

CHARCOAL DRAWING WITH VANISHING NAME, EMOJI CLOUDS, STAIRS, AND LIGHTNING!



Project Description and Objective

Grades 6-8

Through the course of this project students will learn to use vine charcoal and kneaded erasers to make a drawing that constantly changes and eventually disappears. The lesson challenges students to follow directions, experiment with a physical and messy medium, and make mistakes. The spark of all artmaking is expression. The need to express an emotion, an idea, or a concept requires being in touch with how you feel. Charcoal is a fantastic medium for expression. It's a wild intimidating medium that can be difficult to control. This lesson makes it fun to use and sparks students' imagination to see the possibilities of what a piece of art can be.

Learning value scales can be a bore and a drag for students when there is nothing drawn or anything actually created, but a long rectangular box showcasing different tones on a page.

This lesson teaches value scales while making a drawing and gives space for students to reflect on how value scales are used in art through making it.

Visual art classes can be intimidating. There is pressure to make works of art that are accomplished, will be hung on the walls of the school, shown in museums ;), and be graded. This lesson ends with a big surprise for students. No product! This lesson is less about outcomes, than it's about experiencing expression.

National Visual Arts Standards

VA:Cr1.1.7a : Apply methods to overcome creative blocks.

VA:Cr1.1.8a: Document early stages of the creative process visually and/or verbally in traditional or new media.

VA:Cr1.2.7a: Develop criteria to guide making a work of art or design to meet an identified goal.

VA:Cr2.1.6a: Demonstrate openness in trying new ideas, materials, methods, and approaches in making works of art and design.

VA:Cr2.1.7a: Demonstrate persistence in developing skills with various materials, methods, and approaches in creating works of art or design.

VA:Cr2.1.8a: Demonstrate willingness to experiment, innovate, and take risks to pursue ideas, forms, and meanings that emerge in the process of artmaking or designing.

Apply visual organizational strategies to design and produce a work of art, design, or media that clearly communicates information or ideas.

VA:Cr2.3.7a: Learn to use charcoal, and make a layered drawing featuring your name.

VA:Cr2.3.8a: Select, organize, and design images and words to make visually clear and compelling presentations.

ELA Common Core Standards

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6.6

Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate general academic and domain-specific words and phrases; gather vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression.

Blueprint Standards

8th Grade: Art Making: Drawing: the ability to create the illusion of space through perspective and scale of objects and figures • the use of a range of values to describe volume and form • purposeful use of drawing pencils, charcoal, pastels, and pen and ink to create varied line quality and visual textures • ability to use drawing tools in inventive ways such as stippling, hatching, cross-hatching, and blending • organization of composition, using foreground, middle ground, and background

Prior Experience

- The students have had art classes from 1st Grade.
- Students are familiar with NYC Blueprint art units and have explored two and three-dimensional art mediums.
- Students are familiar with completing a do-now at the beginning of each class to focus their energy on art class.
- Students were introduced to the elements and principles of art at the beginning of the semester, and have since used these vocabulary terms in each subsequent lesson.

Language Demands

The students will learn vocabulary words related to charcoal drawing and artmaking.

List key vocabulary words: medium, texture, proportion, composition, shape, form, kneaded eraser, malleable, value, tone, zigzag, drop shadow, cast shadow, emoji, oval, two-dimensional, three-dimensional, anthropomorphic

Spanish translation of vocabulary words: medio, textura, proporción, composición, forma, borrador amasado, maleable, valor, tono, zigzag, sombra paralela, sombra proyectada, emoji, oval, bidimensional, tridimensional, antropomórfica (feminine), antropomórfico (masculine)

Instructional Support and Learning Tasks That Support Diverse Learners

Students can be paired or put in groups with peers who have strong English skills, so that they may act as translators when needed. Instructors will write all vocabulary

words in multiple languages, as reflected by the diversity of the classroom (ex. include French Creole translations for Haitian students, Spanish translations for Mexican students, and so on). In addition, instructor will provide written translations to further enhance the learning process.

This lesson works well for students who grasp information in a variety of modalities i.e., visual, auditory learners, tactile, and kinesthetic. To augment verbal instruction, teachers will also utilize written instruction when necessary.

