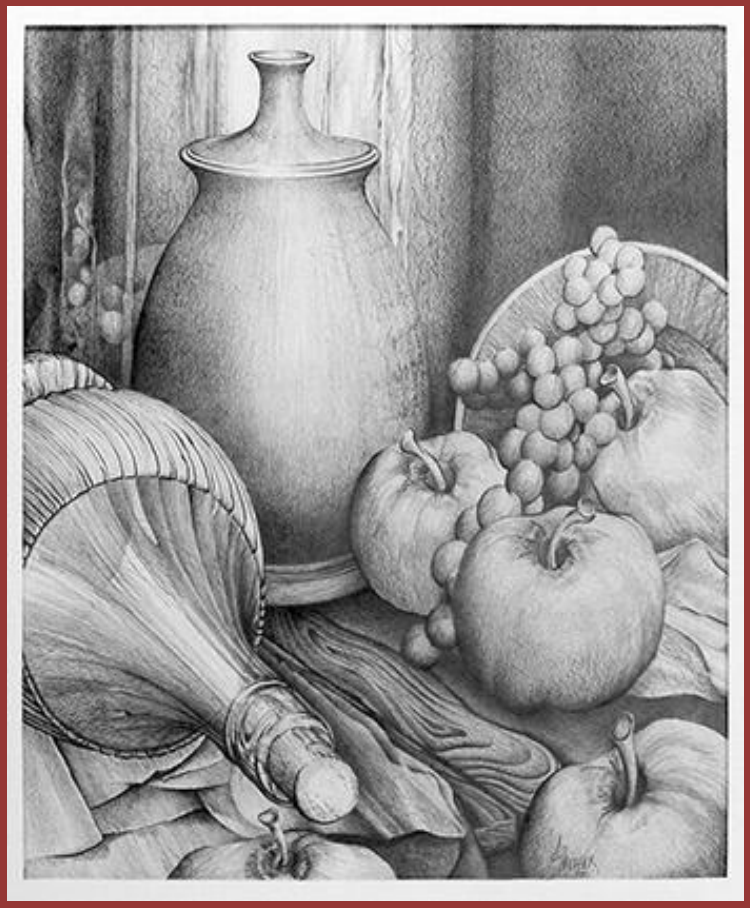
Observational Drawing

In other words drawing what you see in front of you!

Observational Drawing is **observing** a real object, studying the object very carefully and then replicating it precisely as it truly is. Trying to create the illusion that it is a form and not a shape. Sometimes called a “still life”, if objects in composition are inanimate



What? Huh? Draw what I see?

Yes! Observe an object, really observe it!

Look at the shape/form of the object.

Look for the shadows that are cast on the table.

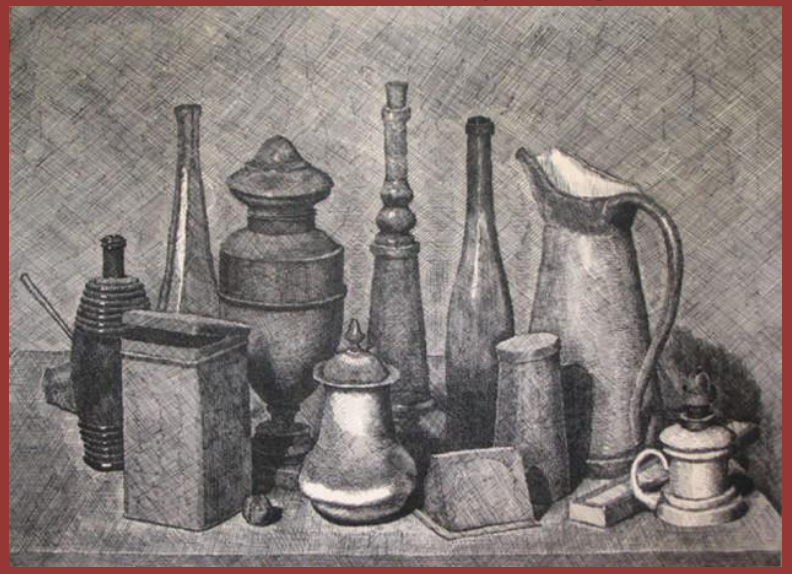
Look for areas that are highlighted.

