

Zara's Perspective Playground: Mastering the Horizon Line

Learning objective: To understand and apply the concept of linear perspective to create the illusion of depth in a 2D drawing.

Join Zara the zebra in her art studio! Zara explains that to make a drawing look 3D, we use a horizon line and a vanishing point. Look at the scene below and use a ruler to draw 'orthogonal lines' (receding lines) from the corners of the objects toward the vanishing point. This creates the illusion of objects getting smaller as they move further away. Follow the numbered questions to explore how position and size affect your perspective.

Word bank: Horizon line · Vanishing point · Orthogonal lines · Foreground · Background · Recede · Depth · Perspective

1. Explain why objects located near the 'vanishing point' appear smaller than objects located in the 'foreground'. (2 marks)

2. If you were drawing a long, straight road disappearing into the distance, describe where you would place the vanishing point and justify your choice. (2 marks)

3. Compare and contrast the 'foreground' and the 'background' in a landscape drawing. How do the size and detail of objects differ in these two areas? (2 marks)

4. What might happen to the perspective of your drawing if you moved the horizon line to the very top of your paper instead of the middle? (2 marks)

5. Justify your answer: Does a higher horizon line make the ground look larger or smaller? Explain your reasoning using the word 'perspective'. (2 marks)

6. How do 'orthogonal lines' help an artist create a sense of realism? Describe the process of using them. (2 marks)

Draw: Using a ruler, draw a horizon line across the middle of your page. Place a single dot in the centre as your vanishing point. Draw three rectangles of different sizes at various distances from the vanishing point. Connect the corners of each rectangle to the vanishing point using light pencil lines to create 3D cubes that appear to be receding into space.



Extension challenge: Design a 'perspective city' scene. Challenge yourself to include at least five buildings that all follow the same vanishing point. Add a path or a row of trees that follow your orthogonal lines to enhance the sense of distance. Write a short paragraph explaining how you used the horizon line to guide the viewer's eye.