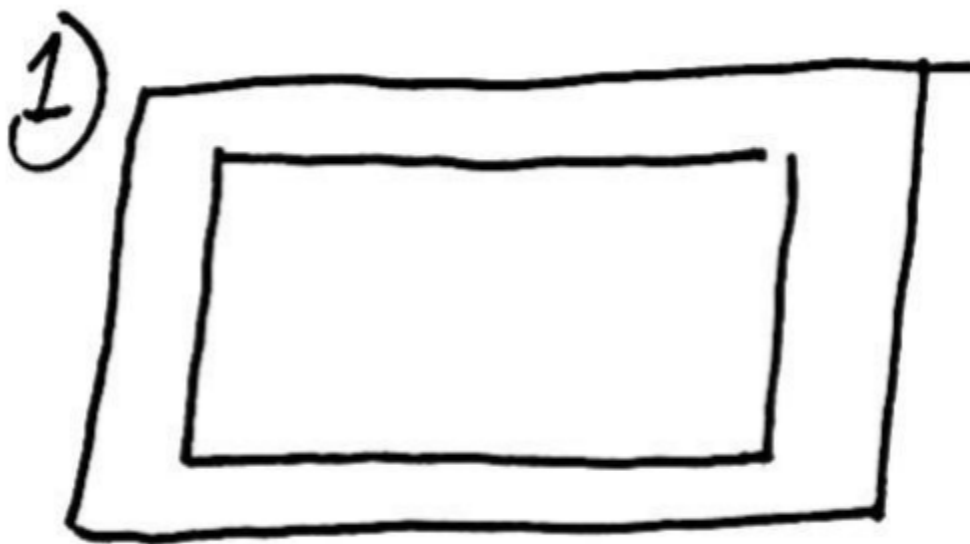
Supplies: Paper, blue or masking tape, vine charcoal, compressed charcoal, kneaded erasers, hand wipes

Procedure

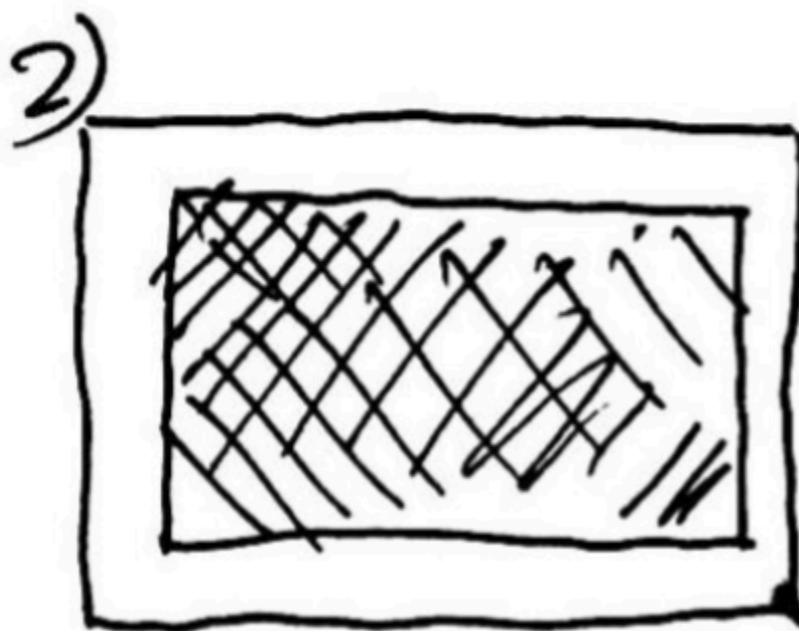
Teacher greets students at the door and they sit at seats that already have the materials laid out. Paper is taped down to the student's desks in order to stabilize the surface, which allows students to erase and draw more effectively. As soon as students are settled, the instructor asks, "Have you ever used charcoal to make a drawing?" "How about kneaded erasers?" The instructor will share some information about the history of charcoal and its uses.

The first recorded use of charcoal as an artistic medium was in cave paintings. Not merely an art medium, charcoal also played a pivotal role in the technological development of man. Used as a fuel source to enable people to smelt and work metals, it was and is an important part of history: both in use for various tools and recording it as seen in the cave drawings. Vine charcoal is a long and thin charcoal stick that is the result of burning grape vines in a kiln without air. Compressed charcoal (also referred as charcoal sticks) is shaped into a block or a stick.

