

## Creating Atmosphere With Value

During the 1800's in America, an important artistic movement called The Hudson River School, involved artists who famously painted landscapes and nature on America's east coast, often along the Hudson River.

They painted nature in ways which captured its dynamic, and immense beauty, realistically portraying the natural subject matter and dramatic lighting they often witnessed.

The movement is nationally significant as the artists painted places in America, tying the movement to the country.

In the image below, Hudson River School artist, Robert S. Duncanson, recreates the dynamic mood or **atmosphere** of the expansive and strikingly lit wilderness.

The various **values** or shades in the piece, which range from dark to light, show dramatic lighting in which there are areas of shadow and illumination. This creates an intense, somewhat mysterious atmosphere.



Scottish Landscape

Robert S. Duncanson

The artist of this piece, Robert S. Duncanson, was a prominent African American painter. He painted during a time when it was very hard for African American artists to have their work bought or displayed. He is now widely revered for his breathtaking portrayals of American Landscapes.

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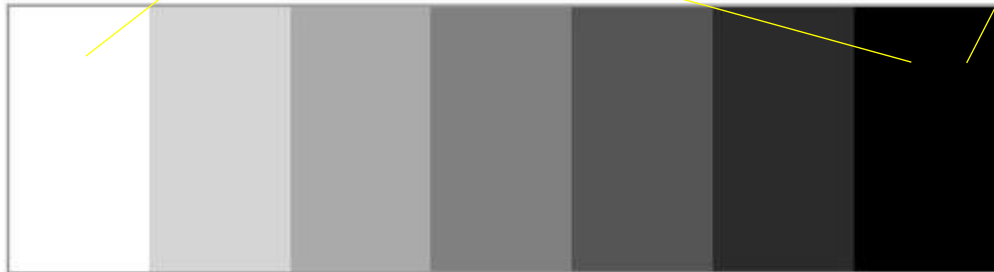
As stated above, the intense, dynamic, **atmosphere** of the piece comes in part from the dramatic lighting.

Duncanson uses various **values** or shades, for the lighting,

Remember, **value** is another word for shade. Looking at these various shades,



you can see

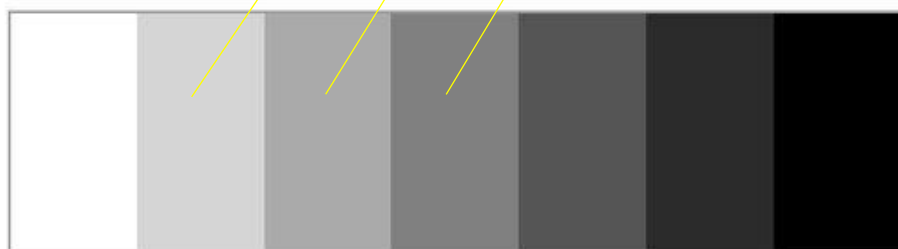
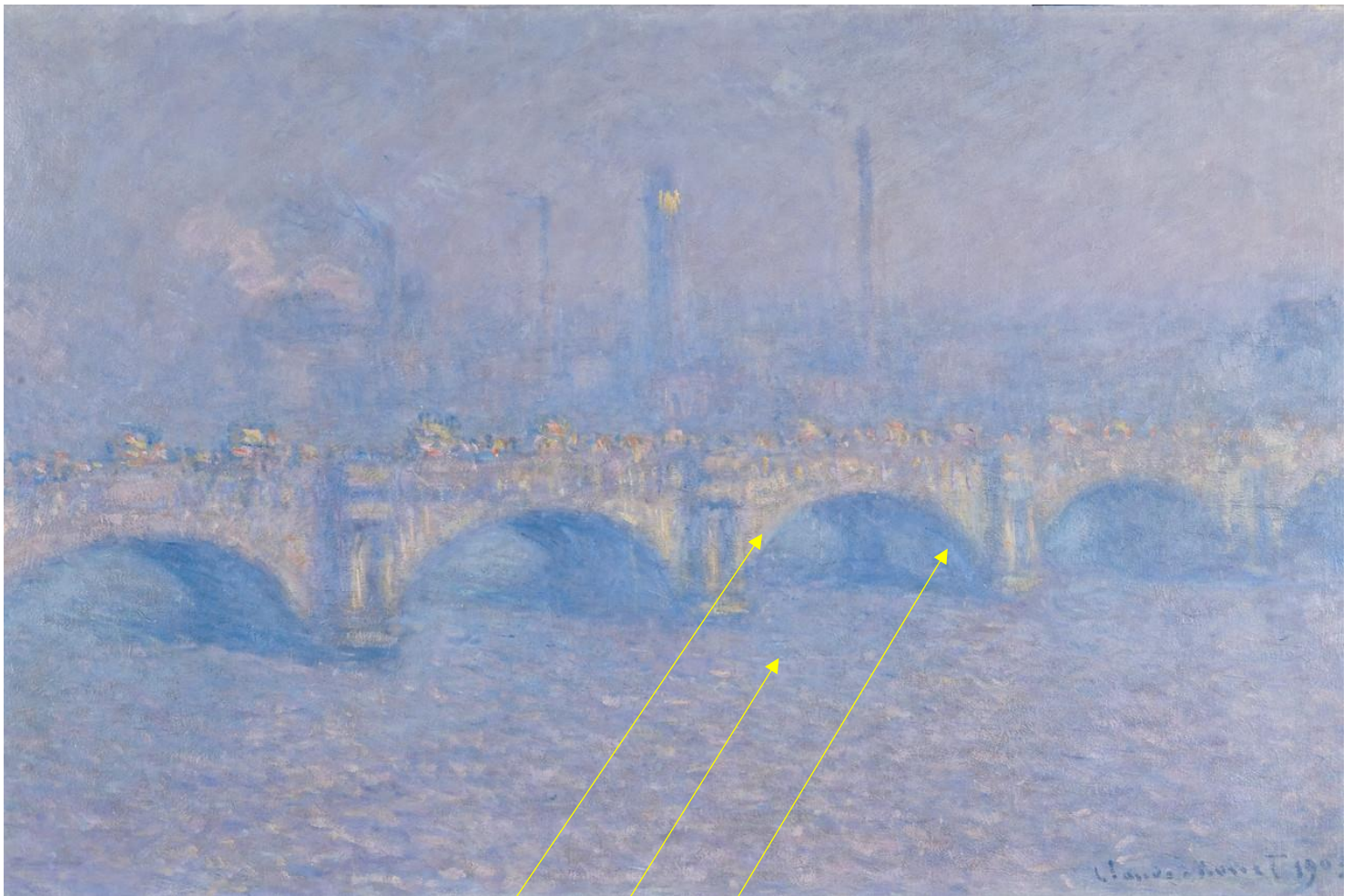


