

MASTERS OF ILLUSION



Secondary Unit: Tricks of Perfection

by Mary Erickson, Ph.D. and Arizona art teacher Hillary Andrelchik

Tricks of Perfection provides activities that teachers can use can use

- to prepare young people to explore the *Masters of Illusion* exhibition at the Tempe Center for the Arts (TCA),
- to focus their attention during a visit and
- to create illusion in their own artworks.

[Teacher/Parent Introduction \(pdf\)](#)

Lessons

[Lesson One: Welcome to the Magic Show \(pdf\)](#)

[Lesson Two: And the Curtain Goes up... \(pdf\)](#)

[Lesson Three: Tricks of the Trade \(pdf\)](#)

Resources

[Tricks of Perfection PowerPoint](#)

[How did they do that? PowerPoint](#)

[Watch My Hands Closely \(pdf\)](#)

[Now You Try PowerPoint](#)

[Interesting Composition Worksheet \(pdf\)](#)

[Optional Questor's Questions about Realistic Art](#)

Supplies

#2 pencils

Erasers

Variety of flat items to use as subject matter for drawing in Tricks of the Trade lesson.

White drawing paper

Web resources

[Computer and Digital Projector or SmartBoard](#)

[Sneak Peek of Masters of Illusion PowerPoint](#)

[Masters of Illusion Exhibition Artists](#)

[Mary Erickson Ventures](#)

Credits

Richard Haas for permission to use photographs of his trompe l'oeil mural.

Patrick Bailey, Clinton T. Hobart, Ellen Murray Meissinger, John Schiefer for permission to reproduce their artwork used in Lesson Three.

Tom Eckert for permission to reproduce his artwork for Lesson One.

Hillary Andrelchik and Mary Erickson for photography.

Hillary Andrelchik for sample drawings.

Teacher/Parent Introduction

Themes

Tricks of Perfection is based on two themes.

Theme in Life: We all admire extraordinary skill.

Theme in Art: Some artists are so skillful they can trick the eye.

Key Question

Lessons approach the themes through one key question.

- How does value (light and dark) help artists create realistic drawings?

Connections

Broad themes and key questions not only give focus to specific activities but also provide connections that children can use to go beyond those activities.

The broad *theme in art* can be an entry point to explore art from diverse cultures and times, especially in the west. The broad *theme in life* connects art to widely-held human concerns.

Similarly, the key question can guide inquiry into a great many artworks, not just those introduced in the lesson.

Adaptations & Extensions

The lessons in this unit are written for secondary students or students with less art experience.

See the elementary version of the unit, which is appropriate for younger students or students with less art experience.

Students vary greatly in maturity and prior experience. Of course, as you plan to implement specific activities, you will want to make adjustments to best suit the abilities and interests of your students.

Visit the Tempe Center for the Arts. You are encouraged to visit the Masters of Illusion exhibition. Selected works from the exhibition are reproduced in the “Now You Try” PowerPoint, which you can use if a trip to the TCA is not possible.

Estimated Time

Preview and Lesson One = 90 minutes

Lesson Two = Field Trip

Lesson Three = 135 minutes

Lesson One: Welcome to the Magic Show (Advanced)

Objectives

1. Students identify characteristics of trompe l'oeil.
2. Students use value, light source, shade and shadow in their drawings.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques

PO 301: Identify and experiment with materials, tools and techniques appropriately and expressively in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Concepts and Purposes

PO 302, 401: Create original artworks that communicate substantive meanings or achieved intended purposes.

EVALUATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques

PO 401: Analyze how an artist's use of materials and techniques affect an artwork's meaning, purpose and value.

EVALUATE: Elements and Principles

PO 301: Using established criteria, judge the effectiveness of an artist's use of elements and principles in a composition to support the meaning and/or purpose of an artwork.

RELATE: Artworlds

PO 401: Discuss how artworks reflect ideas, images and symbols from the culture within which they were made.

Preparation

Preview "Tricks of Perfection" and "How did they do that?" Advanced Power Points.

Use the internet to locate two works of art, one Power Point and one not, to use during guided practice #1 activity in this lesson.

Decide whether you will use the final slide of "How did they do that?" Advanced Power Point or real apples for guided practice #2 activity. If using real apples, bring in an apple for every two students to share.

