



# **Light and Shadow**

## *Drawing*



## What is a shadow?

When light hits an object, it casts a dark shape on the surface of the opposite side of the object. The dark shape is called a *shadow*.

Shadows cast by an object change depending on the how bright the light is, whether it is near or far away from the object, and the angle at which it strikes the object.

In these lessons, you'll learn about light and shadow, then create, change and draw your own shadows.



# Light and Shadow *Drawing*



For this project, you will need several sheets of paper. Any kind of paper is fine.

You can use pencils, crayons, markers, ballpoint pen or any other drawing materials you have available. A crayon, or the side of a pencil, might be the easiest drawing tool to create large areas of light and dark.



## Shadows are created by light.

The sun is our most powerful source of light. The sun changes throughout the day and throughout the year, creating many different shadow effects.

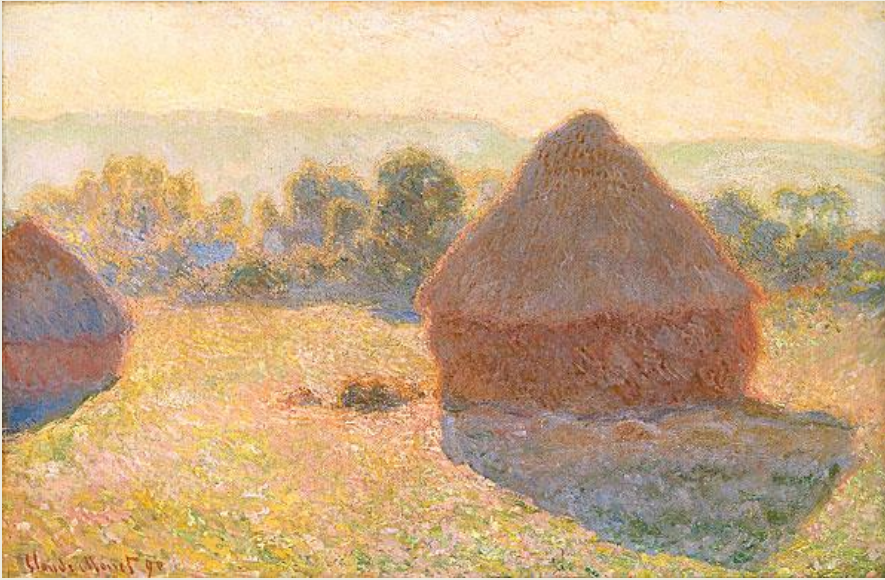
Light can come from other sources too. Lamps, flashlights, and candles are sources of light you might find inside your home. Streetlights create light outside at night.

Artists use light and shadow to create definition, focus, drama and mood in their artwork.

Detail of Artemisia Gentileschi, *Judith and Her Maidservant with the Head of Holofernes*, Oil on Canvas, Detroit Institute of Arts.



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In a series of over twenty-five paintings, French artist Claude Monet documented the way light and shadow changed the way a group of haystacks in a field appeared, depending on the time of day, the weather, and the season.

Even though the haystacks stayed the same, the light dramatically changed the way they looked.

