

SNOWY MOUNTAIN SILHOUETTES



In this art lesson, students will explore how moonlight affects snow and shadows. They will analyze various images of snowy mountains from photographs and works of art noting the impacts of light through the process of reflection and refraction. Using a layered approach, students will create their own snowy mountain silhouettes.

NATIONAL ART STANDARDS

- VA:Cr1.1.4a – Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.
- VA:Cr2.1.4a – Explore and invent art-making techniques and approaches.

OBJECTIVES

- ✓ Students will be able to identify how light can be used to impact works of art.
- ✓ Students will be able to explore art-making techniques to create snow and shadows.

MATERIALS

- ☐ Drawing paper
- ☐ Acrylic paints
- ☐ Paintbrushes
- ☐ Images of snowy mountains at night
- ☐ Artwork depicting snowy mountains at night
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Cup
- ☐ Water



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ACTIVITY

- Write the following question in a shared visual space:
 - What colors are often used to indicate the presence of nighttime or darkness?
- Allow students to share their ideas and discuss their reasoning.
- Share several images of snowy mountains at night and provide time for students to study them.
- Point out that snow has a high level of reflectivity. This means it reflects a majority of moonlight and provides a glow.
- The high reflectivity also allows objects to cast sharper shadows on snow than on other surfaces.
- Return students to the pictures and encourage them to note the light and shadows that are present. Do they appear sharper?
- Inform students that they will create snowy mountain silhouettes and invite them to brainstorm how they can create shadows.
- Discuss their ideas and add suggestions if asked.
- Give students access to paints, paintbrushes, drawing paper, a cup, and a paper towel.
- Guide students to create a snowy moonlight silhouette with the following steps:
 - Start by creating a dark blue or purple night sky for the background.
 - Add a glowing moon and stars.
 - Paint black mountain silhouettes of various sizes.
 - Add white or silver for snow on the mountains and ground.
 - Create buildings or objects that cast shadows in the foreground.
 - Finish by painting the shadows cast onto the snow.
- Allow students time to complete their piece of art.
- Invite students to share their work with others.

