

tone, light, shade and shadow

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.

Diego Velazquez, *The Lady with a Fan*, Spain, c. 1640, Oil on Canvas (P88)

Discussion about the effect of tone and shading in this painting, especially the indistinct background and the muted colour scheme. The darkest tones seem to merge into one another.

A 'reductive' drawing can be made, working with a putty rubber into a sheet pre-prepared with graphite, to reveal the lightest tones and highlights.



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Probably Henri Perian, *The Borghese Dancers*, France, probably 1642 - 1643, bronze (S155)

Working from *The Borghese Dancers*, students will build up a drawing by focusing on the shadow shapes first then looking for half tones, to create strong contrasts in light and shade.

An appropriate technique is to draw with a white Conté crayon on black paper, allowing the highlights to reveal the form.



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Rembrandt, *Titus, the Artist's Son*, Netherlands, c. 1657, Oil on Canvas (P29)

Students will make a close study of *Titus*, using black and white Conté crayon on grey paper, to make a sketch with dark, light and mid-tones.

Careful observation will be required to see and then describe the shadows and subtle modelling across the face. Tutor and students will discuss whether these sharp contrasts of light and shade create a feeling of intimacy, vulnerability or other emotions.



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Workshop of Kolman Helmschmid, *Armet*, Germany, c. 1530 - c. 1540, steel and paint, etched (A165)

In the Armour galleries students will select a piece of armour to sketch from. Starting with 'blind' drawing by only looking at the object and not lifting the pencil; the drawing will concentrate on the tones and light to describe the object to suggest volume.



White pencils/crayon will be used to develop this sketch by picking out highlights and carefully drawing reflected shapes and tones. Students will be encouraged to create strong contrasts in light and shade.

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Pieter de Hooch, *A Woman Peeling Apples*, Netherlands, c. 1663, Oil on Canvas (P23)



Students are asked to identify the light source in this painting, to understand how the artist has used the fall of light across the surface of objects to reveal form and create a mood.

Sketches will be used to identify the different tones across the painting.

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Peter Paul Rubens, *The Rainbow Landscape*, Flanders, c. 1636, Oil on oak Panel (P63)



Discussion about the range of light and dark tones in this landscape and how they contribute to the overall effect of the painting.

Different drawing media, hard and soft, will be used to represent different aspects of the weather portrayed in this scene: rain, sunshine, the rainbow and the reflections of the cattle in the stream.

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Sketching Activities

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

- An abstract, warm-up drawing to help students loosen up and experiment with various shading techniques
- Students to create a grey scale with four tones, using graphite and white paper.
- A close study of a low key portrait using black and white Conte on grey paper, to describe the shadows and subtle modelling across the face. Discuss whether these sharp contrasts of light and shade create a feeling of intimacy, vulnerability or other emotions.
- With another portrait the tutor and students should talk about the effect of tone and shading. Students to make a reductive drawing by removing graphite with an eraser.
- In the Armour galleries students will select a piece of armour to sketch from. Starting with 'blind' drawing by only looking at the object and not lifting the pencil; the drawing will concentrate on the tones and light to describe the object to suggest volume.
- White pencils/crayon will be used to develop this sketch by picking out highlights and carefully drawing reflected shapes and tones.
- Working from a relief panel or piece of sculpture students will build up a drawing by focusing on the shadow shapes first then looking for half tones, to create strong contrasts in light and shade.

Follow up Activities

Further discussion on how the Wallace artists used tonal values to create mood and emotion, volume and 3D effects where the gradation between light and shadow fully reveal form and to create patterns of light and shadow within the composition.

Students to review their sketches and the paintings used, to analyse how the artists used various degrees of dark or light values to create an illusion of form and space, as well as suggesting mood and emotions.

Using an HB or B pencil, create a tonal strip with a total of nine values, black to white with a full range of intermediate tones in between. This can be kept with a student's sketchbook to help evaluate the tonal strengths of objects and scenes being sketched. Try different types of shading including hatching, cross-hatching and non-directional strokes.

Using *The Rainbow Landscape* as an example, students could draw a pretend sun and work out where the shadows would fall on the drawn object. The amount of detail revealed and the strength of shadows will depend on the direction of the light.

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.