

Experiment With One-Point Perspective

Inspiration: [*Butterfield Road Intersection*](#), 2011, by Marcia Clark

Ages: 5+ (Pre-K–Grade 12)

Duration: 30 minutes

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Pencil
- Markers, colored pencils, or crayons
- Optional: collage materials (mixed paper, old magazines, newspapers, flyers, etc.)

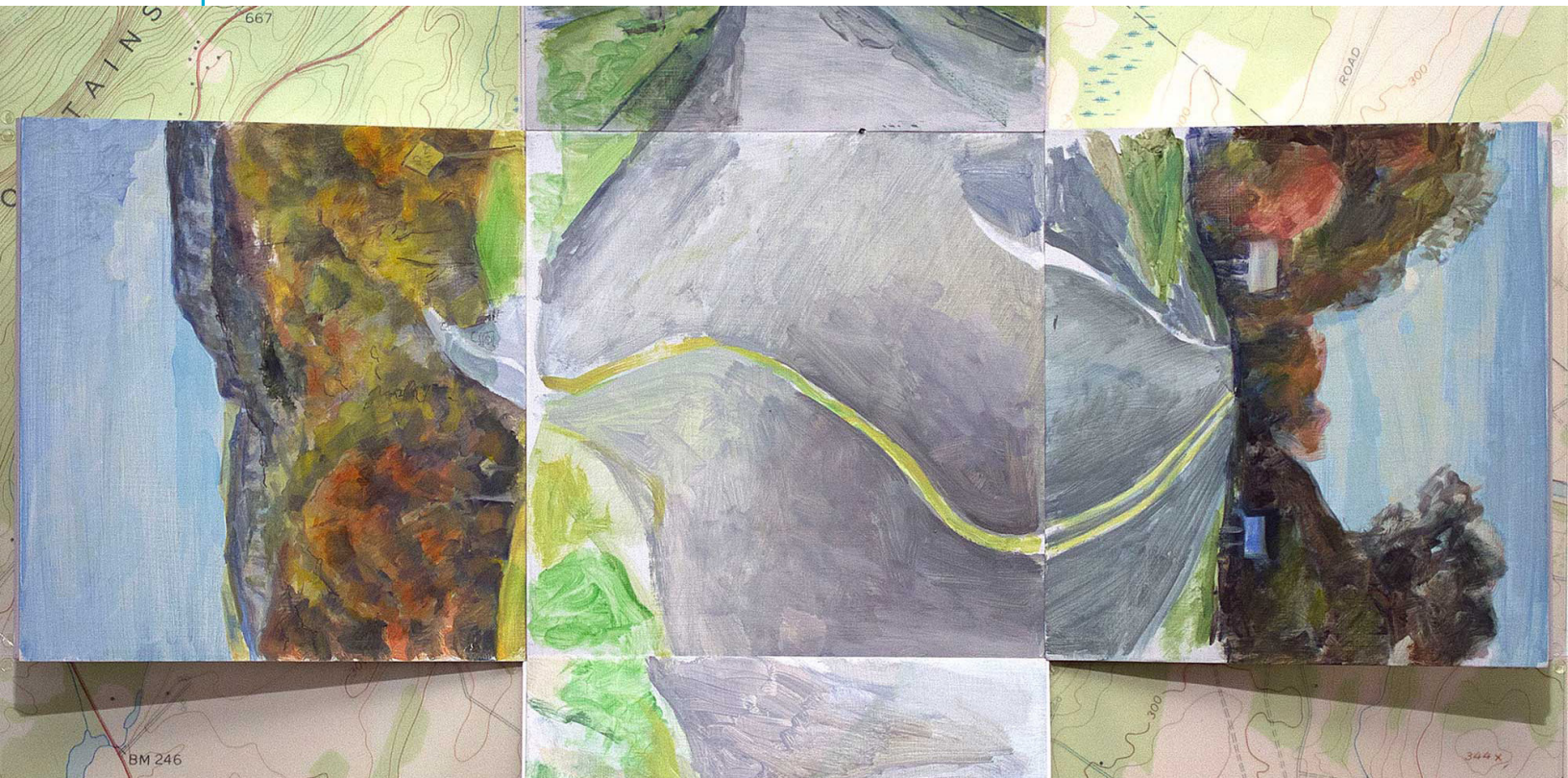


Image: Marcia Clark (American, b. 1938). *Butterfield Road Intersection* (detail), 2011. Mixed media. Gift of the artist, 2018 (2018.03).

Introduction:

Artist Marcia Clark has been painting landscapes since the 1960s, when she was inspired by the paintings of Hudson River School founder [Thomas Cole](#), whose work urged her to look deeper. The many ways in which artists perceive and record their environments has been a subject of research and artistic exploration for Clark for more than thirty years. In her work *Butterfield Road Intersection*, Clark uses a **multi-dimensional** approach to illustrate a panoramic view of a road and intersection near her former home in New Paltz, New York. She envisions the intersection at the center of her work, and the different points of view seen from this space looking in different directions. In this activity, you will choose a space, place, or location you are in, see, or pass every day and use the same process Clark did in showing the location's surroundings using **one-point perspectives**.

Procedure:

1. Think about an everyday space or location that you are in or that you pass by or see on a regular basis. This can be an indoor space, like a specific room, or an outdoor space like Marcia Clark's intersection.
2. Brainstorm some notes about this space in writing. Does it have a formal name? What are its main features? What is the purpose of the space? Is it a manmade environment or natural environment? What is your personal relationship to the space?
3. Take one piece of paper, whatever size you have available. Fold the paper into thirds from its long side. Then, fold into thirds from the short side of the paper. You should end up with a paper that has nine different sections delineated by the folds you have made.
4. Your center section will be where you draw or render the location of your choice in as much detail as you like. Everything else you draw or render in the spaces surrounding this center will be what you see if you were standing at this center and rotating around.
5. Find your space or location on Google Maps, or use a handheld compass or smartphone to determine what you see looking from your chosen space out into cardinal directions—north, east, south, and west. With Google Maps, you can often use Street View to digitally visit this space if you cannot access it in person.
6. Rotate, or imagine rotating, north to east to south to west and back again. How does your view change as you move?
7. Record what you see from each perspective. Add as many details as possible.

Thought Extension (Grades 6–12):

As you create the visual perspectives from different directions, consider the following:

- Are you able to see ahead of you *and* behind you at any given time?
- How does seeing all views at the same time in your collective one-point perspective work change your experience of being in, or your memory of, your central location?

In traditional landscape art, an artist is creating a scene that is one moment in time, like a photographic snapshot of a place. Marcia Clark's approach compresses several moments in and views over time into one work.

Clark is incorporating elements of **Cubism** into her work instead of a realistic, or literal, replication of the intersection and what can be seen from its central point. Cubism is an early twentieth-century style and movement in art, especially painting, in which perspective with a single viewpoint was abandoned and use was made of simple geometric shapes, interlocking planes, and, later, collage, in order to represent multiple viewpoints/ moments in time at once.

- How does Clark's work and your own work in this activity relate to the definition of Cubism? Look at her piece and at your own perspectives-based artwork again.

Share your work:

Take a photo of your work and post it to Instagram using the hashtags #MuseumFromHome and #MapArt, and tag @HudsonRiverMuseum.

