



## “A Look at How Artists Handle Edges”

*Lesson plans designed for DVI by  
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Rembrandt van Rijn,  
*Rembrandt in Velvet and Plume*

### SUMMARY

The study of how artists handle edges in their drawings can show us ways to alter our way of drawing so that we can more clearly communicate some ideas.

For example:

- Edges can show the texture/material that something is made of, i.e. furry animal or shiny metallic vessel.
- Edges change depending on how they are lit. When something with a sharp edge is in the light, the edge is crisp and distinct, however when the same edge is in the dark, it appears to be fuzzy or out of focus.

This lesson approaches these ideas at an appropriate elementary level by experimenting with the look and feel of various objects of differing textures and materials. Also, we will examine what happens to edges in light vs. shadow. Students will be feeling textures, describing textures and drawing textures (and edges of textures).

### OBJECTIVES

- Students will experiment with forms and materials to represent differing textures with the emphasis on what happens to the edges
- Students will draw objects with a similar texture from their imagination to match the texture they see in an illustration
- Students will observe what happens to the edges of objects in drawings that are in the light and in the shadow
- Students will summarize what they intend to communicate through the use of drawing edges to convincingly represent textures

### STANDARDS

National Art Content Standards:  
VA:CR2.1.Ka  
VA:CR2.1.1a

## “HOW ARTISTS HANDLE EDGES”

K-5/ Edges

VA:CR2.1.2a  
VA:CR2.1.3a  
VA:CR2.1.4a  
VA:CR2.1.5a

VA:Cr.3.1.Ka  
VA:Cr.3.1.1a  
VA:Cr.3.1.2a  
VA:Cr.3.1.3a  
VA:Cr.3.1.4a  
VA:Cr.3.1.5a

Literacy Common Core Standards:  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.K.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.1.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.2.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.3.1A  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.1A  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.5.1A

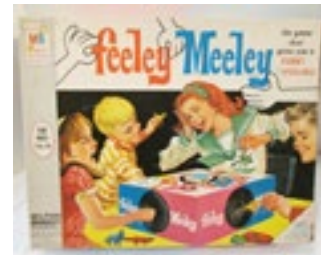
### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The images in the following activities are based on studying Rembrandt van Rijn’s drawings and etchings. Take some time before presenting the lessons to examine how he represents the edges of textures and materials along with how the light affects the edges in the drawings. His intention, more than likely, was to communicate how the things he was observing look like they feel with a variety of approaches of shading and line variances. Learning how to do this will lead to the young student artist’s ability to convincingly represent objects and people in the 6-12 lesson plan of the same name. The K-5 is more about observation and experimentation and tactile fun.

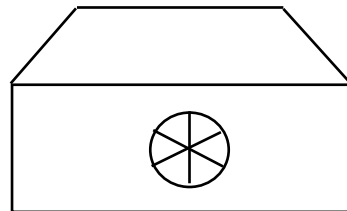
### ACTIVITY 1

#### TACTILE FUN

This activity is based on a favorite childhood game I got for Christmas one year that no one but me seems to remember. It was called Feeley Meeley and I loved it!



To make your version of the game, use a corrugated cardboard box about 15-20” long and wide and 8-10” tall. Cut a round hole in the side of the box big enough for a student’s hand to fit into it. If you want to be fancy, cut a felt square with pie shape cuts in it so that the student cannot peek into the box while they have their hand in there.



Now collect miscellaneous textured objects to put inside of the box and you are ready to go. Here is a list of things I can suggest, but you will have good ideas of a variety of things made from different materials and textures that are available to you: a golf ball, tiny stuffed animal or piece of fur, small piece of sand paper, a coin, one piece each of the two sides of Velcro, a jack, pom pom ball, glass marble, a wooden block, a piece of sponge (man made or sea), a rock, etc.

## “HOW ARTISTS HANDLE EDGES”

K-5/ Edges

Now students take turns putting one hand in the box and taking out any object of their choosing and showing it to the class. They then describe what it feels like using a one word description. All students then draw the object on the attached A1 handout in the first box, trying to draw the object’s edges to accurately represent the texture they see and have heard described.

