

MoNA

Museum of Northwest Art

Age: Kindergarten

Lesson Duration: 1 hour

Subjects: Science, Weather & History

Whatever the Weather: Shrinky Dink Key Chains

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY DESIGNED
BY CARRIE STRACHILLA

Materials

- *Ella Sarah Gets Dressed* book or [this read aloud video](#)
- Shrinky dink paper, precut into 1/8 sheets and hole punched in one corner
- Toaster oven and oven mitt
- Sharpies
- George Tsutakawa info & artworks (included)
- Metal rings for key chains
- Plain paper for planning or optional: planning sheet (4 boxes to trace and learn to draw the human figure, example included at the end of this lesson).



Above: Student example

Image Source: Museum of Northwest Art

Description

In this lesson students will look at artist George Tsutakawa's artworks depicting weather, and read the book *Ella Sarah Gets Dressed* by Margaret Chodos-Irvine. Students will then create a shrinky dink key chain depicting outfits they would choose for various types of weather. This activity will have students practice drawing a human body and items of clothing.

Instructions

- 1) Start with a discussion asking students what they already know about the weather. Ask students what types of clothes they choose to wear in different types of weather and why.
- 2) Introduce the artist and explore artworks using **VTS** (visual thinking strategies). Have students describe the types of weather they see. Using their imagination, ask students what outfit they would choose if they could jump into the painting!
 - This lesson includes a guide to **VTS** and additional resources below
 - A helpful way to remember types of weather is to assign hand movements or cues. For example: sunny (putting on sunglasses), rainy (rain fingers), cloudy (hold the cloud), windy (little sway with fingers)
- 3) Read *Ella Sarah Gets Dressed* **or** [play video](#)
- 4) Teach students how to draw a basic human shape, or have them trace the human shapes you can find on the included planning sheet. They can freehand their human shape and add clothing to it to create a self-portrait. On the back of the paper or planning sheet, students can plan and sketch their two outfits.
- 5) After their practice drawings, have students draw a small self portrait on one of the shrinky pieces (make sure students write their name on the back) and give students the opportunity to watch it shrink in the toaster oven.
- 6) Students will then use their remaining two shrinky pieces (with their name on the back) to design one warm weather outfit and one cool weather outfit.
- 7) The facilitators will bake the remaining shrinkies and help assemble the key chains.

George Tsutakawa



George Tsutakawa in the studio with his son Gerard
Photo by Lon McKee
<https://georgetsutakawa.com/about/>

To learn more about George Tsutakawa head to his [website](#) and this [History Link article](#) written by his daughter.

George Tsutakawa was a Pacific Northwest painter, sculptor and fountain maker. He was born in Seattle, Washington in 1910 and was a second generation Japanese American (called *nisei*).

George Tsutakawa experimented with many different types of art-making in his career. These included oil paints to explore abstract expressionism, *sumi* ink to show scenes of nature and landscapes, and wood, bronze and metal to create sculptures and fountains.

George Tsutakawa was a Japanese American artist. To discover more Asian American and Pacific Islander artists in Washington state click [HERE!](#)

Learning and State Standards

Fulfills [Washington State Arts Learning Standards](#):

- **VA:Cr1.1.K** (Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials)
- **VA:Cr10.1.K** (Create art that tells a story about a life experience)



Winter (1949)

Photo by Paul Macapia

<https://georgetsutakawa.com/early-works/>



Untitled Beach Scene, La Push (1961)

Image credit:

