

# SEEING NATURE IN OUR WINDOWS

**GRADE:** 1-2

**TIME:** Two 40-minute sessions

In this lesson, students will explore Frank Lloyd Wright's geometric window designs and learn how he designed in harmony with nature. Students will discover how geometry can be found in plants and flowers native to Illinois. Students will then creatively interpret a plant or flower native to Illinois through use of geometric shapes. In their design, students will identify and use simple shapes to represent the different parts of their chosen plant or flower.

**INTEGRATED SUBJECTS:** Visual Arts, Math, Science

## OBJECTIVES

### MATERIALS | RESOURCES

Images of Frank Lloyd Wright's window designs  
Books or images of native plants and/or flowers  
Library or Internet access for independent student research  
Colored vinyl sheets or colored acetate  
Black masking tape  
Clear contact or wax paper (optional)  
Geometry manipulatives (optional)  
Colored pencils  
Paper  
Pencils  
Rulers  
Geometric stencils

1. Learn about Frank Lloyd Wright and his architectural work and understand how he incorporated geometry and nature in his designs.
2. Learn about plants and flowers native to the state of Illinois.
3. Create a geometric window design that represents the parts of a native plant or flower.

## ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

1. How did Frank Lloyd Wright incorporate nature in his window designs?
2. How can art reflect the world we live in?
3. How is art related to other disciplines like science or math?

# LESSON PROCEDURE

## EXPLORE

### Session One

- **Introduce Frank Lloyd Wright and the job of an architect.** Have students explore and discuss window designs by Frank Lloyd Wright. Pay particular attention to Wright's use of geometry and how the designs might be inspired by the natural world. Resources can be found at <https://www.teachingbydesign.org/multimedia/>.
- **Explore images of plants and flowers native to Illinois.** Have students consider: What parts make up this plant? **With the classroom, identify any plant organs you see such as roots, stems, leaves, buds, or flowers.**
  - Differentiation: Explore images of plants and flowers native to the state in which your students live.

## ENGAGE

### Session One

- **Ask students to select one plant to sketch.** Challenge students to label each part of the plant in the sketch.
  - Optional: Challenge students to use math manipulatives to depict their flower. Ask students to note the geometric shapes they use in this task.

### Session Two

- **Review Frank Lloyd Wright's window designs as a classroom and/or in small groups.**
- **When exploring Wright's window designs, have students create a list of geometric shapes they see.** Challenge students to identify any plants or flowers they see in the design, as well as any plant organs they see in the design. (Tip: The tulip-inspired playroom window in Wright's Home & Studio is great for this exercise!)

## DESIGN

### Session Two

- **Instruct students to review their sketches from Session 1 and, if applicable, reflect upon how they used math manipulatives to interpret the sketch.** Then, challenge students to draw their chosen plant using only geometric shapes.
- **Encourage students to apply color to their design, considering which colors best represent their chosen plant.** Then, ask students to label each part of the plant in their new sketch.
- **Working within a frame, challenge students to use colored vinyl or acetate to transfer their design to clear contact paper or directly to a window.**
- **While transferring their designs to contact paper or a window, encourage students to discuss their designs with partners and work together to identify successful strategies for transferring designs.**

## CRITIQUE & INTERPRET

### Session Two

- **Have students share their designs in a class critique.**
- **Display student work for other classes and school staff or visitors to view.**
- **Ask students to reflect on their design by writing an artist statement.** Sample reflection questions include: How is my design inspired by native plants? How did I use geometric shapes in a creative way? What about my design or the process of making my design makes me feel proud?



FRANK  
LLOYD  
WRIGHT  
TRUST

# STANDARDS

## NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS

- **VISUAL ARTS- Creating Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.**
  - VA:Cr1.2.1a Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.
  - VA:Cr1.2.2a Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity.
- **VISUAL ARTS- Creating Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.**
  - VA:Cr2.1.1a Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.
  - VA:Cr2.1.2a Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interests in a work of art or design.
- **VISUAL ARTS-Presenting Anchor Standard 5: Develop and refine artistic techniques and work for presentation.**
  - VA:Pr5.1.1a Ask and answer questions such as where, when, why, and how artwork should be prepared for presentation or preservation.
  - VA:Pr5.1.2a Distinguish between different materials or artistic techniques for preparing artwork for presentation
- **VISUAL ARTS-Connecting Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.**
  - VA:Cn11.1.1a Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.