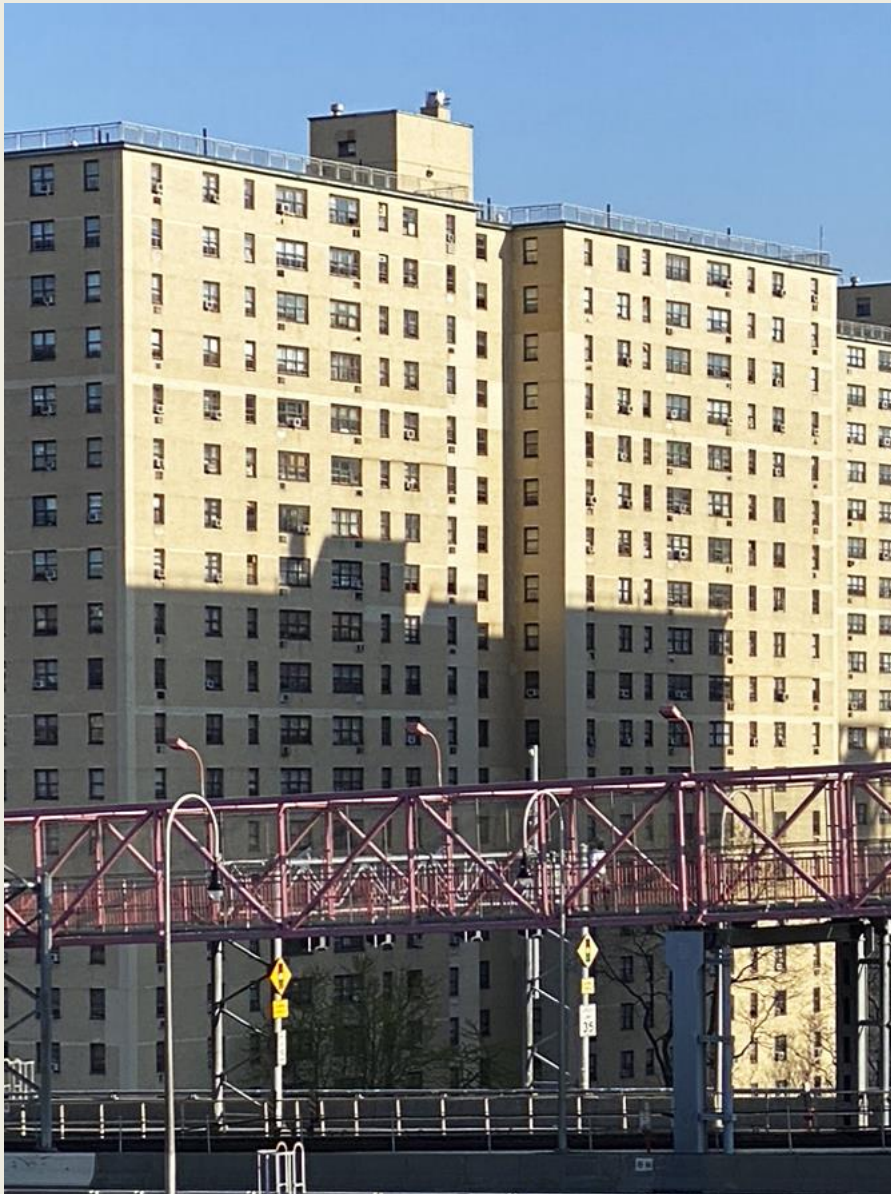
What differences do you notice in these two paintings?



Claude Monet, *Haystacks, (Midday)*, 1890-91.  
Oil on canvas. National Gallery of Australia.

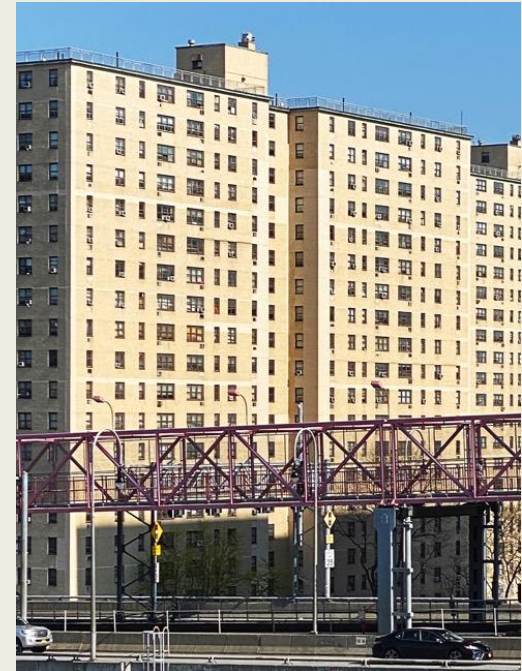
Claude Monet, *Wheatstacks, Snow Effect, Morning*, 1891.  
Oil on canvas. J Paul Getty Museum.

# Light and Shadow *Drawing*



Look out your window. Do you see any shadows? Shadows move and change as the sun moves through the sky.

Make a drawing of the same shadow in the morning and the afternoon. How does it change?





# Light and Shadow *Drawing*



Look for shadows created by sunlight in your home. Notice how they change over the course of the day.

Draw the same shadows in your home two times, with or without their object.

How are your two drawings different?



## Make your own shadows

You can create your own shadows at home with a flashlight or lamp.

Find an object and place it against a simple background. Shine your light on it from the side, just slightly above the object.

Look closely: what happens to the edge of the shadow as it moves farther away from the light?

Draw the object and its shadow from at least two angles.





## What is a silhouette?

A silhouette is a solid, single-colored shape of a person, animal, or object.

See if you can create a silhouette of yourself or something else.

Make a drawing of the silhouette, where all you can see is the shadow.



Girma Berta, *Moving Shadows II, X*, 2017. Photograph.

Here are links to two artists whose work you might enjoy.

Ethiopian photographer Girma Berta created *Moving Shadows*, two series of photographs of people walking in the sun in his native country. He removed the background and replaced it with a solid color to highlight the people and their shadows.

[Girma Berta](#)

Claude Monet made over twenty-five paintings of haystacks.

[Claude Monet](#)

*Photos by Pamela Crimmins*