

Art Masterpiece: by Ansel Adams



Attention Coordinator:

There are two art print options available at the IRC that work well for this lesson.
“Looking through Forest to Mountain” or “Looking across Lake at Mountain”

Pronounced: An-sell Adams

Keywords: Value, Grayscale

Grade: 4th – 5th

Project: Desert Landscape using Grey- Scale

Definitions:

Value: the lightness or darkness of a color

Grayscale: the range of shades of gray without apparent color. The darkest possible shade is black. The lightest possible shade is white. The degrees in between is dependent on the absence or presence of transmitted or reflected light.

Meet the Artist: (5 min)

- Ansel Adams was born in 1902 in San Francisco, California.
- He was a gifted piano player and as a young boy his father groomed him for a profession as a concert pianist.
- In 1916 his family vacationed in Yosemite, California and Ansel was immediately taken by the beautiful natural landscape.
- In 1927, he began taking photographs with his new camera and in that same year, he gained notoriety in the field of photography.
- He realized through photography he could capture the emotion, spirituality and wonder of nature.
- By the 1940's his landscape photograph work was well known and he set up a workshop in Yosemite known as the U.S. Camera Photographic Forum.
- In the 1970's, he traveled through Arizona and found he loved the Arizona landscape nearly as much as Yosemite and began to photograph many areas across the state.
- Many of his Arizona photographs have been and continue to be featured in Arizona Highways

Magazine.

- Ansel Adams died in 1984 but left behind a vast amount of beautiful photographs and books about photography that continue to be used in photography courses around the country.

Discussion: (10 min)

Review definitions noted above.

Look for the color gray. How many different grays do you see?

The term to describe the lightness or darkness of a color is called it's VALUE.

Every gray you have found is considered to be a different value.

Would this photograph have the same feeling if it were in full color?

Why do you think Ansel Adams chose not to use colored film?

What impact does color or lack of color have when viewing a photograph?

Some people say that black and white Artwork is more dramatic. Do you agree?

Ansel Adams Project Procedure

Purpose: To teach the concept of VALUE (light to dark).

Materials:

Landscape template – Class set, 1 template per student.

White copy paper

Pencils

Erasers

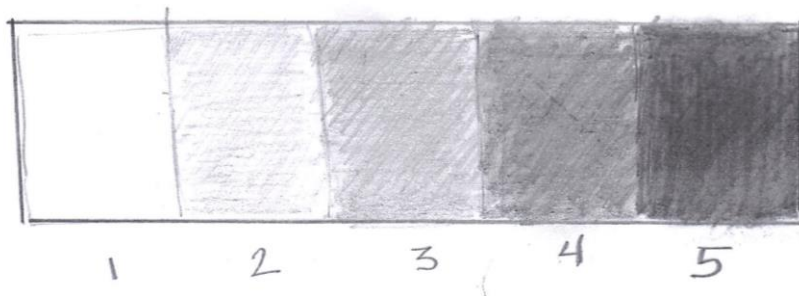
Cotton Ball or square – 1 per student

Q-tips 1 per student

Black Construction paper for mounting – optional

Wet wipes for easy clean up of hands and desk

Mini Lesson - Create a Gray Scale (3 minutes start to finish)



Mini-lesson cont'd:

1. Distribute $\frac{1}{2}$ sheet of copy paper. Students will draw a 1" x 5" rectangle shape and divide it into 5 sections. Or, you can make one template and provide each student with a photo copy .
2. Using only the SIDE of their pencil they will add layers of graphite onto each square darkening as they move across. This will create a 5- step gray scale.

3. Below each section of their scale have them label the section 1 – 2 – 3 -4 or 5. #1 being the lightest section . #5 almost black.
4. ***Students should refer back to this scale when working on their project.***

Main Project:

Please conduct mini-lesson on grey-scale prior to main project.

1. Distribute the desert landscape templates and a clean piece of copy paper. 1- per student.
2. Students should place their clean copy on top of the line art and trace the image onto their project paper.



3. Collect the desert landscape templates.
4. Direct the students on how to number the different areas of the sketch to indicate which value to put in that area. Add the number 1 on their project paper in the circle of the moon. Add 2, 3, 4 as shown on attached diagram. #5 is the cactus and foreground. ***Stress to do this lightly as we do not want to see the number when finished.
5. **Instruct to use their gray scale and work to match each section with the same lightness or darkness of their gray scale.**
6. Begin with **LIGHTEST** area first:
 - a. Using the **SIDE** of their pencil against the paper add a soft layer of lead onto the paper. As they cross over to a section with a darker value they can either add more pressure OR add more layers. This will take more time than you would think.