Look at the texture.

It is important that you learn to see
and draw what you see,
not draw what you think you see
or you think you know.

Tips and Tricks

- Study the object…. Notice the angles and the negative space. Look at the shadows and the highlighting. Notice the object in relation to other objects in the composition.
- MOST of your time should be spent looking at the object not at your drawing.
- TRUST your eyes and draw what you see.
- This takes practice and patience. Take a break if you get frustrated- but do not Quit.



Where to start...

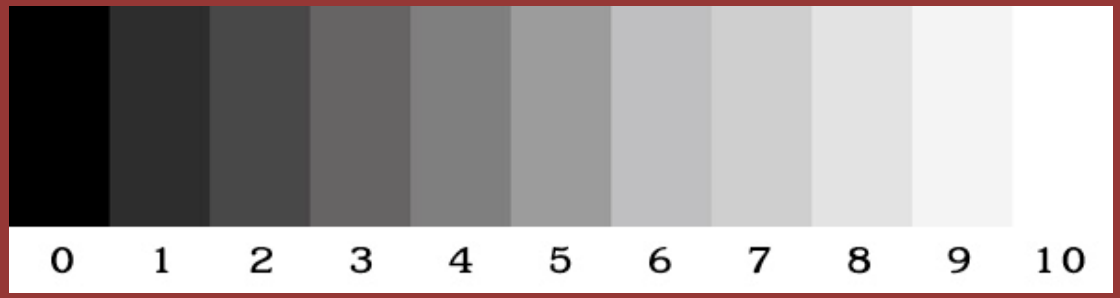
- After observing your object- get your materials. You will need drawing paper, ebony pencil and an eraser.

Contour Drawing

- **Contour drawing**, is an artistic technique used in the field of art in which the artist sketches the **contour** of a subject by **drawing** lines that result in a **drawing** that is essentially an outline; the French word **contour meaning**, “outline.”
- You must keep this “outline” very light!

Add Value!

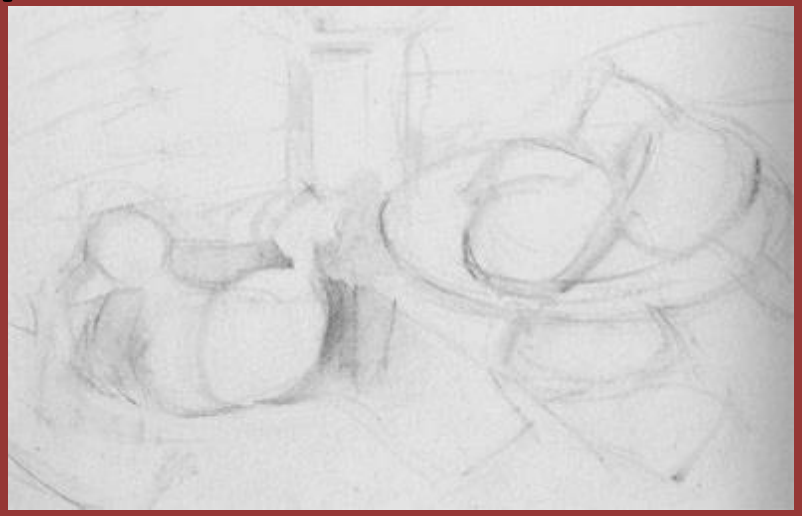
- Value is the lightness or darkness of a color.
- Adding value is the opportunity to make your contour line drawing become more realistic.
- Value can make your drawing appear 3-D and not flat.
- Remember the value range is important.
- A tint is a light version of a color, A shade is a dark version of a color.
- Highlights are created by light reflecting off the object, creating a bright white looking area.
- Shadows are created by lack of light, usually the light is being blocked by the object causing it to cast a shadow.



How to Add Value….

