

GALLUP NEW DEAL ART

Lesson Plan: *Adventure Gesture*

Primary Subject Area

Visual Art

Grade Levels

6th—8th Grades

Estimated Length

Three to five 40-minute periods

Summary

Students will explore concepts of gesture and movement in art, first through the study of Allan Houser's 1942 *Apache Crown Dancer* painting and then by creating their own action-oriented wire sculptures.

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- 1) Analyze a painting for movement and gesture and describe and discuss what they see.
- 2) Practice capturing gesture and movement through sketching and sculpture.



Allan Houser
Untitled (Apache Crown Dancer)
1942
Casein/tempera on paper
15" W x 20 ¾ H

Materials

- [Digital image](#) of *Apache Crown Dancer*
- Projector
- Printer (optional)
- Timer
- Paper
- Pencil
- Clipboard
- Lightweight wire (40 gauge recommended)
- Broadline markers
- Scissors
- Stapler
- Small wood pieces
- Model Magic in white or skin tone colors
- Fabric/felt scraps and/or tissue paper
- Craft glue

Based on a lesson by Ms. Denise Johnson



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Common Core Standards

ELA Speaking & Listening		
6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.1</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.1</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.1</u>
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.2</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.2</u>
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.4</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.4</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.4</u>
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.6</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.7.6</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.8.6</u>

ELA Language		
6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.6</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.7.6</u>	<u>CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.8.6</u>

National Arts Standards

<https://nationalartsstandards.org/>

Creating		
6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
VA:Cr1.2.6a	VA:Cr1.2.7a	VA:Cr1.2.8a
VA:Cr2.1.6a	VA:Cr2.1.7a	VA:Cr2.1.8a

Responding		
6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
VA:Re.7.2.6a	VA:Re.7.2.7a	VA:Re.7.2.8a
VA:Re8.1.6a	VA:Re8.1.7a	VA:Re8.1.8a



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Pro—tip:

- Activities #1 and #2 can be done together in one day/40-minute period. Activity #3 requires two days/40-minute periods, and can be extended to cover four days/40-minute periods.

Activity #1: Looking

Materials

- Projected [digital image](#) of *Apache Crown Dancer* (or prints of the image; see attachments)
- Timer

Duration

5—10 minutes

Activity Steps

- 1) Project the [image](#) of *Apache Crown Dancer* on a screen/wall. (If projector is not available, print copies for partners or small groups to look at together. Students may also access the digital image online through individual devices.)
- 2) Tell students to silently study the artwork for 1 minute. Set a timer.
- 3) At the end of the 1 minute, engage students in a whole-group discussion asking the following questions:
 - ⇒ What is the subject of the painting doing?
Example answers: dancing, performing
 - ⇒ What specific movements is the subject engaged in?
Example answers: stepping, lunging, pointing, thrusting, jabbing, turning, swerving
 - ⇒ How would you describe the subject's movements? What adjectives would you use?
Example answers: energetic, forceful, vigorous, spirited, intentional, strong, big, fast
- 4) Explain that this painting is titled *Apache Crown Dancer*. Chiricahua Apache artist [Allan Houser](#), best known for his sculptures, created this painting in 1942 at the age of 28. It portrays an Apache Crown Dancer performing a ceremonial dance in full regalia, including a wooden headpiece, hooded mask, body paint, buckskin skirt, and moccasins.

Optional: Show a 6-minute video showing and explaining the Apache Crown Dance:

<https://nm.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/natam.arts.dance.abapache/native-american-culture-about-apache-dances/>



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Activity #2: Creative Warm-up

Materials

- Sketch paper (at least one piece per student)
- Clipboard and pencil for each student
- Timer

Duration

10—20 minutes

Activity Steps

- 1) Pair students with partners.
- 2) Direct pairs to spread out throughout the classroom.
- 3) Explain that partners will take turns sketching each other's gestures as follows:
 - ⇒ The partner with the shorter hair will go first, thinking of a dance move and then striking a pose related to that dance move. (If students cannot or do not want to do a dance move, any full-body action will do—a jumping jack, high kick, running, yoga posture...)
 - ⇒ The partner with the longer hair will have two minutes to create a “blind contour” sketch of the dance pose, using scribbles and continuous lines to capture their model's form without looking at their paper (keeping their eyes on their model).
 - ⇒ Then partners will switch roles.
- 4) Guide students through the activity.
- 5) Students' blind contour drawings will be used as the bases for their sculptures. Have the students repeat the activity with new poses and/or partners if desired, to give them more sketching practice and/or to provide multiple options for their sculptures.



