

MARK MAKING, LINE AND TEXTURE

Teachers' Notes

The Art of Drawing and Using a Sketchbook:
Workshops for Key stages 3, 4 & 5 at the
Wallace Collection

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'If you have not got the knack of making a sketch of a man who has thrown himself out of the window whilst he is falling from the fourth storey to the ground, you will never be able to go in for the big stuff'.

Eugène Delacroix (19th-century French artist)

This quotation from Delacroix highlights some of the qualities of the sketch: spontaneous, speedy, agile, imprecise and unfinished – an essential skill, used today by artists, architects and designers alike.

These notes are designed to accompany the KS3 – KS5 workshops on The Art of Drawing and Using a Sketchbook at The Wallace Collection and to support the KS3 –KS5 national curriculum targets for Art & Design and Design & Technology. The notes provide a summary of the sessions, some information on the key works of art used and some ideas on follow-up work.

By introducing a range of drawing activities including annotation of sketches, rapid drawing, making best use of the page and making restatements as opposed to erasing, the gallery based sketching will help students develop their sketchbooks – a personal space to gather information, record observations and explore design ideas.

The Workshop

Students should bring their own sketch/workbooks; artist quality materials will be provided.

Following a brief introduction to the Wallace Collection, the tutor will discuss what the students understand by the terms 'mark making, line and texture', any problems encountered with these concepts and what their expectations are for the session. Different approaches to applying these drawing techniques in practice will be discussed.

Through a series of sketching activities (see "Sketching Activities" below) students will learn new drawing techniques, hone observational skills and experiment with a range of dry drawing media including graphite sticks, Conté crayons, lead pencils of varying grades and different coloured and toned papers.

Sketching takes place in the galleries, where the emphasis will be on close looking to gather information, based on observational drawing from objects and works of art including paintings, armour and furniture. Illustrated below are a selection of the main artworks which are typically used in this session, but these may vary depending on the tutor.

Sessions are of two or four hour's duration, with each covering the same ground but with the longer session including an extended range of drawing activities.

Jan Weenix, *Flowers on a Fountain with a Peacock*, c. 1700 – 1710, Oil on Canvas (P59)

Students to use as many different marks as possible to transcribe a section of this painting, to simulate texture as visual stimulus (replacing an area of colour), to differentiate parts of the painting, and if possible suggest colour through monochrome. Marks might include hatching, cross-hatching, dots and dashes, scribbled tone



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Attributed to Andre-Charles Boulle, *Cabinet*, France, c. 1670 – 1675, oak with various applied decorative woods and metals (F16)

Study and sketch a section from a piece of furniture to translate the different materials – woods, metals, glass – into drawn marks. Students will be encouraged to explore the capabilities of pencils and graphite sticks by using the flat side, points, dragged as well as soft and hard marks.



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Ary Scheffer, *Francesca da Rimini*, France, 1835, Oil on Canvas (P316)



Students will use a soft pencil or graphite stick and draw with an expressive line to capture movement and emotion, twisting and turning the pencil to respond to the way the figures move within the painting.

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Peter Paul Rubens, *The Adoration of the Magi*, Southern Netherlands, c. 1624, Oil on Oak Panel (P519)

This is an oil sketch by Rubens, a preparatory work and modello for an altarpiece. The paint has been applied broadly, with brushstrokes visible and a range of marks have been used.

Students will use graphite or Conte to sketch this work using a flowing line to show the important gestures of the Magi offering their gifts.



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Lucio Marliani, Piccinino, Partial amour, Italy, c. 1570 - 1590, very-low carbon steel and other materials (A51)



In the Armour galleries students will select a piece of armour to sketch and explore line as a means of defining and as a means of expressing.

Students will sketch the armour using various techniques designed to improve eye to hand coordination and observational skills. Continuous, unbroken line, 'blind'; repeat with some looking at the paper; draw with 'wrong' hand and try different ways of holding the pencil to create interesting marks

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Large Drawing Room

The luxuriously decorated rooms in Hertford House provide a wealth of opportunities to explore mark-making.

Students will draw a wide range of decorative details from the interior room finishes and furnishings, including ceiling mouldings, floor and wall patterns as well as fabric, gilt, glass, marble and other textures



Sketching Activities

The core activities will comprise the following, with some variations from session to session if temporary room closures dictate:

- Discussion about mark making and how textures appear to the eye.
- Students to make an abstract, warm-up drawing to help them loosen up and experiment with groups of marks to create abstract areas of texture, using at least three different types of drawing material, separately and in combination.
- Look at still life paintings, furniture and other objects and discuss how different surface might be rendered with a range of drawing media to simulate the actual textures – using pencils in different ways and varying the direction of the marks.
- Working from a painting, students to sketch using marks in a variety of ways: to simulate texture in the painting as visual stimulus (replacing an area of colour), to differentiate parts of the painting.
- In the Armour galleries students will select a piece of armour to sketch and explore line as a means of defining and as a means of expressing.
- Students will sketch the armour using various techniques designed to improve eye to hand coordination and observational skills. Continuous, unbroken line, 'blind'; repeat with some looking at the paper; draw with 'wrong' hand and try different ways of holding the pencil to create interesting marks.
- Students will learn to draw with an expressive line to capture movement and emotion.
- Study and sketch a section from a piece of furniture or room decoration to depict the different materials – woods, metals, glass – into drawn marks.

Follow up Activities

Further discussion on how mark making can be used to suggest texture in the world around us, to convey how the surfaces of different things might feel. The idea of 'Texture' could relate to the surfaces being depicted in the drawing or the physical surface of the drawing itself. The quality of lines in a drawing – crisp, smeared, solid – should also be discussed to focus on how this most widely used mark can have many uses within the same drawing.

Students could consider whether 'texture' in drawing depends upon how the actual marks are made – the size, length, strength, fast or slow – or does it depend upon the materials used, including the support (e.g. paper), or a combination of both?

This discussion may suggest different ways to experiment with mark making, including frottage, collage and related techniques recorded in the sketchbook. Students to review their sketches and the paintings used, to prompt discussion.

Some ideas for further reading:

Felicity Allen: *Your Sketchbook Your Self* (Tate Publishing, 2011)

Gillian Robinson, Alison Mountain, David Hulston: *Think inside the sketchbook* (HarperCollins, 2011)

Sam Piyasena & Beverly Philp: *Just Draw It!* (Search Press, 2013)

In the Wallace Collection bookshop you will find several helpful books on the various sections of the collection, including the paintings, armour, furniture and Sèvres porcelain.