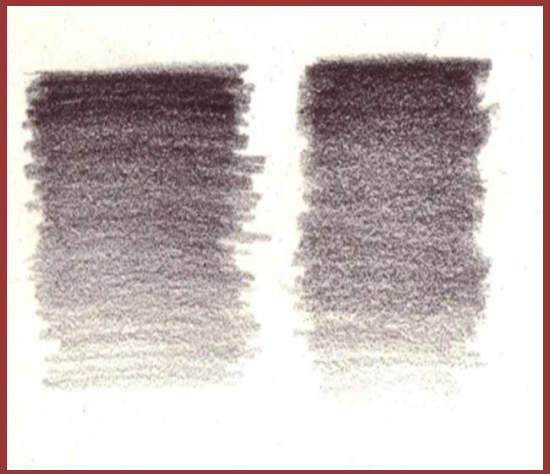
- Very lightly draw out the areas of shadow and highlight.
- Choose a pencil technique, hatching, cross hatching, scumbling, directional lines etc…
- Lightly begin to fill in the area, leaving the highlighted area empty.
- Continue to add graphite to darker areas until they have reached the desired value.

Example…



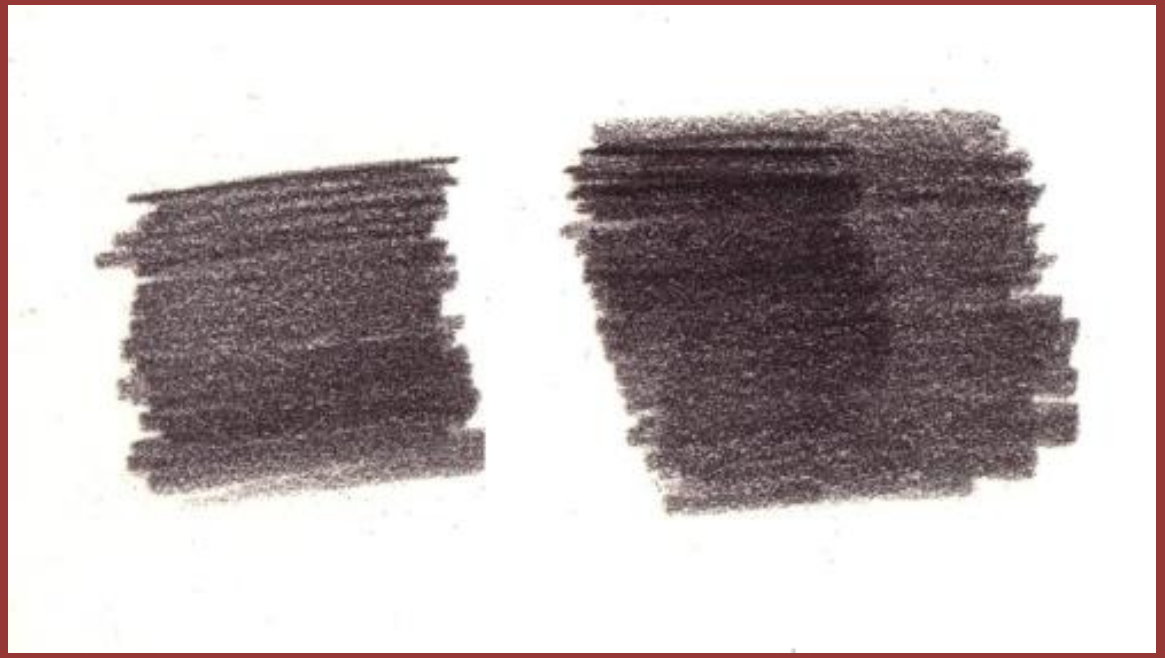
Important Tips about Adding Value!

- Pay attention to your hand pressure. Keep it light until it is right!
- Shading with the point of your pencil allows for more control and details.
- Shading with the side of your pencil allows for a softer appearance and covers larger areas quickly.



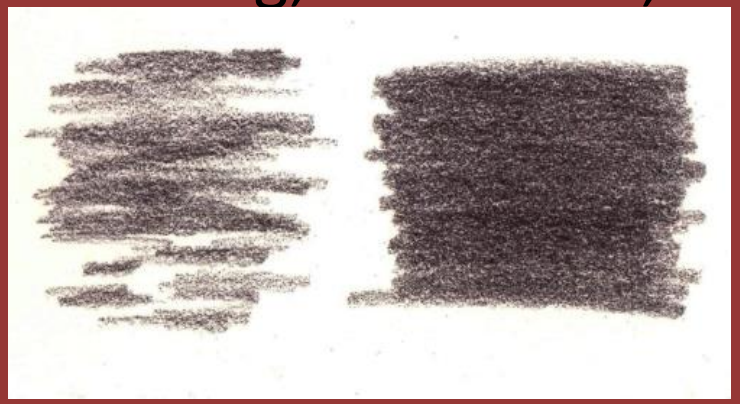
Common Problems when shading

- Most people move the pencil back and forth in a regular pattern
- This can result in a dark line in your shading



Solutions for better shading!

