Scale/Proportion > Issaquah Schools Foundation

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Art Concept: Scale/Proportion. Scale is how we measure the relationship of a created object to the original (like a house plan or model trains). When we look at a map in a book and it shows how many miles are in an inch, that is the scale of the map.

Proportion is the relationship of parts of a single object to the whole (like a person's hand in relationship to his/her head). These two terms are often used interchangeably.

In order to get your attention, artists sometimes make something unusually big or unusually small. They are trying to get you to look at that thing differently or to ask questions about the object they have changed. Sometimes they do this to one object in the image they create and we would call that 'out of proportion' (*The Listening Room*, Magritte (France) 1952). If the whole image or object has been changed we would talk about the scale (1:12 miniatures or model trains).

Look at the examples of art below and note the size of each work of art and how the surroundings effect our perception of its scale and proportion.

Sample Projects:

- <u>Snowy Winter Landscape</u> (1st Grade Art Lesson)
- Make some miniatures out of Fimo or Air Dry Clay (such as food, people, flowers–anything that is normally much bigger). This could be tied into math by measuring an object and them purposely making it some percentage smaller or ½ size.
- Make a HUGE class painting together. Tape together rolls of butcher paper to create a huge canvas (10' x10' or more). You could either do something abstract like a Jackson Pollock, or draw out a painting beforehand, like a painting such as *Miro's Blue II* (Complementary Colors) that is huge in real life. Put it up and talk about the impact of it versus a small slide.
- Paint small paintings in small frames.
- Have each student bring in the box of a small product (like a pudding box). Using a grid, have them enlarge the design to 2x or 3x (recommended for 4th or 5th Graders; younger students could try the same thing with a more simple shape such as a heart).

Sphinx in Egypt,2530bc. It is simply HUGE.
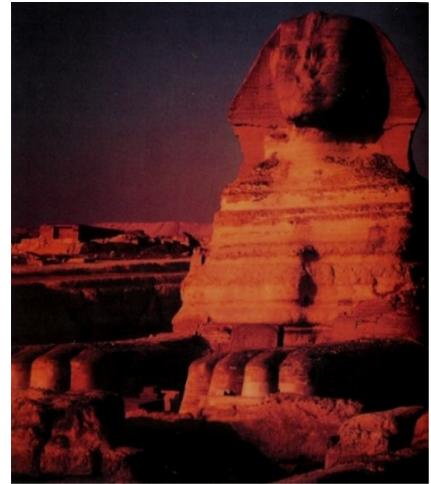
Wilt Chamberlin Willie Shoemaker, Annie Liebowitz, 1980s. A tiny man and a huge man.

Lake Tana, Ethiopia 20thc. These heads look odd because they are out of proportion to the rest of the body. The bodies are too big for the boats. Did the artist care about proportion? Is it okay not to care sometimes?
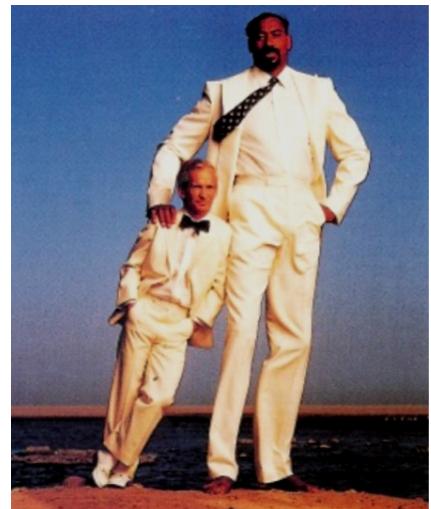
Falling Water, Frank Lloyd Wright, 1937. The house is in proportion with its surroundings.

Heavenly Guardian Spirit Road of Shenzongemp (China), 1085. 4m tall. Although you can't tell from this picture, this is HUGE. Why would it be made huge instead of life size?

Illian Liberman (American), 1974. Students may have seen a sister work at the Pacific Science center like this. How big is it? Would it be as fun if it were small?

Pharaoh Taharka and Falcoln God Heman (Egypt), 680bc. Which is usually bigger, a bird or a person. Does it help to know that the Egyptians thought of the falcon as a god?

The Listening Room, Magritte (France), 1952. Do you think this is a big apple or a small room?