

WOODMERE

ARTISTS IN BLOOM



ACTIVITY WORKBOOK FOR

EARTH DAY 2020

JOIN WOODMERE'S CELEBRATION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

April 22, 2020 marks the 50th year anniversary of Earth Day, the birth of the modern environmental movement. To celebrate, Woodmere invites you to explore one of the most beautiful landscape paintings in our collection, *Edge of the Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning)*, 1866, by Edmund Darch Lewis.

An art activity is included as well. Please participate in Woodmere's celebration by making a landscape picture of your own. (You can also work with a family member.) It can be a favorite place or a place you imagine.

We encourage you to share your artwork on social media by tagging **@woodmereart #earthdaywoodmere**.

For more information about Earth Day, go to: <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-2020/>





Edge of a Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning), 1866, by Edmund Darch Lewis. Oil on canvas, 40 ½ in. x 69 ½ in.
(Woodmere Art Museum: Museum purchase, 2018)

LOOKING AT: *EDGE OF A FOREST ON THE SUSQUEHANNA RIVER* (EARLY MORNING)

The artist who created this painting, Edmund Darch Lewis, (1835-1910) was considered one of the greatest landscape painters of his time. He was one of many artists whose paintings show the beauty of America's untouched, natural environment.

In *Edge of a Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning)*, the light of the rising sun touches and brings life to every element of nature. Thick yellow paint radiates light and energy throughout the entire painting.

Describe how the sun's rays or beams of light affect the clouds and the sky. Trace your finger along the shapes of clouds lit by the sun.

Look how the sun's beams of light spread across the water and create reflections. Trace your finger along the shapes reflected on the water. What are these shapes?

Notice how the trees lean toward the sun, dependent on its light to grow.

Notice the difference between the mountains along the edge of the river and those in the distance. Light seems to soften the distant mountains as they meet the sky.

Find the people in this painting. What are they doing? What might they be feeling as they walk in this landscape?

Tip: You can view this artwork in Woodmere's online collection by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/darchlewis>



Detail of *Edge of a Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning)*, 1866, by Edmund Darch Lewis.

LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE WORK

The historical context of this painting is significant. It was painted in 1866, one year after the end of the Civil War. The suffering of the war and its destruction of land were felt across the nation.

Edge of a Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning) looks forward with hope. The dramatic sunrise suggests the promise of a new day and a new chapter in the country's history. Two figures standing at the edge of the woods gaze at a broken tree in the foreground (front) center. Look carefully to see how its sprouting new leaves. New leaves mean new life. They bring hope and remind us of the power and persistence of nature's growth.

For more information about the Civil War, go to:
<https://www.dkfindout.com/us/history/american-civil-war/>



Detail of *Edge of a Forest on the Susquehanna River (Early Morning)*, 1866, by Edmund Darch Lewis.

REFLECTIONS

How do you think the artist felt about the environment he painted?

How does the painting make you feel? Would you like to go to this place?

DID YOU KNOW?

The Susquehanna River is approximately 444 miles long, the longest river on the American east coast, and the 16th longest in the nation. It flows from upstate New York down through Pennsylvania and into the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. The river is the source of drinking water for millions of Pennsylvanians.

Over the years, however, the Susquehanna River has become threatened by pollution which alters the river's flow, blocks fish and impacts water quality. The pollution that flows into many Pennsylvania rivers and streams ultimately finds its way via the Susquehanna River into the Chesapeake Bay. The Chesapeake Bay Foundation is now working to improve the river's health.