And now: **the jump off!** Let's make a drawing!

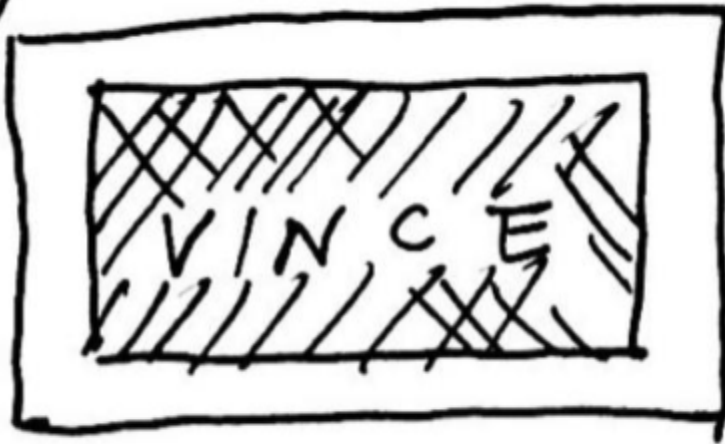


Draw a rectangle inside your page.



Fill in the rectangle with a light tone using the charcoal. Don't press too hard! Use your fingers to fill in the rectangle.

3)

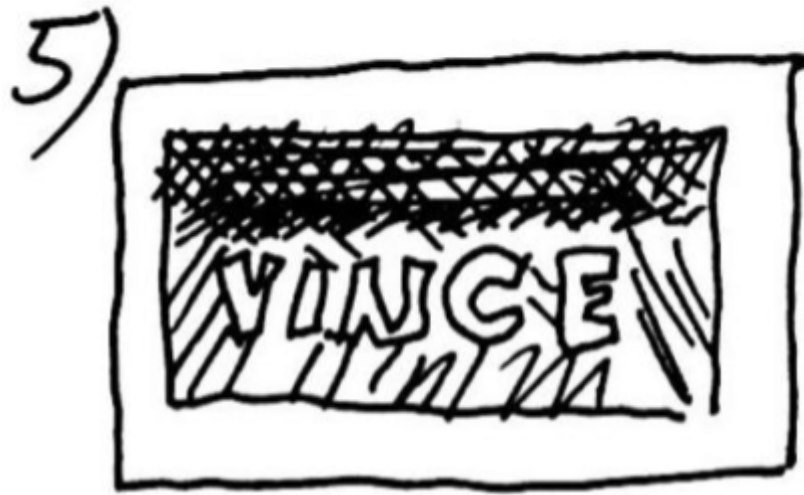


Using the kneaded eraser as a drawing implement, write your name in the shaded rectangle and go over it a few times until the white of the paper shows through.

4)



Trace the outside of the shape of your name after you erased it, making block letters.



In the upper third of the rectangle, above your name, fill in the space with a darker tone than the original lighter tone or value that you originally covered the page with.



Within the darker area that you just created above your name, erase an oval. Try to make it as white as possible. Don't worry if it still looks gray!



Imagine that the oval you just created is a light source shining down on your name, like a light bulb or a spotlight. If you think of this drawing as three-dimensional instead of two-dimensional, the light source shines on the block letters from above and creates a shadow on the ground below them.



I changed my mind about the light source above the letters and I want to make the oval shape a cloud. Why not? Charcoal allows you to make infinite changes and transformations to drawings.



What's your favorite emoji? How are you feeling today? I'm a little stressed so I decided to make a frowny cloud with a sweat bead. Yours can be happy or bored or can give side-eye. Whatever you want to do.



Since the light source has disappeared and morphed into a cloud, the shadow on the ground below the letters has changed. Lighten it up with your fingers. You can use the kneaded eraser if you like.



Time to make it rain! Using your kneaded eraser (it should be black by now, so stretch it and roll it until it's gray again) imagine rain coming down from the cloud, covering the letters. Retrace the rain and let it erase the block letters of your name.



Let's change gears and draw symmetrical staircases that mirror one another on either side of your drawing. Once you draw the zigzag lines, erase the shape of a staircase. Make the kneaded eraser clean again before you do it.



