Perspective

‘Lightwell at UNT – Third Floor’ by Gretta Arzate (2006)

‘Dream House’ by Gretta Arzate (2007)
Perspective – what is it?

Perspective Drawing is a technique used to represent three-dimensional images on a two-dimensional picture plane.

Perspective was developed in the 15th century by the architects, Leon Battista Alberti (1404-72) and Filippo Brunelleschi (1377-1446).

“There are three aspects to perspective. The first has to do with how the size of objects seems to diminish according to distance: the second, the manner in which colors change the farther away they are from the eye; the third defines how objects ought to be finished less carefully the farther away they are.” (Leonardo da Vinci)
Examples of One Point Perspective
If you were to stand on a plane and look out into the distance, the imaginary line that demarcates between the Earth and the sky is considered the horizon.

For argument's sake, the Horizon Line is a straight line (even though in actual space it is slightly curved).
Now, if you were to stare straight ahead at the horizon, the point on the horizon directly in front of you would be considered the **Vanishing Point**. It's called the **Vanishing Point** since all objects seem to vanish towards it as they go back into the distance.
This is not a typical 1-Point Perspective drawing because it is from a “bird’s-eye point of view” (no pun intended) 😊.

Even though it’s from a different point of view, the concept is still exactly the same.

Where is the Vanishing Point?
HERE is the Vanishing Point!
HERE is the Vanishing Point!

AND HERE is the Horizon Line!
On both of these artworks, notice that the **Vanishing Point** is somewhat in the center or center top of the picture.

This is typically how most people start with 1-Point Perspective.
The **Vanishing Point** (VP) must be on the **Horizon Line**, however it can be moved from side to side. The VP will always be at the viewer's eyeline and directly in front of the viewer.

If the VP is moved to the right along the Horizon Line, as it is here, there will be the illusion of a tipped perspective, or seeing the content from a sort of side view.

Remember that another way to think of the **Horizon Line** is your eye level. The **Vanishing Point** is directly in front of the viewer.
Sometimes artists will choose to intentionally not follow the rules. The Surrealists did this (i.e. Dali, Kahlo, etc.) and here it appears that Rivera did this as well. Why would artists intentionally do this? What effect does it have on their art?

‘Frozen Assets’ by Diego Rivera (1931-1932)
Let’s take a step back and talk about some other aspects to this painting...

What is special about the color scheme?

What effect does it have on you, the viewer?

If you were inside this painting, what are some adjectives you might use to describe your surroundings?

Where is the **VP** and **Horizon Line**?

‘The Night Café’ by Vincent Van Gogh (1888)
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One Point Perspective

Another way to think about the Horizon Line is your eye level.

The **Vanishing Point** MUST be on the Horizon Line.

All lines/points will either converge onto the **Vanishing Point**...

...or the lines will be horizontal or vertical.

Another way to think about the Horizon Line is your eye level.
One-point perspective is marked by the fact that all objects seem to converge towards one solitary point on the horizon (Vanishing Point). In order for all objects to converge at a single point, their closest face has to appear to be parallel to horizon.

In other words, if there was a cube between you and the horizon, the face of the cube closest to you would have two horizontal lines parallel to the horizon. In fact, everything viewed in this perspective must have horizontal lines parallel to the Horizon Line.
Let’s try an example!

For this you will need:

1. your sketchbook (turn to a clean page) or get a piece of good drawing paper
2. a Sharp Pencil
3. a class ruler (18”)
4. an eraser

Get this stuff out NOW! 😊
Turn your sketchbook horizontal. Measure down from the top of your sketchbook however far down you would like your Horizon Line to be. For this exercise, try to do it somewhere in the middle (it does not need to be perfect). Next, find the midpoint of your Horizon Line (it doesn’t always have to be right in the middle, but for now try to make it so) and draw a dot – this will be your Vanishing Point.
LIKE THIS!
Draw a square on your **Horizon line**. Remember that “front faces” are horizontal to the horizon line. Measure from the bottom, top, and side of the paper to get your square exact.

Right now you should have a two-dimensional square. To make this flat square look like a three-dimensional cube, it has to appear to have depth.

To make something appear like it has depth, the corners must **CONVERGE** back towards the **Vanishing Point**.

Connect the corners to the VP (Vanishing Point) and draw your converging lines *lightly*.

Decide how long you would like the sides of your cube and measure the SAME DISTANCE to create the back edge. **THIS LINE IS PERFECTLY VERTICAL.**
Repeat steps 1-4! This time try it in a different area of the paper.

Draw 2 more, but this time above the Horizon Line.

Draw another 2, but this time completely below the Horizon Line.

Try one directly above and below the Vanishing Point.
Try a letter!
Try your NAME!
your assignment:

**Using 1-Point Perspective**, draw your room & everything in it, or an imaginary street with buildings, or a city from a bird’s-eye-view, or a hallway in a castle, or ????

You will need to sketch out a plan/thumbnail in your sketchbook, then move on to your 9”x12” final paper.

You will have 2 weeks for this drawing.

It needs to be fully shaded and colored.

DUE:
Notice how the Mariachi Men, APPEAR to get smaller & closer together & we place them higher on the page (showing SPACE).

Remember that people, trees, cars, etc. will also be in perspective too!