

4. FIND *SHINNECOCK CANAL*
BY GRACE HARTIGAN.



The artist named this painting after a waterway she crossed on her drives from Manhattan to Long Island.



Photo by Doug Randall

COMPARE Hartigan's painting to this photograph of Shinnecock Canal. Do you notice any similarities?

LOOK closely at the painting. Can you find a canal? How about a bridge? What other parts of a landscape can you find?

Hartigan's paintings are not exact likenesses of what she saw, but they include clues about her subjects. In her paintings she tried to capture the excitement of life around her.

YOUR TURN! Think of a place you see every day. Draw it in the space below. Will you draw the place the way it might look in a photograph or, like Hartigan, capture the idea of the place?

5. FIND *A TREE IN NAPLES*
BY WILLEM DE KOONING.



LOOK closely at the brushstrokes in this painting. Can you tell what size of paintbrush de Kooning used?

PICK one brushstroke and pretend you are painting it. Did you use your wrist, bend your elbow, or use your whole arm? How about your back? Did you move your body quickly or slowly?

CREATE the gesture, or movement, for another brushstroke in the painting.

KEEP LOOKING! Look for bubbles in the blue paint. Bubbles are signs that water may have been combined with oil paint. It is likely that de Kooning added egg to the paint, poured water in, and frothed it all up before applying the mixture to the canvas!

CIRCLE the words that describe the way the artist may have moved his paintbrush:

LIGHTLY
QUICKLY
WILDLY
CAREFULLY
ENERGETICALLY
MESSILY
SLOWLY

As you explore the rest of the exhibition, think about how the works of art you see are similar to and different from the ones you have explored in this guide.

BIG

Together with your friend or family member list four words that describe some of the Abstract Expressionist art you have seen.

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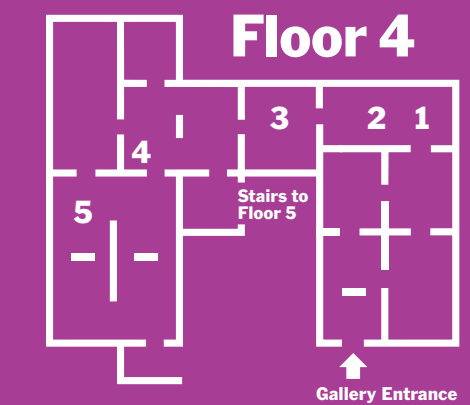
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For information on Family Programs at MoMA, please visit MoMA.org/family.

FAMILY ACTIVITY GUIDE

**ABSTRACT
EXPRESSIONIST
NEW YORK** →

The artworks you are about to see were made by Abstract Expressionists, artists who worked in New York in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. Instead of trying to represent a person, place, or thing, these artists used line, shape, and color to express their ideas.



THE BIG PICTURE

Use this guide to discover different ways Abstract Expressionists made art. You can even write a poem or two!

This Family Activity Guide offers questions for guided looking, activities, and suggestions for further exploration. We encourage families to work together.

AGES
6+

Grace Hartigan, *Shinnecock Canal*, 1957, oil on canvas, 71 1/4 x 51 1/4 x 1 1/2 in. (182.5 x 130.5 x 3.8 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of James Thrall Soby. © 2010 The Estate of Grace Hartigan.

Willem de Kooning, *A Tree in Naples*, 1960-1961, oil on canvas, 6' 8" x 70 1/4" (203.7 x 178.1 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. The Sidney and Harriet Janis Collection. © 2010 The Willem de Kooning Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York.

1. FIND *ONE: NUMBER 31, 1950*
BY JACKSON POLLOCK.



What do you notice about this painting when you stand near it?

Pollock laid the canvas on the floor to make this painting instead of propping it up against a wall or easel.

What do you notice from a distance?

In the air, trace some of the lines in the painting with your finger.

POLLOCK SAID,
“ON THE FLOOR I AM MORE AT EASE.
I FEEL NEARER, MORE A PART OF
THE PAINTING.”

Can you tell which lines were painted first? How?

While walking around the canvas—sometimes even on top of it—Pollock applied paint using stiff brushes and sticks and by pouring it directly from the can.

LOOK for areas where paint was:

DRIPPED
SPLASHED
POURED

SPLATTERED
FLUNG
LAYERED

➔ **KEEP LOOKING!** Look for other paintings by Pollock nearby. Can you find everyday objects, such as thumbtacks or nails, hidden in the paint? Can you find a handprint?

2. FIND *AUSTRALIA*
BY DAVID SMITH.



SMITH SAID,
“I DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE LIMITS
WHERE PAINTING ENDS AND SCULPTURE
BEGINS.”

In *Australia* the artist used metal lines to “draw” in space.

Though the artist never said why he titled this work *Australia*, some people think it looks like a hopping kangaroo! Where might the kangaroo’s head be? Can you see its legs?

1. CHOOSE an animal and draw it here.

2. DRAW the same animal using just five lines.

➔ **AT HOME** use pipe cleaners or aluminum foil to make your drawing into a sculpture. Can people guess what animal your drawing in space represents?

3. FIND *THE GALLERY OF WORKS*
BY MARK ROTHKO.



LOOK for paintings in which rectangles seem to float on large areas of color. These large areas are sometimes called “color fields.”

CHOOSE one of these paintings with your friend or family member and take turns sharing words you think of while you are looking at it.

WRITE one word on each of the perforated cards to the right. Separate the cards and arrange them to create a free-form poem.

RECORD your poem in the space below:

ROTHKO SAID,
“I’M INTERESTED ONLY IN EXPRESSING
BASIC HUMAN EMOTIONS.”

Which emotion, or feeling, do you think this painting expresses?

CHOOSE another painting by the artist. How is this painting similar to and different from the painting you just looked at? What is the mood of this painting?

CREATE a new poem, inspired by this painting. Use the same words as last time or write new ones on the backs of your cards.

RECORD your poem below:

Jackson Pollock (American, 1912–1956), *One: Number 31, 1950*, Oil and enamel on unprimed canvas, 8' 10" x 11' 9 1/4" (269.5 x 350.5 cm), The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Staley and Harriet Jane Collection Fund (by exchange), © 2007 Pollock-Krasner Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

David Smith (American, 1906–1980), *Australia*, 1953, Powder steel, 6' 7 1/2" x 1' 3/4" x 16 1/2" (202.5 x 271.4 x 41 cm), on wooden block base, 17 1/2" x 16 1/2" x 15 1/2" (44.5 x 38.7 cm), The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of William Rubin, © Estate of David Smith (licensed by MOA), New York, NY

Mark Rothko (American, born Latvia, 1903–1970), No. 10, 1950, Oil on canvas, 7' 6 3/4" x 5' 7 1/4" (229.9 x 168.1 cm), The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Gift of Philip Johnson, © 1998 Kate Rothko Pritzl & Christopher Rothko/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York