

# Materials in Practice

## Drawing

Check out the  
video series here



### Materials

- Table protection such as newspaper
- Drawing material such as charcoal, pastels or pencils.
- Eraser
- Paper, consider exploring different weights and textures

### Optional

- A backing board and bulldog clips
- Cloth or rag

### Techniques

Drawing builds understanding of the world by improving our observational skills and perception. Drawing encourages students to expand their senses, categorising things more deeply beyond surface-level recognition, exploring ideas and expression.

- Line and form are the focus in contour drawings, using directional changes in mark making rather than heavy outlines to identify edges of forms.
- Shading and tone are used to build depth through tonal blocking using **hatching**, **cross hatching**, blending or **stippling** to add interest and variety to areas. It is useful to squint to simplify light and shadow and use negative space for contrast.
- **Perspective** is used to **render** spatial depth from a fixed viewpoint. Movement alters perspective so it is important to have a fixed position for accuracy. The horizon line represents eye level, and parallel lines converge at the vanishing point.
- **Reduction** method allows a shaded area to be drawn into with an eraser, revealing lighter tones and negative spaces. This technique allows for subtle adjustments and textures creating atmosphere and mood within the drawing.
- Reverse tone, such as a white charcoal on black paper, to highlight lines and capture details in your subject matter.
- **Texture** is emphasised when using different materials such as soft pastels, oil pastels and smooth or textured paper surfaces. Rags, cotton tips and fingers can be used to blend the materials on the surface and create a smooth texture. Texture can be built up with hatching and stippling techniques.

### Safety

- Use newspaper or another cover to protect surfaces, as some materials can be messy.
- Choose a setup that allows you to work comfortably, whether it's sitting at a table, using a clipboard on your lap or standing at an easel. Remember to regularly step back to view your work.
- Charcoal and pastel dust residue needs to be wiped with a damp cloth to avoid breathing in and staining surfaces.
- Remember to use fixative (or hairspray) to **set** soft pastel and charcoal works.

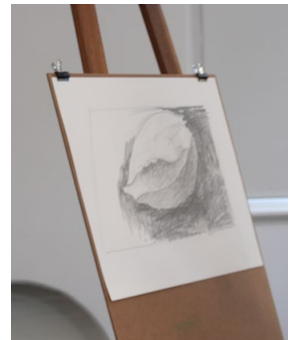


# Materials in Practice

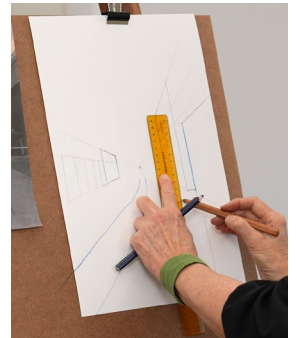
## Drawing

### Processes

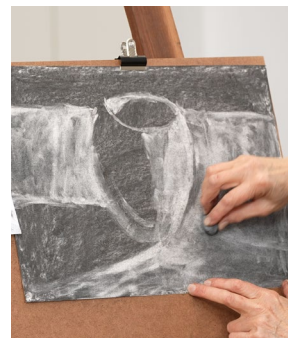
1. Use a 2B pencil for versatility, avoid excessive smudging and explore other materials for different effects.
2. Use reference images to help maintain accurate perspective and proportions.
3. Start with basic shapes, breaking the subject into simple forms (ovals, curves) to establish structure and proportions.
4. Gradually develop the drawing, keeping visible marks as part of the process, which can be integrated or removed at later points.
5. Carefully consider space when needing to measure distances and objects using angles, negative space and relationships between parts, to refine accuracy.



Preliminary sketch



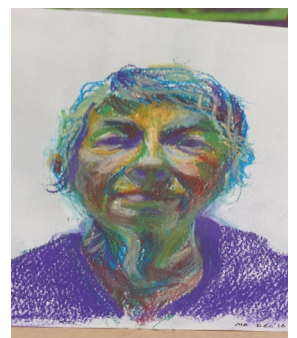
One-point perspective



Reduction method

### Top tips

- Choose paper based on weight (**GSM**), texture (smooth or rough) and colour; thicker paper is better for detailed work; coloured paper can help contrast and highlight lighter materials.
- In perspective drawing, remember objects appear smaller as they recede into the distance.



Oil pastel portrait

# Vocabulary list

## Drawing

| Term                 | Definition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Atmospheric</b>   | In drawing, this term typically refers to the quality of light and air in a landscape or scene, often used to create a sense of depth and mood.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Crosshatching</b> | A technique that involves layering sets of parallel lines in different directions to build up areas of shadow or tone, enhancing depth and texture.                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Hatching</b>      | A technique used in drawing and painting to create tonal or shading effects by drawing closely spaced parallel lines.                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>GSM</b>           | Grams per square metre (GSM) is a unit used to measure paper weight. Tissue and newspaper tend to have a low GSM whereas stiff cardstock has a high GSM.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Perspective</b>   | A technique used in drawing to create the illusion of depth and three-dimensionality on a two-dimensional surface. It involves the representation of objects in relation to their distance from the viewer, typically using converging lines and vanishing points to depict how objects appear smaller as they get further away. |
| <b>Proportions</b>   | The relationship in size and scale between different elements in a drawing, crucial for achieving realistic representations of subjects.                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Reduction</b>     | In drawing, 'reduction' or 'reductive' refers to a method where the artist starts with a darker medium (like charcoal or pastel) and reduces or removes material to create highlights and details, often using an eraser or cloth.                                                                                               |
| <b>Render</b>        | To depict or represent something in a drawing, often involving the application of techniques to illustrate form, colour and texture.                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Set</b>           | Allowing the material to fix or settle on the surface, often by using a fixative spray which can help reduce smudging.                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Stippling</b>     | A drawing technique that uses small dots to create texture, shading or patterns, often employed in pen and ink drawings.                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Texture</b>       | The perceived surface quality of a work of art, which can be visual (implied) or tactile (actual). It refers to how something feels or looks like it would feel.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Tone</b>          | The lightness or darkness of a colour, which can affect the mood of a piece and is used to create depth and dimension in a drawing.                                                                                                                                                                                              |