Spatial Strategies –
How do artists create the illusion of space in a landscape?

A horizon line is created in a landscape in order to show where the sky meets the land. Objects are placed on or below the horizon line to show space.

Three ways to create depth:

1. **Overlapping** - Two or more objects are placed so that one is partially covered by the other to create an illusion of depth.

2. **Varying sizes** - Objects are drawn larger in the foreground and decrease in size the farther back they are placed on the picture plane.

3. **Placement on the picture plane** - Objects are drawn lower on the picture plane so they appear closer to you. Objects are drawn higher on the picture plane so they appear farther from you.

Remember the three basic portions of a landscape:

- **Foreground** - (closest to the viewer) Objects have many details, are largest in size, and are found lower on the picture plane.
- **Middleground** - (between the foreground and the background) Objects are smaller and have less detail.
- **Background** - (farthest from the viewer) Objects have little or no detail, are smallest in size, and are found highest on the picture plane.

How do artists create a focal point or emphasis in a composition?

The artist places an object or objects in the focal point to get the viewer’s attention! The focal point is the part of the painting that has the most interest and is often the most important part of the painting. It does not have to be in the center of the work. Try placing the focal point to the left or right to add interest.

The focal point may be something that is:

- Unexpected or unusual
- Painted or drawn in great detail
- Very different or in contrast from the rest of the work