

# Straw Line Art

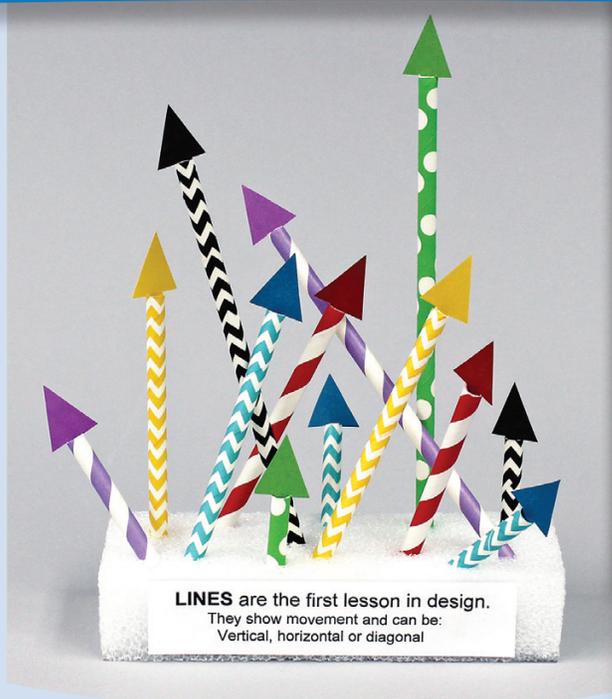
## MATERIALS

**FOR STUDENT:** (one per student unless otherwise noted)

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Block, cut from large Foam Block (see "FOR TEACHER") to 2 1/2" x 6" x 1" thick
- Paper straws, patterned and colorful, six different ones
- Paper arrows, thirteen in colors to match straws (See "FOR TEACHER" below)
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Paper plate
- Small plastic cup (to hold parts)

## FOR TEACHER:

- FloraCraft® Make It: Fun® Foam Block, 1" x 12" x 36" (can get 28 pieces per foam block)
- Cardstock paper in colors to match straws (such as: red, yellow, purple, green and aqua blue) (You can get 32 arrows per 8 1/2" x 11" sheet)
- Copy paper, white
- Sheet of white address labels
- Pencil
- Ruler
- Serrated knife
- Scissors
- Paper cutter
- Glue gun (for teacher only)
- Cutting mat or stack of old newspapers
- Photocopier



## ART

GRADE LEVEL  
EARLY CHILDHOOD – PRE K

## COMPLETION TIME

- 45 minutes (or divided into two sessions)



## OBJECTIVES

Students learn:

- To recognize line and the movement it creates
- The names of three directions: Vertical, horizontal and diagonal
- How to space objects to show balance
- The use of fine motor skills

## STANDARDS

- Students perceive and respond to objects in the environment
- Identify elements of art in the environment and works of art, emphasizing line
- Recognize and describe positions of objects
- Discuss how line creates movement

## LESSON INTRODUCTION

- Let the students know that they will each be able to make a sculpture using straws to represent line.
  - Explain there are three dimensions – length, width and depth. Examples are:
    - Line – has only one dimension – length – like a piece of string
    - Shape – has two dimensions – length and width – like a square cutout
    - Form – has three dimensions – length, width and depth – like a cardboard box
- If possible have examples of each to show. (While it's early to address this, hearing the words will make them more familiar with the concept in the future.)
- Explain that you're going to talk about the direction of a line: Vertical, horizontal and diagonal. Demonstrate on a board each of the lines and use the terms throughout the lesson, to reinforce the vocabulary.
  - Explain that lines can show movement, too. By adding arrows to your sculpture, you'll see the direction our eyes take when we look at it.

## TEACHER PREPARATION

*Note: Read through all the instructions first and check out the TIPS! It is also recommended that you make one project first, before preparing the materials for any others, since knowing how the parts fit, might affect how you prepare. Decide if you want to break the project into two sessions, making and inserting the arrows during the second session. Have a glue gun plugged in and ready to use (ideally set on low temperature) but out of student reach. This can give you immediate adhesion when you're in a hurry to help the students.*

**[1]** Use a ruler and pencil to measure and make small marks as ruler guides for the 2 1/2" x 6" pieces on the foam block. Then, on a cutting mat or stack of newspapers, use a serrated knife against the edge of ruler to cut the foam block with several passes of the knife for each cut.

**[2]** Optional: Decide if you want students to make arrows. (They are not necessary to explain the lesson on line, but they are helpful in discussing movement.) If you want to include them, photocopy the arrow pattern onto colored cardstock papers and use scissors to cut apart the arrows by twos for each student to be able to cut out. (Note: Cut the aqua blue into threes.)

