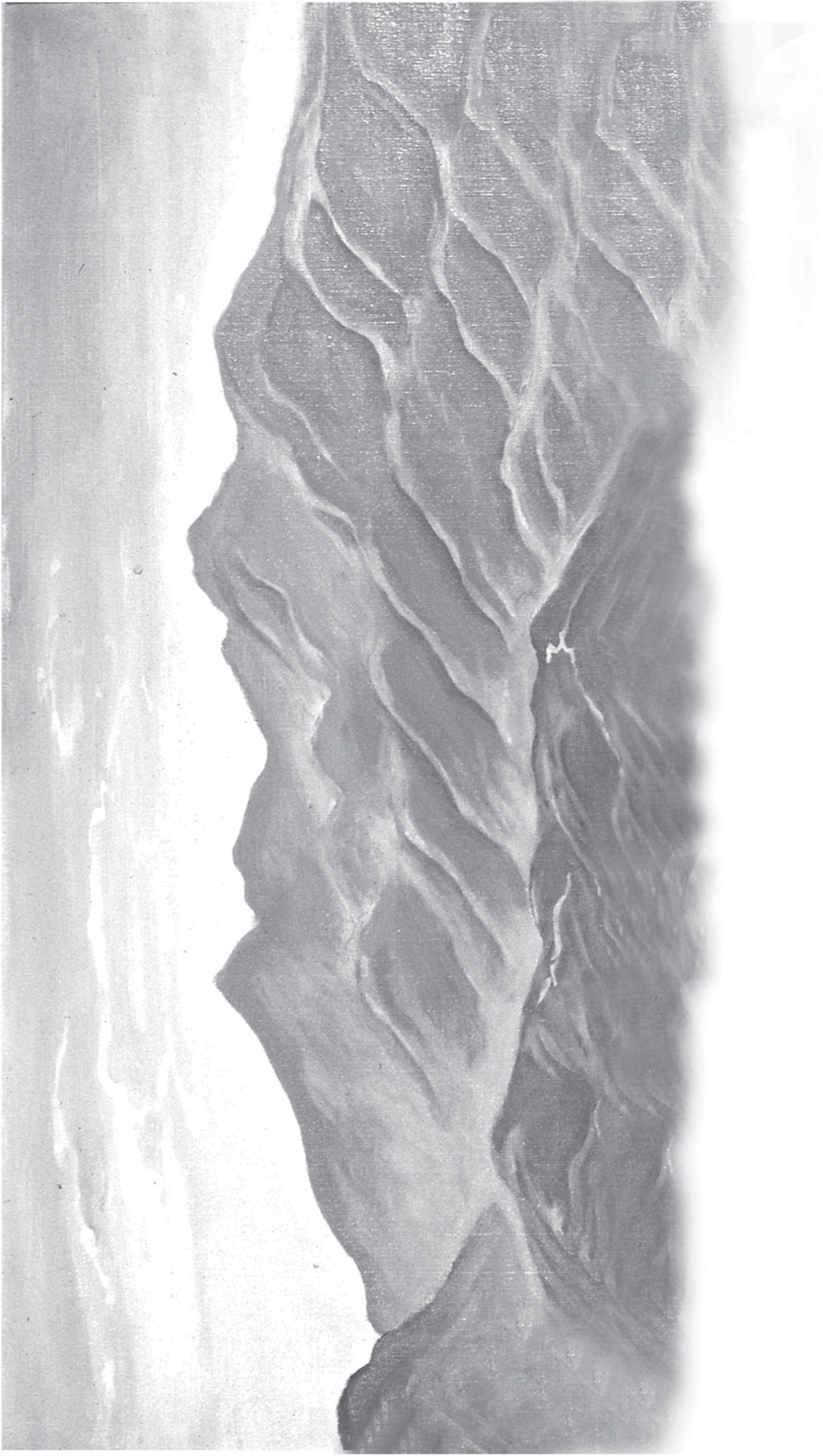
Activity 2

Materials: - three different colors of copy paper
- scissors

Students will learn about foreground, middle ground, and background with this activity. If students are too young to safely cut the images, you may do one for them and just demonstrate how it all fits together.

