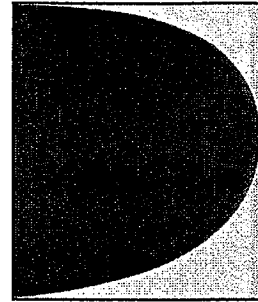


# Lesson 1:

## Positive/Negative Space: Now and Then

*Black Curve Relief*  
Ellsworth Kelly



**TEACHER'S NAME:**  
GINGER LINDSTROM

**SCHOOL:**  
PANORAMA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

**LENGTH OF LESSON:**  
2-3 40 minute periods

**Grade Level:**  
4<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Date of Lesson:**  
*Fall Quarter*

**OBJECTIVE:**

Students will experiment with symbol making understand qualities of positive/negative space. Students will be inspired by the work of the Native Americans, Kenneth Noland and Ellsworth Kelly. Students will design symbols with personal meaning.

**RELATIONSHIP TO THE UNIT:** This unit allows students to study symbolism in Native American Art and in the art of current artists. Positive and negative space will be a key factor in creating personal symbols.

**RELATIONSHIP TO LIFE:** Symbols are an important part of our culture. We catch sight of peace signs, the yin yang and smiley faces in our everyday lives. There are symbols for love, religion, sports and gender related iconography. Studying the symbols of the traditional art of the Native Americans gives students a strong basis for examining symbolism in culture. Students explored symbols in the previous unit. The designs on Native American pottery fit the form of the vessel, creating interesting positive and negative space. This study provided the background knowledge for the students in positive/negative space. In this lesson, students will decipher the meanings and transfer the information into their own personal symbols. These symbols will represent their name, personal traits, family and where they live. Students at this age level wear symbols on their clothing and often draw different symbols when they are "doodling". Examining what these symbols mean in past and present cultures makes students aware of issues in our environment and society.

Students will see how artists solve issues with compositional elements. The art of Ellsworth Kelly and Kenneth Noland will guide students in solving positive and negative space issues within their own works of art. Exposing students to new artists shows the wide variety of art styles that exists and develops confidence in furthering their artistic abilities. Students will see that symbolism is used in all types of occupations such as: art, newspaper/magazine advertisement and T.V. commercials.

**PROBLEM/ACTIVITY:** How do artists solve problems with positive/ negative space? The art of the symbols used by Native Americans, Kenneth Noland, Ellsworth Kelly allow us to compare and contrast this issue. How can we use this information to make personal symbols,

cutting shapes with construction paper. The Frayer models will aide students in drawing their symbol designs.

**GOAL (S)**

**Know:**

- Symbols can be used to communicate personal ideas and experiences. (A.04-05.02.01)
- Symbolism in art is influenced by culture. (A.04-05.02.03)

**Understand:**

- Symbolism is a major factor in today's visual culture as it was in the ancient pueblos of the Southwest. (A.04-05.02.03)

**Be able to...**

- Create prints with interesting compositions and consider positive/negative space as a major principle in their work. (A.04-05.06) & (A.04-05.02.08)
- Recognize the artwork of Kenneth Noland and Ellsworth Kelly. (A.04-05.04.01)
- Use a Frayer model to create personal symbols.

**RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:**

Scissors  
4"x4" black and white paper  
Glue sticks

**MOTIVATION:**

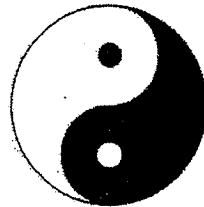
What is a symbol? Do you recognize these symbols and what do they mean?



**Native American Bear**  
Means: Strength and Protection



**Nike Logo**  
A symbol that represents the wingspan of the Greek goddess of victory, Nike.



**Yin Yang**  
A Chinese Tao picture of universal harmony and the unity between complimentary opposites: Dark/Light



**Recycling symbol**  
3 Arrows represent reduce, reuse and recycle



**Poison Symbol**  
Skull and bones crossed in X



**Peace Sign**  
War protest symbol



**Recycling symbol**  
3 Arrows represent reduce, reuse and recycle



**Male and Female symbols:** commonly used for bathrooms

**Topic Question:**

What symbols have a strong positive/negative relationship? Strongest? Least Strong?

**Association Question:**

Can you visualize other symbols that you see in society today?

**Visualization Question:**

Do you notice symbols that are symmetrical or asymmetrical? Do the symbols display different types of symmetry? Radial? Bilateral? How will the different types of symmetry affect your artwork?

**Transition Question:**

How can you make symbols that represent you and at the same time have an interesting positive/negative relationship?

**ARTIST STUDIES:**

Students will see the slides of Kenneth Noland and Ellsworth Kelly and examine the artists' studies of positive/negative relationships.

1. The teacher will demonstrate cutting symmetrical shapes from black paper by folding the paper in half and cutting an interesting shape. Asymmetrical shape will be demonstrated by cutting organic shapes with one continuous cut, so that the outside edge can be used to show the reverse shape.
2. Students will receive four 4" squares of white and black construction paper. They will fold 1 sheet of black in half to cut a symmetrical shape. On the second piece of black, they will cut an organic shape. They need to save the remnants of the black paper. They will glue the black shape to the white squares. They will glue the black remnants to the white squares. Students will arrange the four squares together in a composition.
3. As students finish, they will pin the class works on the wall to make a collaborative artwork. Students are asked to examine the squares and point out interesting and strong compositions. The class will assess the relationships of: positive/negative space and symmetrical/asymmetrical and radial/bilateral symmetry. Students will rate the terminology using the +/- Knowledge Rating Scale as a formative assessment.
4. The Frayer model will guide the students in their thought processes for their personal designs. A symbol representing their name, region, a personal trait, talent and family should be sketched in each box of the Frayer Model. Baby name books and Internet sources will guide them in defining their name.

**CLOSURE:** Students will share one of their symbols with a peer and explain their thought during creating. The +/- Knowledge Rating scale will evaluate student's understanding of the terms discussed during the lesson.

**EVALUATION**

- The Frayer model will serve as an evaluation of the student's work.
- The teacher will meet with students to discuss their symbol designs.
- The experiment with the construction paper the completed Frayer model will show if the student understands positive/negative relationships.
- The +/- Knowledge Rating Scale will evaluate students; understanding of the terms.

# Frayer Model Personal Characteristics

What is something you do well or enjoy? Biking?  
Swimming? Reading?

What do you think is your best quality? Keeping secrets?  
Honesty? Trustworthiness?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning:

**+/-Knowledge Rating Scale**

<b>Word</b>	<b>Know It Well</b>	<b>Have Seen or Heard It</b>	<b>Have No Clue</b>
Positive Space			
Negative Space			
Symmetrical			
Asymmetrical			
Tension			
Radial symmetry			
Bilateral Symmetry			
Composition			