Activities

Unit Preview: Introduce the lessons of this *Tricks of Perfection* unit by discussing its two themes. Introduce the *theme in life* (we all admire extraordinary skill) by asking students to identify people they admire who have extraordinary skills and the areas in which they demonstrate those skills. For example, a famous soccer player and the team for which he or she plays; a talented musician and the type of music he or she makes; an inspiring social activist and what he or she has done for society; or a family member who has done something extraordinary, etc.

Introduce the *theme in art* (some artists are so skillful they can trick the eye) by showing some famous examples of artwork with which your students are likely to be familiar. Explain that many artists make art that refers to or represents something outside itself. For example, Van Gogh's paintings of sunflowers are NOT actual sunflowers, but a representation of sunflowers made on a flat surface. However, Van Gogh's sunflowers are not realistic enough to fool a viewer into believing that they are real. Some artists desire to trick the eye in a very realistic way; these artists want to make audiences believe that their painting, drawing or sculpture is actually the real object itself. Artwork that tricks the viewer into believing that it is made of something else is called *trompe l'oeil*.

Definitions and Examples: Show "Tricks of Perfection" Power Point to introduce:

- Unit themes and key questions
- Definition of trompe l'oeil
- Local, everyday examples of trompe l'oeil
- Basic ideas of what makes trompe l'oeil effective in fooling the eye
- 3-D trompe l'oeil artworks

Guided Practice #1: Ask students to describe any other examples of trompe l'oeil they may have seen.

Show students two examples of artworks you located using the internet. Ask students to identify which is trompe l'oeil and which is not. Ask students to describe characteristics of each image in order to explain their choice.

Definitions and Step-by-Step Instructions: Show "How did they do that?" Power Point to introduce:

- Vocabulary terms: value, highlight, contrast (low, middle, high), light source, shaded area, lit area and shadow.
- Tips to making artwork that fools the eye, including using a light source to determine where the different values should go.
- Demonstration of how to use value in a pencil drawing to make an object look realistic.

Guided Practice #2: Ask students to create a realistic drawing of an apple that uses value, shaded area, lit area, shadow, highlights and indicates a light source. Use real apples brought to the classroom for students to view, or use the final slide of "How did they do that?" Advanced Power Point for students to view.

Transfer at TCA: Explain that when students visit *Masters of Illusion* at the Tempe Center for the Arts, they will examine the subject matter and value used in trompe l'oeil artworks by local artists. They will need to locate artworks by specific artists and create sketches of specific areas of the artist's work.

Extension Ideas

Use "Questor's Questions about Realistic Art" to broaden students' thinking about trompe l'oeil and other realistic artworks.

Show students further examples of PowerPoint artworks by browsing the following terms/artists' on the internet:

Sistine Chapel
Donald Clapper
John Harberle
William Harnett
Karen Shapiro

International Guild of Realism
Photorealism
Trompe l'oeil
Ultra-Realistic Art

Ask students to create a 10-step value chart that starts with the lightest value (white) and ends with the darkest value they can create (black) using only graphite.

Ask students to experiment using colored pencils to create different values of one specific color (for example adding white or black to blue to create a 10-step value scale).

Language Arts

Ask students to make 8 1/2-inch x 11-inch posters for vocabulary terms. Each poster should contain the term, its definition and a drawing of collaged image that demonstrates the meaning of the term. Hang posters throughout the room to help students learn vocabulary terms.

Vocabulary

trompe l'oeil

value

shaded area

lit area

shadow

contrast

highlight

light source

Assessment Checklists

Objectives:

1. Students identify characteristics of trompe l'oeil images.

Use the following criterion to assess students' participation to "How did they do that?" PowerPoint:

___ Student points to characteristics in Power Point examples.

2. Students use value, light source, shaded areas, lit areas, highlights and shadow in their drawings.

Use the following checklist to assess the "Apple Drawing" worksheet:

___ Student's drawing indicates light source with visible mark on paper.

___ Student's drawing includes a lit area, shaded areas, highlight and shadows.

___ Student's drawing use a wide range of values.

Lesson Two: And the curtain goes up...(Advanced)

Objective

Students locate and sketch characteristic features of trompe l'oeil works.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

Evaluate: Elements and Principles

PO 301, 401: Select criteria to judge the effectiveness of an artist's use of elements and principles in a composition to support the meaning and/or purpose of an artwork.

