

On the Edge with Maysey Craddock

GOAL: Focus on the Positive and Negative areas and their shared edges.
Standard 1 - Create
Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work.

VOCABULARY:

- Positive and Negative Shapes
- Shared Edges
- Organic
- Found Materials
- Color Harmonies

MATERIALS:

- Brown Paper Bags
- Carbon Paper
- Gouache
- Brushes
- Water/bowls

INSPIRATION:



samples of Maysey Craddock's work



Maysey Craddock is a Memphis based artist and here is how she describes her work and process, "My work mines the in-between spaces in the diminishing wildernesses of southern wetlands... I work from imagery based on my own photographic explorations, from which abstracted drawings are rendered and then transferred onto a substrate of sewn-together fragments of discarded paper bags. Layers of gouache are laid over the terrain of the paper, conveying atmosphere and a recollection of the story of these spaces."

SUBJECT OPTIONS: Subject is open but look for items that have a unique outer edge and some interior negative space. Such as: plants/trees, kids toys/dolls, bicycles, kitchen utensils, chair(s)

GRADE LEVEL: Adaptable but best suited for upper elementary to secondary levels.

DURATION: Expect to spend approximately 5 class periods. This will vary according to your class schedule.

INSTRUCTIONS

STEP ONE:

- Gather subject matter - look for objects or images that have organic shapes and some negative area within the object - there should be a clear play between positive and negative areas - for example the tree and the sky between the trees

OPTIONS AS TO HOW YOU MIGHT GET IMAGES

1. You might have the students create these images from direct observational drawings
2. You might have your students take photos that illustrate use of positive/negative space
3. You might take the photos yourself and allow the students to choose from them.
4. You might have students cast a shadow onto paper and then trace the shadow.
5. You could also use clip art.

COMPOSITION:

However you choose to create the image, you want to have the students consider composition. Perhaps you encourage them to go off the page with the object. Key is that the subject matter engages the space and that the student finds the right balance between positive and negative space.

SAMPLE SUBJECT MATTER



PHOTOGRAPH BY
TEACHER/STUDENT



STUDENT DRAWING FROM
DIRECT OBSERVATION



CAST SHADOWS ONTO
PAPER AND TRACE

STEP TWO:

- Convert the image to a line drawing.
- Essentially you are tracing the positive and negative shapes - talk to the students about deciding what is relevant and what is irrelevant to the image
- You could use tracing paper, light boxes, iPads and drawing apps - there are multiple ways to complete this step - use the tools you have access to and are appropriate for your age group.
- For younger students or if you have limited time, you may choose to change the photos to line drawings ahead of time

