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| **Lesson Title:** |
| MC Escher’s Stairs |
| **Grade:** |
| 7&8 |

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| **Academic Standards:** |

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| **Production, Performance and Exhibition of** **Visual Arts 9.1…***A. Elements and Principles in each Art Form**B. Demonstration of Dance, Music, Theatre and**Visual Arts**C. Vocabulary Within each Art Form**D. Styles in Production, Performance and Exhibition**E. Themes in Art Forms**F. Historical and Cultural Production, Performance**and Exhibition**G. Function and Analysis of Rehearsals and Practice**Sessions**H. Safety Issues in the Arts**I. Community Performances and Exhibitions**J. Technologies in the Arts**K.**Technologies in the Humanities* | **Historical and Cultural Contexts 9.2…***A. Context of Works in the Arts**B. Chronology of Works in the Arts**C. Styles and Genre in the Arts**D. Historical and Cultural Perspectives**E. Historical and Cultural Impact on Works in the**Arts**F. Vocabulary for Historical and Cultural Context**G. Geographic regions in the arts**H. Pennsylvania artists**I. Philosophical context of works in the arts**J. Historical differences of works in the arts**K. Traditions within works in the arts**L. Common themes in works in the Arts* |
| **Critical Response 9.3…***A. Critical Processes**B. Criteria**C. Classifications**D. Vocabulary for Criticism**E. Types of Analysis**F. Comparisons**G. Critics in the Arts* | **Aesthetic Response 9.4…***A. Philosophical Studies**B. Aesthetic Interpretation**C. Environmental Influences**D. Aesthetic Choices* |

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| **Lesson Objectives:** |
| Students will learn about the artist M.C. Escher by watching videos from the MCEscher web site and looking at his works in the galleries on that page. Students will also explore Escher’s impact on contemporary culture by watching clips from “Night in the Museum” and “Inception” “Dr. Strange” and “Labyrinth”. Students will explore the juxtaposition of perspective in Escher’s works dealing with stairs (House of Stairs, Relativity 1&2, and Convex and Concave). Students will create their own art work using pencil shading and architectural drawing. Finally, they will populate these spaces with their own creatures as Escher did. |

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| **Resources:** |
| <http://mcescher.com/>Note: Two films on Escher- Located in the first menu (About Escher) then in menu (Films on Escher) Scroll down to “BBC Productions The Art of the Impossible: M.C. Escher and me” show parts 1 and 2.<https://youtu.be/k1Z2pk5J9Ng> (A scene from the 1986 film Labyrinth)<https://youtu.be/trMpjAGseng> (A scene from the 2014 film A Night in the Museum)<https://youtu.be/UMr1xLzEnqw> (A scene from the 2016 film Dr. Strange) Also needed will be print outs of Escher’s work Relativity1 and the examples of staircases. (See Attached Folder) |

