



## Nature in abstract

GRADES 7–8

*Plants in the Sun* by Kazuo Nakamura is composed of bold, faint, geometric and organic shapes, waves, lines and dots. Explore the elements of shape and value with the following activities:

### Art Activities

#### Create an abstract landscape

Find an image of a landscape to use as inspiration. Use lines and dots to portray the scene, but do not try to replicate the landscape realistically—lean into the abstract! Experiment with value by using a variety of bold and faint lines to emphasize specific elements.

#### Depict a realistic landscape using different materials

Find an image of a landscape to use as inspiration. Experiment with materials such as watercolour, tempera paint or pastel. Instead of drawing on paper, perhaps experiment on canvas, a wood plank or even fabric.

#### Create Tangram Art

Experiment using the element of shape in art by arranging geometric tangram puzzle pieces to create a unique image. You can print a tangram puzzle template [here](#). After finding a shape you like, trace your image and decorate it.

If you'd like to extend the lesson beyond visual art, here are some other activities:

### **Play with pigments (science)**

Chlorophyll is a natural pigment found in green plants. It is the primary pigment that absorbs light energy from the sun for photosynthesis. Using a coin or spoon, press a leaf onto a piece of paper. Chlorophyll will be left behind. How does the value of the colour change over time or with exposure to the sun? Using the scientific method, develop an experiment to extract chlorophyll from spinach or leaves found outside. Use this pigment to make a painting.

### **Angle scavenger hunt (math)**

Take a protractor outside and look for right-angled triangles all around you. You may find them on things like shadows, buildings, branches, or leaves. Record your findings. For a challenge, use a ruler to measure the base and height of the triangles and use the Pythagorean Theorem to calculate their hypotenuses.

### **Write an abstract poem (language)**

Free verse poetry is a style that doesn't follow a rhyming pattern or consistent meter. Using a landscape image, write a free verse poem using descriptive language to explain what you see in the image and how it makes you feel. Recite your poem to a peer, using your tone of voice to emphasize specific words or lines that help portray emotion in the piece.



## **Glossary**

**Value:** An element of art that deals with the lightness or darkness of a colour.

**Shape:** An element of art that has an external form or outline made by line, colour and/or texture. Shapes can be geometric, organic, positive or negative. Shapes have two dimensions: length and width.

**Tangram:** A geometric puzzle consisting of a square cut into seven pieces that can be arranged to make various other shapes.