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Activity #3: Sculpture-Making

Materials

• Per student:

- Blind contour drawing (see Activity #2)
- Lightweight wire (40 gauge recommended)
- Two broadline markers
- Small piece of wood (to create a base)
- Good-sized handful of Model Magic in white or skin tone colors

• Shared:

- Scissors
- Stapler and staples
- Fabric/felt scraps and/or tissue paper (optional)
- Craft glue (optional)

Duration

Three 40-minute periods

Activity Steps

Part 1: Create a wire armature

1) First demonstrate how to create a wire armature (15—20 minutes):

⇒ Option A: show students a demonstration video by Ms. Johnson from Gallup, New Mexico:

CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY



<https://youtu.be/NGqorrwycpg>

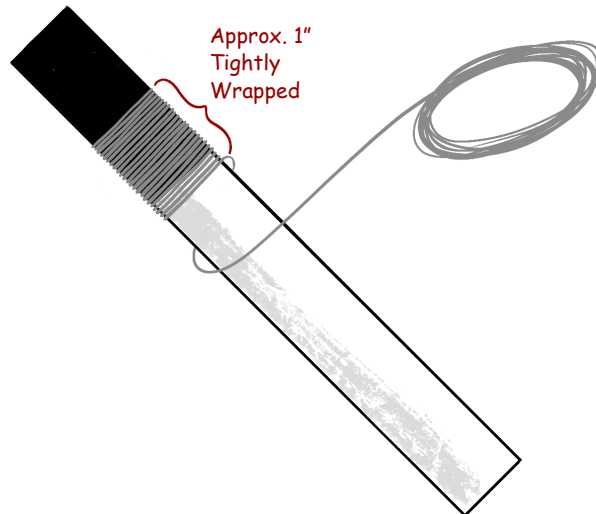


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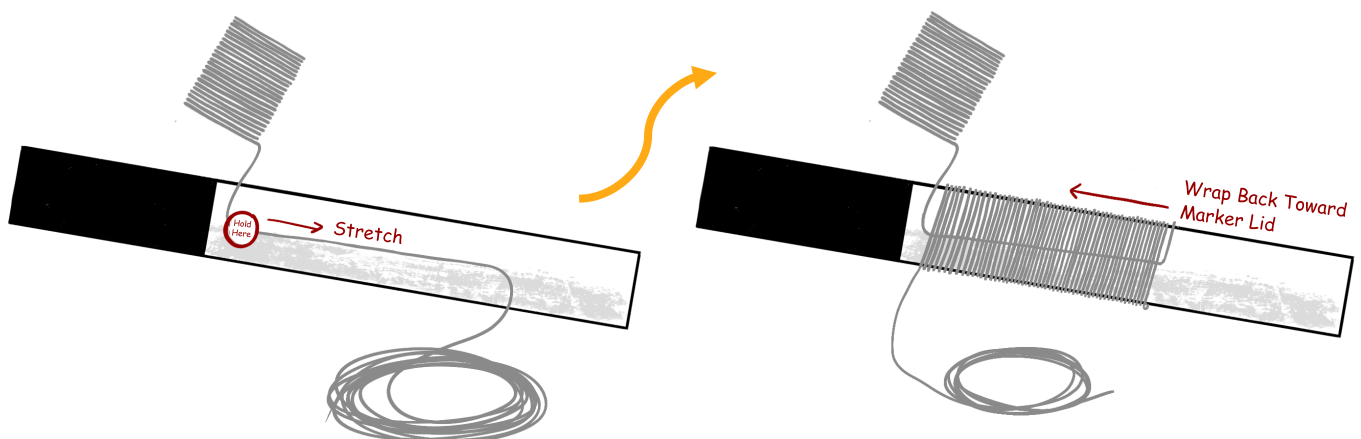
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⇒ Option B: Do a live demonstration for your students following the below steps:

1. Wrap the end of the wire around the marker cap to create the sculpture's head. Wrap the wire tightly, squeezing the loops together. About an inch of tightly wrapped, compressed wire is sufficient to create the head.