Evaluate: Materials, Tools and Techniques

PO 301, 401: Analyze how an artist's use of materials and techniques affect an artwork's meaning, purpose and value.

Preparation

Read "Watch My Hands Very Closely" worksheet (three versions). Each version is identical in format; however, each requires students to view four different artists' work. Distribute an even number of each version to students in order to keep crowds from building up in front of particular works of art.

Arrangements for field trip to the TCA

Advance discussion with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Provide the docent with a copy of "Watch my Hands Very Closely" worksheet (Advanced) prior to your trip, and discuss the extent to which students might complete any or all of the worksheet at the center or whether any or all of the questions or ideas might be addressed during their tour.

Activities

Review and Application: Distribute "Watch my Hands Very Closely" worksheet (Advanced) to students and ask them to complete all four questions after their tour has been completed. If completing the sketches is not practical or possible during the TCA visit, use the worksheet to guide students in focused observation as circumstances permit. For example, during the tour students could locate and list areas that show examples of different levels of value or shaded versus shadow areas. Then, you could lead students in a discussion of what they wrote on their lists when they assemble for or travel back to school.

Take notes on any new information presented by the docent, as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour.

If the circumstances of the visit do not allow students to complete their worksheets, explain that later, in class, you will lead a discussion of discoveries they made about value, highlights, contrast, shaded areas, lit areas, light source and shadow.

Assessment Checklist

Objective: Students locate and sketch characteristic features of trompe l'oeil works.

- ___ Student completes all four sections of "Watch my Hands Very Closely" worksheet (Advanced).
- ___ Student have sketched areas of artworks showing areas of shaded areas, lit areas, shadow, middle value, and highlights.

Lesson Three: Tricks of the Trade (Advanced)

Objectives

1. Students create a finished drawing using value, contrast, shaded areas, lit areas, shadow and highlights.
2. Students arrange objects in various ways and choose an interesting composition.

Arizona Visual Arts Standards

CREATE: Materials, Tools and Techniques

PO 301: Identify and experiment with materials, tools and techniques appropriately and expressively in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Elements and Principles

PO 301: Identify, select and use elements and principles to organize the composition in his or her own artwork.

CREATE: Quality

PO 301: Identify successful aspects of his or her own artwork and possible revisions.

CREATE: Creative Process

PO 303, 401: Develop and revise plans for his or her own artwork and select the best option.

RELATE: Quality

PO 302, 402: Demonstrate respect while responding to others' artwork.

Preparation

Decide whether to review "Tricks of Perfection" or "How did they do that?" PowerPoint presentations with the students.

Preview "Now You Try" PowerPoint.

Gather a variety of "flat" items, such as postcards, playing cards, envelopes, sticky-notes or paper money for students to use as subject matter for a final drawing. Choosing a wide variety of items can make the compositions more interesting.

Resources and Supplies

"Now You Try (Advanced)" PowerPoint presentation

Flat items (such as playing cards, postcards, sticky-notes, paper money) for students to use as subject matter for a drawing

Graphite pencils

Erasers

White drawing paper

"Interesting Composition" worksheet (one copy per student)

Activities

Definitions and Examples: View “Tricks of the Trade” PowerPoint to:

- Review basic concepts such as the use of value and how to create a drawing that creates the illusion of three dimensions.
- Introduce and explain the idea of creating an interesting composition.
- Introduce and explain the use of subject matter.
- Examine examples of trompe l’oeil drawings by local high school students.

Planning: Ask students to create and arrange different compositions using the subject matter you or individual students provided. Students should create at least four different compositions with their items. For each composition, students should create a thumbnail sketch in one of the four boxes on the “Interesting Composition” worksheet. The students should explain (in writing) what makes each of their compositions interesting.

Final Drawing Assignment: Ask students to choose their most interesting composition. Then, ask students to create a finished drawing using only graphite pencils using the skills they have learned and practiced. Ask them to create drawings that show a wide range of values in order to make the compositions look as realistic as possible.

In-Process Feedback: Ask pairs of students to show each other their in-process drawings and propose alterations in subject matter, value and composition.

Completion and Exhibition: When drawings are complete, ask students to create a name tag for their drawings. The name tag could include the student’s name, the title of the image and the class. Display images together on a wall or flat surface. Lead a class discussion of the successes and possible improvements of the class’s drawings.

