Intro to Advanced Observational Drawing
On Line Course
Supplementary material by Camilla S. Haneberg

SECTION 1: Introduction to Materials
Lecture 1: About The DaVinci Initiative

SUMMARY: Welcome to the course! Please access any further information and opportunities for K-12 art teachers for hands-on training, workshops and other things from the website, www.davinciinitiative.org.

You will be in the meritorious hands of Mandy Hallenius throughout this course.
SECTION 1: Introduction to Materials
Lecture 2: Course Introduction

SUMMARY: This course it designed to guide you through the process of one still life observational drawing (see vocab explanation below) from start to finish. The process will include steps such as: Notional Space Box, Envelope, Follow Through Lines and Observation of Light, among other things.

The goal is to draw using accurate relative proportions in your representation by learning to carefully observe what you see and techniques for how to apply media to the paper in a careful and purposeful way.

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:

*Observational Drawing*-is a true to life drawing in accurate relative proportion to the object being portrayed. The drawing can be any size and with careful observation will be a realistic image. The artist uses very careful observation to over ride any pre-conceived ideas of what she may “think” an object looks like and relies on what she sees to draw.

*Sight Size Drawing*-is a method of drawing an object at the size it appears to be from the artist point of view. The image in the drawing is usually not scaled larger or smaller; it is the same size as observed. When set up for this method, the artist stands back from the easel and object for comparison, then walks to the easel to draw.

*Accurate Relative Proportions*- are the visual information (drawing) of an object representing what is observed so that the drawing has the same proportion as the object even though it is not the same actual size. Each measurement of the object corresponds with other measurements within the drawing to make a realistic representation.
SECTION 1: Introduction to Materials
Lecture 3: Materials

SUMMARY: Here’s a list of all the things you need to start your drawing. Remember that being diligent about the details of setting up your materials can help produce great results. Take your time and make the place you will draw a comfortable space with quality materials.

Here’s what you need for the course:
- Drawing board – Masonite or 1/2” foam core can work well
- Cardboard box—large enough to be a light box containing a cup and egg
- Toned paper (gray paper) — to cover the ground plane and back plane of the inside of the light box, made from the cardboard box
- Light source—direct, portable and movable— for still life
- Vine charcoal—hard, medium and soft
- Sand paper—220 grit
- Kneaded eraser— a small piece
- Soft brush—for sweeping away eraser crumbs
- Skewer/dowel—used to sight angles and measure
- 3 sheets of newsprint—used under your drawing paper for padding
- Charcoal Drawing paper— Strathmore 500
- A very simple white mug—no textures or decorative details
- An egg

Setting up your materials:
It’s best if you can set up your drawing area in a place that you can leave as is in between drawing sessions if possible. If you do not have this luxury and have move things, you can mark the corners of the light box, the position of your easel and position of your chair using masking tape or painter’s tape (less sticky). This way you can find the exact place you were for each session.

Also, if you are using an easel, set your drawing board up so that the majority of the extra board around your drawing is on the side opposite of the view of your still life.
Mark the position of your easel on the floor if you have to move it between drawing sessions.

Paper is close to the side of the easel where you will be looking at the still life. This way your eyes have a shorter distance to travel observing the still life and your drawing.
SECTION 1: Introduction to Materials
Lecture 4: Sharpening Charcoal

SUMMARY: When transitioning into drawing, it is nice to form a habit of quietly preparing materials for optimal use. Taking a few deep breaths and getting things into order can set the mood for patient and thorough work.

Preparing 5-10 sticks of charcoal by sharpening them to a very fine and even point will allow all of your attention to stay with your drawing process, rather than having frequent interruptions for sharpening.

General tips for sharpening vine charcoal:
  o Strive for a long thin tapered point, find an appropriate angle for sharpening and stay consistent
  o Rotate charcoal while sanding
  o Have a gentle and patient approach
  o Hard charcoal will take longer than soft
  o Prepare 5-10 sticks of charcoal before beginning drawing

Avoid:
  o Too much pressure or the charcoal will snap
  o Changing angle of the tip of the charcoal, remember the long thin taper

SOME INFORMATION ABOUT VINE CHARCOAL:
Willow and vine charcoals are made from controlled burning of willow branches and grape vines that are sold in approximately 6-inch sticks. There are no binding agents added to the charcoal so it erases very easily and is soft and powdery on the paper surface.
It comes in several thicknesses and degrees of softness to hardness: extra soft, soft, medium and hard.
For this drawing method, hard vine charcoal is good for keeping a sharp point and is good for filling in small holes in tones.
Medium is good for filling in bigger holes in tones and for the values coming outward from the core shadow into the light.
Soft is good for attaining very dark darks.
SUMMARY: For the purposes of this course, select a very plain light colored or white mug/cup and an egg. Keep it simple so that you can work on the techniques that make a solid drawing.

