

# TEN 10 MIN DRAWING LESSONS

## (FOR ALL AGES)

Drawing is about looking closely, slowly and recording what you see. Together we will discover drawing, art vocabulary and ways of looking in ten minutes for ten days. You can of course draw for longer than that if you wish!

**You need a pencil and paper for each day, and something to draw.** Each lesson will guide you on what household item you need.

Share your drawing with us by tagging [@nassaumuseum](#) or use the hashtag [#ncmcreates](#) so we can share your work in our stories.

## #1 Gesture Drawing

**Vocabulary** - Negative space: the space in between and around objects

You will need: 3 simple objects from your home. These objects can be pieces of fruit, mugs, lego blocks, cookies, whatever is at hand. Place the three objects in a group in front of you.

- Today we are practicing gestural drawings. A gestural drawing is a quick loose drawing, full of energy and exploration. Make a few simple marks on your paper to show where the top and bottom of each object will fit to, and where the objects fit next to each other.
- Start to draw the objects as you see them, with quick loose lines. Go back and forth looking at the objects, then drawing, then looking.
- Use the relationships of where the objects touch or where there is empty space between them to help guide your looking. This is **negative space**.
- You can think about adding shadows or textures, but this meant to be a loose, quick drawing.

## #2 Blind Contour Line Drawings

**Vocabulary** - Contour Line: A line that defines the edge of a form

You will need something to look at and draw. This can be your reflection in a mirror, a stuffed animal, a bunch of flowers, or even the view out your window.

Today we are practicing observing subject matter (what an artwork is about) and training our eye and pencil to work together as we draw.

- You are going to look at your subject matter, and slowly start moving your pencil on the page drawing what you see. **You are challenged to never pick up your pencil and never look at your paper as you start to draw the outlines of what you see.**
- Your lines will criss cross and overlap and may look silly as your pencil moves back and forth, but this is all drawing practice!
- *\*An alternative for younger artists, you can try drawing by touch. Have a family member hide objects inside a paper bag, and don't look inside! Using one hand, carefully feel the object inside the bag and with your other hand draw what you feel. Try to figure out what you're drawing!*

# #3 Drawing Slowly

**Vocabulary** - Proportion: how big or small one part of an object is compared to the other parts

You will need an extra piece of paper to rip up.

- Take one piece of paper and cut it into three strips of paper. Accordion fold one strip, curl one around your pencil to make a curving shape, crumple the last one.
- Set all three changed papers together in an arrangement that you think looks interesting.
- Today we are practicing drawing slowly, looking closely and thinking about proportion (how big or small one part of an object is compared to the other parts). Look at your three changed papers, notice where folds are or how large the curl of your paper is.
- Set a timer for 8 minutes. You must draw the entire 8 minutes. Slowly move your eye and pencil together, focusing on the folded papers. Use their shapes to guide you. Where does one shape meet another?

# #4 Large as Life Drawing

**Vocabulary** - Scale: how big an object is compared to other objects

You will need a twig, fork, spoon or another object you want to try drawing.

- Artists need to be able to draw something in all different sizes, and today we are practicing drawing something the size it actually is or "to scale".
- Turn your paper horizontally (landscape format). Place your twig or object at the top of your paper, and then mark the left and right side of your page to match where your object reaches to.
- Begin carefully and slowly drawing your object, always looking back at your object to note any details and textures.
- Try to draw as slowly and carefully as possible, drawing your object the actual size it is.

# #5 Thumbnail Sketches

**Vocabulary** - Composition: the placement of forms, shapes, colors, and light and dark areas in an artwork

Today we are going to practice creating compositions, the placement of forms, shapes, and areas of light and dark in an artwork. This exercise is to practice drawing what you find interesting by creating thumbnail sketches.

- On your one piece of paper, draw 4 rectangles. You are going to create one mini drawing inside of each of these rectangles.
- Sit in front of a window and draw what you see outside the window in one rectangle.
- Now "zoom in" and just draw part of what you see in your next rectangle.
- "Zoom in" on a different part and draw that in your third rectangle.
- Now zoom all the way out and draw the window smaller, and include what is on the walls surrounding the window.
- Which small thumbnail sketch looks the most interesting to you? Why?

# #6 Creating Space

**Vocabulary** - Foreground: the part of an artwork that appears closest to you, generally the bottom of a composition.

Today we are exploring a way to organize our artwork and create a sense of space. When you look out at a landscape the things that are closest to you are in the foreground, and are much larger than the things in the distance (background).

***Imagine you are standing on a pathway, and next to you are large trees reaching towards the sky. Your pathway stretches and curves as far as your eye can see, and it gets smaller and smaller as it reaches into the distance. There are more trees all the way along the path. On the horizon line, where the land and sky meet, you can see a range of mountains stretching from left to right. Can you picture this landscape in your mind? Now we are going to try drawing this scene.***

- On your paper draw 2 lines to divide your paper into thirds. These don't have to be equal thirds, have the bottom section be the largest.
- Put your pencil on the bottom of your page and draw a curving line to your middle line, and continue it to your third line. This is one side of your path. Now draw another line mirroring it, making your path wide on the bottom and narrow at its farthest point.
- On the line you drew closest to the top, draw your mountain range stretching from one side of your page to the other. Have the bottoms of your mountains rest on that top line.
- On and near your line near the middle of the page, draw some medium sized trees. Any trees close to your mountains need to be drawn much smaller than the ones drawn near the middle of your page.
- Finally, close to the bottom of your page draw a large tree whose top branches reach to the very top of your mountain range and whose roots are near the very bottom of your page. This tree is in the foreground of your landscape.