Impressionism is another artistic movement from the 1870's and 1880's which often involved artists looking at landscapes or views outside. Lighting and atmosphere were also important in the movement.

Within this movement, artists like Claude Monet, who painted the bridge below, would look at how lighting interacted with the subject matter they were painting. They were interested in recreating the "impression" or visual, emotional, impact of what they were seeing, so their art was often full of **atmosphere**, communicating the mood of what they saw.

Like The Hudson River School, the impressionists used lighting to create **atmosphere**. They would often paint the same subject matter at different times of day or night, to see the different ways the sun or moon shone on what they were painting.

You can see in Monet's painting of the bridge below, that he used middle tones, which were closer together in value or shade than the more dramatically different or **contrasting** shades used by the Hudson River School Artists. This creates a sense of hazy, misty, light on the bridge, which gives it a hazy, mysterious, mystic mood.



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For this assignment, look out of a window in your house, or in your back yard, and draw the landscape you see. Try to include the different values or shades you see from the lighting. What types of light do you see? Is it a low or gentle light? Is it very bright? Are there shadows? Use dark, middle, or light shades or **values** in each area that you see.

How does the lighting affect the mood or **atmosphere** of the piece? Is it calm or hazy? Is it very eye popping or dynamic? Is there a sense of mystery mysticism, joy or cheerfulness? The mood may have more than one of these things happening at once!

For a bonus activity, you can go back to the same place you drew later in the day or evening, and redraw it! Most likely the lighting will be a bit different, as the sun shifts position in the sky throughout the day, shifting the way it shines light on things. As you look at the lighting, try to see what is the same, or what is different. Also look for the mood in your drawing!



Scottish Landscape

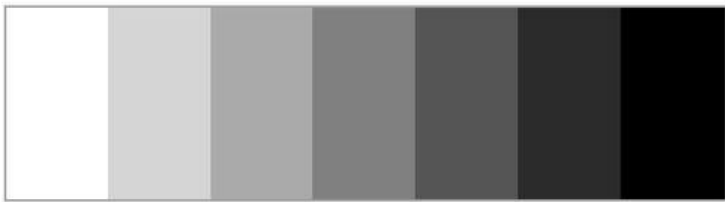
Robert S. Duncanson

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**Works Cited:** Below are the links where I found the pictures used in this assignment



<https://americanart.si.edu/artwork/scottish-landscape-7614>



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/60939401186898530/>



[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Claude Monet%2C Waterloo Bridge%2C Sl%2C%201903%2C\\_olie\\_p%2C%20A5\\_l%2C%20A6red%2C\\_64%2C77\\_x\\_99%2C7\\_cm%2C Memorial Art Gallery%2C Rochester.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/59/Claude_Monet%2C_Waterloo_Bridge%2C_Sl%2C%201903%2C_olie_p%2C%20A5_l%2C%20A6red%2C_64%2C77_x_99%2C7_cm%2C_Memorial_Art_Gallery%2C_Rochester.jpg)