Mastering the Art of Sketching: Light and Shadow

Learning objective: I can use sketching techniques to create depth, texture, and form in my artwork.

About 15 minutes. Grown-up tip: Encourage your child to look for where the light hits an object before they start drawing, as this makes their sketches look much more realistic.

When sketching, start with light 'construction lines' to map out shapes. Use different pencil pressures to create shadows. Example: Pressing harder with your pencil creates a dark, dense tone, while a light touch creates a soft, grey tone. Zara the zebra loves to see how light hits objects in the classroom!

Word bank: cross-hatching · shading · texture · perspective · composition · highlight · mid-tone

1. Look at an apple on your desk. Explain how you would use 'shading' to show where the light source is hitting the fruit. Give a reason for your choice of pencil pressure. (2 marks)

2. Describe the technique of 'cross-hatching'. How does it help an artist create a darker area compared to using a single, smooth layer of pencil? (2 marks)

3. If you are drawing an old oak tree in the park, what specific sketching techniques would you use to represent the rough texture of the bark? Explain your answer. (2 marks)

4. Zara wants to sketch a still life of a mug and a spoon. Why is it important to sketch the 'composition' lightly before adding any final details or heavy shading? (2 marks)

5. Look at the object in front of you. If you were to draw it, where would the 'highlight' (the lightest part) be? Describe the position of the light source in relation to the object. (2 marks)

Draw: An artistic studio setting with a Zebra character named Zara holding a pencil, with a bowl of fruit and a detailed oak leaf on a table, shown in a clean, professional illustration style.

Extension challenge: Find an object at home or in the classroom with a complex texture (like a woolly jumper or a shiny coin). Create three small sketches of it, each focusing on a different technique: stippling, cross-hatching, and smooth blending.

I did it! Name: _____ Date: _____

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