

ART: THE BASICS

How to Paint a Mural

This guide provides you with an introduction to the program and follow-up questions (along with their answers).

The question sheet is designed to be duplicated for class distribution.

Before Viewing: Give students an overview of the program using the program introduction. Discuss the words in the vocabulary box to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

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Program Introduction

It could be said that mural painting is the continuation of cave painting; a style of painting that humans have done since the dawn of time. When these early humans attempted to capture their world on the walls of caves a tradition was born. During the Renaissance, fresco painting was the most popular method of mural painting, while in the modern day murals are often painted directly on the wall with acrylic paint.

Murals can be very large works and to tackle any large work everything needs to be well planned out beforehand. Murals are usually 'site specific' which means they must conform and respond to the physical boundaries of the wall or area to be painted. Other considerations, such as how people move through and utilise the space where the mural is painted, must also be taken into account.

A successful mural requires many careful considerations and there are many stages to go through. If the mural is to last, the surface where it is to be painted must first be stabilised, cleaned, and depending on the final paint used, sealed with a suitable undercoat.

Planning is paramount and it is important to sketch through as many ideas as possible, before tackling the final work.

Vocabulary:

Mural, Fresco, Renaissance, Easel Painting, Billboard, Sketch, Trompe l'Oeil, Pigments, Scale, Marquette.

How to Paint a Mural: QUESTIONS

1. An easel painting is meant to be seen from close up. What becomes more important when paintings are viewed close up?
2. Why can mural paintings incorporate broad brush strokes and large areas of colour?
3. Mural painting has been described as part billboard, part theatrical scenery and part easel painting. Although billboard posters are mostly done digitally now, how do you imagine they were done fifty years ago?

Chapter 1: Preparing for a Mural

4. What does 'site specific' mean?
5. Being site specific is one of the design issues when working on a mural. What can some of the other design issues be?
6. Trompe l'Oeil is an illusionist style of painting where you try to fool the eye into thinking something might be real. This is done by painting it very realistically and giving it a sense of depth by manipulating the surface light effects. How therefore could Trompe l'Oeil be used in mural painting?
7. In the process of mural painting, after you've sketched the main layout of the wall, what should you then do?

8. What can it be a mistake to do when designing a mural?
9. What is one way of paring down or distilling an idea?

Chapter 2: Designing a Mural

10. How is the presentation drawing usually drawn?
11. After final changes have been made to a drawing, what is then added?
12. The first stage in designing a mural is the 'concept' stage, what is the next stage?
13. What is often useful when it comes time for portrait studies in the final mural?
14. Name two styles of art that could be used to produce a final mural.
15. At what scale is a mock drawing drawn at?
16. For the painting of a large mural to go well, what must be done?
17. Having a mural well planned out beforehand allows you to focus on which aspect of the job when you're doing the painting?

Chapter 3: From the Sketch to the Wall

18. Projection is one way of enlarging a drawing onto a wall, what is another?
19. When you're gridding up a wall, how many squares do you draw onto it?
20. 'Pouncing' is the process of transferring a full scale drawing onto a wall by making a series of holes along the main outlines, holding the drawing against the wall, and pushing charcoal through the holes to leave a mark where the line should go on the wall. What are two ways of making the line of holes in the mock drawing?
21. What are some of the OH&S (occupational health & safety) issues involved in when painting a mural?

Chapter 4: Painting a Mural

22. What is the benefit to having a well planned mural that is built up layer by layer?
23. The details are worked into the composition last; do you have to consider scale at this point?
24. What is one way of looking at a large object from close-up?
25. How is a colour marquette used when painting the final work?
26. Why would you increase the intensity or values of the colours in a mural?

How to Paint a Mural: ANSWERS

1. When paintings are viewed close up the details become more important.
2. Murals can incorporate broad brush strokes and large areas of colour because they are often seen from a distance.
3. Billboards were painted directly onto the wall and were done to last many years. Sometimes they can still be seen today on the sides of old buildings.

Chapter 1: Preparing for a Mural

4. Site specific means that because every site is different, every mural must adapt to the physical elements of that particular space.
5. Other design issues are the audience, the client, the subject and the purpose of the mural.
6. Trompe l'Oeil can be used to give the illusion of depth in a mural although it is actually on a flat surface.
7. After sketching out the main dimensions of the wall, you should sketch out the first ideas for filling the space.

