

Drawing by Blocking In

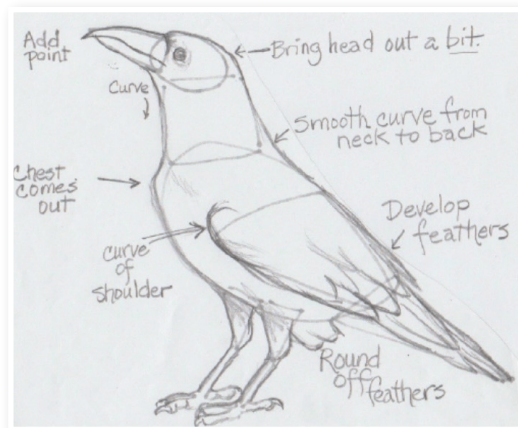
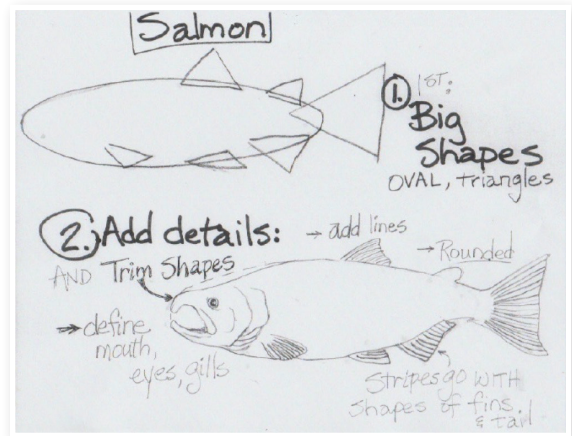
by Bonnie Dillard

Supplies: Paper, graphite & charcoal pencils, eraser

Overview: This lesson will demonstrate how we can use basic shapes: circles, ovals, squares, rectangles and triangles to “block in” drawings of the world around us.

1. Find a clear image (photo or drawing) of what you want to draw. Look at it carefully to see the basic shapes within your subject. You can also use an actual object.

2. Let's look at this salmon. Notice how the big shapes start as a foundation for the final fish. Try drawing your own salmon, starting with a long oval. Draw lightly so that you can erase if you need to. Then adjust your big shapes, erase the beginning lines and add details when you are happy with it all. Measure the head (including gills) and see that the fish is about 4 heads long. What else can you measure? Measuring helps you get the proportions correct.

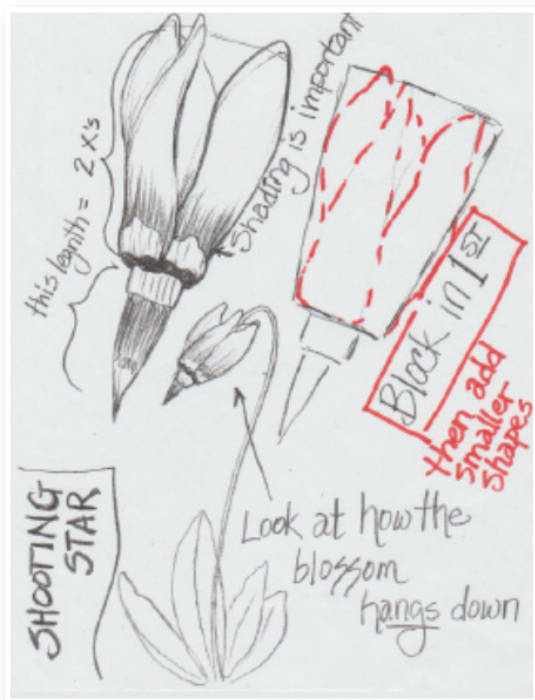
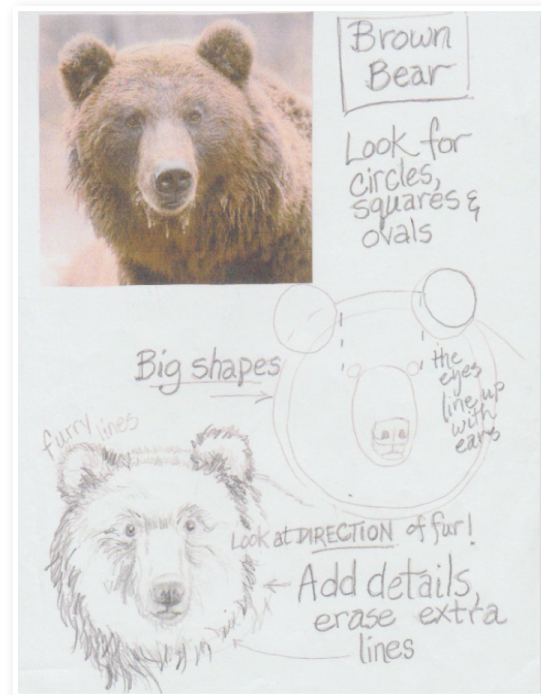


3. Now let's look at a raven. Find the big shapes: ovals for head and body, triangles for peak, wing and legs, rectangle for neck. Then measure, adjust, add and define.

Drawing by Blocking In (continued)

4. Drawing a bear's head – go step by step: Notice that his head and ears are rounded shapes and that his nose is basically a square. Look for alignment between the nose, eyes, and ears.

When you are ready for details, study the picture to observe the direction of the fur.



5. Finally, let's look at a shooting star. It is more complex, you might need to ask for help! Can you see how the blown-up drawing of the flower looks like one large triangle with smaller triangles making up the parts? Block in your shapes.

Then adjust the edges and add details and lines for shading. Take your time, this is a complicated design!

Each of these exercises uses a slightly different approach to "blocking in". See what works for you and try finding the shapes in a subject in your home or yard. Remember, start drawing shapes light and simple, then measure and add details last.



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