Mastering the Art of Sketching: Light and Shadow

1. I would use light pressure on the side facing the light to create a highlight, and heavy pressure on the side furthest from the light to create a shadow. (2 marks)

Working: Light source = light pressure; opposite side = heavy pressure.

1 mark for identifying pressure difference; 1 mark for linking pressure to light source position.

2. Cross-hatching is drawing sets of intersecting parallel lines. It creates darker areas because the overlapping lines cover more of the paper surface than a single layer. (2 marks)

Look for: Explanation of intersecting lines and how density creates darkness.

Good: Cross-hatching is drawing lines that cross over each other to make it look darker.

Better: Cross-hatching uses layers of intersecting lines. It makes an area darker because the lines overlap, leaving less white paper showing.

Best: Cross-hatching involves drawing sets of intersecting parallel lines. It creates a darker tone than a single layer because the density of the lines increases, reducing the amount of white space visible.

What moves an answer up: Moving from 'good' to 'best' requires explaining the mechanism of density and light reflection.

3. I would use short, jagged, and overlapping pencil strokes to mimic the rough texture of the bark. (2 marks)

Look for: Mention of varied, non-smooth, or directional strokes to represent roughness.

Good: I would use rough lines to show the bark.

Better: I would use short, jagged lines to show the texture of the bark because it is not smooth.

Best: I would use short, irregular, and overlapping pencil strokes to capture the rough, uneven texture of the bark, varying the pressure to show depth in the crevices.

What moves an answer up: The 'best' answer connects the technique (irregular strokes) to the specific visual outcome (depth in crevices).

4. It is important to sketch the composition lightly first so you can easily erase and adjust the shapes or proportions before committing to heavy shading. (2 marks)

Working: Light lines allow for correction without leaving dark marks.

1 mark for mentioning adjustability/erasing; 1 mark for mentioning proportions or layout.

5. The highlight would be on the part of the object closest to the light source. If the light is on the left, the highlight is on the left side. (2 marks)

Working: Highlight = area closest to light source.

1 mark for identifying location; 1 mark for linking to light source position.

What a secure answer looks like

A secure answer demonstrates an understanding that pencil pressure and line density directly correlate to the perception of light, shadow, and texture.

If your child is stuck

Ask the child to hold their pencil at an angle and try pressing very softly versus very hard on a scrap piece of paper to see the difference in tone.

Common mistakes to watch for

Children often press too hard for all parts of the drawing, making it difficult to create highlights, or they use 'scribbling' instead of controlled, intentional lines for texture.