Photocopy the caption page onto white copy paper. Then, cut them into 7/8" x 5" strips (to fit on the edge of the foam).

**[3]** Use a ruler and scissors to measure and cut the paper straws into the following lengths per student: Green 1" and 7"; Black 2" and 6"; Purple 3" and 5"; both Yellow and Red 4" and 4"; and Aqua Blue 4", 2" and 2".

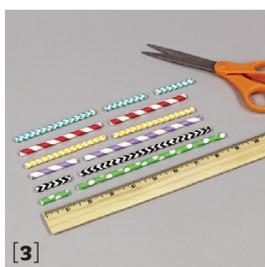
**[4]** Use the scissors to cut apart the address labels, one per student. Put on a paper plate for each student: Foam base, pencil, scissors, glue stick, colored paper arrow pieces, paragraph strip, name label and cup of straws.



[1]



[2]



[3]



[4]



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# INSTRUCTIONS

**[1]** Have the students write their name on the label and attach it to the bottom of the base. With their name label on the bottom, demonstrate and have the students apply glue stick to one long edge of the foam and press the paragraph strip onto it. As they work, read and explain the caption on the strip.



**[2]** Demonstrate and have the students insert two yellow straws into their base, apart from each other and going in different directions. (Note: They should not be trying to copy the exact position of your model, simply listening to the guidelines you're giving them.) Take a moment to have the students say if their straws are vertical, horizontal or diagonal. Then repeat with two purple straws placed in different places, going in different directions. Take a moment to talk about balance – making the straws fill the space above the base so that they aren't clustered in one place more than another.



**[3]** Similarly, demonstrate and have the students watch as you consider where to place your black and red straws (one color at a time) to have the colors separate from each other and balanced with the other straws. (Talk aloud as you think it through so they see your considerations in placement.) Explain that

straws can also extend forward and backward. Have the students insert their black and then, their red straws. Again, have students turn sculptures to check for large open spaces.



**[4]** Demonstrate and have the students insert the green straws, commenting about how they should be finding spaces that seem empty. Also mention the straw height – that they probably wouldn't want two tall ones side by side – that they should be spread apart. Last, have them insert the three aqua straws.



**[5]** Optional: Demonstrate and have the students cut the cardstock arrows. Have them insert them into the same-color straws. While they cut, discuss that movement in art means how the viewer's eye moves as it looks at the art. Ask students what they see first and ask if their eyes follow the directions of the arrows - which are the directions of the lines going in vertical, horizontal and diagonal directions.



## MODIFICATIONS

### To simplify project:

- Eliminate doing the arrows or have them precut and already glued in the ends of the straws.
- Use fewer straws.

### To expand project:

- Provide additional straws for students to choose colors and cut to desired lengths to create another sculpture.
- Show students Internet printouts of modern sculpture to look for lines, their directions and movement. (We suggest that you consider whether or not to have them searching on line due to the appropriateness of the content they may find in the art category, but certainly you can find what you want to share with them at this age.)

### For multiple ages:

- Younger and older students can work side-by-side, with older students turning the sculpture to consider the various viewpoints while younger students work on how it looks from the front.
- Older students can be introduced to the positive space (the straws) and the negative space (the areas between and around the straws). Students can start to consider those areas (shapes) being created, too.

## ADDITIONAL IDEAS

- Tie in examples of other sculptures. Alexander Calder did mobiles and stabiles with lines. Kandinsky is another artist with lots of lines. Photos of those could be shown and discussed. (Classic art has line, as well, but sometimes, they aren't as obvious.)
- The use of line can be tied into math and measuring units.
- Velcro a large foam sheet to the wall and allow students to create "relief" wall art with the leftover straws.
- If the name labels come off, apply glue stick directly on the foam and press the label back in place.



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## TIPS

- Keep the serrated knife blade perpendicular to the table so that the foam edges are straight. Score it lightly first and then press more firmly to cut deeper with several passes of the knife.
- Often times people think that an art class can be simply making something. While the skills learned in making something can be helpful, there are still basic elements of design and principles of arrangement that are as fundamental to good art as adding and subtracting are to math or learning how to put together letters and spelling are to language arts.
- To help students cut arrows, demonstrate how to cut from the outside of the paper in, for each straight line and stop when you reach the arrow. (That way, they don't have to bend the paper and scissors to try to curve around the small areas.) Also, have them cut off the black outline, or turn that side away from the front.
- While designing their project, if students' pull straws in and out too much, they may become very loose. If so, apply white glue in the foam holes and re-insert the straws.
- The arrows can also be glued in the ends if they fall out too easily.
- Encourage the students to share with their parents the terms "vertical, horizontal and diagonal". Sometimes when people understand that "practical" terms have been learned in art class, the modern art sculptures seem a bit less strange. 😊

