

Drawing Basics: Contour

Lesson Plan for Art I
Prepared by Mrs. Clonts

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

From the time we are able to hold a drawing tool in our hands as babies, most of us have been drawing. For many, drawing is a source of both frustration and delight. Frustration with drawing often stems from a person's perceived inability to draw realistically. It can be a difficult skill to master, requiring a lot of practice and patience, which can turn people off from art in general and drawing in particular. These exercises are designed to help you with your *observation skills*. Observation is key to being able to draw accurately from life, and will help you improve in all aspects of art, not just drawing. The purpose is to slow down your eye and get you to *see* the world around you, rather than relying on memory and ending up with a wonky drawing. The point is to draw what you **see**, not what you **think** you see. To accomplish this, you will learn how to do *continuous-line contour*, *blind contour*, and *cross-contour drawings*. And it is **completely okay** if your drawings look doofy and weird. That is part of the joy of making these drawings!

EDUCATION STANDARDS

B.V.2 Apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression.

OBJECTIVES

B.V.2.2 Understand the relationships between sensory awareness and artistic expression.

MATERIALS NEEDED

1. Sketchbook
2. Pen (no pencils!)
3. Mirror

ACTIVITY

Continuous-line Contour Drawing

The first activity will be continuous line contour drawing. A contour drawing is a drawing which shows the edges and lines of an object without using shading. Many would think of this as an outline, but this words doesn't really encompass the whole object. An outline would result in a silhouette, contour drawings show details within an object. With a continuous line contour drawing, you will show these edges and inner details by creating a drawing with one single line, without lifting your pen. You also draw these contours **v-e-r-y s-l-o-w-l-y**. You want to slow down your eye, and slow down your hand to match the speed. For this drawing, it is okay to look back and forth between your subject and your paper. You will complete a continuous line contour drawing of your hand in any (appropriate) position, and another of your face using the provided mirror.

Blind Contour Drawing

Blind contour drawing is exactly the same as continuous-line contour drawing, except you look only at your subject, and not at your drawing. You still use one continuous line to draw your subject. Again, do one drawing each of your hand and your face.

Cross-contour Drawing

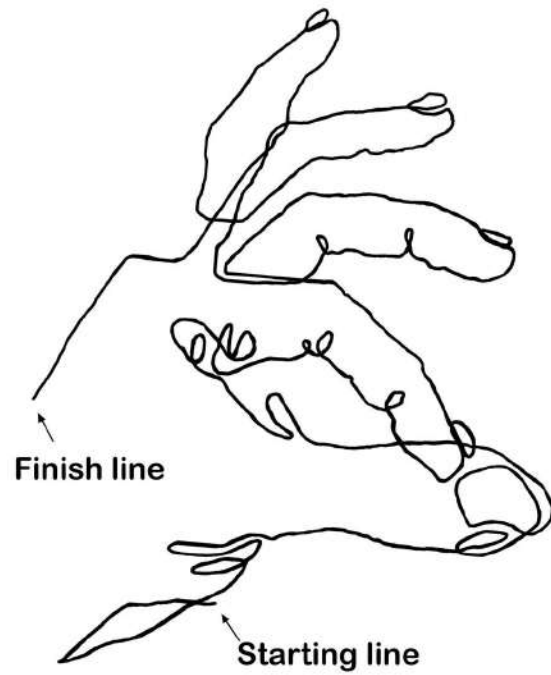
Cross-contour drawing is a way to show depth in a drawing without using shading. Imagine you had a series of straight, parallel lines drawn across your hand or face. How would these lines look as you moved your hand or changed the position of your head? Lines would dip down in low areas like the creases of your hand, and they would move in the opposite direction on higher places like your nose. For these drawings, you will sketch out a basic outline of your hand and face, then draw the cross contours on them. We will only do one direction of cross-contour, though many people will do two directions (vertical and horizontal). Do one drawing each of your hand and face.

You should have a total of six drawings for this project: three of your hand and three of your face.

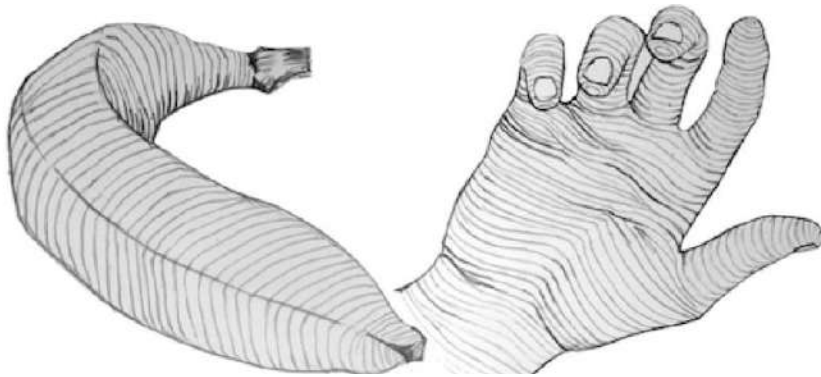
Examples of continuous line contour:



Examples of blind contour drawing:



Examples of Cross-Contour Drawing:



Scoring Rubric for continuous line contour:

	Value	Yes	No
Did student do a continuous-line contour drawing of their hand?	10		
Did student do a blind contour drawing of their hand?	10		
Did student do a cross-contour drawing of their hand?	10		
Did student do a continuous-line contour drawing of their face?	10		
Did student do a blind contour drawing of their face?	10		
Did student do a cross-contour drawing of their face?	10		
Did student refrain from lifting their pen on the continuous-line drawings?	10		
Did student show improvement over the course of these drawings?	30		
Total	100		