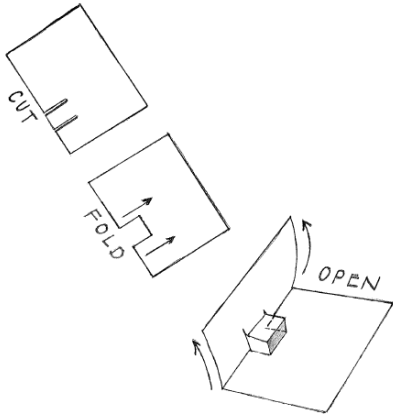


Classroom Activity

Surrealism & Writing: Pop-Up Bookmaking

Enduring Understanding	The visual and literary arts inform each other. The writer's pencil and the painter's brush are conduits for the artistic imagination.
Grades	6–12
Time	One to two class periods
Visual Art Concepts	Composition (foreground, middle ground, background), bookmaking, paper sculpting techniques (folding, scoring, cutting), positive and negative space, three-dimensionality
Materials	Cardstock, paper, staplers and staples, scissors, and glue or tape. Optional: pencils, rulers, hole punches, colored pencils or decorative paper
Talking about Art	<p>View and discuss Helen Lundeberg's <i>Double Portrait of the Artist in Time</i>, 1935. Compare and contrast with Lundeberg's <i>Self-Portrait (with Landscape)</i>, 1944, and other artworks by Lundeberg featured on the CD.</p> <p>Describe the setting (place and time) of each painting. Who are the main characters, what are they doing, and where are they situated within the artwork?</p> <p>The placement of people, lines, or shapes within an artwork is called composition. Artists often divide a composition according to a figure /ground relationship, meaning objects or subjects occupy space within the foreground, middle ground, or background of a vantage point. Things that appear closest to the viewer, such as the young girl seated in Lundeberg's painting, occupy the foreground. The space furthest from the viewer is the background and the middle ground exists between the foreground and background. Take a closer look at <i>Double Portrait of the Artist in Time</i>, turn to a partner, and explain how the figures interact with each other in space. Is this a realistic viewpoint? Why or why not?</p> <p>The result of Lundeberg's play on space is a disorienting illusion of perspective, depth, and scale. If you could rearrange the elements of the painting, such as the young girl, the table and clock, the shadow, and framed painting, within the foreground, middle ground, and background, how would it change your perception of what's happening in this scene?</p>

Making Art



Pop-up books are simple, yet complex spatial illusions that are fun and relatively easy to create. The basic concept of the pop-up is diagramed at left. Practice making this basic unit by folding a piece of scratch paper in half. On the folded edge, cut two parallel slits into the paper to create a tab. (Score your lines with pencil and a ruler, if you need help.) Invert the tab by folding it down and loosening it. Open the paper like a book and push the tab in with your finger so that the tab "pops up" from the center fold. Manipulate this basic unit to create more complex shapes by testing out some of the following techniques:

- Cut deeper into the folded edge or make more shallow cuts to create shapes of differing depths. Be careful not to cut too deep so as not to weaken the form.
- Use push-pins to invert the "pop-up" tab with precision.
- Play with positive and negative space by cutting shapes out of the tab. Think of the tab as positive space and the shapes that you cut out as negative space.
- Hole-punch the tab to create patterns and shapes.
- Decorate the edge of the tab with colored pencils or decorative paper to add color and design.
- Save and repurpose your scraps.

Now that you have tested out various techniques, choose a motif, or theme, for your pop-up book. Use language arts vocabulary words to create a word association game, a literary device popular with surrealists and their fascination with unveiling the subconscious. For instance, use terms from a lesson on the ecosystem, such as savanna, desert, tundra, and forest to draft a list of related colors (warm versus cool), shapes (organic versus geometric), textures (smooth, rough, sandy), etc. Use these words as inspiration for creating your pop-up cover!

When finished, create a simple book by folding a piece of cardstock as book cover, inserting folded copy paper as book pages, and staple on the folded edge as binding. The dimensions of the book should match the dimensions of the pop-up card. Attach your pop-up card to the cover of the book with glue or tape.

Reflection

Many surrealists, including Lundeberg, incorporated writing into their practice. This often took the form of automatism, or automatic writing and drawing. Automatism to the artist is what improvisation is to the jazz musician – the spontaneous and uncontrolled creation of images and/or words, straight from the artist's imagination to the page.

Use your book to practice automatism techniques, to create an exquisite corpse drawing with a friend (another popular surrealist game), or as a place to brainstorm ideas for classroom writing prompts.