

Mastering the Art of Sketching with Zara

Learning objective: To develop sketching techniques by exploring line, tone, and texture through close observation.

Follow Zara the Zebra's tips to complete these sketching exercises. Remember to use a light touch with your pencil to allow for adjustments as you observe your subject.

Word bank: cross-hatching · shading · texture · proportion · observation · gradient · contour

1. Zara suggests using 'contour lines' to capture the shape of an object. Explain why drawing the outline of an object first is a useful starting point for a detailed sketch. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast 'cross-hatching' and 'blending'. Which technique would you choose to show the rough, bumpy surface of a tree trunk, and why? (3 marks)

3. If you wanted to show that a ball is round rather than flat, what should you do with your pencil shading? Describe the effect of a light source on the object. (2 marks)

4. Justify your answer: Does a sketch need to be a perfect, photo-realistic copy of an object to be considered successful art? Why or why not? (2 marks)

5. What might happen to your sketch if you press down very hard with your pencil at the very beginning of the drawing process? How does 'light pressure' help the artist? (2 marks)

Draw: Find a natural object, such as a leaf, a stone, or a piece of fruit. Using your pencil, create a sketch that focuses on texture. Use small, short marks to show the surface detail and varying pressure to create a gradient of light and shadow.



Extension challenge: Challenge: Find a partner. Set up a 'still life' scene with three items of different sizes and shapes. Sketch the scene, but focus specifically on 'proportion'—ensuring that the sizes of the objects look correct in relation to one another. Write a short paragraph justifying the placement of your shadows.