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| **Day:** | **Procedures:** | **Notes:** |
| Step 1 | On the first day of the project the instructor will introduce the work of M.C. Escher by opening up the web page M.C. Escher.com (Link above or the students can look at this page on their chrome books). The instructor can open up the gallery from the first drop down menu and explore some of the works (of specific note should be the works in the “Impossible Constructions” Collection as it will be the most applicable to the students’ projects. After the students have perused the site and had an opportunity to explore what might be of interest the instructor should direct them to the page “About Escher” and then to the page “Films about Escher”. Scrolling down the videos listed above (The Art of the Impossible; M.C. Escher and Me) can be found and played for the students. As the videos are playing pass out sketch paper (tan paper) and tell the students to sketch anything that they may find interesting whether it is a creature or a building, etc…. If they are watching on their Chrome Books encourage them to pause and draw from the screen if they wish. Once the students are finished looking at the video bring up the image of “Relativity”. Tell them that their job is to create a work of art in this surrealistic (Surrealistic quick definition: It looks like it could be real, but it isn’t. It defies physics or reality in some way) style of Escher. Tell them that their drawing will include sets of stairs but where the stairs lead is their choice. Give them the rest of the period to sketch out some place or locations that they may want to include in their works. This could be a basketball court, a haunted house, the coolest room ever at Urban Air, etc… Remind them that this is only a sketch and that they shouldn’t worry about mistakes.  | At the end of the period have the students put their names on their sketch paper and have them store these on their shelves. Shelves are arranged around the room Blue= 8th grade Red= 7th Grade. Shelves are then numbered according to period ie. 2nd period 7th grade is a red tag that reads 7-2.  |
| Step 2 | On the second day the students can make one of two choices. The first is to use the modified image of Escher’s work “Alien World” and install their own drawings/ settings in the cut out spaces. Remind students to incorporate a different perspective in each window. They may use the original to guide their choices or they may use their own choices. The second choice is to create their own space using stairs and different perspectives to make a piece similar to the Escher piece “Relativity”. With either choice they may want to search Google Images to find examples that they can use for inspiration. Having printouts to example staircases will be a way to cut time and to make life easier on the students so that they focus on the settings rather than just the staircases. Finally, encouraging students to use a ruler or strait edge will help them create nice rectilinear planes. Remind them that craftsmanship counts!   | For this class please print copies of the staircase examples included at the end of this document and in the attached Folder.Also: This step may take several days as students construct their pieces. A good idea will be to remind them periodically that they will have to populate their environments at some point and to keep this in mind as they work.  |
| Step 3 | Once the students have a setting almost complete they should begin to focus on what they would like to populate their environments with. For this they may want to revisit M.C.Escher.com again to look at the various creatures and people that Escher used in his works. These ranged from snakes, butterflies, and fish to monks, angels, and gnome like creatures. If the students wish to use another piece of practice paper to fine tune their drawings these should be made available. Encourage the students to be clever with their designs and to have fun creating the personalities of their creatures.  |  |
| Step 4 | Once the students have laid out all of the detail with pencil line they should move to shading. This presents a unique problem. Because all of the perspectives represented in the students works and in Escher’s works, realistic lighting may be difficult. Reassure the students that this is not the focus of the project. This may be something that they will have to solve creatively and intuitively and there isn’t a specific “correct” answer to the problems that they may face. Tell them to do their best but to also keep in mind simple solutions that may help them create the sense of space. This could be a shadow under a tree or a cast shadow underneath a creature. Some students may prefer to use a blending stump. This may also be a way to speed up the process for the student and give them confidence. If available supply these. This may also take several classes. Remind students to stay diligent and to practice good craftsmanship. Monitory progress here and award extra periods if necessary.  |  |
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| **Lesson Concepts:** |
| Students should work to mimic the style of Escher’s impossible spaces |
| Students should come up with their own creature to populate their spaces |
| Students should make an effort to apply value to their drawings to create the illusion of space and mass |

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| **Assessment Area:** | **Definition:** | **%** |
| **Lesson Concepts** | The student will earn points in this area by mastering and utilizing concepts presented in the lesson. The greater extent to which these concepts are visible within the project the greater the total score will be. Additional points (10 possible) may be accrued if the student employs these concepts in a non-traditional way or uses creative problem-solving to add an additional dimension to the project thus taking it further than the designed parameters of the original lesson. | **30PTS****10CPS** |
| **Craftsmanship** | The student will earn points in this area by using materials and tools for the project in an effective, deliberate, neat, and non-wasteful method. Clean edges, media control, stability, and overall presentation of the project will be considered when applicable. | **30PTS** |
| **Participation Diligence Experimentation, and Effort** | The student will earn points in this area by staying on task, following directions, and utilizing the available work periods appropriately. Compensation will be given to students who experiment and or attempt divergent methods to complete the project even if these attempts are not successful as this demonstrates creative problem solving (see above). | **30PTS** |
|  | **Score:** | **100** |