- **Irregular Shading-**Change the pencil direction at irregular intervals. ex. One stroke long, then short, overlapping when needed.



- **Circular Shading-**

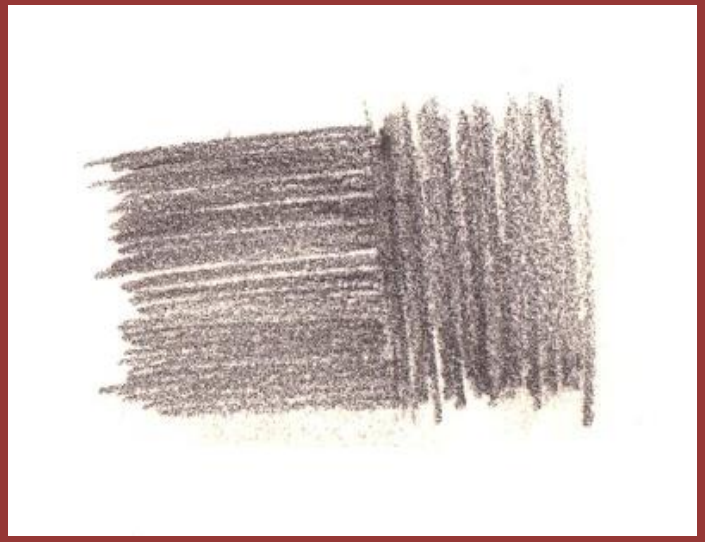
Use small, overlapping circles

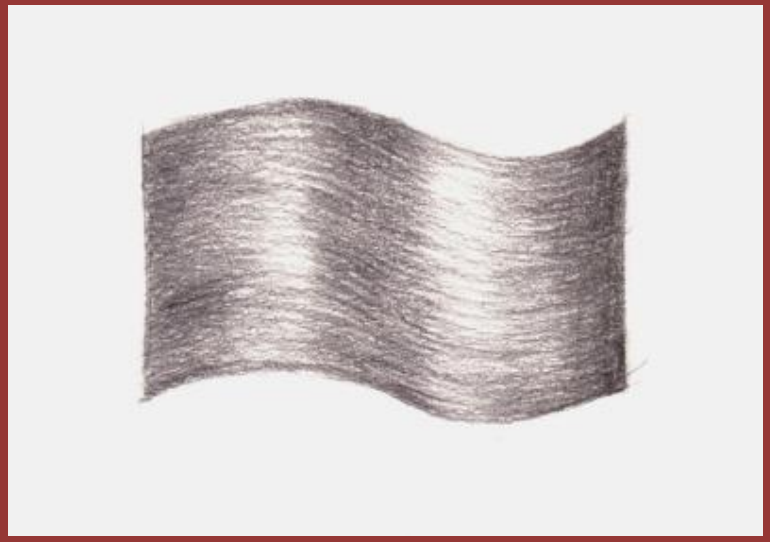
Try to minimize texture though

Work an area, and gradually build up the graphite on the page.

More Solutions….

- **Direction-**Changing the direction of your shading will create an edge. Be sure it is intentional if you do this.
- **Contour Shading-** Directional shading that follows the contour of a form