Use the cardboard box to make a light box. A light box helps to control the light on your still life by blocking out light from above and ambient light. Use one direct light source for your still life and check for only one cast shadow as evidence of this.

What makes a really good still life?
Here are some considerations:

- Arrange the objects in your still life so that they “have a conversation” with one another. This means that the objects can be grouped so that they rely on one another in visual ways.
- Link the shadows of the objects. Arranging the placement of the objects and the direct light source so that shadows connect can create a “conversation” between the objects.
- Consider the angles of the arrangement of objects as well as the angles of the objects themselves.
SECTION 2: Setting up Still Life
Lecture 5: Arranging the Still Life

- If you look at where a central axis goes through the objects, you can arrange them by repeating the angle creating unity/cohensiveness between the objects.

- Bring still life up to eye level for yourself when you are seated at your easel so that things do not look like they are tilting in space.

- Create a hierarchy of the objects within the still life by deciding which object is the most important and considering putting it closest to the light source for emphasis.

- Differences between shadow and white objects can become a point of contrast, which will draw an observer’s eye to that area of the drawing.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 6: Comparative Measuring

SUMMARY: Developing good habits for measuring and observation is important to launch your drawing technique. A skill-based approach uses tools and methods that with practice will result in better and better results. Keep an open mind and give it a try!

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:

*Comparative measuring*- is using percentages to draw or paint the objects you wish to portray at the size you want them while keeping realistic ratios. This is not the sight-size method.

Using a skewer or dowel:
- Lock elbow for a straight arm while you use your skewer/dowel to measure
- Allow space physically for you to be able to lock your straight arm at your easel
- When measuring line up the end of the skewer with the edge of the object you are measuring and mark the other edge with your thumb
- Measure overall grouping of objects horizontally and vertically figuring out if that is a rectangle, the percentage of the overall width vs. the height and mark that on the drawing paper.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 7: Notional Space

SUMMARY: This step of the early drawing process asks that you imagine a square or rectangle around the grouping of objects in your still life so that you can draw a proportional box onto your paper. This is part of working from big ideas to small ideas in your work.

Tips on drawing the Notional Space:
- Find the furthermost points of the grouping of objects in your still life and determine the proportional shape of the box
- Everything from now on will fit inside of this box...be as accurate as your skills allow
- You can set up your own visual aid notional box using kneaded erasers and skewers to help you see and measure

GENERAL DRAWING TIPS THAT WILL FOLLOW YOU THROUGH THE ENTIRE DRAWING:
- Draw LIGHTLY! If you learn to draw lightly, you will be able to better erase mistakes and eliminate unnecessary lines without killing the paper
- Work from big ideas to small ideas

Using the skewer/dowel to measure, it can be determined that this side of the rectangle is a bit shorter than the horizontal sides. It is maybe 20% smaller, and the notional box that you draw will reflect these observations.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 7: Notional Space

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
*Killing the Paper*- means that you burnish the surface of the paper with too much media or too much pressure. If you have a light touch you will be applying media (tiny bits of drawn charcoal) onto the tooth of the paper. If you press too hard or apply too much media the tooth can get filled up or burnished flat and that is considered “killing the paper”.

Referring to the image below, imagine that you are looking a super close view of a piece of drawing paper from the side. The points are the “tooth of the paper”.

Example 1 is a light drawing touch that leaves tiny media (charcoal) pieces on top of the tooth.

Example 2 is possibly the darkest area of the shadow on your drawing where the tooth is still intact, and the points and valleys of the tooth are filled in with tiny bits of media.

Example 3 is a flattened tooth that has been squashed by too much pressure and too much media.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 8: The Envelope

SUMMARY: Now that the notional space box has been established, we move on to finding a few straight lines to define the outer edges of the grouping of objects in the still life. The select straight lines envelope (surround) the objects as a group.