2. Slide the wrapped wire off the marker.
3. Stretch the loose end of the wire along the body of the marker to create a length of arm. Then, working back along the marker toward the head, wrap the wire tightly, covering the stretched, straight wire. Leave only slight gaps between loops. (The wire will become the armature for modeling clay, and wide gaps will not provide sufficient support for the clay.)



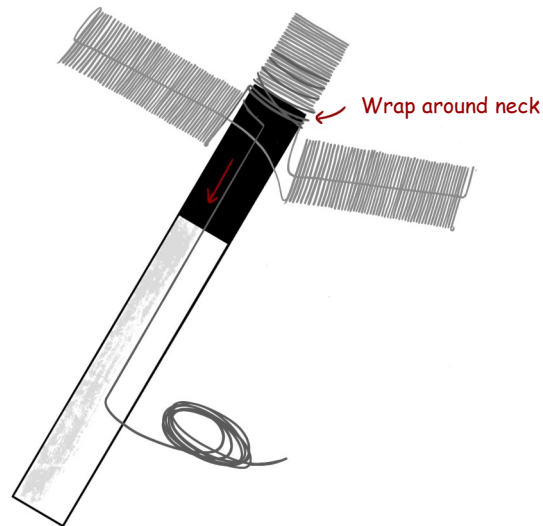
4. Once the arm is complete, remove the marker, and repeat step #4 on the opposite side of the head to create a second arm.



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- Put the head portion wrapped wire above the marker cap and wrap the loose end around the cap a few times to create a neck. Then stretch the loose end of the wire straight to create the length of the torso.



- Get a second marker, and hold the two markers together with the stretched wire between them. Working back toward the head, wrap the wire around both markers to create a wider torso. When you reach the head, loop the wire once more around the neck. Then work in the opposite direction wrapping the wire around both markers, to form a second layer until you reach the bottom of the torso.
- Slide the double-wrapped wire off the markers, and squeeze the loops together to shape the torso.
- Create two legs as you did the arms in step #3. Stretching the wire along the full length of one marker (so the legs are longer than the arms) and then tightly wrapping it back to the torso. Make a couple of loops around the torso to connect each leg to the body with added stability.
- Cut any excess wire and tuck the cut end of the wire into the sculpture.
- Bend and shape the wire sculpture to create the desired gesture/pose/movement.
- Staple the sculpture to the wooden base.



- Student practice (20—25 minutes): Using their blind contour drawing as inspiration, have students create a wire armature according to the process described in the demonstration.



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Pro—tips:

- Wire may need to be added to the sculpture after it is mounted to the base to hold the desired pose.
- Allow students to play with proportion to create exaggerated gestures.

Part 2: Sculpt modeling clay

- 1) Demonstration (5 minutes): Show students how to add Model Magic to their wire armatures and sculpt it into a figure. First, use your fingers to create small, thin slabs and then work the slabs into place on the armature. Finally, mold them to show anatomical features.
- 2) Student practice (35 minutes): Have students work to cover their wire armatures in Model Magic.

Part 3 (optional): Final touches

- 1) Once Model Magic is dry, encourage students to add facial expressions, hair and other details (with clay or marker), and to create clothing for their figures using scrap fabric, felt, and/or tissue paper.

Part 4 (optional): Presentation

- 1) If time permits, allow students to present their sculptures through a “show and tell” or “gallery walk”.





Allan Houser
Untitled (Apache Crown Dancer)
1942
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15" W x 20 3/4" H