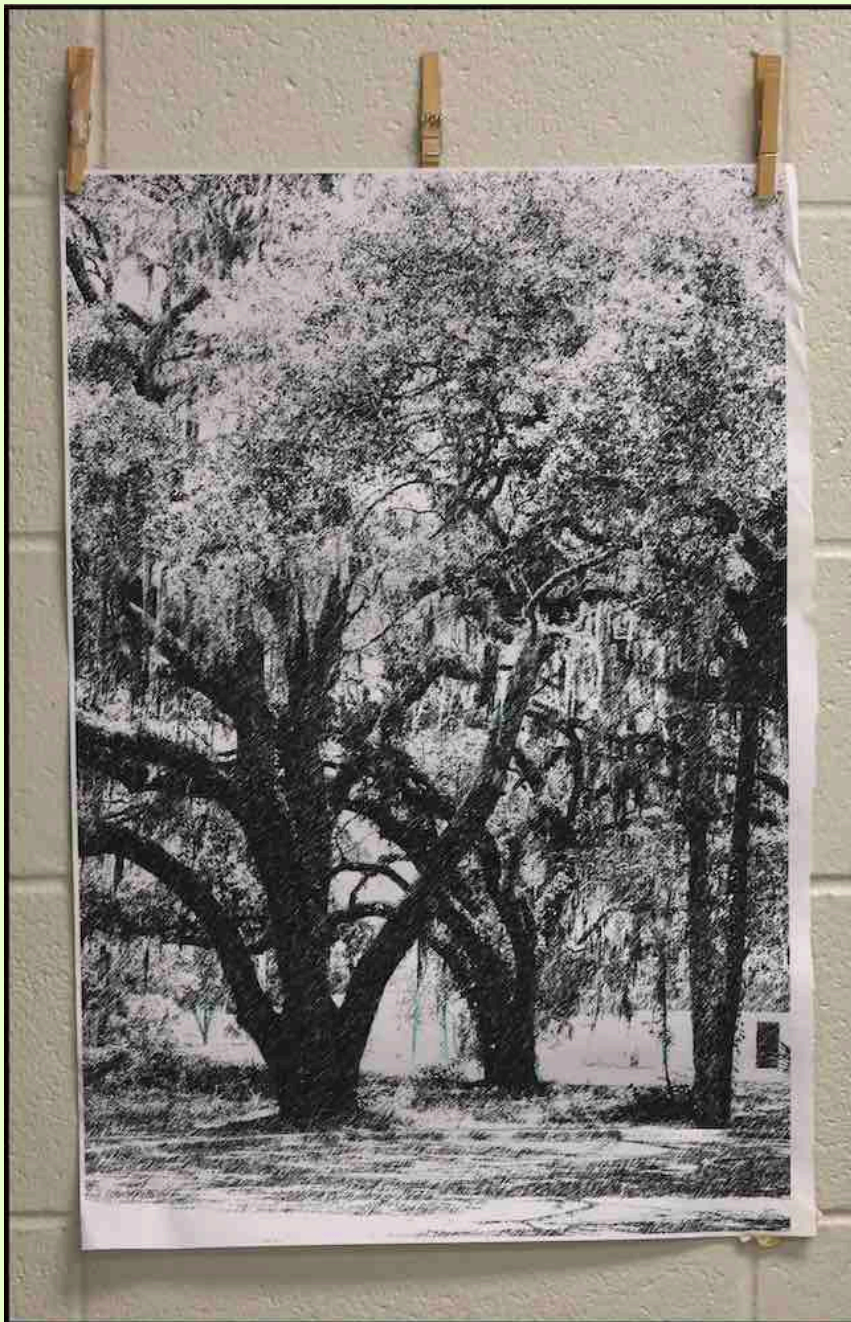
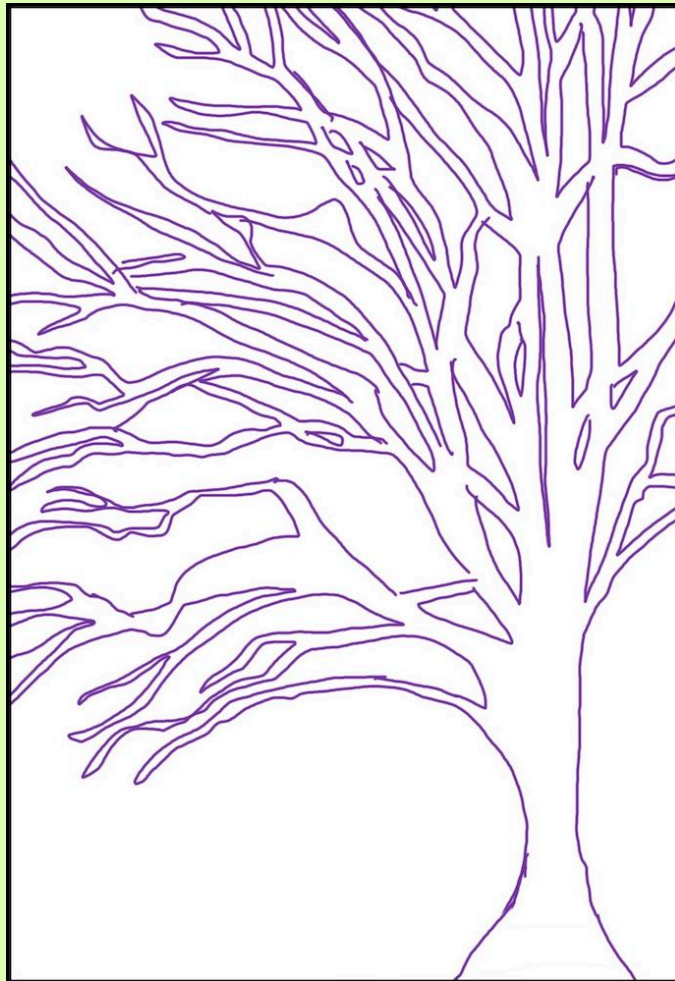


Photo - printed - so the student can lay tracing paper over the image and convert it to a line drawing

STEP THREE: Prep the paper bags. Cut open and iron flat. Set iron to a low temperature and keep it moving. If you teach young children, you may choose to complete this step ahead of time.