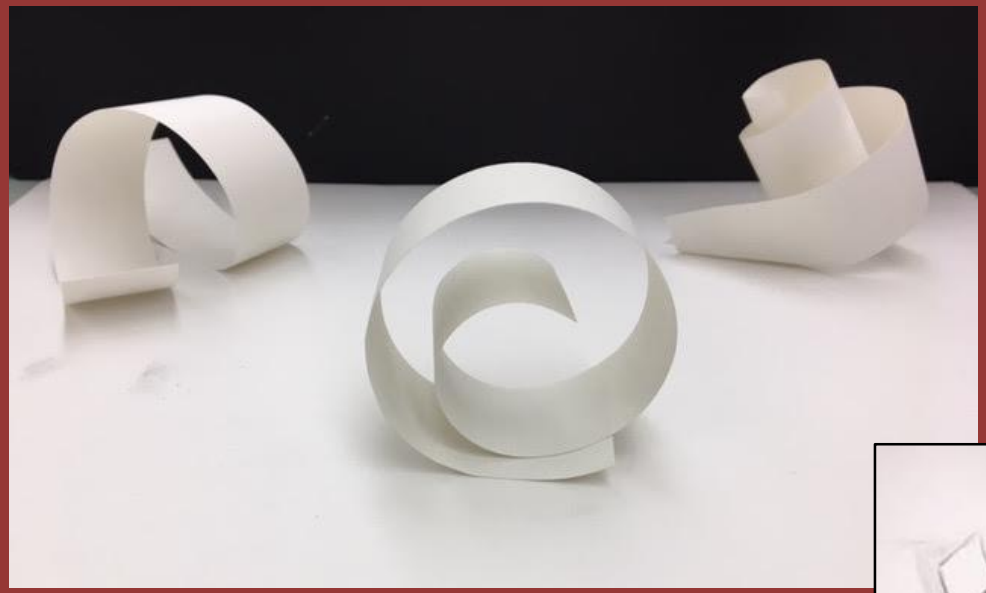




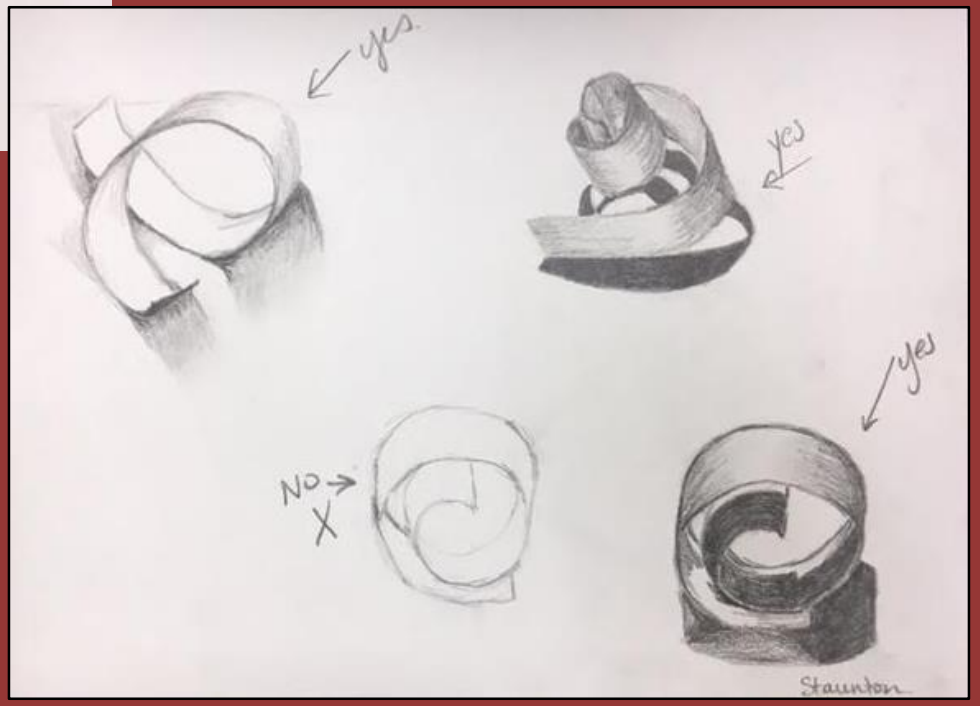
Your Assignment….

1. Complete drawing exercise that is attached to your notes. Take your time and try hard to do a good job, this will make your project easier. Turn them in for points!
2. Get a piece of tag board and three strips of paper.
3. Create three curled strips and attach them to the tag board. Put your name on this paper.
4. Observe the curled paper on the tag board, look how it curls, look at the shadows and highlights.
5. On a piece of drawing paper, lightly draw out the contour lines of each curl, then begin to shade to make them look 3-D.
6. You must have three final drawings demonstrating your understanding of drawing from observation, value and shading, and good technique and craftsmanship.
7. This will not be a “composition” as much as it will be three drawing studies on one sheet of paper.
8. This assignment is worth 30 points- 10 points for drawing, 10 points for shading and value, 10 points for technique and craftsmanship.