Let's try to make the steps three-dimensional. Draw horizontal lines extending from each point of the zigzag lines and draw another zigzag line below connecting all the points to one another. (this step can be skipped for younger students)



Draw an oval at the between both staircases at the bottom of the stairs. We can make it bigger and break the first line that we drew that created a rectangle in a rectangle.



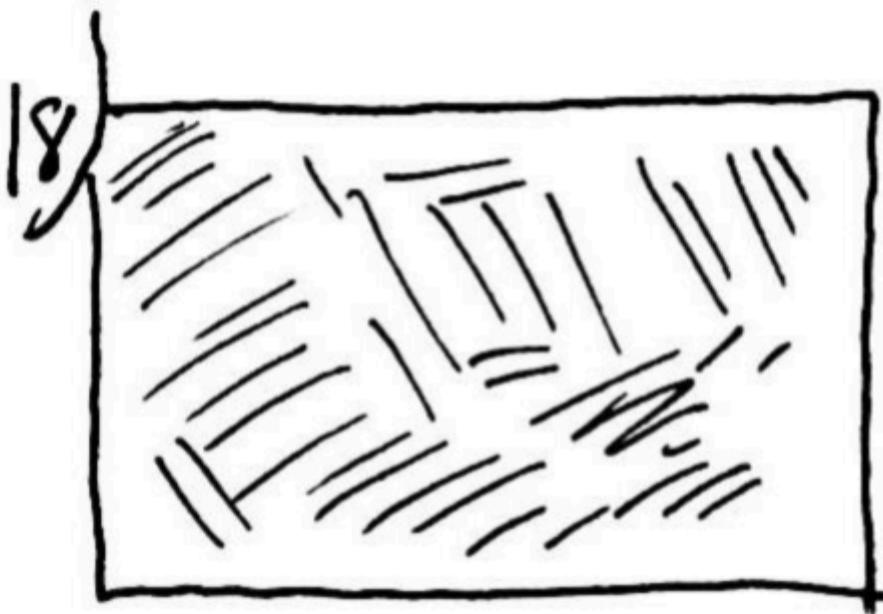
Draw a small line at the top of the oval and make the bottom half as black as possible. Think about a sewer with the cap missing. The line at the lip makes the oval a three-dimensional hole.



