

Landscape in Lines

Ages: 5+ (Kindergarten–12)

Duration: Open-ended

Materials Needed: Paper and pencil; ruler or another straight edge; markers, crayons, and/or colored pencils; postcards or other images of different city landscapes OR a Google Image search of the same.

Inspiration: Delilah Pierce (American, 1904–1992). *DC Waterfront, Maine Avenue*, 1957. Oil on board. Collection of the Smithsonian American Art Museum. Museum purchase made possible through Deaccession Funds, 2009.29. On view in *African American Art in the 20th Century*.



Introduction

A landscape is an area of land that a person can see. A work of landscape art might include landforms like mountains, rivers, hills, and valleys; it might include plants, trees, flowers, and other things that grow; it might include animals; and it might include humans and the things that they build, like buildings, streets, schools, parks, and factories. Certain landscapes that show places where many humans live, work, play, and interact together are called cityscapes. Let's explore this work by Delilah Pierce, who lived in Washington, D.C., in more detail.

Look

- What's going on in this painting?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- What more can you find?

Think

- What do you think it would be like to walk around in this area of Washington, D.C.?
- What do you think it sounds like in the area that is shown in this painting?
- What do you think people are doing inside the buildings in this painting?
- How do you feel when you look at this painting? Why do you feel like that?

Connect

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Do

1. First, choose a postcard photograph of a cityscape or look at a photograph image of a city from Google Images. You can look at a cityscape that you live in, or you can choose a city you are curious about or want to visit some day.
2. Look very carefully at your photograph. Where can you find shapes? Where can you find patterns? Where in your cityscape can you find lines?

3. Use your pencil and paper to start drawing a version of the cityscape you have chosen. Use your ruler/straight edge to add lines of buildings, streets, windows, utility poles, etc. to your composition. These lines may go on top of other shapes and details you have already drawn. That's okay!
4. Do any of your lines cross one another? Do any of your lines go across a different shape like a circle or a rectangle? Are any of your lines at a diagonal? Are any vertical, or up-and-down? Are any horizontal, or going across?
5. Once you think you have added in every line you can find to your cityscape, go over them again so they are nice and thick. Then, you can add color with markers, crayones, or colored pencils.

Reflect

Why do you think cities have so many lines, shapes, and patterns? Why do you think Delilah Pierce liked to paint different neighborhoods in Washington D.C.? Why do you think she made this painting of the waterfront? Would you like to visit this place? Can you think of another place you have visited that has many lines, shapes, patterns, or colors?

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