Examples of the project…

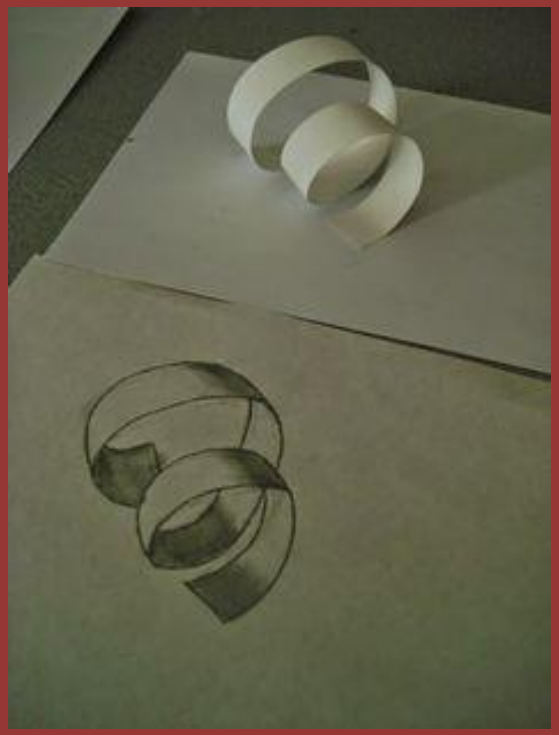


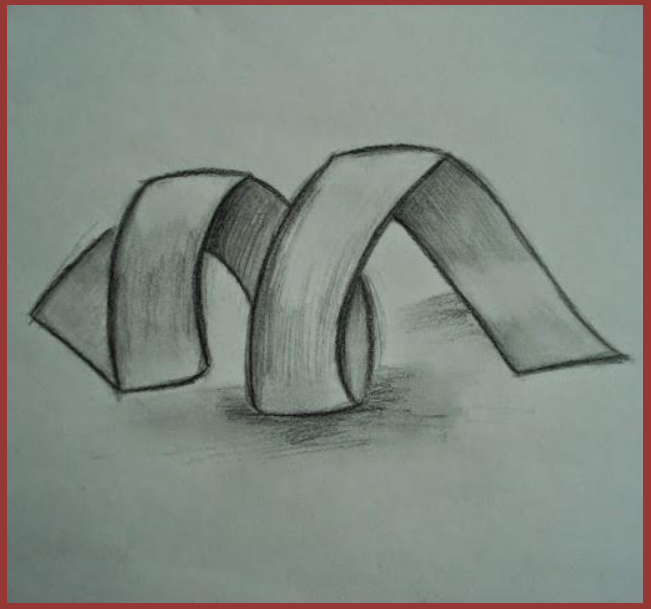
These are my strips of paper attached to the tag board. Notice the highlights and shadows.

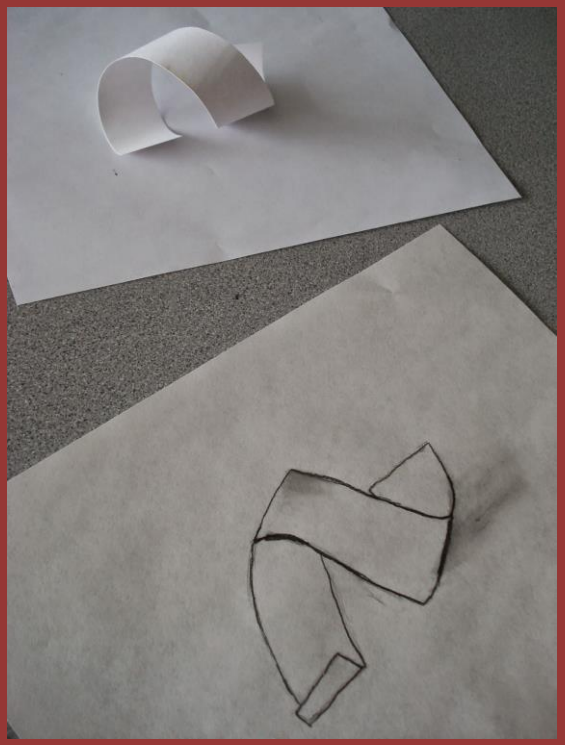


Notice this is not a composition but rather a study of the curled paper. Notice that I even did more than three and crossed off the one I did not want graded.

