FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / K–2 / 11

Kitchen Table Still Life

TEACHER GUIDE • lesson design & facilitation

Grade band: K–2 | 3–4 sessions, 35–45 minutes

Media: washable art media and cut-paper supplies

The artistic problem

Arrange and draw three familiar or invented objects that tell a small story of gathering.

Essential question: What can a few objects tell us about everyday life?

Place-based cultural lens: Look at objects from local kitchens, classrooms, restaurants, and community meals.

Learning targets

- Investigate the question: What can a few objects tell us about everyday life?
- Apply looking carefully, contour, relative size, overlap in a deliberate original composition.
- Use critique evidence to improve looking carefully and name one next step.

Student-visible success criteria

- The final artwork solves this problem: Arrange and draw three familiar or invented objects that tell a small story of gathering.
- Artwork includes three observed forms and one intentional overlap.
- Process evidence shows two different options before selection.
- Visual decisions demonstrate looking carefully and support the intended audience.
- Feedback results in at least one visible revision that the student can explain.

Standards & studio habits

Louisiana K–4 cluster: VA-CE-E1, VA-CE-E3, VA-CE-E5, VA-AP-E6

Studio Habits of Mind: Observe, Envision, Express, Reflect. These habits are developed interactively, not in a fixed rank or sequence.

Instructional alignment: Louisiana benchmark codes are official broad grade-cluster benchmarks; specific expectations are developed locally. The ten instructional stages come from the supplied Artistic Investigations framework.

Preparation & materials

- Drawing paper or sketchbook for idea studies
- washable art media and cut-paper supplies
- Samples and images from reliable sources, with attribution
- Tools appropriate to local safety rules and grade level
- Choice of visual, oral, or written reflection tools

10-stage teaching sequence

01 / Engage Present the artistic question: What can a few objects tell us about everyday life? Give students two contrasting examples that do not dictate a finished product.

02 / Investigate Look at objects from local kitchens, classrooms, restaurants, and community meals. Gather visual evidence and note what is observed rather than assumed.

03 / Skill Studio Demonstrate looking carefully, contour, relative size, overlap. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.

04 / Generate Develop two possibilities for the challenge: Arrange and draw three familiar or invented objects that tell a small story of gathering. Change the focal point, material, arrangement or viewer perspective between drafts.

05 / Plan Compare sketches to the success check (three observed forms and one intentional overlap); choose a direction and state why it better communicates the intention.

06 / Produce Produce an original visual response using looking carefully, contour, relative size, overlap; conference on one technical choice and one contextual question.

07 / Critique Partners identify where the artwork communicates the intended idea and locate evidence of looking carefully in the work.

08 / Revise Revisit the specific checkpoint: Three observed forms and one intentional overlap. Make one visible change after critique and preserve the initial view for comparison.

09 / Present Present with a title, medium, one key artistic decision and any needed credit or contextual limitation.

10 / Reflect Reflect: What evidence proves you improved looking carefully? What will you try or investigate next?

Studio sessions & evidence checkpoints

Session	Teaching move	Capture evidence
Day 1	**Notice + explore** Look at objects from local kitchens, classrooms, restaurants, and community meals.	Record one noticing and a quick mark-making sample.
Day 2	**Skill studio + choices** Demonstrate looking carefully, contour, relative size, overlap. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates. Children develop two possibilities.	Photo or scan of two studies, with a selected idea.
Day 3	**Make + conference** Create the artwork; show one decision at a time.	Teacher notes use of looking carefully.
Day 4	**Critique + revise + share** Peer observation, visible change and oral/visual reflection.	Save before/after samples and next goal.

Key technique to model

looking carefully, contour, relative size, overlap

Access without lowering the artistic goal

Invite varied foods and utensils without treating a cuisine as a stand-in for an entire culture. Offer physical samples, captioned images, accessible demonstrations, flexible planning modes, and alternate materials while retaining the common visual learning target.

Teacher coaching questions

- What is the visual problem you are solving?
- Which decision communicates your intended meaning most clearly?
- What does your reference prove, and what are you still imagining?
- What could a viewer misunderstand?
- What visible revision will strengthen your next version?

Cultural care

Do not require students to disclose meals, income, or family structure.

Stretch & explore

Make a second view from the opposite side of the arrangement.

Design provenance: Original Studio Fieldnotes investigation developed for the 50-lesson library; informed by the teacher-supplied ten-stage Artistic Investigations architecture and reflective Studio Habits framework.