

SHAPING FORM

Shapes are flat, forms are fat!



Alexander Calder, (American, 1898—1976), **Moon and Stars**, 1947, watercolor and gouaches, Terese and Alvin S. Lane Collection, 2012.54.8.6.



Alexander Calder (American, 1898-1976), **Orange and Black Waves**, 1954, Aluminum, iron alloy, paint, Terese and Alvin S. Lane Collection, 2012.54.8.11.

Did you know that artists use “blocks” to make art? Known as the elements of art, they are the building blocks that artists use to communicate. **Form** is the element that transforms flat shapes like a circle into round shapes like a ball or sphere. Shapes are **two-dimensional** and forms are **three-dimensional**. Other common forms are a cube, pyramid, or cone.

LOOK

Take a minute and look at the two artworks above. What is the same? What is different? Now, focus on the “L” shape in the painting and the orange shape in the background of the sculpture. What did the artist do to the sculptural shape to make it different than the flat shape in the painting? What do you see that makes you say that?

MAKE

Try your hand at making your own sculptural forms from flat shapes using household materials. We’ve included instructions on an additional page. You will need paper, scissors and imagination to complete the activity!

DO

Imagine that these artworks came alive. If they could talk, what would they say—to each other? To you? How did they meet? What are their favorite things to do? If they could travel anywhere, where would they go? Be as silly as you want and let your imagination run free!



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A paper sculpture activity inspired by Alexander Calder and a blog that we love: <http://www.pinkstripeysocks.com/>.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

Paper — Stiff paper is best. If you don't have stiff paper, look in the recycling bin for thin cardboard.

Scissors — Ask an adult for permission to use.

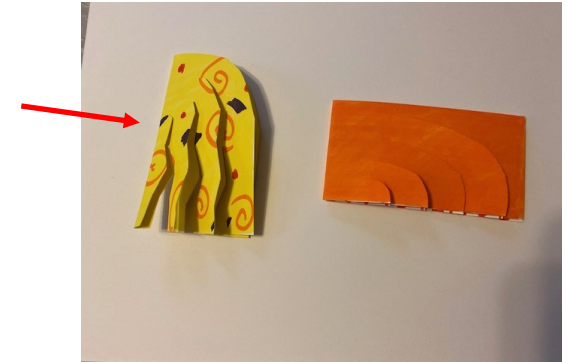
Imagination — Required! Let your mind go wild!



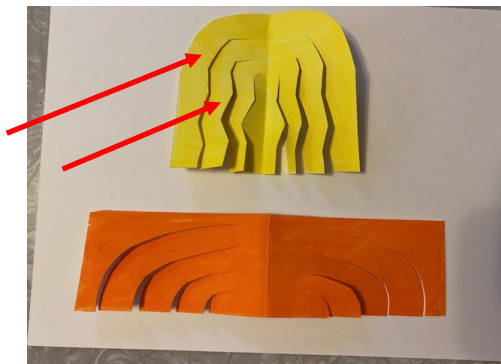
1. Gather paper and cut it into squares or rectangles. Cut your shapes at least 6" wide. If you don't have colored paper, use markers to decorate your paper like we did!



2. Fold your squares and rectangles in half. You can fold your rectangles long ways like a taco or short ways like a sandwich.



3. Cut lines in your shapes beginning at the non-folded edge of the paper. **Be careful not to cut through the edge.**



4. Unfold your shapes and **bend** the cut strips in an alternating fashion. Starting from the top, you would fold the strips front, back, front, back. Do this on both sides.

As you bend the strips, you should start to see your shapes go from flat, or two dimensional, to fat, or three dimensional!



5. Continue opening and unfolding your shapes. As you begin to gather them, what do you notice?

Compare your works of art to the inspiration pieces by Alexander Calder—how are they alike? How are they different?