

Spooky Streets: A Halloween Lesson in One-Point Perspective

Materials Needed:

- Drawing Paper (9"x12" or similar)
- Graphite Pencils (a standard #2 pencil is fine, an ebony or 6B pencil is great for shading)
- A good Eraser
- A Ruler (12-inch is ideal)
- Optional: Fine-point black marker for outlining
- Optional: Colored pencils, markers, or watercolors for adding color

Lesson Plan Details

Subject: Visual Arts, Drawing

Grade Level: 7th - 9th Grade (Age 13-15)

Time Allotment: 60 - 90 minutes

1. Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, the student will be able to:

- **Define and identify** the key elements of one-point perspective: the horizon line, vanishing point, and orthogonal lines.
- **Apply** the rules of one-point perspective to draw at least three 3D forms (cubes, rectangular prisms) that convincingly recede into the distance.
- **Create** an original and imaginative Halloween-themed drawing that demonstrates a correct application of one-point perspective.

2. Alignment with Standards (General Visual Arts Curriculum)

- **Creating:** Students will apply media, techniques, and processes to create a work of art that communicates ideas. (VA:Cr2.1.7a)
- **Presenting:** Students will analyze why and how artists use structures and functions of art, such as the principles of design (perspective), to convey meaning. (VA:Pr4.1.8a)
- **Connecting:** Students will relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding. (Connecting a technical skill to a cultural event like Halloween).

3. Instructional Strategies & Lesson Procedure

Part 1: The Hook - What is Perspective? (5 minutes)

Begin with a question to spark curiosity: *"Have you ever looked down a long, straight road or a set of train tracks and noticed how they seem to get smaller and smaller until they meet at a single point and disappear? What you're seeing is perspective! It's a powerful artist's trick to make a flat piece of paper look like a deep, 3D world. Today, we're going to use that trick to build our own spooky Halloween street."*

Show a quick example image of one-point perspective (a photograph of a long hallway, road, or an artwork by an artist like Albrecht Dürer).

Part 2: I Do - The Rules of the Road (10 minutes)

On a separate piece of paper, clearly explain and demonstrate the three magic ingredients for one-point perspective:

1. **The Horizon Line:** "This is the line where the sky meets the ground. It can be high or low in your picture, but for today, let's draw it straight across the middle of our paper using our ruler."
2. **The Vanishing Point:** "This is the 'disappearing' point we talked about. It's a single dot that must be on the horizon line. Everything in our picture will move towards this point. Let's place a small dot in the very center of our horizon line."
3. **Orthogonal Lines:** "This is a fancy word for the diagonal lines that create the illusion of depth. They always connect back to the vanishing point. Let's practice!"

Quickly demonstrate drawing a square on the paper (not on the horizon line) and then connecting its corners back to the vanishing point with your ruler to create a 3D box or "building."

Part 3: We Do - Guided Practice (15 minutes)

Now, have the student take their main drawing paper and do it with you, step-by-step.

1. "Let's draw our horizon line across the middle of the page together."
2. "Now, place your vanishing point in the center of that line."
3. "Okay, let's draw a simple rectangle on the left side of the paper, below the horizon line. This will be our first haunted house."
4. "Great! Now, take your ruler and very lightly draw lines from the three closest corners of your rectangle back to the vanishing point."
5. "To finish the house, draw a vertical line between your two top and bottom orthogonal lines to create the back edge of the building. Erase the extra bits of the orthogonal lines that go past the house. Look! You made a 3D building!"
6. Repeat the process on the right side of the paper.

Part 4: You Do - Create Your Spooky Street! (30-50 minutes)

This is where the creativity comes in! Set the student free to transform their simple 3D shapes into a Halloween masterpiece. Offer these prompts to guide their imagination:

- **Transform the Buildings:** "Turn those boxes into haunted houses! Add spooky windows, doors, and crooked roofs. Remember, the tops and bottoms of the windows on the *side* of the house must also follow the lines back to the vanishing point!"
- **Build the Road:** "Use the vanishing point to draw a road or pathway. The edges of the road should be orthogonal lines. You could make it a cobblestone path or a cracked sidewalk."
- **Add Spooky Details:** "How can you make it feel like Halloween? Add a row of jack-o'-lanterns or fence posts that get smaller as they get closer to the vanishing point. Draw some bare, spooky trees. Maybe a full moon in the sky? Or some ghosts floating around?"
- **Finishing Touches:** Once the pencil drawing is complete, encourage the student to outline their work in a fine-point marker and add color and shading to bring the spooky scene to life.

Part 5: Closure & Reflection (5 minutes)

Have the student present their finished artwork. Ask them to point out the horizon line, the vanishing point, and their favorite part of the drawing. Ask a final reflective question: "*Now that you know this artist's trick, where else do you think you'll see one-point perspective in the world around you?*"

4. Differentiation and Inclusivity

- **For Extra Support:**
 - Begin with a pre-drawn horizon line and vanishing point.
 - Focus on creating just one or two simple, large buildings instead of a full street.
 - Provide a worksheet with shapes already drawn, so the student only needs to connect the corners to the vanishing point.
- **For an Advanced Challenge:**
 - Encourage the student to draw objects that are *above* the horizon line (like floating ghosts or clouds).
 - Challenge them to draw the interior of a haunted hallway instead of an exterior street scene.
 - Have them add more complex details that use perspective, such as a tiled floor or a line of trick-or-treaters that shrink as they move down the street.

5. Assessment Methods

- **Formative (During the Lesson):**
 - Observe the student's technique during the "We Do" guided practice.
 - Ask questions like, "Which point do all the diagonal lines need to connect to?" to check for understanding of key concepts.
- **Summative (The Final Artwork):**

Evaluate the final drawing based on the learning objectives using a simple checklist:

1. Horizon line is present and straight.
2. A single vanishing point is correctly placed on the horizon line.
3. Orthogonal lines correctly converge at the vanishing point.
4. The drawing includes at least three Halloween-themed elements that demonstrate perspective (houses, pumpkins, fence, etc.).
5. The overall work shows creativity, effort, and a clear Halloween theme.