Tips for a good envelope:
- A small amount of lines
- Angled lines connect the edges of the still life objects
- Use the skewer/dowel to observe where angles lines pass through the notional space box
- Find angle with locked arm, then hold it steady and move to drawing to see if it matches the established parts of the envelope so far
- Once angles are found, mark where the ends are, then draw the line between them
- The envelope is not an outline of the still life objects, think of it like the notional box is a block of marble and you are using large chisels to form the basic shape of what you are observing (big to small thinking)
- Use only longer straight lines, shorter lines come later
- Measure, and re-measure

GENERAL DRAWING TIPS THAT WILL FOLLOW YOU THROUGH THE ENTIRE DRAWING:

⇒ Draw LIGHTLY! If you learn to draw lightly, you will be able to better erase mistakes and eliminate unnecessary lines without killing the paper
⇒ Work from big ideas to small ideas
⇒ Double check measurements EVERY time
⇒ Double check angles EVERY time
⇒ Making adjustments and corrections to your drawing will happen at every stage of the process, however, establishing accurate big ideas now, will be super helpful in the long run
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 9: Follow through Lines

SUMMARY: Continuing the block-in drawing, now we look for straight line angles different from the those of the envelope which will start to place the edges of the still life objects with in the established notional space box and envelope lines. It is important to look for lines that follow through the still life, as this is a big idea of how the objects are communicating with one another, which creates unity in your drawing.

Think of follow through lines like the concept of hitting a tennis ball with a racket. If you abruptly hit the ball with no lead in or follow through of the stroke, you may get lucky and the ball might go where you intended it. However, if you have the whole motion of lead in, contact with the ball and follow through of motion, the chance of success is much higher.

Tips for follow through lines:
- Train yourself to look through the objects in the still life, to find reference points and edges
- Look for imaginary follow through lines that mark more than one edge or reference point within the still life

VOCABULARY EPLANATION:
“Looking through the objects in a still life”-means to keep yourself from focusing on your preconceived ideas of what the objects in your still life are, and to look at the grouping for patterns and common reference points and angles. Your eye learns to look at the whole and find what makes it unified.

Looking at the still life to the left, we see a large ball, small ball and an egg. What if we think of them as two spheres and an ellipse? Or...we look at them as a pyramid-ish shape made from curved objects? How do the curves relate to one another? What happens to the shadows of the overlapping objects vs. the shadows of the separated objects? Can I find areas of the still life that could be considered reference points?
Here is the pyramid-ish grouping of the curved objects.

The axises of the individual objects are all related to one another in an almost symmetrical way. The extended point towards the lower right creates a bit of tension because it is not symmetrical. This could be considered as a radial design, because it all points to the center.

Here is an alternate way of looking through the objects in this still life. Some of the follow through lines are very close to being parallel to one another and there is a pattern of triangles overall among the curves.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 9: Follow through Lines

Lastly, here is a way that does not represent follow through lines, but it does show how patterns can appear as you look for them. This example points out the axis of the shadows and the repeated curved dome shapes in the arrangement. The placement of the objects leads your eye into the still life, kind of like a landscape containing rocks and hills. This is a big idea.

GENERAL DRAWING TIPS THAT WILL FOLLOW YOU THROUGH THE ENTIRE DRAWING:

⇒ Draw LIGHTLY! If you learn to draw lightly, you will be able to better erase mistakes and eliminate unnecessary lines without killing the paper
⇒ Work from big ideas to small ideas
⇒ Double check measurements EVERY time
⇒ Double check angles EVERY time
⇒ Making adjustments and corrections to your drawing will happen at every stage of the process, however, establishing accurate big ideas now, will be super helpful in the long run
⇒ To draw a straight line, mark each end of where the line will begin and end, start at one point and look at the other point to draw towards it
⇒ Hold your charcoal pinched between your thumb and pointer finger, using your pointer fingernail as a slippery guide against the paper to aid in drawing straight lines. Avoid using your skin against the paper, as it can put oils on the surface of the paper
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 10: Follow Through Lines Continued

SUMMARY: As we continue the follow through lines, the objects begin to emerge from that “block of marble” we referred to before. Remember you are still using the “large chisels” so the lines remain straight and follow through from one end of the drawing to the other. Careful observation and drawing are key to things being represented realistically and in a convincing manner. This is a problem solving process, so keep your thinking flexible and open.