8. It can be a mistake to try to put too much imagery into a mural just because you have a large space to fill.
9. One way of paring down or distilling an idea is to work through many sketches, even throwing some of them away.

Chapter 2: Designing a Mural

10. The presentation drawing is often a fairly simple line drawing so that the composition can still be changed.
11. The next thing added is the colour of the composition.
12. The next stage after the concept is the 'Design with line' stage.
13. Photographs of friends can be used for the portrait studies within the mural.
14. A mural could be painted in any of the following styles; realism, abstraction, art deco, impressionism, pop or poster art.
15. A mock drawing is a full scale drawing.
16. For the painting of a large mural to go well it must be planned in advance.
17. With the overall composition decided upon, it allows the artist to concentrate on the details of the mural.

Chapter 3: From the Sketch to the Wall

18. Another method of enlarging a drawing onto a wall is by placing a grid over the drawing and over the wall.
19. The wall grid has the same number of squares as the drawing grid.
20. A pin can be used to make them individually or a pattern marker can be used to make a line of holes. An electric pouncer can be also used to run around the outline.
21. When painting a mural you must make sure you have a safe scaffold and good lighting.

Chapter 4: Painting a Mural

22. At the end of each stage the work should look resolved, and complete, in its own way.
 23. Yes, scale is important as there is little point in putting a lot of detail into an area of the mural that can't be seen close-up.
 24. To look at a large object from close-up you can use a mirror or a reducing lens.
 25. A colour marquette is a guide to the colours that will be used in the final work.
 26. You increase the intensity of the colours in a mural to give it a more dramatic effect.
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ART: THE BASICS

Caricatures and How to Draw Them

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Program Introduction

Doing caricature portraits can not only be great fun but they also demand all the drawing skills needed for more traditional portraiture.

A caricature is not a cartoon. A cartoon will represent a character very generally whereas a caricature is based very much on a single personality. The individual characteristics of that person become the study for this artwork.

Careful observation and clever drawing are needed in all drawing, caricature included. The proportions of the face need to be understood in detail for a basis of the likeness to form. Most people's proportions are very similar and it is the small details that need to be exaggerated for a good caricature to work.

Vocabulary:

Caricature, Cartoon, Charcoal.

Caricatures: QUESTIONS

Chapter 1: What is a Caricature?

1. What is the difference between a cartoon and a caricature?
2. What sort of a likeness of an individual does a caricature provide?
3. What do you do to the key facial features of a person to create an exaggerated likeness?
4. Who is the caricature meant to look like?

Chapter 2: Drawing a Caricature

5. What is the key to all good drawing?
6. What different shapes can human heads come in?
7. What view is a profile?
8. What is it important to look for when viewing a subject?
9. If you divided the head with a horizontal line through the middle, where would the eyes be?
10. The measurement between the eyes is equal to what other measurement?
11. In relation to the top of the eyes and the chin, where is the bottom of the nose positioned?
12. In relation to the top of the eyes and the chin, where is the mouth positioned?
13. The width of the mouth, on average, is equal to which other measurement on the face?
14. What does the 'economy of means' of a line refer to?

Chapter 3: Caricature: Step by Step

15. What is the basic objective of caricature drawing?
 16. What's one of the first things to look for in the features of the face?
 17. What are some of the features of the face that can be exaggerated?
 18. When working in charcoal or soft pencil what can tissue paper be used for?
 19. How can you add greater depth and modelling to your drawing?
 20. Why is it recommended that you do a preliminary sketch before attempting a finished work?
 21. What do good caricature drawings rely on?
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Caricatures:

ANSWERS

Chapter 1: What is a Caricature?

1. A caricature will relate to one individual, whereas cartoons are far more general in their depiction of people.
2. A caricature provides an exaggerated likeness of an individual.
3. An exaggerated likeness of a person can be obtained by enlarging or diminishing key facial features.
4. A caricature is meant to look like the person portrayed.

