

to go! Jacob Lawrence

Jacon Lawrence was born in 1917 in New Jersey, but he spent much of his life living and working as in artist in New York City. In 1970 he moved to Seattle where taught art at the University of Washington until his death in 2000. Lawrence's work depicts the history and struggles of African Americans. His paintings tell stories about important historical time periods and events. Some of his famous paintings include portraits of Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass. Using mostly primary colors, red, yellow and blue, Lawrence is able to create interesting scenes with simple shapes and lines.

In his painting titled, *Brownstones*, painted in 1958, Lawrence captures the neighborhood he was living in at the time, called Harlem. As you can see in the painting, Harlem was a vibrant community full of life, people and activity. Lawrence paints lots of details: children playing, a mother pushing a carriage, and even people in open windows. What is your neighborhood like?

Materials:

- Construction paper (assorted colors)
- Scissors
- Glue



Brownstones, 1958

Directions:

- Using cut out shapes of different colors, create a picture of what your neighborhood looks like. Include your house or apartment, familiar people, children, stores, trees or whatever makes your neighborhood unique!
- Begin by cutting out shapes of houses, people, and other elements that you want to put in your neighborhood drawing.
- Once you're finished cutting, carefully arrange the figures and objects on a large sheet of paper.
- When you have all the pieces where you want them you can begin gluing the pieces down onto the larger sheet of paper.



Student Example