Tips for continuing the follow through lines:
- As lines are added and things begin to get a bit confusing, emphasize the lines you mean to keep by slightly darkening them and leave the others very light
- Organize the space with necessary follow through lines
- Use a plumb line if the opportunity arises
- Continuously check height and width of follow through lines
- Keep notional space box intact and use it as a reference for where follow through lines intersect
- No curved lines yet…use a series of straight lines to work towards accurate curves

These straight lines are starting to form a curve...our eye can see straight lines more accurately than curves, so this series of lines will bring us closer to an accurate curve.

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
Organizing the space- means looking at the big ideas as demonstrated in the visuals in the follow through lines, Lecture 9. As you observe the still life, you will begin to see the patterns, repetitions and unity that create a conversation between the objects. Choosing which lines are important for your follow through lines is organizing the space. The framework of lines leads to an accurate portrayal.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 11: Defining Curves with Lines

SUMMARY: Stay patient and continue the diligence of using only straight lines...it will lead to accuracy! Because curves are made from many different sizes of lines linked together (think of various sized train cars linked together to make a long train traveling along a curvy mountainous track), it is hard to draw them accurately in a free hand way. Using a series of straight lines overlapping will lead to a much more accurate representation.

Here is a bit of an extreme example of follow through lines used to draw an accurate egg. An egg seems deceivingly simple, but it is an ellipse that changes not only from egg to egg, but also from the angle from which you view it. The pieces of line that touch the edges of this egg are the shorter segments that form a curve.
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing  
Lecture 12: Perspective with Ellipses

SUMMARY: Learning about perspective of ellipses is a geometrical lesson that will change the way you think about what you are seeing. When you draw ellipses (which are a common shape all around us) knowing there is a “formula” for accuracy gives you a “one up” on accuracy and awareness. This is yet another example of forgoing preconceived ideas of what you are drawing for observation and knowledge.

Think about being a bird that is visiting Monet’s pond containing the water lily pads happily floating on the water’s colorful surface. When you accidently passed up the pond and flew over it, your bird’s eye view saw round circular water lilies seen from above.

Looping back around, you decide to land on the edge of the pond and look for a juicy worm to eat. Upon landing you notice that the shape of the lily pads has changed.

Next you feel like preening your feathers on a tree branch, so you fly up and find a good spot. Looking at the pond you notice the lily pads have changed again!
As you see, the shape of the ellipses (lily pads) changes depending on the point of view. The same thing happens with the height of your view of your cylindrical objects in a still life. They can range from a concave to a convex curve, depending on your point of view.

Some tips about Ellipses in Perspective:
- The ellipse becomes foreshortened as it turns away from us
- The farther below our eye level the ellipse is, the deeper the curve becomes, (similar to the bird flying over the pond)
- An ellipse can become a line as it gets squished or turns away from us
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 13: Ellipses on the Cup

SUMMARY: Now that you have seen and thought about how ellipses change depending on where you view them from, rendering the ellipse of the cup will make more sense, remembering the that the curve at the top of the cup is a thinner ellipse than the one on the bottom of the cup.

Tips for drawing the ellipses of the cup:
- Measure for the top, bottom, right and left edges of the ellipse
- Use straight lines and knowledge of perspective to draw the curves
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 14: Making Corrections

SUMMARY: Once you have the block in lines in place, its time to figuratively and literally stand back and look for errors, or anything that doesn’t feel right. If you take on a flexible attitude from start to finish of a drawing, you will allow yourself to keep from becoming attached to parts of the drawing that you like. Getting attached can blind you to the truth of the proportions that will impede realistic drawing in the end.

Tips for Making Corrections:
- Get used to the idea that “close enough” really isn’t close enough, if you see an error, not matter how slight do your best to correct it
- Standing back and up close, re-check the measurements of your still life and adjust problems
- Remember the big ideas-making sure that if you move one part of the drawing, it will affect other parts of the drawing, so you will need to reassess the whole drawing from one change
- No matter how experienced an artist is, she will still make mistakes. With practice the mistakes can become less frequent, but they will always come. If you accept this idea, you will be better able to stay flexible with your expectations

There is a saying that goes something like, “Every time I do a drawing I do at least twenty, I just erase nineteen of them.”
SECTION 3: Blocking in Your Drawing
Lecture 15: Shadow Shapes

SUMMARY: Adding the shadow shapes to your drawing is done with straight follow through lines that can not only aid in finding areas that need to be adjusted within the drawing, but separates the light areas from shadow areas. Determining where the light areas turn into the shadow areas is not an exact science, however for the purposes of drawing the block in you will choose the best solution and draw it lightly. You are always keeping your paper workable insofar as using a light touch so that charcoal can be removed if necessary.