Assessment Guides

Objectives:

Use the table on the next page to assess students’ finished drawings.

1. Students create a finished drawing using value, contrast, shaded areas, lit areas, shadows and highlights.

| | Fails to Meet Expectations | Approaches Expectations | Meets Expectations | Exceeds Expectations |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Value | No value is shown. | Drawing has a minimal range of value. | Drawing has a moderate range of values. | Drawing has a wide range of values. |
| Contrast | No contrast is shown. | Drawing has minimal contrast. | Drawing has areas of moderate contrast. | Drawing has areas of high contrast. |
| Shaded area/ lit area | No shaded/lit areas are shown. | Drawing has minimal shaded/lit areas. | Drawing has a moderate number of shaded/lit areas. | Drawing has shaded/lit areas in all appropriate areas. |
| Shadow | No shadows have been added. | Drawing has at least one shadow. | Drawing has a moderate number of shadows. | Drawing has shadows in all appropriate areas. |
| Highlights | No highlights have been added. | Drawing has a highlight if appropriate. | Drawing has an appropriate number of highlights. | Drawing has highlights in all appropriate areas. |

2. Students arrange objects in various ways and choose an interesting composition. Use the following checklist to assess the “Interesting Composition” worksheet:
- ___ Student has created and sketched four different compositions.
 - ___ Student has explained, in writing, what makes each composition interesting.

Name: _____ Date: _____



Watch My Hands Very Closely (#1 Advanced)

Find artworks by each of the following four artists. Look at the artwork and sketch the areas of the artworks showing a trompe l'oeil effect that helps the artist to make an object look more realistic.

1. Ellen Murray Meissinger

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a highlight?

A large, empty square box with a black border, intended for sketching the highlight areas of an artwork.

3. Ellen Wagener

Artwork Title: _____

What is the direction of the light source?

A large, empty square box with a black border, intended for sketching the direction of the light source in an artwork.

2. Donald Clapper

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a shaded area?

A large, empty square box with a black border, intended for sketching the shaded areas of an artwork.

4. Tom Eckert

Artwork Title: _____

What casts the biggest shadow?

A large, empty square box with a black border, intended for sketching the biggest shadow in an artwork.

Name: _____ Date: _____



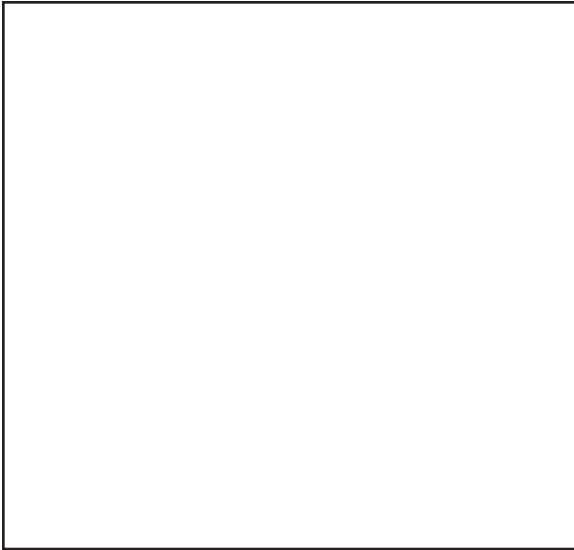
Watch My Hands Very Closely (#2 Advanced)

Find artworks by each of the following four artists. Look at the artwork and sketch the areas of the artworks showing a trompe l'oeil effect that helps the artist to make an object look more realistic.

1. Larry Charles

Artwork Title: _____

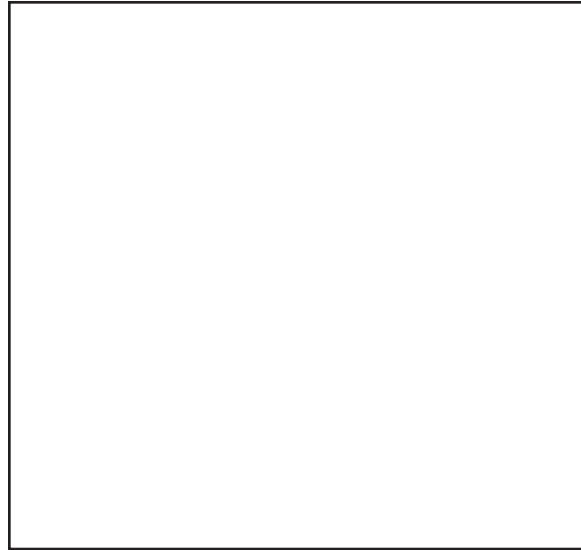
Where are the middle values?



