

Mastering the Art of Sketching with Zara the Zebra

Learning objective: To understand and apply key sketching techniques including mark-making, shading, and observational drawing to create depth and texture.

Use these flashcards to test your knowledge of sketching terminology. Zara the Zebra suggests using a range of pencils, from 2H to 6B, to explore different tones in your sketchbook.

Hatching

A series of parallel lines drawn close together to create areas of shade or texture in a sketch.

Cross-hatching

The technique of layering sets of parallel lines at angles to one another to create darker tones and depth.

Stippling

Creating texture and shadow by using a series of small dots rather than lines.

Blending

Softening the edges of marks by smudging or layering to create smooth transitions between light and dark areas.

Tone

The lightness or darkness of a colour or a grey shade, used to suggest three-dimensional form.

Composition

The intentional arrangement of elements within a drawing to create a balanced or interesting final image.

Perspective

A technique used to create the illusion of depth and distance on a flat surface, often using a vanishing point.

Contour Drawing

A drawing that focuses purely on the outlines and edges of an object, often without looking down at the paper.

Highlight

The area on an object where the light source hits directly, appearing as the brightest part of the sketch.

Pressure

The amount of force applied to the pencil, heavier pressure creates darker, thicker lines, while light pressure creates delicate marks.

Explain why artists use a variety of pencil grades (e.g., 2H vs 6B) when sketching.

Harder pencils (H) produce lighter, finer lines suitable for initial layouts, while softer pencils (B) contain more graphite, allowing for deep, dark shading and expressive textures.

Justify why an artist might choose stippling over blending for a specific subject.

Stippling might be chosen to represent rough or granular surfaces (like stone or sand) where blending would make the texture appear too smooth or artificial.