7. When they are finished adding the graphite, show the students how to go over the entire rendering with a light rubbing of the cotton ball/pad. Use a Q-tip for tight areas. This will smooth away the lines of the graphite and soften the finished appearance.



8. Last step is to take an eraser and erase the graphite in the area of the moon. The white paper will serve as the lightest value.

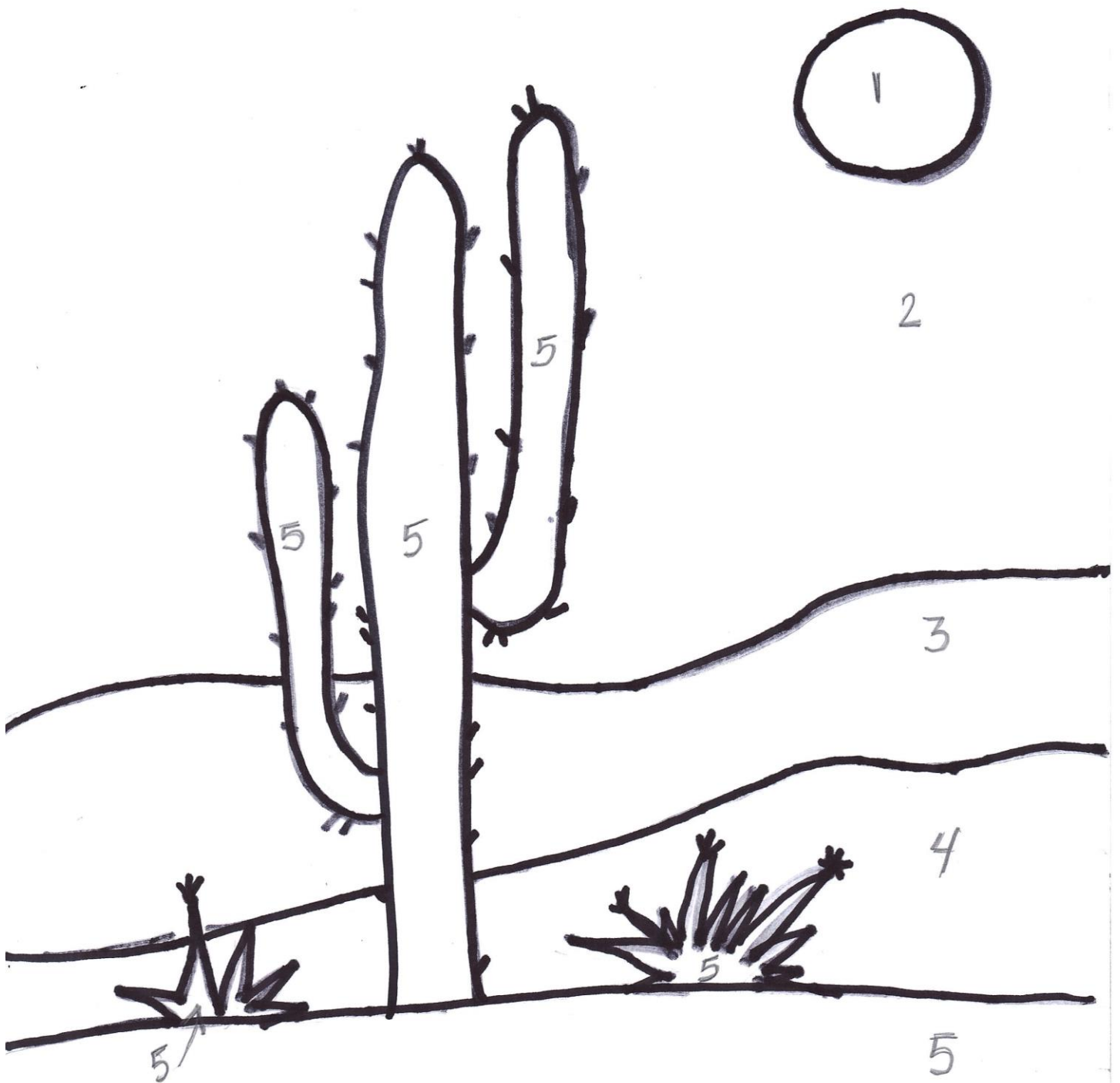


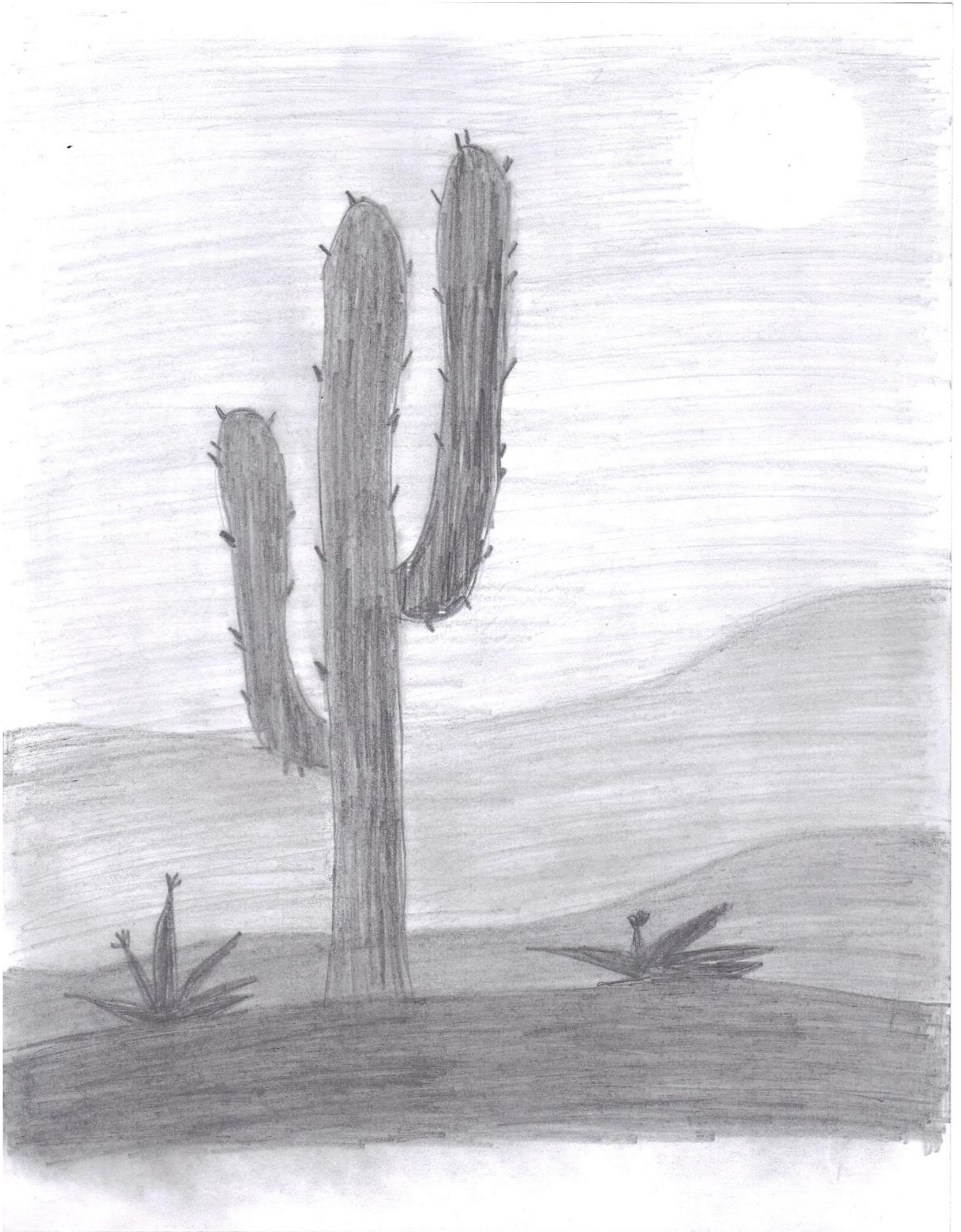
9. Sign artwork and mount on black construction paper.

10. Attach artist bio to the back of project/black paper.

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Template attached below. Please copy enough for one class set. Re-use.





Chandler Unified School District Art Masterpiece

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Brief info about the project: Students were taught how to create different values (lightness & darkness) of color. They first completed the image and then filled their drawing with pencil to match the values depicted in the artwork.



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