Tips for blocking in Shadow shapes:
- Choose where you think the light turns to shadow and draw the edge of that using follow through lines
- Measure angles and lengths of shadow shapes, add to drawing
- You may need to erase and emphasize lines as needed to organize your drawing
- Use only straight lines
- The cast shadows from the still life objects may “break out” of the notional space box

The example for finding shadow shapes on the left shows follow through lines, while the example on the right shows how those lines might look after erasing the unnecessary lines
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 16: Single Value Shading

SUMMARY: Now that your block in drawing is complete, the areas that are in shadow will be filled in with one even tone or value. This in part is a way to distinguish the lighted areas from the shadow areas (which alone looks cool) but it also helps train your eye to become more and more aware of the range of values possible in drawing. As you shade using one even tone you’ll also be experimenting with the use of a kneaded eraser to lift out dark spots and to fill in light ones with a very well sharpened stick of vine charcoal. Striving for that even look can be tedious but the results are worth it!

Tips on attaining one even tone:
  o Sharpen several sticks of charcoal to a perfectly tapered and thin point
  o Keep sand paper conveniently close for frequent use
  o Put yourself into a calm and patient mind set so you will work slowly and diligently
  o Strive for a goal of as even a tone as your skills will allow
  o Start with a very light pass over the shadow shapes, and slowly and carefully layer light passes over the top in varying directions
  o Be careful to keep your hand from touching/smearing the charcoal drawn areas on the paper
  o Rotate your charcoal stick frequently while applying media to keep point sharp and even all the way around
  o Keep a light touch so that you do not “kill the paper”
  o Sit back from drawing and examine for light areas that you can fill in with more media and dark areas that you can lift out with a kneaded eraser formed to a fine point
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 16: Single Value Shading

SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT KNEADED ERASERS:
When you buy a kneaded eraser it is in a rectangular slab wrapped in cellophane. Since you do not need the whole piece for effective lifting, an easy way to preserve the unused portion is to use an x-acto knife to cut just the part you need away from the slab. Shaping the portion you intend to use into a long sad teardrop shape with a very sharp point makes a superb tool for lifting dark areas from what will become an even tone, possibly later a gradient value.

When you first begin using the kneaded eraser, knead it in your hand and warm it up so it is malleable and then shape it for use. Do this often while lifting charcoal off of the paper to keep the tip fresh and ready to accept media. Resist dragging the kneaded eraser across the drawing surface...use a gentle dabbing motion.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 17: Blocking in Shadow Shapes

SUMMARY: Continue your one even tone within the shadow shapes of your block in.

Tips for a successful shadow shape block in:
  o Lift and add value where needed to create an even tone throughout all the shadow shapes
  o Be patient and take your time
  o Reinforce follow through lines inside of the shadow shape tone for future reference
  o Use all straight lines, no curves yet
  o Stay flexible and make adjustments as mistakes become apparent
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 18: The Picture Plane

SUMMARY: At this point you can make a decision as to how your still life will be contained within a picture plane.

Tips for choosing a picture plane:
  o Consider a square or a rectangular horizontal or rectangular vertical picture plane
  o Consider horizontal if there is horizontal repetition within the objects of the still life, or vice versa for vertical
  o Consider the use of the space around and between objects
  o Consider whether you will include the complete cast shadows, or partial

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
Picture Plane- is the overall size and shape of the visual area that your finished picture will encompass

A “coincidence”-is when the placement of a feature within the still life picture plane is in an awkward place that coincides with another feature in the grouping of objects. It may coincidently line up or not line up with the bigger ideas of the conversation.

Ground Plane-is the flat surface that the still life objects are sitting on

Back Plane-is one or both of the shadow box upright planes/walls that are seen as the back ground of the still life

Artistic Choice-is the option available to an artist to move objects, or render objects in a specific and purposeful way to communicate an idea, or create a conversation.