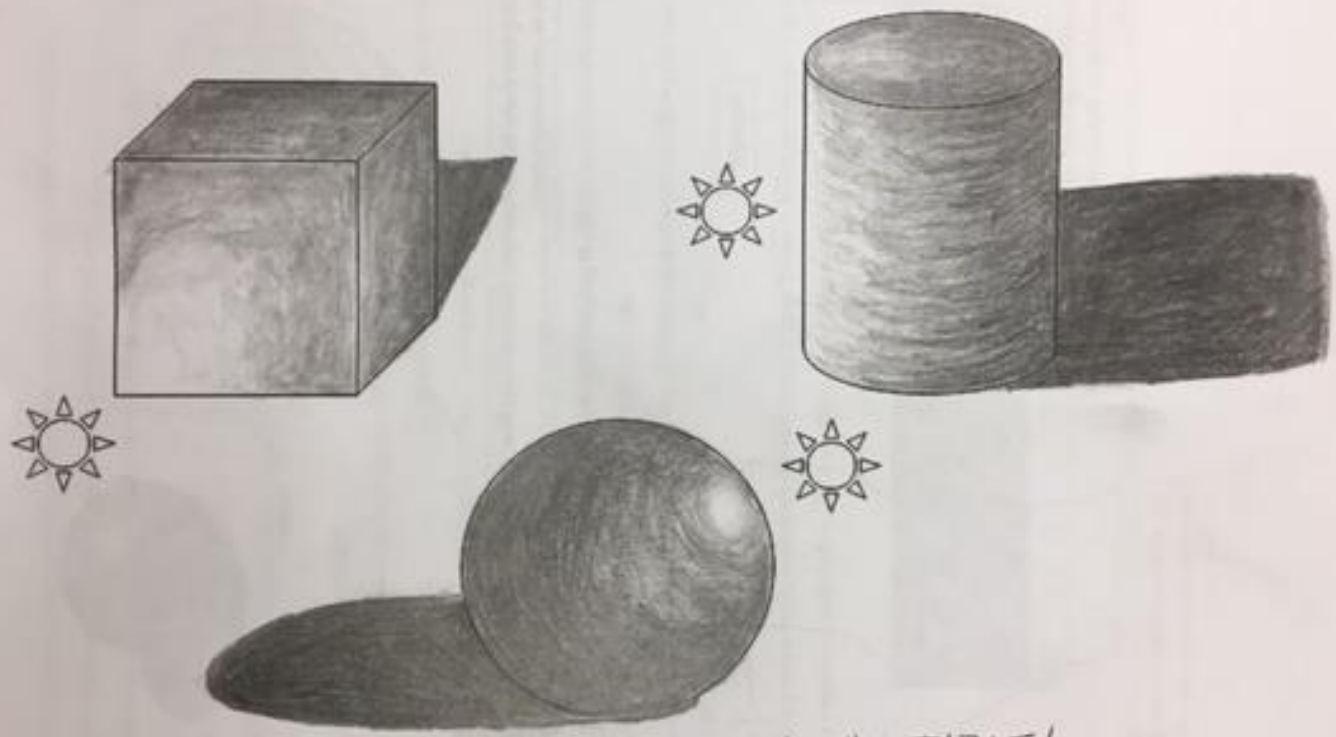
More Examples…







PRACTICE VALUE



★ REMEMBER TO PLACE A SHADOW ON THE TABLE!

★ CHOOSE YOUR FAVORITE TECHNIQUE TO FILL IN ALL THREE FORMS.

Videos to Watch

Paper Curls:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ToClxAmoy0M&feature=em-share_video_user

Extra Credit Opportunity #1- Crumpled paper:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IQ3BLK2vLgU&feature=em-share_video_user

Extra Credit Opportunity #2- Optical Illusion Letter:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=07il8wZR1Tk&feature=em-share_video_user