



Artist's name and age/year

USING SKILL

Creating tone with charcoal

Time	Resources	National Curriculum
30–45 min.	Charcoal Sketchbooks or slightly off-white paper Old erasers View/scene to sketch Scrap paper if working indoors Fixative (see Glossary) Digital camera (optional)	1a, 1c, 2a, 4a, 5a

Introduction

'You have been investigating different tones you can make with charcoal. Now you are going to have the opportunity to use those effects in your drawings.'

Practical activity

- Children make a quick light outline of their subject, with no detail.
- Ask where the darkest and lightest areas are. They could try half closing their eyes to get an overall image. Sometimes it is easier to see the main tonal contrasts this way.
- Suggest they block the darkest areas in first.
- Then build up the rest of the picture, filling in with different tones, leaving out the lightest areas. The paper acts as the lightest tone.
- Remind them they can use an eraser to remove tone.
- Line detail and textures could then be added last.

Extension idea

- If you have a digital camera, you could photograph the subject, print it out, photocopy it so it becomes black and white, and enlarge it.
- Then children can compare their tonal picture against the photocopy. Their pictures and the photocopies could be mounted and displayed side by side.