ART PROJECT: CREATING A LANDSCAPE

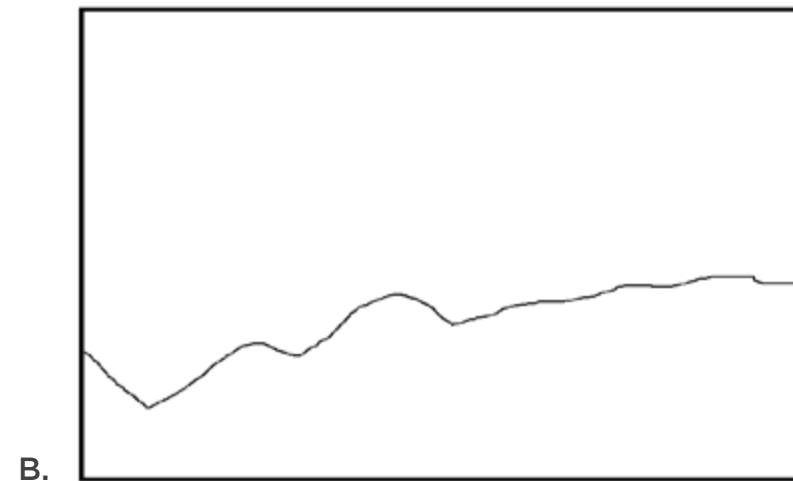
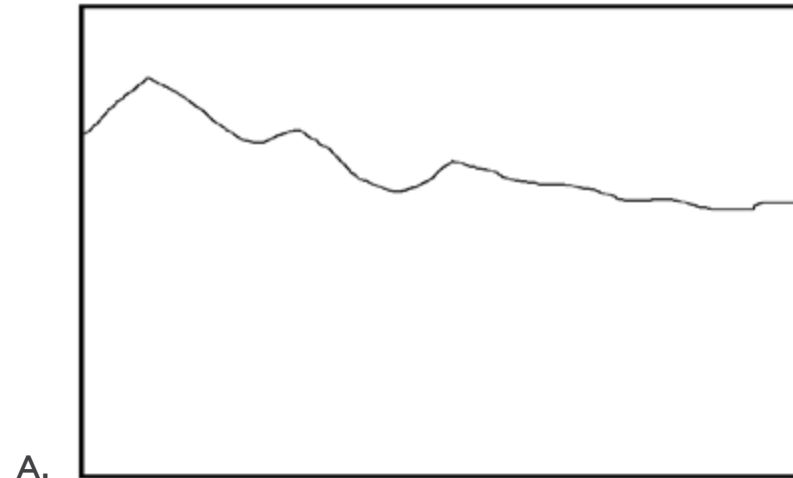
Look again at *Edge of a Forest Along the Susquehanna (Early Morning)*. The artist creates a deep and spacious view of the river's edge as it moves **diagonally** from the front of the painting, the **foreground**, to the hills in the distance. The river widens into the **middle ground** where hills roll down toward the river on opposite sides. In the **background**, a series of misty hills fade into a sunlit sky of billowing clouds with patches of blue sky.

Artists often begin by drawing sketches of their images.

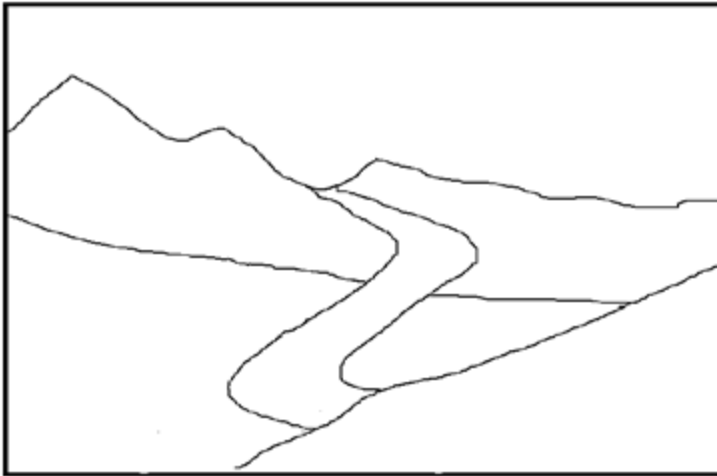
1. To create a sense of depth, start by drawing a **horizon line**, an imaginary tool an artist uses to separate the sky from the earth. Draw the horizon line from one edge of the paper across to the opposite edge. You can make it curvy, diagonal, straight, zigzag, or a combination of lines.

The higher the horizon line, the bigger the earth below.
See picture A.

The lower the horizon line, the bigger the sky above.
See picture B.



2. Divide the space below the horizon line with more lines to create a **foreground** and a **middle ground**. You can also draw lines for a river, road, valley, or mountain. Lines can be **straight, horizontal, vertical, diagonal, curve, intersect** or **connect** with one another.