Below is the image you will be working with; it is an oil painting from UMMA's permanent collection by Maine artist Edmund Schildknecht titled *Taorima, Late Afternoon*. The next four pages contain printable images. The first shows the entirety of the painting; print the image in color if you can, if not, black and white will suffice. The images that follow that are pieces from the painting separating the foreground, middle ground, and background. Cut out only the top portion of the middle and foreground, and leave the background intact. Tape or glue pieces over each other to demonstrate depth. Compare to the original to help students visualize how to identify the different distances.
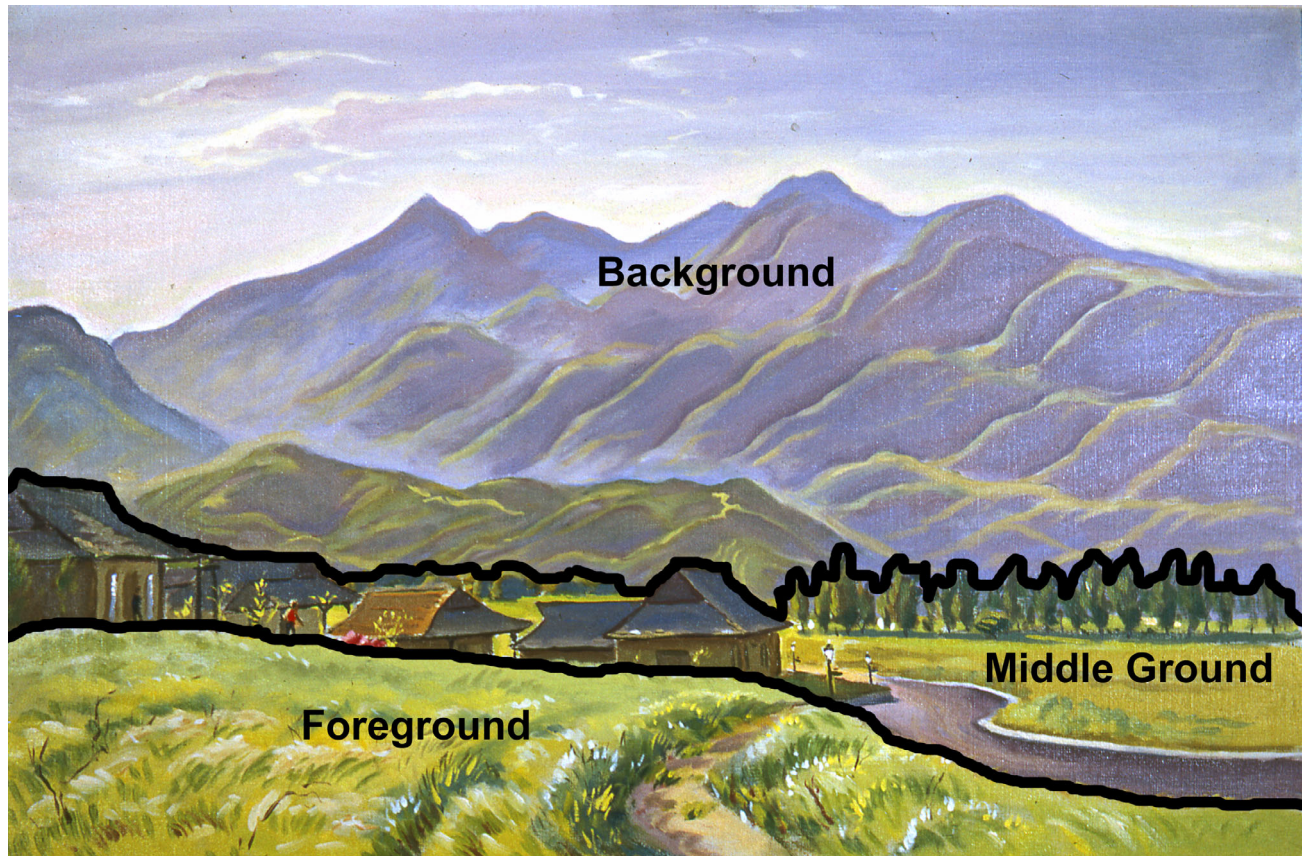
Background
do not cut

Middle Ground
cut only above houses/trees

Foreground
cut only above land

Activity 3

> **Materials:** - 9x12 paper for painting
> - pencils/erasers
> - paint and brushes (tempera, acrylic, or
>   watercolor)
> - cups of water

Now that students have listed some of their ideas for landscape components and understand depth, have them create their own landscape. Students should close their eyes and imagine a place...it can be real or made-up or a little of both. Explain that they must do the following:

- show depth using at least three techniques
- demonstrate season, time of day, and weather conditions
- use the paper horizontally and fill the page
- show location by using appropriate components (no palm trees in Maine!)

