



LESSON 17 LEVEL A ORGANIC SHAPES

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

cutting a folded paper to produce a symmetrical shape

WHAT YOU WILL NEED: many shades and tints of green paper (gift wrap, magazines etc.); scissors; paste or glue; manila or construction paper; scissors

NOTE TO PARENTS: Gather an assortment of leaves that are obviously bilaterally symmetrical (the two halves are mirror images of one another) and, if possible, several others that are not. Cut the green papers into rectangles of various sizes, 50 x 50 cm to 100 x 150 cm (2"x 2" to 4"x 6"). Provide at least 8 or 9 rectangles. Encourage the child to use the new "big" words.

WORDS TO LEARN:

symmetrical: a balanced arrangement on opposite sides of a line, real or imaginary

bilateral: on two sides

"symmetry"; the leaf is symmetrical. Maybe you learned about symmetry at school. What other things do you know that are symmetrical? (faces, bodies, insects, cars, etc.)

1. Look at the leaf shapes in Henri Rousseau's painting, Jungle Sunset. Point at the the kinds of leaves that are symmetrical. The artist has repeated

LEAF SHAPES



Henri Rousseau Jungle Sunset (detail)
Oeffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel

GETTING STARTED: Many artists show trees and flowers in their pictures. They need to know how to make the shapes of leaves. Look at different kinds of real leaves. Notice how they are much the same on both sides of their middle veins. Fold one of the leaves along the center vein. Can you see that the two sides are very much alike? We call this



these shapes many times, but the picture is not boring. That is because he showed many different kinds of green and arranged them carefully.

2. Fold one of the pieces of green paper in half. Pinch the fold of the paper. Cut off some of the open edges that stick out.

3. Now, carefully cut a curve. Start at the bottom of the fold and end at the top. Turn the paper little by little while your scissors do the cutting. Open the paper. See the symmetrical shape? You can close the paper again and cut a jagged edge to make the leaf shape fancier.



Henri Rousseau Jungle Sunset (detail)
Oeffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel

4. Fold other papers and make more symmetrical leaf shapes: large, small, long and skinny, short and fat. Use scraps to make some tiny leaf shapes.



Student Demonstration

5. Separate the leaf shapes from the scraps. Throw the scraps into the trash basket. Arrange the leaf shapes on the big paper until you are happy with the way they look together. Overlap some of the shapes if you like.

6. Lift each leaf, one at a time and spread paste on the back. Fasten it back in place. Maybe you would like to draw the veins with a crayon or marker.

CLEAN UP: If you threw the scraps of paper away, there isn't much more to clean up. Check your work area. Any more scraps? Throw them away. Then put away the things you'll use again for another project.

TALK ABOUT IT: Are all your leaves “bilaterally symmetrical”? (Can you say those big words?) Did you make different shapes, sizes, and colors? Do some of your leaves have interesting edges? Did you overlap some of the leaves as Henri Rousseau did?

CONNECTIONS: Collect some real leaves. Press them flat overnight between old newspapers, under heavy books or other weights. Find out what each kind is called. Fasten them to paper and print labels to identify them.