Composition-is the plan, placement or arrangement of the objects in a work of art
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 18: The Picture Plane

USEFUL TOOL FOR PICTURE PLANE CONSIDERATION:

Using two right angles cut from mat board or foam core are a useful and movable tool for finding a picture plane. You can try a variety of shapes and sizes to “frame” your drawing this way.

Another useful tool is drawing what are called thumbnail sketches. These particular sketches are super quick, but you can spend a longer time on them if you want to. Using the two right angles seen above, you can “frame” your still life, draw a thumbnail and then move the right angles for a different idea to sketch and so on, until you find a composition that is communicating what you want it to.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 19: Background Shading

SUMMARY: Beginning with shading the back ground of your still life is helpful overall because once there are tones in the back ground, you will better be able to choose the correct tones for the foreground and objects grouped in the still life. You can avoid some of the pitfalls of field effect.

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
*Field effect*-is the way a tone can appear to be lighter or darker compared to the tones surrounding it. For example, a light tone will look light among light tones but will look brighter among dark tones. Or another example, a medium tone will usually appear darker among light tones and lighter among dark tones. This is important to be aware of because working on white paper can cause you to think your tones are dark enough when in reality they are not. Also, as you add darker tones to a drawing, it can make the light tones appear too white….or vice versa. The visual below demonstrates how the single even tone of the bar in the middle of the value scale appears to grade from dark to light, even though it is the same tone surrounded by progressively darker values.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 19: Background Shading

*Gradation of value*—is the very even and gradual change of value from light to dark, or dark to light while shading

Tips for shading the background of your drawing:
- Work from background to foreground, which is big to small
- Leaving still life objects for later allows you to have the background values as a measure of how dark to make the still life objects
- Observe that the ground plane and back plane both get subtly darker the farther away from the light that they are. It is a gradation.
- Determine a tones for the different background areas and fill them with even tones, such as light, medium and dark
- Each tonal area should be even and flat
- Remember to lift out and add value to keep a consistent tone
- Be patient and work slowly, it will be tempting to use larger and longer strokes, but that works towards uneven tone, so stay with patient layering of lighter values
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 20: Adjusting Values

SUMMARY: Now that you have filled in all the background even tone areas, sit back and look at your drawing compared to the still life. Assess whether the tones you drew are accurate to what you are seeing. You will more than likely see some discrepancies.

Tips for adjusting your background tones:
- As you make changes, remember to re-compare and re-assess after you make changes. Changing one area may require that you change others
- Remember that values on white paper may look too dark, so consider the field effect when determining values
- This is a process of sharpening your visual and drawing skills, allow for mistakes and adjustments
- You may see proportional changes that need to made...make them
- Standing back helps you to see the big ideas
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 21: Understanding Shadow and Light

SUMMARY: Understanding some principles about light can be great help to rendering form. Observation of still life is vital, but add to that the knowledge of how light behaves as it falls onto surfaces and your observations will become much more acute.

Principles about light:
- The closer an object is to the light the brighter it is
- It is possible to know the direction of the light by looking at the angle of the cast shadows
- When light falls on an object, the light turns to shadow where the object turns away from the light
- When the object turns away from the light there is a core shadow that is the darkest area between the light and shadow
Reflected light bounces onto the ground plane and onto the shadow side of the egg, and onto the egg and bounces into the shadow.

Shadows have different values within that happen because of ambient light and reflected light.

The edges of a cast shadow closest to the light are sharper, and they get blurrier as they move away from the light.

NOTHING IN THE SHADOW CAN BE LIGHTER THAN THE DARKEST POINT IN THE LIGHT.

If values 0-3 are in the shadows, they will never be in the light, if values 4-10 are in the light, they will never be in the shadows.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 22: Rendering the Egg

SUMMARY: Time to start rendering/shading the three-dimensional form we see as an egg. The “tornado” technique plus careful gradation of value will allow the roundness of the ellipse to emerge from the paper.