## REFERENCES

*The Art Lesson* by Tomie dePaola  
*Lines That Wiggle* by Candace Whitman  
*Follow The Line* by Laura Ljungkvist  
 Current coloring books – examples of line, direction and movement

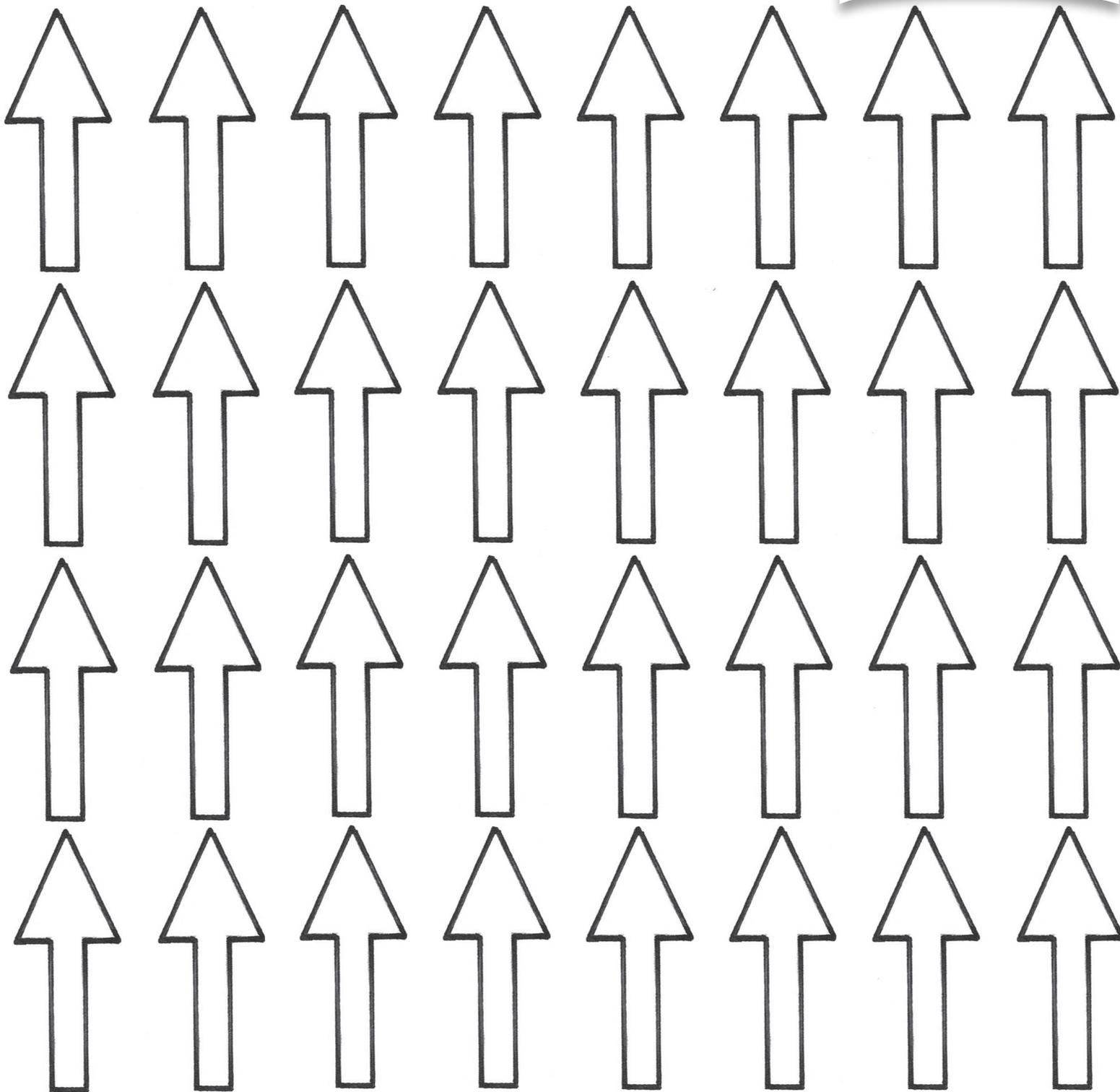
# PATTERN

32 ARROW PATTERNS

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## CAPTION

7 CAPTIONS; Print at 100%

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Vertical, horizontal or diagonal

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