3. Donald Clapper

Artwork Title: _____

What area has been shaded?



2. Billie Jo Harned

Artwork Title: _____

What area casts the biggest shadow?



4. Cynthia Peterson

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a highlight?



Name: _____ Date: _____



Watch My Hands Very Closely (#3 Advanced)

Find artworks by each of the following four artists. Look at the artwork and sketch the areas of the artworks showing a trompe l'oeil effect that helps the artist to make an object look more realistic.

1. Craig Cheply

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a middle value?

A large, empty square box with a thin black border, intended for the student to sketch the middle value of an artwork.

3. Lorna Kloosterboer

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a highlight?

A large, empty square box with a thin black border, intended for the student to sketch the highlight of an artwork.

2. Patrick Bailey

Artwork Title: _____

What is the direction of the light source?

A large, empty square box with a thin black border, intended for the student to sketch the direction of the light source in an artwork.

4. Robert Peterson

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a three-dimensional form?

A large, empty square box with a thin black border, intended for the student to sketch a three-dimensional form in an artwork.

Name: _____ Date: _____

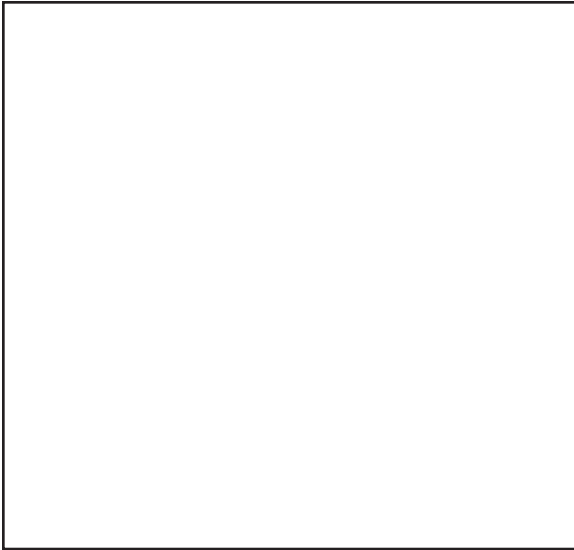
Watch My Hands Very Closely (#4 Advanced)

Find artworks by each of the following four artists. Look at the artwork and sketch the areas of the artworks showing a trompe l'oeil effect that helps the artist to make an object look more realistic.

1. John Schieffer

Artwork Title: _____

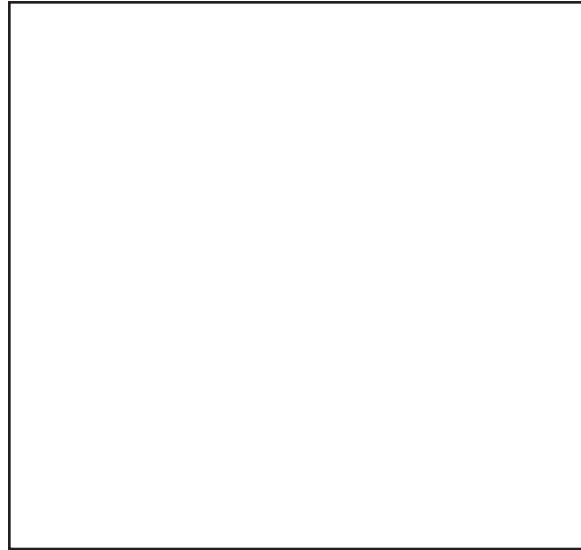
What is the direction of the light source?



3. Lorna Kloosterboer

Artwork Title: _____

Where is a highlight?



2. Clinton Hobart

Artwork Title: _____

What casts the biggest shadow?



4. Anna Youngers

Artwork Title: _____

Where is an area shaded?



Name: _____ Date: _____

Interesting Composition

Arrange and rearrange your chosen subject matter to create various interesting compositions. Sketch a different composition in each box. Under each box to explain what makes each composition interesting.

