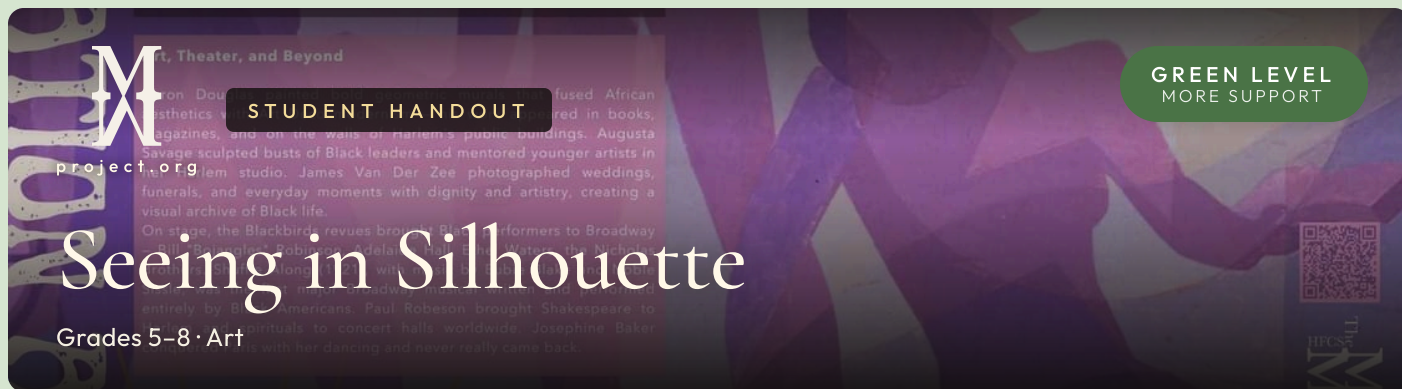






Art, Theater, and Beyond

STUDENT HANDOUT

project.org

Seeing in Silhouette

Grades 5–8 • Art

GREEN LEVEL

MORE SUPPORT





ADMIT ONE

NAME

DATE

CLASS

About Aaron Douglas: Aaron Douglas (1899–1979) was the leading visual artist of the Harlem Renaissance. He created a completely new style: flat black silhouettes of figures, overlapping circles of light, and geometric patterns inspired by African art. His paintings told the story of Black history and culture — from Africa, through slavery, to freedom and the creativity of Harlem.



LOOK CAREFULLY · ON THE SCREEN

Song of the Towers

Aaron Douglas, 1934. Oil on canvas.

GUIDED ANALYSIS

1. What do you see in the foreground (front) of the painting?

2. What shapes repeat in the background? What do you think they represent?

3. The figures have no facial features. Why do you think Douglas made that choice?

MORE ANALYSIS

4. What colors does Douglas use? What mood do those colors create?

5. This painting is about jazz music in Harlem. Where do you see the music in the image?

YOUR TURN: MAKE A SILHOUETTE

Create in the Style of Douglas

In the box below, draw a silhouette figure doing something important — playing music, reading, leading, building. Add at least one circle of light behind the figure, and one pattern or symbol in the background.

YOUR SILHOUETTE COMPOSITION — USE DARK PENCIL OR MARKER FOR FIGURES, COLOR LIGHTLY FOR BACKGROUND



What did you choose to show, and why?

MINI MUSEUM CONNECTION

The Harlem Renaissance exhibition features large-format prints of Aaron Douglas's work alongside interactive displays about his techniques. Look for the concentric circles — how many of his paintings use them?

minimuseumproject.org/exhibitions/harlem-renaissance