

Checkerboard Outlines

Objective: Students will develop a basic understanding of pattern, repetition, and positive/negative images.

Materials: Construction paper (1 and 1/2 sheets of different colors per student), scissors, glue, pencil, found object(s) from the Bronx River.

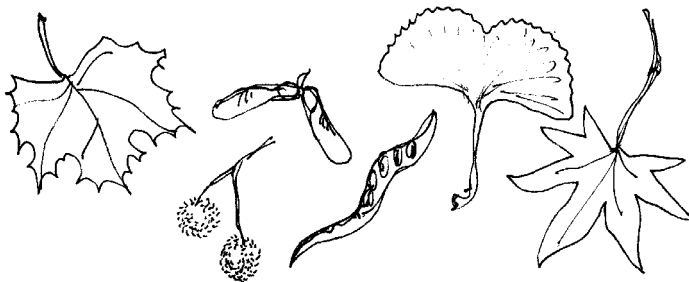
ACTIVITY SUMMARY:

Students use the traced outlines of Bronx River objects to create a simple checkerboard image.

This is a very simple positive/negative image activity that can be done with groups of many different ages and levels of learning. It uses materials related to the Bronx River to create simple, bold graphics of two contrasting colors. Students can display their artwork, or use it to cover journals or booklets.

PROCEDURE:

1. On a trip to the Bronx River (or as assigned homework), students find one small object with a simple yet interesting outline. This should be an item already fallen or detached. Leaves and large seedpods work well. Clarify why pulling leaves, flowers, seeds, and twigs from living plants causes harm to plants and their habitats.



NOTE: It is unethical and illegal to collect living material and remove it from site without a permit. Be sure natural items like leaves are not picked from thriving plants. Check leaves and other items for amphibian and insect eggs, and encourage a “tread lightly” ethic. Explain that the areas along the river are for everyone to share, and each time we visit it is our turn to take care of it. See ECOSYSTEMS for information on obtaining permits.

EVERYBODY

IN THE CLASSROOM AT THE RIVER

Skills:

Reading/Writing, Communication, Observe/Compare

Subject/Discipline:

Language Arts, Expressive Arts.

Standards by Grade:

S4, S7, S8

Time:

Prep plus one class meeting following a field trip to the Bronx River.

The Inside Track:

See the Appendix at the back of this guide for a Bronx River species list.

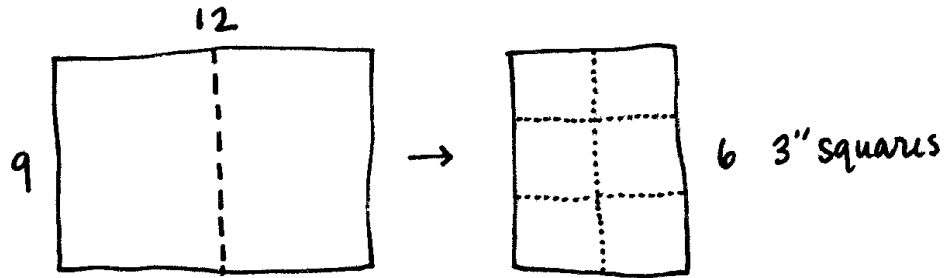
www.bronxriver.org/theRiver.cfm#list

Try *Nature Journaling* in this section of the guide for reflection ideas.

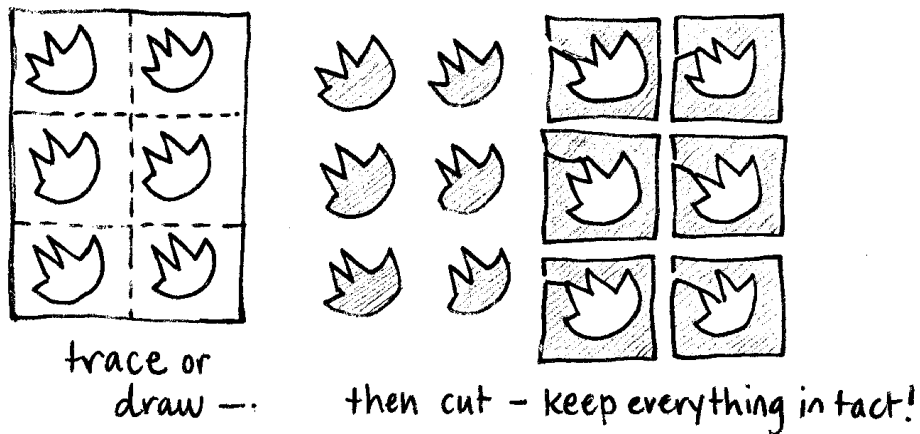
Call the Bronx River Alliance at 718-430-4665 for help planning a trip to the Bronx River Forest.



- In the classroom, the students divide the half sheet of paper into 6 parts.
(One 6"x9" pc. yields 6 - 3" squares).



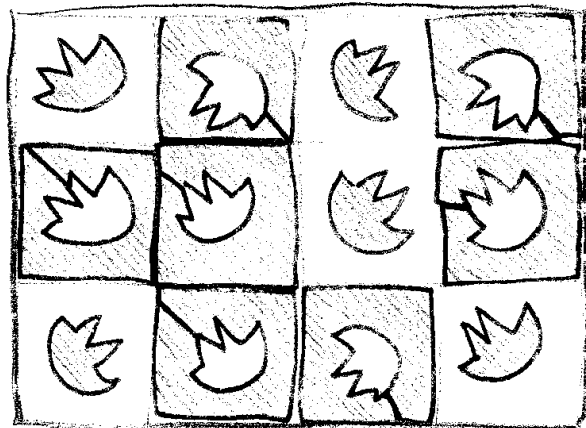
- Students then trace their leaf or other object onto the divided pieces of paper. They then cut them out, trying to keep the paper with both the positive and negative images intact.



- Students then lay out the positive and negative images in an alternating pattern, creating a checkerboard of positive and negative images. For more interest, the cut outs can be turned, flipped, or inverted.

- After deciding on their repetitive patterns, students then use glue to affix the smaller pieces of paper to a full sheet of construction paper (9"x12").

- Have students write a one-paragraph description of their object. What kind of objects did they pick? Where did they find those objects? Why did they choose those particular objects?



EXTENSIONS:

- Expand this procedure to larger formats.
- Try different papers with colors textures and weights.
- Reinforce the positive/negative space concept and encourage students to arrange object pieces in compositions other than a checkerboard, such as “drawing” a larger version of the shape using smaller shapes. Have students share suggestions of what they would like to do with the shapes.



*Submitted by Karlee Yurek.
Additional content provided by Jill Weiss.*