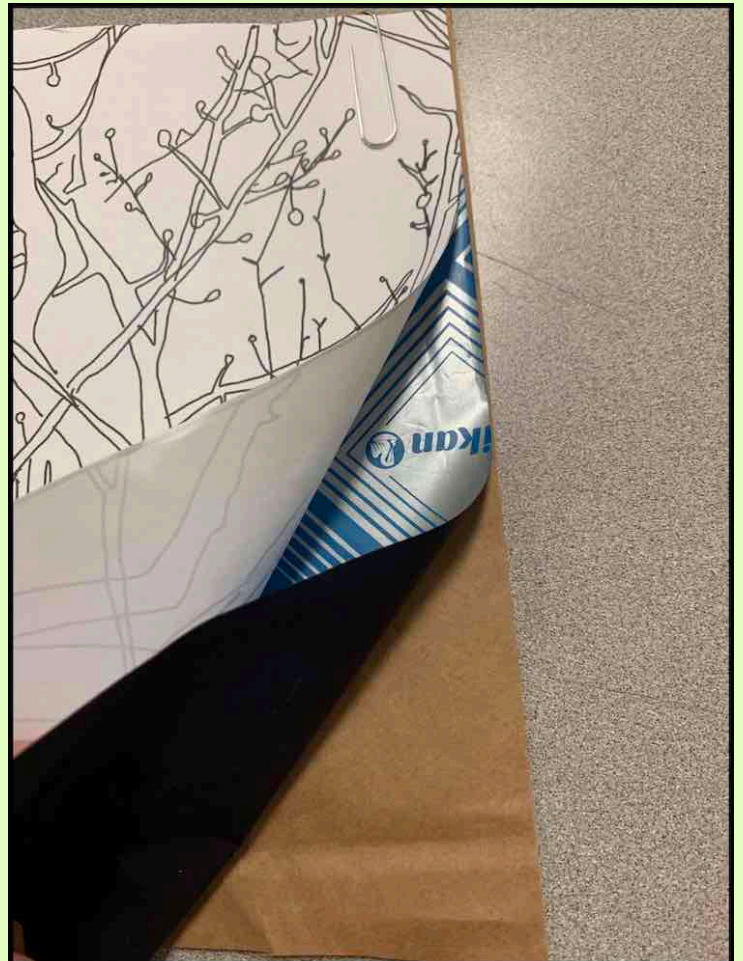
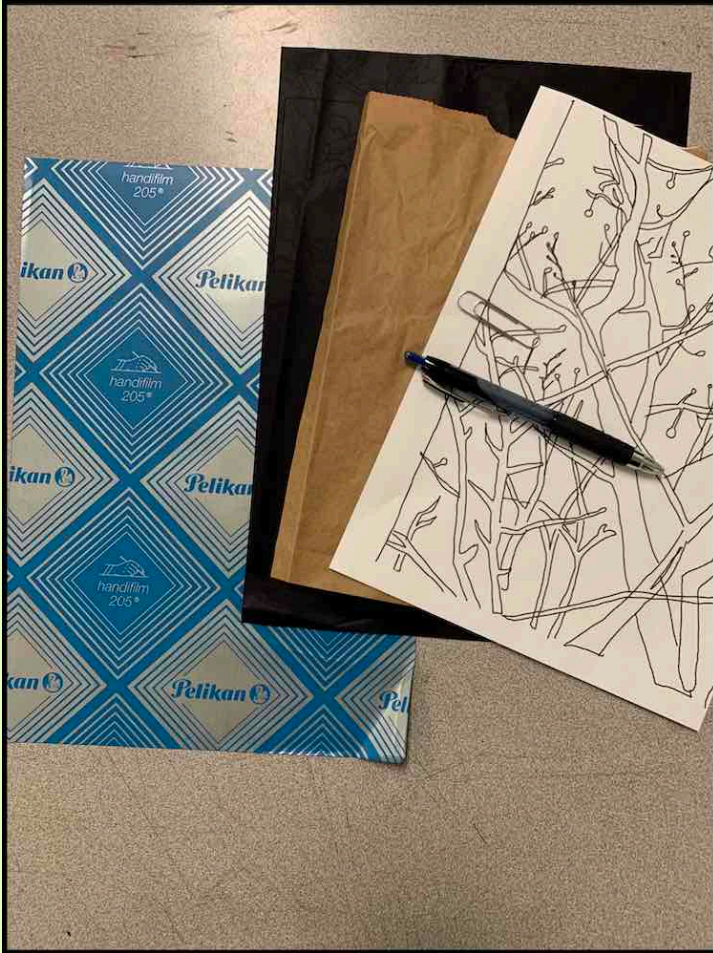
STEP FOUR:

- Print and/or enlarge line drawings you just created. You want them to be the same size as the paper bags or slightly smaller.
- This step might look different for everybody
- You may choose to cut the paper bag and work smaller so you just print the image as a standard 8 x 11 OR you may choose to use the entire paper bag and need to print the image larger - perhaps you have access to a large format printer at your school or could take the image to a Fed Ex Kinko's. You could even print the image in sections and tape it together to make a bigger print.



