

Seeing silhouettes

Learn to stand out from the crowd with this simple yet effective art activity

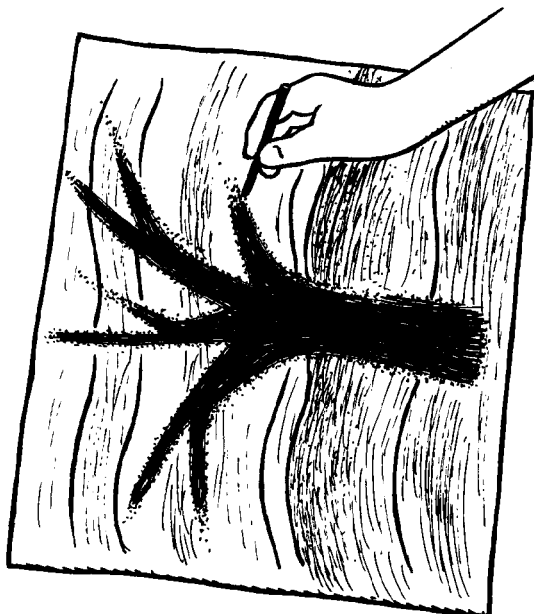
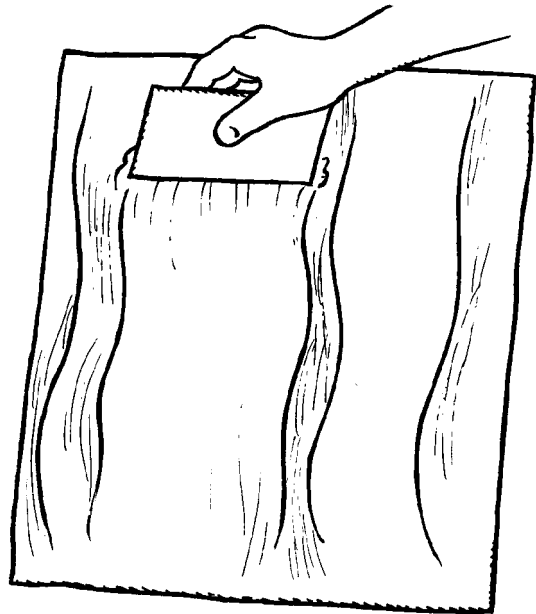
As a starting point for this task, look together at some paintings by Wright of Derby such as *Vesuvius from Posillipo*, *A Moonlit Lake by a Castle* and *Firework Display at the Castel Sant'Angelo*. He loved to paint dark objects against bright, lit-up backgrounds. These examples, along with the poster painting (*Bonfire Night* by Barry Watkin) should ideally be displayed as reference for the following activity.

The background

You will need: neutral coloured sugar paper; paints in white, yellows and reds; tray or plate; brushes/sponges/pieces of very stiff card.

- First, choose a light source. This will be the bright background of the picture. It could be a fire or a sunset.
- Mix bright, fiery colours and cover the paper with them. Children could use a big brush, a sponge or their fingers. Alternatively, they can be shown how to scoop paint onto a piece of stiff card and then drag it across the paper to make sunset stripes.

Drag paint using card strips to make a sunset



Use charcoal for trees

The silhouette

You will need: charcoal or dark paper/magazine photos; scissors; glue sticks. Alternative: paints in blues, reds and yellows; trays; small brushes.

- While the background is drying, get the children to decide what their silhouette will show. Will it be a forest fire? Bare winter trees or a church against the sunset? A bonfire of sticks with a guy on top? Houses burning in the Great Fire of London?
- The choice of silhouette will affect how it is made. If it is trees or a forest fire then charcoal can be very effective. If it is houses or other similar, easy shapes, then these can be cut out of dark paper or magazines and stuck onto the background.
- More confident children can have a go at mixing their own colours to paint on the silhouettes.

Top tip

Make sure that backgrounds are completely dry before children start adding their silhouettes.

