



Jumping puddles

A fun activity for a rainy day. Children search for reflections in rain puddles and get to know the work of Henri Cartier-Bresson.



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Learning outcomes

Competencies

Visual competence: observation, visual perception

Artistic competence: fostering creativity, learning about art history

Digital and media competence: fostering skills in photography

Target group

→ 5 years and up

Individual work

Required materials

Camera

Puddles

Materials

Photos of Henri Cartier-Bresson: <https://www.magnumphotos.com/newsroom/society/henri-cartier-bresson-the-world-of-henri-cartier-bresson/>

Examples of photographs of reflections

Description of the activity (step by step)

Preparation:

Wait for a nice rainy day that leaves the playground full of puddles. Tell the children that you will use the rainy day to make some interesting photographs.

Present the photograph *Behind the Gare St. Lazare* by Henri Cartier-Bresson. Talk about what is interesting in the photo. What do the children notice? Try to explore the photo together. You could ask the children to observe all the things that are reflected in the water. What could this scene present? Do they notice the dancers on the poster leaping in the air just as the man in the foreground? What about the ladder – why would it be there? Can they figure out what time it is on the photograph? Etc.

Implementation:

Go out in appropriate rain clothing. Distribute cameras and instruct children to find puddles and photograph them. They can be free and creative. They can photograph reflections of the sky, trees, houses, and their reflections or those of their friends. They can place objects in the puddle and take pictures. If it still rains they can photograph the raindrops in the puddle. Or, if they are dressed appropriately, they can jump in the puddles and take pictures of the splashes.

You might want to remind them that they can move around the puddle, get low on their knees, or stand high on tiptoes or a bench to capture an interesting perspective.

Reflection:

Get back inside and dry up. Go through the photos and let the children comment on their experience. What did they observe? What did they like? Did they notice something new on the playground? Would they like to repeat the activity when it rains the next time?

If the children like, you can look through other pictures of Cartier-Bresson and discuss them together.

Variations and additional ideas

Try photographing reflections with mirrors.

Complement the activity with the activity <https://media.eduskills.local/activities/thinking%2Fmoment>

Background information and didactical perspective

Henri Cartier-Bresson is one of the most famous photographers and renowned for his brilliant snapshots. He pioneered the photography genre of street photography and was one of the first photographers to use a handheld camera with a 35mm film. His goal in photography was to capture the decisive moment.

Behind the Gare St. Lazare is a photograph taken in Paris behind the St. Lazare train station in 1932. Cartier-Bresson later said it was taken through a fence at a small construction site. The photo marks the beginning of snapshot photography and is one of the most iconic pictures in the history of photography. Although today we are used to this kind of photographs, it has been something completely new at the time of its creation.