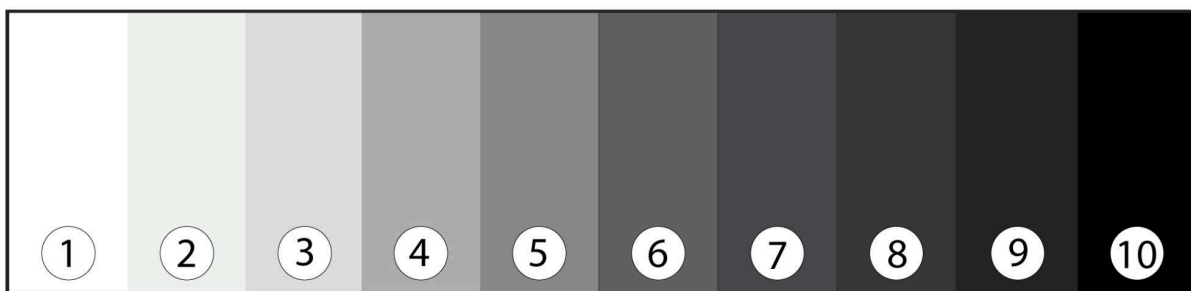
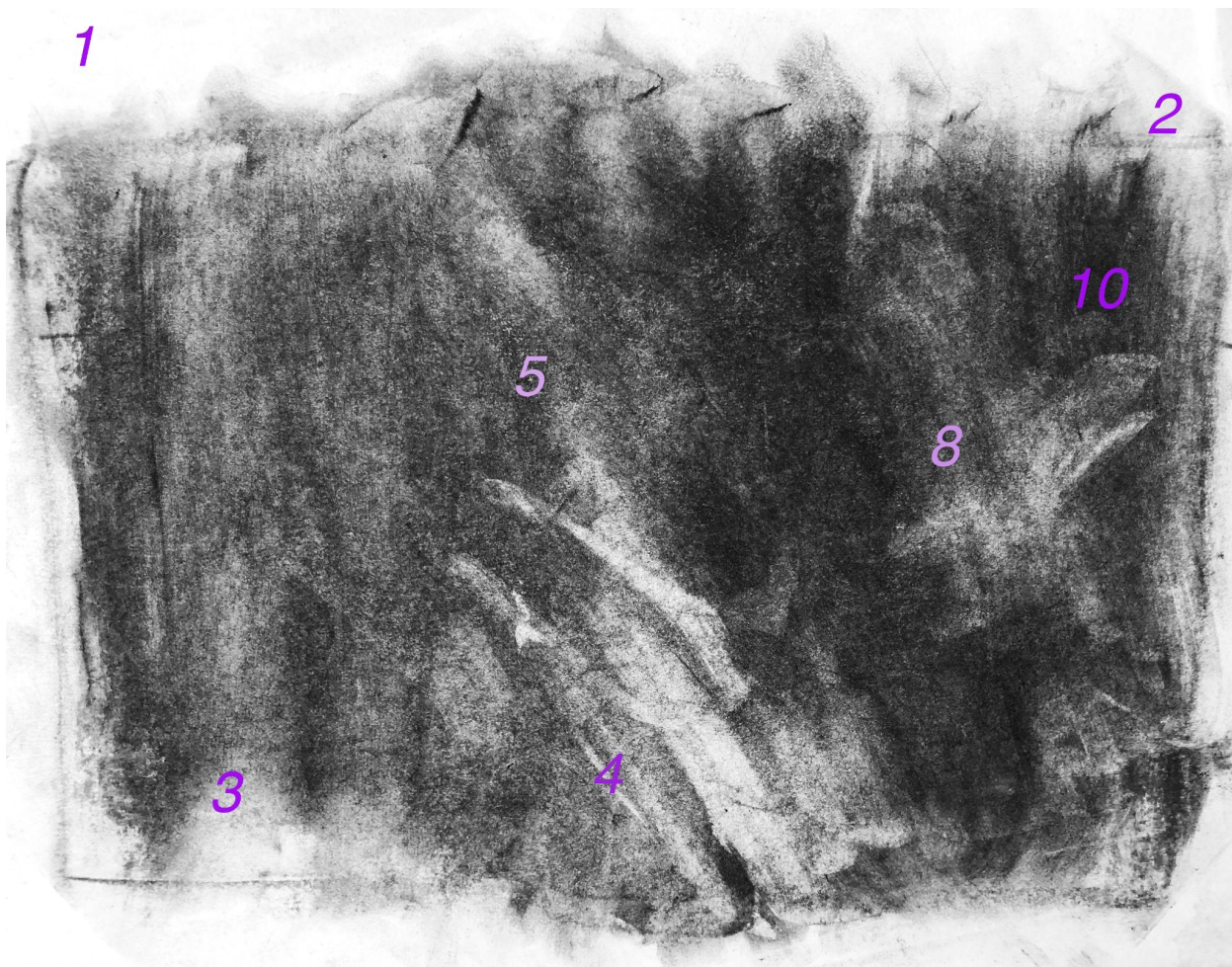
Now that your name has been covered by all the other stuff let's try to make it pop out again. Clean off your kneaded eraser and erase your name. By now the drawing is getting confusing, but don't worry it will all come out in the wash!



Bonus round! Let's make a lightning bolt shoot of the clouds into the hole below! Use your kneaded eraser and trace the zigzag shape just like you did with your name when you turned it into block letters.



Ok now for the absolutely crazy part. Erase the whole drawing and try to get all of the charcoal off the page. Charcoal is infinitely changeable, and so are most pieces of art, writing, and science projects. Can you think of other things that are impermanent? How about things that you can't change?



Assessment

After the first line is drawn at the beginning of the lesson (#1 the rectangle inside the rectangle) the instructor will go around the room to make sure the student has given themselves enough room on the page and they followed directions closely.

In the last stage of the creation of the drawing (#17), the instructor will hand out a numbered value scale and ask the students to count up as many values on their drawings as they can. The instructor will go around the room and engage with each student to check in with them and ask the student to show them where the values are located on their drawings (students typically undercount how many values they have made, and this drawing will inevitably create a wide range of tones).

Final Questions for students

What surprised you?

If you made the drawing again what would you do differently with the materials?

What would you have added to the drawing if we had more time?

How would you use some of the things that you drew today in other drawings?