# #7 Mark Making & Cross Hatching

**Vocabulary** - Cross Hatching: a set of diagonal lines that criss cross over each other to create value, the closer together the lines and the more lines you have the darker the area appears

You will need object to draw. A plant, shoe or crumpled sweater have interesting textures and details to draw.

**Part One:** On a scrap piece of a paper, draw 3 squares.

- In one square draw a series of diagonal lines all facing the same direction. Experiment with adding more lines in to make the square appear darker, this is called **hatching**.
- In your second square, draw a series of diagonal lines in one direction and then in the other direction, again experimenting with adding more closer together to make it appear darker. This is called **cross hatching**.
- In your third square draw many small dots or circles to make the square appear darker, layering them close together. This is called **stippling**.

**Part Two:** With hatching, cross hatching, and stippling you are varying your type of line to create value (the lightness or darkness of an object). **Now that you've practiced these types of marks, you are going to use all three of them to create a drawing of your object with areas of light and dark.**

- Set up your object in front of you and look at it, where would each type of mark work best? What mark would work for lighter areas and which would work for darker areas? Start by creating a quick, gestural drawing of your object. Now go back and refine your lines of the object, and start adding in value using your variety of marks.

# #8 Cast Shadow + Value Study

**Vocabulary** - Value: the areas of lightness and darkness in an object

You need a simple shaped object like an apple or an egg. If you have a flashlight or a lamp you can use that to make an even more dramatic shadow.

- Today we are practicing drawing an object and paying attention to its different values. Place your object in front of you, near a window or with an extra light source such as a flashlight, so that you can see a shadow underneath your object.
- Look closely at your object to see where the brightest area is, the shape of the shadow, and where the midtone (somewhere in value just above the darkest) of your object is.
- Begin by drawing your object using contour lines, focusing on just the edges of the object. *You can add a one or two lines of detail if you want to, but the focus is going to be on the form of the object and the value.*
- Once you have the form down, use cross hatching or shading with your pencil to darken the shadow. Make the shadow the darkest value in your drawing.
- Now use hatching to make the midtone, and leave the brightest area open so you can see the white of the page.

**Take it further:** *try another drawing with multiple objects focusing on showing three distinct values. You can try combining this with blind contour line drawing, or try drawing your subject matter to scale.*

# #9 Overlapping Objects

**Vocabulary** - Overlapping: when one part of an object covers part of another object, it seems to be closer to the view

You will need 2 objects to draw. One should be larger than the other, such as a teapot and tea cup.

Today we are practicing setting up a still life, using what we've learned about negative space and proportion. We are also going to use overlapping objects to make one of our objects seem closer, and the other farther away.

- Place your two objects in front of you, with one slightly behind the other but still keeping both visible. Decide which one you want to be the focus, this will be the one that is covering up part of the other object and will now seem closer.
- Make light marks on the page to indicate the tops, bottoms and sides of your objects. Start drawing the outlines of your objects Pay careful attention to the space in between them and around them, using this negative space to help you draw your objects in proportion.
- Keep looking back at your objects, then back at your page. Notice where one shape touches another, or how big or small the shapes are next to each other. You can add value to your objects, using the lightest and darkest areas of each object to help guide you in drawing them in proportion and to emphasize that one is in front of the other.

***Take it further: Set up another still life with multiple objects, try three, four or more! Vary your objects in size and make sure to have your arrangement of objects overlap in some spots.***

**IN LESSON TEN, IT'S TIME TO  
PUT IT ALL  
TOGETHER!**

# #10 Putting It Together

You need at least three objects to draw in a still life. It is up to you what objects you want to draw, but choose objects of different sizes and even of different textures. You also need an extra piece of paper for thumbnail sketches.

- Arrange your objects on your table in front of you, making sure to have some overlap. Whatever is in the front will appear closest to the viewer in your still life, and will cover up some of the objects behind it. If you want to, you can use a flashlight or lamp off to the side to create stronger shadows from your objects.
- On your first paper, draw three small rectangles to create thumbnail sketches and try out different compositions. Will your still life drawing be vertical or horizontal? How can you crop or zoom in on the still life to fill most of your page? Try to not leave too much open space on both sides of your page, or to center everything exactly in the middle of your page. Choose the composition which looks the most interesting to you to enlarge.
- Start by making light marks on your page to indicate the top, bottoms and sides to help guide you. Sketch the largest shapes first, always checking one shape to another and looking at the negative space between them. Notice where one object touches another or overlaps or where there is space between them.
- Draw slowly, having your eyes and your pencil work together. Once you have your contour lines, or outlines of your objects, then start adding value to build up the form. Use hatching, stippling and cross hatching to show the highlights or brightest areas, the middle tone areas, and the shadows.

**Take a step back and look at your drawing from farther away, or even turn it upside down. Does the scale of the objects to one another seem to make sense? Do the darkest areas on your page seem to match the darkest areas of your objects?**

**Keep drawing and checking until you are satisfied!**



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