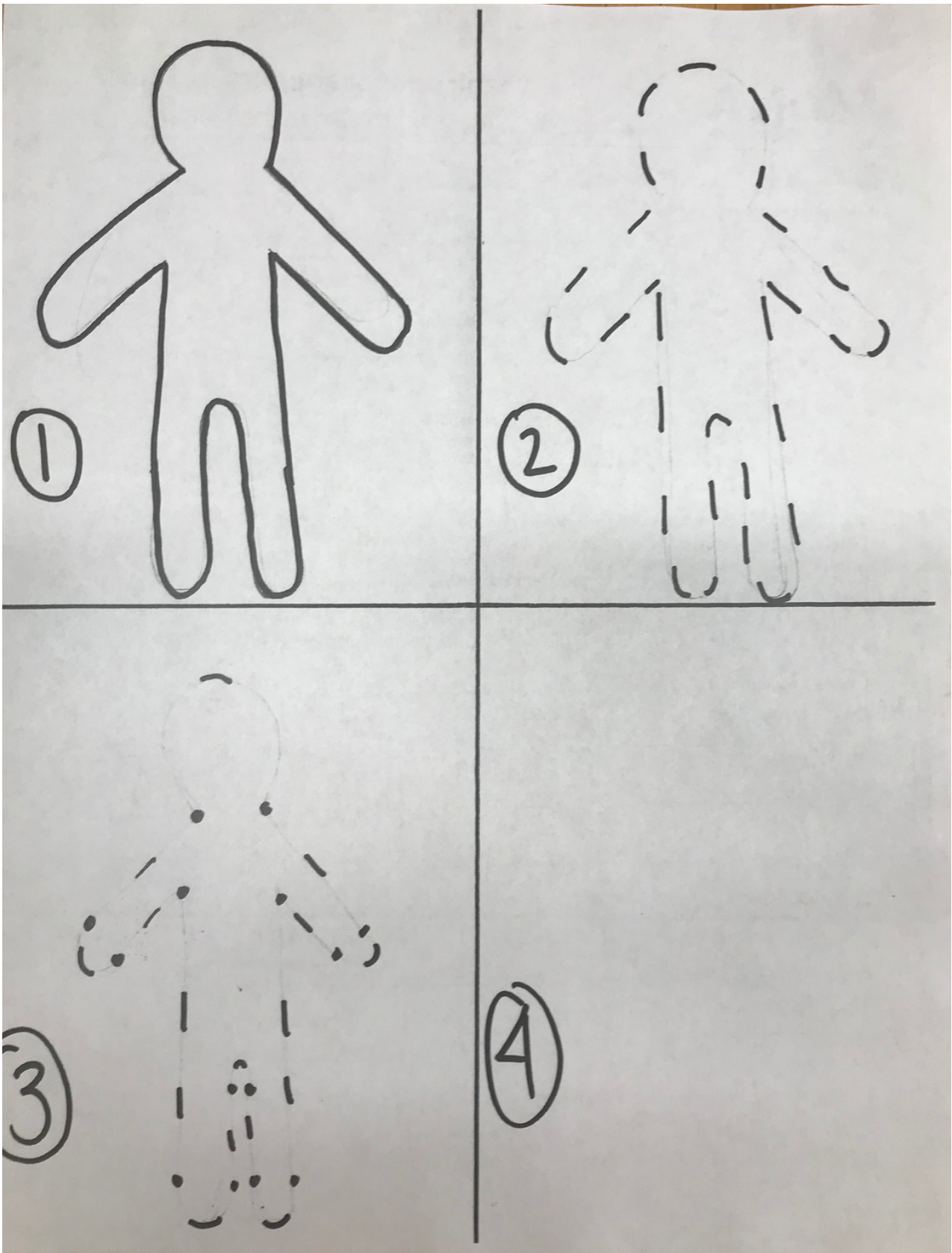
https://www.liveauctioneers.com/item/36950806_george-tsubakawa-1910-1997-washington-untitled-beach



Camp Fanning (1943)

Photo by Paul Macapia

<https://georgetsutakawa.com/early-works/>



Example of student planning sheet for practicing human body shape.

Visual Thinking Strategies

MoNA's Education programs utilize Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), which is a research-based teaching method that promotes aesthetic development including critical thinking and communication skills. Here in the MoNA, we use VTS to engage students and general visitors with art encouraging them to observe closely, think critically and discuss respectfully; however, VTS can be effectively used across curricula. This approach teaches its participants how to take the time to observe closely, describe what they see in detail and provide evidence for their observations. Students learn that their reflections and thoughts are valued and appreciated in this inclusive teaching method.

In order to facilitate a VTS discussion, you first encourage viewers to take a quiet moment to observe the work you are going to explore. Then you ask the following questions and paraphrase the responses without adding any of your own judgements. You can insert additional vocabulary and point to specific parts of the artwork.

What's going on in this picture?
What do you see that makes you say that...?
What more can you find?

Visual Thinking Strategy Links

If you are interested in learning more about VTS, [here is their website](#). If you already know and love VTS, but want help finding great images to VTS in your classroom, here is a [fantastic gallery](#). You can also visit this website for additional resources: <https://www.monamuseum.org/resources-for-educators>