

## Mathematical Shapes & Printmaking Inspired by Elizabeth Warhanik

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY DESIGNED  
BY MONA EDUCATORS



*Student example*

*Source: Museum of Northwest Art*

### Description

In this lesson students will gain an understanding of the types and names of shapes. Students will view a video demonstrating the use of shapes in art and be introduced to Northwest artist and printmaker Elizabeth Warhanik.

### Vocabulary

- ✓ Shape
- ✓ Circle
- ✓ Oval
- ✓ Square
- ✓ Rectangle
- ✓ Rhombus
- ✓ Pentagon

### Materials

- Elements of Art: Shapes video
- Toilet paper tubes
- Cardboard pieces
- White paint
- Black paper
- Scissors
- Shallow trays or paper plates for paint

## Instructions

- 1) Have a class discussion about shapes in geometry. Ask students to share their understanding of geometry, what types of shapes they may know and recognize. Describe today's activity incorporating shapes and art making.
- 2) Watch [this video](#) about the use of shapes in art.
- 3) Introduce the students to the artist Elizabeth Warhanik and explore images (full size images included at end of lesson)
  - Here, it may be helpful to use **VTS** (Visual Thinking Strategies). More information on VTS and resources included at end of lesson.
- 4) To begin the art making activity, show students how to make various shapes by cutting the toilet paper tubes and cardboard pieces.
- 5) Students will then use the paint trays and cardboard pieces to print various shapes on their paper.
- 6) Teachers can discuss the students' thought process and approach during and after their printmaking process.
- 7) Optional: after letting the prints dry completely, students can fill in the shapes with oil pastels.

## Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr1.1.K** (Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials)
- **VA:Cr3.1.K** (Explain the process of making art while creating)





Elizabeth Warhanik

Image credit: *Territorial Hues* by  
David F. Martin

**Elizabeth Warhanik (1880-1968)** was an illustrator, watercolorist and printmaker from the Pacific Northwest. Born in Germantown, Pennsylvania, Elizabeth eventually moved to Washington where she continued to live for the rest of her life.

Elizabeth went on to exhibit her artworks with the Seattle Fine Arts Society (that would later become the Seattle Art Museum), help found the the Women Painters of Washington organization and become a member of both the Northwest Watercolor Society and the Northwest Printmakers Society.

Warhanik's prints feature fruit, flowers, bright colors and bold geometric shapes. **How many different shapes can you find?**



Untitled print by Elizabeth Warhanik



Untitled print by Elizabeth Warhanik

**Information and images sourced from [Territorial Hues: The Color Print and Washington State 1920-1960](#) written by David F. Martin**

# Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

***What's going on in this picture?***  
***What do you see that makes you say that...?***  
***What more can you find?***

## Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to VTS in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: <https://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators>





*Untitled* print by Elizabeth Warhanik





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