Repeat this six times to fill all the boxes on the handout. If you want to, you can make a two sided copy of the handout and fill all twelve. All the students are going to want to feel and choose an object so you can fill the boxes with drawings and then put all the objects back into the box and give everyone a turn to feel, show and describe one object. To keep other students engaged, they can add other descriptive words to describe the texture too.

#### MATERIALS:

- corrugated cardboard box about 15-20” long and wide and 8-10” tall
- x-acto knife for cutting the hand hole
- felt to cover the hole from the inside
- tacky glue to attach felt to box
- miscellaneous textured objects to go inside of the box
- copies of A1 handout, one per student
- pencils
- erasers

### ACTIVITY 2

#### STUDY OF REMBRANDT EDGES

Using the Attached A2 handout, make one copy per student. Talk about how Rembrandt used line to make various textures of things in the landscape that appear to be fluffy, straight, hard, grassy, etc.

Challenge students to imitate the line edges they see in the small boxes by drawing an object of their choice in the connected larger box using the same type of lines. The object that they choose to draw may or may not have a similar texture as what they see in the Rembrandt image.

#### MATERIALS:

- copies of A2 handout, one per student
- pencils
- erasers

### ACTIVITY 3

#### COMPARING EDGES IN LIGHT/SHADOW

This activity compares and contrasts two Rembrandt artworks of the same subject matter but presented at different times of the day. They are called, *Flight into Egypt* and *Flight into Egypt by Night*. Upon inspection you and the students will see that the edges of objects and people in the light are drawn much differently than the edges in shadow. When light is strongly hitting a straight edge of a shelf (lets say), the edge is very crisply and sharply represented. When the same shelf is seen with the lights out and some dim outside light coming through a window, the edges will appear fuzzy and blurry. The shadow takes away the detail of the sharp edge where the light casts a shadow over the corner of the shelf’s edge.

In this activity we are looking to observe those differences in the attached A3 handout. Make enough copies for one per each two students. Pairs of students will be looking at and sharing observations about the changing edges. Quiz Students using

the attached Teacher Guide Questions A3 handout.

**MATERIALS:**

- copies of A3 handout, enough for one per every to students
- one copy of A3Q Teacher Guide Questions for yourself
- one minute timer

**ACTIVITY RUBRICS**

Attached are two rubrics labeled AR in the upper right hand corner. Also, there is one general rubric for participation in Activities 1-3 which are designed to be experimental. Assessment can be made with your own observation, as well as looking over the drawing work done during the activities as evidence. The rubric can also be used as a revision tool. If you choose to collect the drawing work and assess using the rubric, return it to the student with her/his work and then ask for improvement based on the “scores”.

The second rubric is a more specific rubric made for Activities 4 & 5, which both address the same concepts. Of course, it is up to you if you choose to do one or both of those drawings with your students.

It is always a good idea to share the rubric with students before starting the activity.

**ACTIVITY 4**

**FURRY VS SMOOTH**

Now that students have experimented tactilely and have drawn texture thinking about the edges of the forms, it is time to put that new awareness to work!

This activity is a practice in representing

two different textures in one drawing by using different drawing techniques on the edges (and insides) of each.

For Activities 4 & 5 you will need several furry objects and several hard and smooth objects. You may already have a collection of still life materials in the classroom, but if you do not there are a few ways to approach this:

- You can use things that you already have
- You can ask students to bring a favorite stuffed animal that is furry in to use and add hard smooth objects (scissors, containers, etc) from the class room
- If you have supportive parents you could ask them to collect/purchase/bring in the things you need
- Or you can purchase cheap items at thrift stores that are both furry and smooth to use.
- It is helpful to have not only interesting objects, but non-ordinary objects if possible. Ordinary objects can make for some spectacular still life work, but you will increase your odds of solid student work with aesthetically interesting objects to look at and study.
- Grouping students depending on your desk, table, space constraints can minimize the amount of materials you will need too.

Set up as many still lifes as possible in your classroom setting and distribute copies of the bottom half of the AR attached rubric. Go over the rubric as a class so that they know what the expectations are. This can also be presented orally to them if you prefer.

Remember that students will be summing up how they represented the texture using edges at the end of the drawing, so as you mingle and assist, remind them to be thinking about later verbalizing their thinking and drawing processes.