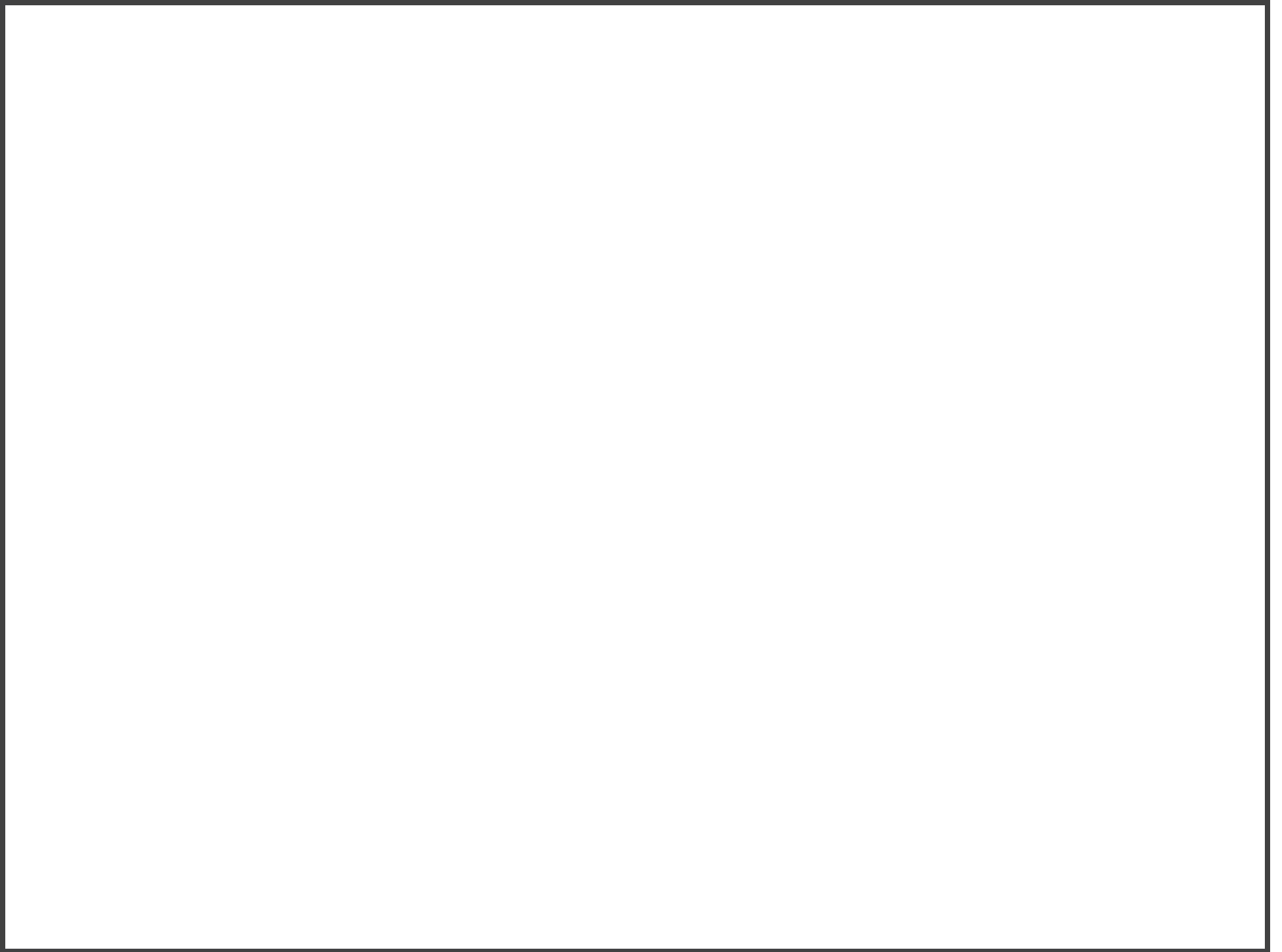


The space above your horizon line is the **background**. This is the sky. Draw lines to create clouds, stars, a sun or sunrays, a moon, or wind.

3. What objects do you want in your landscape: trees, buildings, animals...? Objects that are far away should be drawn smaller than those that are up close. Objects can also **overlap**, for example, overlapping the foreground, and middle ground. Look how the trees in *Edge of the Forest Along the Susquehanna (Early Morning)* overlap the foreground, middle ground, and background.
4. Think about the time of the year and draw details to show it is summer, winter, spring, or fall. Create colors that show if it is a bright, sunny day, or foggy day; is it morning, afternoon, dusk, or nighttime? Consider where you see light and where you see shadows.
5. Continue by choosing one or a combination of materials from below to add color and texture to your landscape.

Oil pastels, crayons, markers, colored pencils, watercolor paint

Or, create a **collage** with assorted and recyclable papers (construction paper, tissue paper, fabric and paper scraps, magazines, newspapers, paper bags), natural materials (sticks, leaves, grass, flower petals). Sort your materials by colors and glue onto your landscape.



WRITING PROJECT:

Artists and writers are careful observers of the world.

An artist such as Edmund Darch Lewis used a palette of color and paint to bring to life the beauty of the natural environment. Writers use words as their palette to share thoughts and feelings about the world around them.

Please use the ideas listed here as a springboard for a writing project inspired by *Edge of the Forest on the Susquehanna (Early Morning)*.

1. Create a postcard size image of a favorite place in nature. Let your imagination take you there, and write a note to a friend or family member describing why you love this place.
2. Imagine you are standing in the foreground of this painting. Write a brief description of what you see. Include how you feel about what you see.

Now place yourself in a different place within the painting (for example, on the hill on the other side of the river, or in a canoe on the river) and write a brief description noting how things are different.

3. Decide where you would most like to be in this painting. Write a description of what sounds you hear. What do you feel and smell? What does this place make you think about? Add as much detail as you can.
4. Pretend you are in this painting. What would you be doing? How would this be different if you were standing with a few friends?
5. Take a moment and review your ideas so far, especially the details from #3 and #4. Place yourself in the painting, and write an entry in your morning journal, describing your emotions as you get ready for the day.
6. Using your writing samples so far, circle words and phrases that you like the best when thinking of this painting. Feel free to add other words and phrases if they come to mind. From these notes, create a poem to accompany this painting. Be sure to include other senses along with seeing, and how you feel about this place.

Your poem can be free-form, or rhyme, a list poem, or follow a poetic form you have already learned.