Tips for Rendering the Egg:
  o Sharpen your vine charcoal sticks
  o Work from shadow to light
  o Clean up any unnecessary lines from your drawing
  o Soften the angles of the egg into curves (finally!)
  o Observe the gradation of value on the egg, then starting at the shadow, shade one pass from dark to light and back to a med value going from one side of the egg to the other. (Its like a skinny trail going over the curved top of a hill)
  o Your light values close to the highlight will be so light that you may only know that you are putting charcoal on the surface because you can kinetically feel it happening
  o Curves in general are more subtle than you may think they are, so err on the side of making them less curvy
  o Sit and step back from drawing periodically to assess the values drawn for accurateness in comparison to the egg in the still life
  o After values are drawn, look for interruptions in form and correct by lifting out or adding charcoal

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
“Tornado technique”-is shading areas of paper, using a repeated circular motion with the sharpened point of your drawing tool. Remember when you were a kid and you drew a woman’s curly hair or smoke coming from a house chimney? That is the kind of motion you are using...or as if a whirling dervish had charcoal for feet.

Kind of like this
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 22: Rendering the Egg

“One pass” - refers to the first time you add charcoal to the surface of your drawing, which can be an even tone, a gradated value range or what will become a dark tone with many passes.

A “Highlight” - is the area of the object closest to the light in a still life grouping that reflects the brightest light back to you. The highlight will appear in a different place on the object depending on from where you view the still life. Think of it like walking on the beach at sunset and seeing the sun reflected in the water. The reflection appears to follow you as you walk. It is a light relationship between the light source, the reflection and the viewer/artist/observer. It will be the only space on your drawing that there will be no charcoal applied to the surface of the paper.

The arrows on the right somewhat awkwardly show the light source reflecting from the water towards our eye. The reflection for the bird, however would be between her and the light source, possibly being close to the indicated arrow on the right. Same sun; same water; different point of view.

“Interruptions in form” - are blemishes in the value/tone that cause the three-dimensional illusion to look dented or deformed. They are usually areas of darker or lighter than appropriate application of charcoal. Using the kneaded pointy eraser technique lifts away dark areas and a sharp charcoal stick fills in the light areas.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 23: Rendering the Cup

SUMMARY: As you are preparing to render the cup, study the way that light is the brightest nearest the light source and how it very gradually gets darker the farther away from the light source it gets. This holds true for all of the objects in your still life grouping as well. To make sure this happens putting an “oh-so-light veil of tone” progressing to a step darker, and another step darker after that (and so on) over the parts of the cup to establish a hierarchy of value that will assure that the overall logical quality of realism will be achieved.

Tips for overall hierarchy of value:
- All light in the still life with the exception of the highlight will be drawn using values/tones
- Stepping values to a bit darker each time a surface is more distant from the light source creates a realistic knowledge and representation of light
- Render across the form, not with the form
- Remember the big idea (the whole) as you are working on the individual parts (small ideas)

VOCABULARY EXPLANATION:
“Rendering across the form, not with the form” is a way of describing how to draw the values that indicate the angle of the light falling on an object. When light falls on an object the shadow produced is perpendicular to the light, so that the value every so gradually changes from light to dark in a perpendicular angle to the light source. If the ever so slight value steps are not accurate and the shadow seems to have an edge, rather than a smooth transition, this is called rendering with the form, not across it. This is a very difficult thing to explain with words, but if pointed out when it happens, it is easier to see.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 24: Pushing and Pulling Form

SUMMARY: By now you have experimented with a few different ways to apply the vine charcoal to your paper, such as applying subtle layer over layer to achieve the dark areas, barely touching the paper to produce very light values, the tornado method of applying charcoal in a systematic circular motion to create areas of even tone, gradations of values as well as a full range of values. Pushing and pulling the value is the way that you alter the existing drawing by purposefully removing and adding charcoal as you carefully observe the still life and your drawing. You are looking for big and small ideas now.

Tips for pushing and pulling value:
- Sharpen several sticks of charcoal to have at the ready
- Knead your eraser and form it into the long sad teardrop shape with a very pointy end
- Look carefully at your drawing with the goal to spot any “holes” (white spots) and any dark areas that need to be adjusted. This process will be a back and forth process between lifting and applying charcoal
- Dab with your kneaded eraser, rather than dragging

Think of this process and a pendulum swinging back and forth, starting wide and far apart, and gradually getting closer and closer until you have the values right.
SECTION 4: Shading/Rendering/Turning Form
Lecture 25: Rendering the Handle

SUMMARY: Seeing the handle of the cup as a series of planes aids in a realistic representation. Analyzing and breaking down objects into smaller parts can help with understanding of where the light falls and how to better represent that with charcoal on paper.