**MATERIALS:**

- copies of bottom half of attached AR handout, one per each student
- enough furry and hard and smooth objects for groups of students to draw
- drawing paper
- pencils
- erasers



Rembrandt van Rijn,  
*Rembrandt in Velvet and Plume*

**ACTIVITY 5**

**SELF PORTRAIT WITH A PLUME**

This activity is a fun way to wrap up all the textural edge concepts we have been addressing.

After looking and discussing all the textural surfaces and edges of the attached handout labeled A5, students will be drawing a self portrait with the added twist of drawing their own velvet clothes and hat from their imagination, and their plume

after observing an actual feather. Distribute copies of A5 handout, either individually or in groups up to three. Draw the students’ attention to the edges of the velvet clothes and the plume/feather as well as to the edges of the face and hair. Talk about what kind of lines were used to make these things look velvety and soft, smooth, bumpy, etc.

Ask them to imagine what kind of clothes they would want if they were going to have velvet clothes and a plume. If you can, buy a small piece or pieces of actual velvet to pass around for students to feel and examine up close.

After prepping the imagination, distribute mirrors to students and again ask them to imagine themselves in velvet with a plume.

Distribute several types of feathers and repeat the imagination process once more.

As a class, look over and talk about the AR Rubric for Activities 4 & 5 and then begin drawing.

**MATERIALS:**

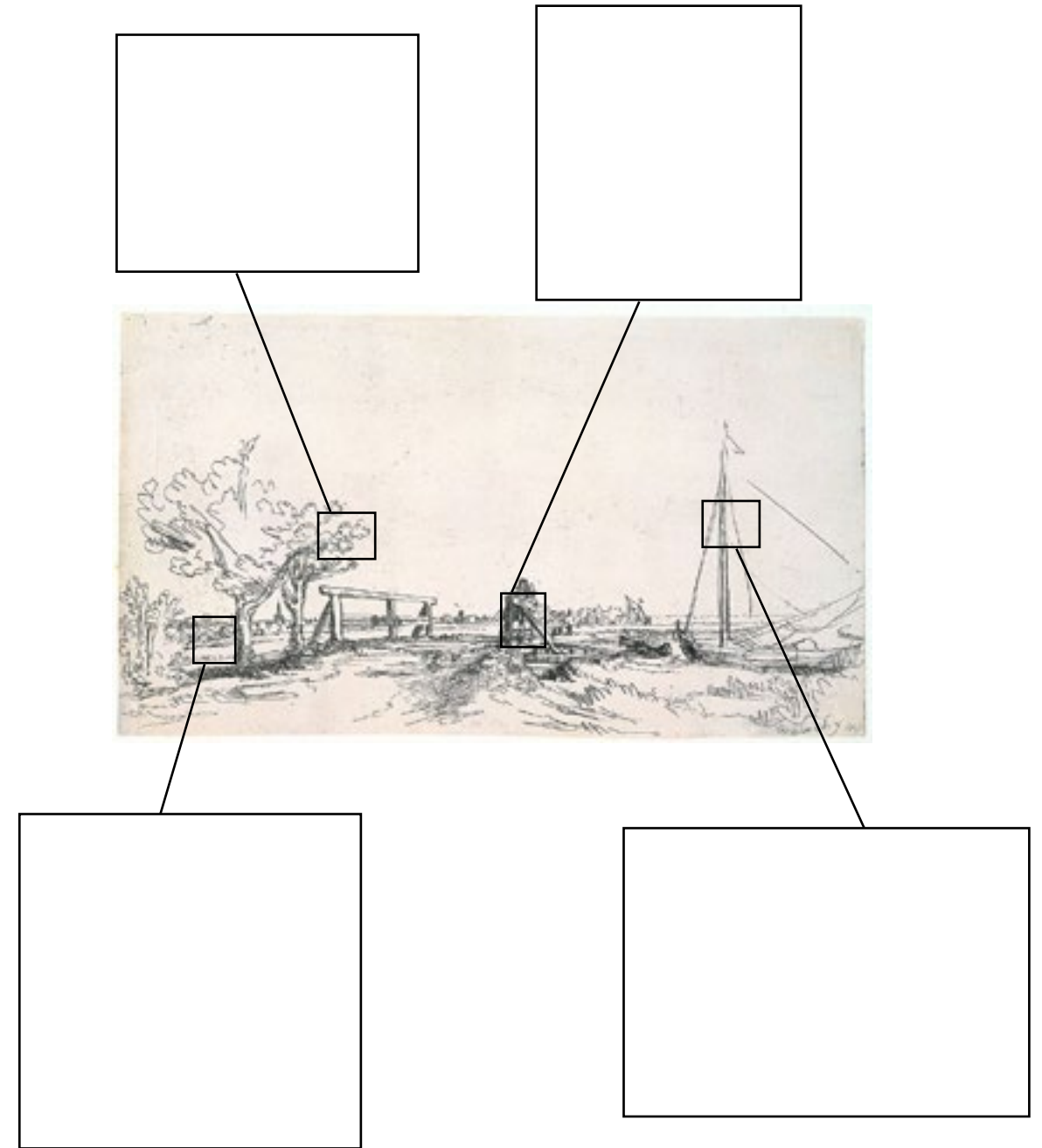
- copies of A5 handout, enough for one per student, or for one per group of up to three
- copies of AR rubric, one per student
- sample pieces of velvet
- a variety of feathers/plumes
- mirrors, one per student if possible
- drawing paper
- pencils
- erasers



Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_


Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Look at the way that Rembrandt made edges using line in the drawing, *Six's Bridge*. Now look specifically at the way line is used to make edges in the boxes inside of the picture. In the larger box attached with a line, draw something from your imagination that has the same kinds of edges that Rembrandt used in the little box. Think about the texture of the object you are drawing. Use only line when you draw (no shading).



## Teacher Guide Questions

For Image 1 ask student pairs to point...

- to a place where there is an edge in bright light
- to where they think the light source is coming from
- at the tree trunk that is covered with a rough texture. Ask them, “What kind of marks make it look rough?”
- to the thing that looks like a wooden mallet/hammer, ask how they know it is made out of wood?”
- at a place where the lines are soft and flowy. Shout out what you pointed at. Did your partner choose the same area of the drawing?
- at a furry burro’s foot. What kind of edge makes the drawing look furry?

For Image 2 ask students pairs to point...

- to the darkest place in the picture
- to where they think the light source is coming from
- to where the lantern light spills onto the ground
- at a furry burrows foot. How do they know the burro’s foot is furry?
- at some soft folds in fabric. How do they know it is not thick and rough fabric?

### Contrasts between the images:

Ask students to first talk with their partner, then volunteer to share out...(give them one timed minute to discuss, then they can raise their hand if they want to share out)

- What is the difference between how the edges of the man’s hat looks in each image?
- Why does the furry burro’s foot appear different in the light and shadow?
- Why does the background look so different in each image?
- Which image shows the most texture and why?

### Comparisons between the images:

- What do you see that is the same in both images?



Rembrandt van Rijn  
*Flight into Egypt by Night*



Rembrandt van Rijn  
*Flight into Egypt*





Rembrandt van Rijn, *Rembrandt in Velvet and Plume*

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL RUBRIC Assessment tool for Activities 1-3						
OBJECTIVE	CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
Students will experiment with forms and materials to represent differing textures with the emphasis on what happens to the edges	Activity 1 Student actively participates in feeling, describing and drawing an object with textured edges					
Students will draw objects with a similar texture from their imagination to match the texture they see in an illustration	Activity 2 Student thoughtfully draws something from her/his imagination that matches the texture seen in the Rembrandt, <i>Six's Bridge</i> .					
Students will observe what happens to the edges of objects in drawings that are in the light and in the shadow	Activity 3 Student actively participates with her/his partner identifying the similar and different edges in the Rembrandt, <i>Fight into Egypt</i> artworks.					

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ Period \_\_\_\_\_

Activity 4 &5 RUBRIC						
OBJECTIVE	CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
Students will summarize what they intend to communicate through the use of drawing edges to convincingly represent textures	Student uses different methods of drawing edges that make the furry object appear furry.					
	Student uses different methods of drawing edges that make the hard, smooth object appear hard and smooth.					
	Student uses descriptive words to summarize how she/he used edges in her/his drawing to represent the furry edges an the smooth hard edges.					
Craftsmanship	Drawing shows care in the condition of artwork.					
	Drawing shows sensitivity and care in technique.					