Perspective Activity

Reflect on the class activity with noticing relationships of size and position among things as you see them while putting yourself and a viewframe in different locations. You might take more care in checking out something about these relationships. How might you represent what you see? What tools or techniques or other aids do you find yourself using or improvising as you sight, compare and document relationships?

Relate your experiences to the illustrations of sighting practices reproduced below. These illustrators and/or their texts were known to Galileo who was an elected member of the Academy of Design in Florence. Guidobaldo de Monte, who innovated perspective demonstrations as mathematics, was a mentor for Galileo; artist Lodovico Cigoli learned perspective from him, conducted telescopic observations in support of Galileo’s, and painted the Virgin Mary on a telescopically viewed moon in a chapel in Rome. (The figures are from *The science of art*, Martin Kemp. Yale University Press, 1990, on reserve at Barker.)

Under **Perspective**, In **Instruments and Science** Veltman, go through the discussion of instruments, particularly noting the discussion of mirror, window, compass and ruler; In **Sources ..Linear Perspective Vol.1** Veltman, look through the opening remarks of the **Introduction (Beginnings/childhood)** about the 15 year old’s experience and the closing comments in **Epilogue**, to get a sense of Veltman’s project, his findings about diversity in what has arisen around perspective across history and culture, and his conclusion that:

the true significance of linear perspective: [is] not simply as a tool for realism, but as a catalyst to our imagination, playfulness, creativity and freedom.

Reflect on how these historical instruments and works add to your experiences in looking, recording, and learning from what you see in the world.

Galileo Story

For an overview orientation:

Under **Galileo Links**, under **Galileo Project**, look at **Biography, Chronology**

Select from these readings on the class website **Materials**:
Under **Galileo Biography**

*Galileo’s Daughter*, part 1, Dava Sobel, 1999. Describes Galileo’s family life, early work, including with the telescope.


Comment in your notebook on an experiment, controversy or experience from Galileo’s life that intrigues you or stands out in some way. Do you notice other parts in his biography that seem related? What about the context of the times, or its science, figures in the example you selected? Does any of this connect with or illumine your training and studies?
EC.050 Recreate Experiments from History: Inform the Future from the Past: Galileo
January IAP 2010

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