Tips for rendering the handle:

- Remember to use straight lines that overlap to form the curve
- Drawing the handle broken down into planes on a separate sheet of paper may be helpful
- Study of the light and shadow will reveal the hierarchy of values that will realistically represent the handle
SECTION 5: Finishing the Still Life
Lecture 26: Cast Shadows

SUMMARY: Cast shadows can tell us a lot about the objects in the still life, and about the light source. There are principles about cast shadows and if you learn them, it will again supplement your drawing skill with knowledge.

Principles about cast shadows:
  o The closer the shadow is to the object casting it the darker it is
  o The edges of the cast shadow changes from crisp/sharp to progressively fuzzier the farther away form the object it is

Tips for drawing a cast shadow:
  o Light areas observed in the shadow can be lifted out from the original even toned value laid down early on
  o Soften straight line edges into curves
  o Emphasize darkness closest to objects
  o Push and pull values in the shadowed areas
  o Remember that the planes of the shadow box will get subtly and progressively darker the farther away form the light source they are both left to right and foreground to background
  o Look for the mild gradation on planes and push and pull value to look like what you are observing
  o Be patient and work diligently,
  o Sit or stand back from your work periodically to see the big ideas
SECTION 5: Finishing the Still Life
Lecture 27: The Space Around the Objects

SUMMARY: This lesson continues the process of pushing and pulling value and honoring the value gradation of the ground plane and back plane.

Tips for shading the space around the objects:
- Remember that the planes get subtly darker going back into space and to the right as they get farther away from the light source.
- Lift charcoal out of shaded shadow areas that need to be lightened
- Layer charcoal carefully onto areas that need to be darker
- Careful and repeated observation will help you train your eye to see the subtle changes in the shadow
SECTION 5: Finishing the Still Life
Lecture 28: Going Back to the Big Picture

SUMMARY: At this point you have all the observed and drawn proportion, value, shadows and light, along with sharpening your skill using vine charcoal. It may feel like your drawing is complete, or “good enough”. But alas, there are finishing touches that can strength the “wow factor” of your drawing yet to do!

Going back to big ideas, try to view your drawing like you are an unattached observer...looking back and forth from the still life to the drawing over and over to identify differences. Some of these ideas may seem redundant, but as you look longer and longer, your sensitivity to the subtleties of value becomes more refined.

Tips for big idea thinking and adjustments:
- Check your hierarchy of light in your drawing. Are the things closest to the light source the lightest and the other objects farther away getting progressively darker? If the hierarchy is not clear, the objects will seem visually confusing and unrealistic.
- Check the edges of your objects for sharpness closest to the light and blurrier/fuzzier the farther away from the light they get. Think of seeing things in your living room when you have all your lamps lit, vs, when you have only the light from the TV vs. lights out and only moonlight coming in the window
- Take a break and look at something else for a while, then come back with fresh eyes...you may be surprised by how differently you see
- Stand back and carefully analyze
SECTION 5: Finishing the Still Life  
Lecture 29: The Big Picture Part II

SUMMARY: Patience and careful observation continue to be key as you refine the fabulous drawing you have worked so hard on.

More tips for big idea thinking and adjustments:
- Check the value on your core shadows...is it dark enough? If they need to be darkened, it will be necessary to adjust the values surrounding them to properly turn form. Don’t decide not to do it because it takes too long....it will sky rocket the quality and interest in your drawing
- Think about how many values there can be between white and black...do you have a large range of values in your drawing? A drawing containing many values is more dynamic!
- Its not a bad idea at this point to ask another person who is drawing in this same method and has a critical eye to take a look at your drawing at this point for a critique. If you show it to a “non-artie" person they will tell you how wonderful it is which is nice to hear, but it will not help you to improve.
SECTION 5: Finishing the Still Life
Lecture 30: The Big Picture Part III

SUMMARY: Remember back at the block-in stage when we compared the envelope to using a large chisel to begin the carving of a sculpture from marble? Well, you have done that, and then used smaller and smaller chisels to carve detail to a more and more precise representation. Now you are putting your chisels away and you will be sanding the sculpture to a life-like smoothness and rendering.

Tips for the final refinement:
- Look from a sitting back position as well as a close up (some people are known to use a magnifying glass) to find interruptions in form, even super tiny ones and make the adjustments.
- Look at where one still life object touches another and clarify what you see happening at those transitions.
- Fill any white spots and pull dark areas up to finish your masterpiece.
- Now, think about what you will draw next!