When students have finished, gather as a group and have a discussion similar to the first one. Have students talk about their artistic choices, and have the class respond. Often it is useful to have the artist hold their painting while you ask the class guiding questions like "Can you tell where this might be?" or "Do you think this is a real place? Why?"; After which the artist can then elaborate on the work. Ask whether they are happy with the results or if they might do it differently another time.

Students should be given at least 45-60 minutes for activity and group discussion.

Extensions
Activity 3 allowed students to create their own landscape following certain guidelines. Here are a few adaptations:

- After creating their landscape, cut it into the three distances and trade pieces to make interesting combinations. A theme such as "jungle" might help unify the class.

- Alternatively, break class into groups of three and have each group pick a theme. Each person creates their own painting which they will cut into three when dry. Students exchange parts within their group to create three mixed-up landscapes per group.

- Students may paint their landscape using only two colors and black and white tempera paint.

- Students paint in a style that you have studied in class (like Pointillism, or like Van Gogh).

- Have students create their painting as above in Activity 3, but they must also pick at least two *element*s and two *principles* to include. (*Elements and Principles of Art and Design* follow).

- Students will make a diorama. Have the class paint *only* their backgrounds. The middle ground and foreground will be created as seperate pieces using cardboard, paper, and constructed or found items. This makes the concept of scale a little more challenging. If you have a digital camera you can also add another dimension to the diorama by having them include a picture of themselves. This will require students to decide what they will be doing in the landscape and where they will be positioned. The photo will be taken and printed with this in mind. Students can then place themselves in their completed diorama.

Elements of Art & Design

Light Either the sensation of light, a source of light, its illumination, the representation of it in a work of art, or awareness as if there were light on a subject.

Texture An element of art which refers to the surface quality or "feel" of an object, its smoothness, roughness, softness, etc. Textures may be actual or simulated. Actual textures can be felt with the fingers, while simulated textures are suggested by the way the artist has painted certain areas of a picture.

Shape An enclosed space defined and determined by other art elements such as line, color, value, and texture. In painting and drawing, shapes may take on the appearance of solid three-dimensional object even though they are limited to two dimensions.

Line A mark with length and direction(s). An element of art that refers to an identifiable path of a point moving in space. Types of line include: vertical, horizontal, diagonal, straight or ruled, curved, bent, angular, thin, thick or wide, interrupted (dotted, dashed, broken, etc.), blurred or fuzzy, controlled, freehand, parallel, hatching, meandering, and spiraling. Often it defines a space, and may create an outline or contour, define a silhouette; create patterns, or movement, and the illusion of mass or volume. It may be two-dimensional (as with pencil on paper) three-dimensional (as with wire) or implied (the edge of a shape or form).

Space An element of art that refers to the distance or area between, around, above, below, or within things. It can be described as two-dimensional or three-dimensional; as flat, shallow, or deep; as open or closed; and as positive or negative.

Color Produced when light strikes an object and then reflects back to the eyes.

It has three characteristics:
Hue refers to the name of a color, e.g. red, blue, yellow.
Intensity refers to the purity and strength of a color, e.g. bright red or dull red.
Value refers to the lightness or darkness of a color. Value is an especially important element in works of art when color is absent.

Principles of Art & Design

Balance The way in which the elements of art are arranged to create a feeling of stability in a work. It can be described as asymmetrical, radial, or symmetrical.

Emphasis The use of any technique that stresses or gives dominance to a single feature of an artwork. Artists often use emphasized elements to direct a viewer's attention to what they consider to be the most important aspects of a composition.

Harmony A way of combining elements of art in order to accent their similarities and join the aspects of a composition into a cohesive whole.

Movement Often implied, it can be achieved by arranging the elements of art in such a way that the viewer's eye is invited to jump rapidly or glide smoothly from one to the next.

Pattern The repetition of anything in order to create a design.

Rhythm A way of combining elements of art in order to produce the look and feel of movement, especially with a visual tempo or beat.

Proportion (or scale) refers to the relationships of the size of objects in a body of work. Proportion gives a sense of size perceived as a relationship of objects; from small to large.

Contrast The use of opposing elements, such as values, colors, forms, or lines, in proximity to produce an intensified effect in a work of art. Contrast can be used to create an area of emphasis.

Landscapes in Art

Maine Learning Results: Career and Education Development Standards

A. Learning about Self-Knowledge and Interpersonal Relationships: Students identify, demonstrate, analyze, and evaluate self-knowledge related to interests, skills, work, and school; positive personal traits, attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, habits of mind, and experiences that lead to success in school, work, and community; their ability to build and maintain a positive self-concept; and their ability to develop and recognize the positive interpersonal skills that effectively influence work and relationships with others.

