Mondays with MoMA
Step 1

Look closely

To get a closer look, visit this website, then click on the image for a larger view: moma.org/collection/works/79462

Questions:
1. What is happening in this artwork?
2. What shapes do you see?
3. How do you think the artist created this?

Step 2

Learn more

Toward the end of his life, Henri Matisse invented a new form of art called the cut-out. He painted large sheets of paper with different bright colors and used scissors to cut them out into different kinds of shapes. He arranged these shapes into compositions.

This artwork is called The Swimming Pool and is the largest cut-out Matisse ever made. When the artist was no longer able to visit the ocean, he said, “I have always adored the sea, and now that I can no longer go for a swim, I have surrounded myself with it.” This artwork is 54 feet long and was hung on the walls of Matisse’s room so that he would feel like he was somewhere else.

Step 3

Activity: Create a cutout

Watch a MoMA educator show how to make a cut-out inspired by Henri Matisse:
youtu.be/7yAXgCBKqqg

Materials: colored paper, magazines, or any other colorful paper you can find, scissors, a blank piece of paper, glue (optional),

1. Collect magazines, flyers, or newspapers that have a lot of colorful pages and images. Or you can use colored paper if you have it.
2. Think of your favorite place to be and cut various shapes that remind you of that place.
3. Arrange the shapes on a blank piece of paper. Keep experimenting with different arrangements. Remember that you can use both the shape that you cut out and the paper that you cut it from (negative space).
4. Optional: When you are happy with your composition, you can glue it down or take a photo of it. Or, you can keep arranging the shapes into different compositions that represent different spaces.

Step 4

Share!

Share your artwork with a friend or family member and ask them about their favorite place. Or, you can email it to us at MoMA:
schoolprograms@moma.org

Volkswagen of America is proud to be MoMA's lead partner of education.
Generous support for School and Teacher Programs is provided by the Carroll and Milton Petrie Education Program Endowment, the William Randolph Hearst Endowment Fund, and the Mimi and Peter Haas Endowment Fund for Elementary School Programs.
Additional funding is provided by the Ducommun and Gross Family Foundation and by the Annual Education Fund.