STEP FIVE:

- Place carbon paper between the printed photo or drawing and the brown bag. Trace over the image (we think a ball point pen works best). The line drawing will transfer to the brown bag. **SUGGESTION:** use a little tape or paper clip to hold the parts still



STEP SIX:

- The carbon paper will transfer the line drawing to the paper bag. It is time to paint.



STEP SEVEN:

- **PAINT OPTIONS:** Craddock uses gouache. She adds water to the paint until it is the consistency of whole milk. You could also use water downed acrylic. Water colors will give you a more muted end result..
- **CHOOSING COLORS:** this is an excellent opportunity to teach or build on prior knowledge of color harmonies, such as: complementary colors, split complement, etc.

OPTIONAL STEPS:

- **STITCHING:** Embroidery floss can be used to incorporate stitching into your piece. It can be used to hold bags together or be used as a type of mark making.
- **VIRTUAL LEARNING:** These steps are very adaptable to the home. Students could go outside and trace shadows cast by tree branches or set up a jar of cooking utensils with a light source aimed at it.
- **ALTERNATE MATERIALS:** Students could work on other found materials. Such as: envelopes or pages from a book

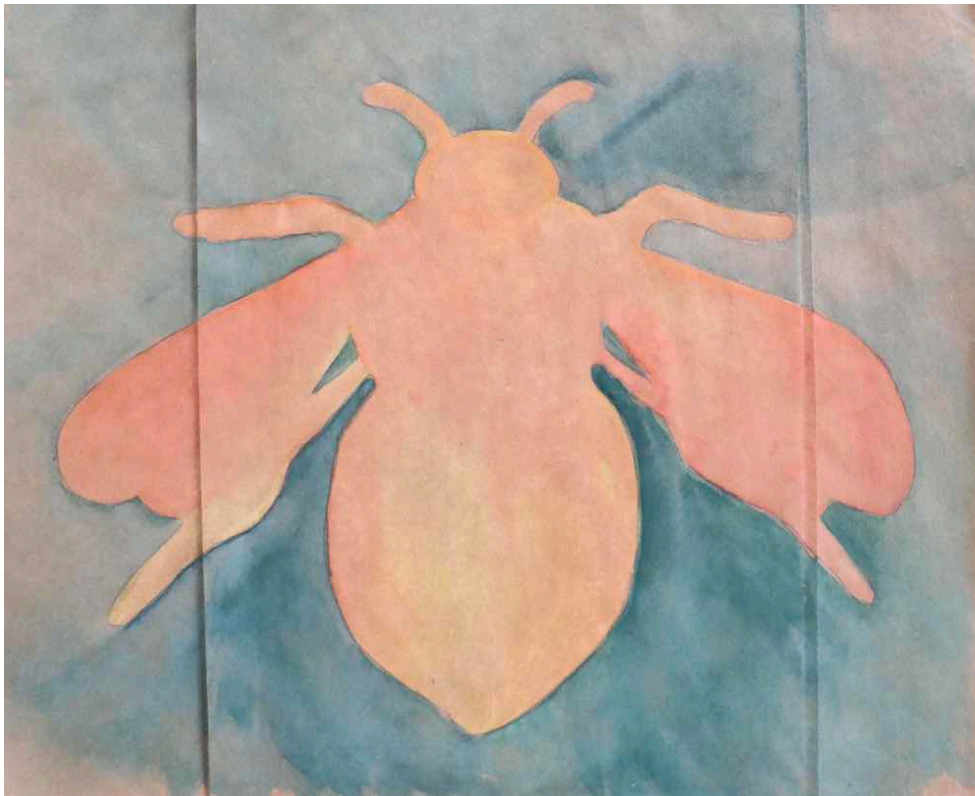
FINISHED EXAMPLES



Student samples - secondary level - gouache



Student samples - secondary level - gouache



Teacher sample - elementary and up - watercolor - complementary colors



Teacher sample - middle/high school - acrylic/have the students purposely under-mix the paint so that you get some variation - complementary colors



Teacher sample - elementary - using stencils to create positive/negative shapes



Teacher sample - elementary - same idea but more advanced

Teacher sample - incorporating stitching