A1 Self-Knowledge and Self-Concept

3-5
Students identify and demonstrate interests, skills, habits of mind, and experiences that build and maintain a positive self-concept.

A2 Beliefs and Behaviors that Lead to Success

3-5
Students make choices about and demonstrate behaviors that lead to success in schoolwork.

A3 Interpersonal Skills

3-5
Students identify decisions and demonstrate behaviors that reflect positive interpersonal skills and lead to success in school or community.
- a. Getting along with others
- b. Respecting diversity
- c. Working as a member of a team
- d. Managing conflict
- e. Accepting/giving/using constructive feedback
- f. Accepting responsibility for personal behavior
- g. Demonstrating ethical behavior
- h. Following established rules/etiquette for observing/listening
- i. Demonstrating safe behavior
- j. Dealing with peer pressure

Maine Learning Results: Visual Arts Standards

A. Disciplinary Literacy : Students show literacy in the art discipline by understanding and demonstrating concepts, skills, terminology, and process.

A1 Artist's Purpose

3-5
Students explain purposes for making art in different times and places, and the relationship to cultural traditions, personal expression, and communication of beliefs.

A2 Elements of Art and Principles of Design

3-5
Students describe features of composition.
- a. Describe Elements of Art: color, form, line, shape, space, texture, and value.
- b. Describe Principles of Design including balance, contrast, emphasis, movement, and pattern.

A3 Media, Tools, Techniques, and Processes

<u>3-5</u>
Students describe a variety of media and associated tools, techniques, and processes, for multiple art forms and genres.

B. <u>Creation, Performance, and Expression</u>: Students create, express, and communicate through the art discipline.

B1 Media Skills

<u>3-5</u>
Students use a variety of media, tools, techniques, and processes to create original art works.

B2 Composition Skills

<u>3-5</u>
Students use Elements of Art and Principles of Design to create original art works including paintings, three-dimensional objects, drawings from imagination and real life, and a variety of other media and visual art forms.

B3 Making Meaning

<u>3-5</u>
Students create art works that communicate ideas, feelings, and meanings and demonstrate skill in the use of media, tools, techniques, and processes.

C. <u>Creative Problem Solving</u>: Students approach artistic problem-solving using multiple solutions and the creative process.

C1 Application of Creative Process

<u>3-5</u>
Students describe and apply steps of creative problem-solving.
- a. Identify problem.
- b. Define problem.
- c. Generate a variety of solutions.
- d. Implement solution(s).
- e. Evaluate solution(s).

D. <u>Aesthetics and Criticism</u>: Students describe analyze, interpret, and evaluate art (dance, music, theatre, and visual arts).

D1 Aesthetics and Criticism

<u>3-5</u>
Students describe and compare art forms.
- a. Describe and compare art forms by applying grade span appropriate arts concepts, terminology, skills, and processes as referenced in Standard A: Disciplinary Literacy.
- b. Ask questions about an art form to further understand the concepts, skills, and processes used to create/perform the work of art.
- c. Explain purposes for making art in different times and places, including cultural traditions, personal expression, and communication of beliefs.

E. <u>Visual and Performing Arts Connections</u>: Students understand the relationship among the arts, history and world culture; and they make connections among the arts and to other disciplines, to goal-setting, and to interpersonal interaction.

E5 Interpersonal Skills

<u>3-5</u>
Students identify and demonstrate the positive interpersonal skills necessary to get along with others and participate in the arts.

    a.   Getting along with others
    b.   Respecting differences
    c.   Working as a team/ensemble
    d.   Managing conflict
    e.   Accepting/giving/using constructive feedback
    f.   Accepting responsibility for personal behavior
    g.   Demonstrating ethical behavior
    h.   Following established rules/etiquette for observing/listening to art
    i.   Demonstrating safe behavior

<u>Maine Learning Results: English Language Arts Standards</u>

E. <u>Listening and Speaking</u>: Students listen to comprehend and speak to communicate effectively.

E1 Listening

<u>3-5</u>
Students apply active listening skills.

    a.   Ask clarifying questions.
    b.   Attend and respond appropriately to classmates and adults.
    c.   Follow multi-step oral instructions.

E2 Speaking

<u>3-5</u>
Students use active speaking skills to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.

    a.   Explain ideas clearly and respond to questions with appropriate information.
    b.   Speak using eye contact, clear enunciation, clear gestures for emphasis, and appropriate volume and rate.
    c.   Share information summarized from reading, listening, or viewing and form a position on a topic, supporting the position with a variety of print and non-print sources.