Chapter 2: Drawing a Caricature

5. Observation is the key to all good drawing.
6. Human heads are oval, round, square or pear shaped.
7. A profile is a side view.
8. When viewing a subject it is important to look for the different lines that make up an individual's face.
9. The eyes would be slightly above the middle line.
10. The measurement between the eyes is equal to the width of the eye.
11. The bottom of the nose is located half way between the top of the eyes and the chin.
12. The mouth is located two thirds of the way down between the top of the eyes and the chin.
13. The width of the mouth is equal to the distance between the pupils of the eyes.
14. A line's 'economy of means' is its ability to describe something in a concise and exact way.

Chapter 3: Caricature: Step by Step

15. The basic objective of caricature drawing is to exaggerate the features of a subject.
 16. The key to caricature drawing are the lines of the face that are characteristic of the subject.
 17. The hair, the eyes and eye brows, the nose and mouth can all be exaggerated.
 18. Tissue paper can be used to smudge and soften lines and to add shading.
 19. You add greater depth and modelling to your drawing by using the eraser to add small highlights.
 20. A preliminary sketch will help you to find the lines of the face that can be exaggerated to reveal the personality of the subject.
 21. Good caricatures rely on keen observation and careful drawing.
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ART: THE BASICS

Airbrush Painting with Air

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Program Introduction

In a way, painting with air has been around for a very long time indeed. In prehistoric times people used a hollow deer bone to blow a mix of water and pigment against the walls of caves to paint their pictures. The modern airbrush was developed by British artist Charles Burdick, in 1893 and is a precision instrument that can work very finely.

The modern airbrush can produce extremely fine lines and softly gradated tones as well as solid areas of even colour. They were first used by artists and photographers for retouching, but their full potential was quickly recognised and they are now widely used – principally by commercial artists – to produce paintings and illustrations.

Airbrushed portraits, figure paintings and landscapes are easily recognized, tones and colours blend softly and almost imperceptibly into one another in a way which can only be achieved with an airbrush.

Vocabulary:

Compressor, Variegated, Frisket Paper, Acetate.

Airbrush: QUESTIONS

Chapter 1: Basic Techniques

1. What are the two types of compressors?
2. How much air pressure should you use when airbrushing?
3. What are the three main parts of an airbrush?
4. What sort of paints can you use for airbrushing?
5. What should the consistency of the paint be for use in airbrushing?
6. Are thick lines produced by holding the airbrush close to the paper?
7. A gradual change of tone from light to dark across a background is called a what?
8. When producing a variegated background, is it best to build up the colour quickly or slowly?
9. What causes a spider, or run, to form when using an airbrush?
10. How long should the paint take to dry when you're airbrushing?

Chapter 2: Using Templates

11. What is frisket paper made from?
12. What can be cut out of frisket paper?
13. When using frisket paper it's easy to apply too much colour and make things too dark. How can you avoid this?
14. How do you cut acetate?
15. What do you have to be careful *not to do* when working with the knife near artwork?
16. If you hold the frisket paper firmly down against the paper what sort of line do you achieve?
17. If you hold the frisket paper slightly away from the paper, what sort of line do you achieve?
18. How could you introduce a texture into your work?

Chapter 3: Cleaning

19. If paint is left in the airbrush, where will it dry?
20. How do you clean an airbrush?
21. What can cause spitting?

Chapter 4: Materials and Final Product

22. Will working on different surfaces give different results when airbrushing?
 23. Is it important to start with a drawing when airbrushing?
 24. Can you reuse templates?
 25. In which order do you build up the colours in an artwork?
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Airbrush: ANSWERS

Chapter 1: Basic Techniques

1. The two basic types of compressors are a storage compressor and a direct air compressor.
2. You should use 35–40 psi (pounds per square inch) or 240-280 Kpa (kilopascals).
3. The three main parts of an airbrush are the throttle body, the head and the needle.
4. You can use liquid acrylic paint, coloured dyes or watercolour paint for airbrushing.
5. The consistency of the paint should be like milk or thinner.
6. No, thick lines are produced by moving the airbrush away from the paper.
7. A gradual change of tone from light to dark is called a variegated background.
8. It best to build up the colour of a variegated background slowly and gradually.
9. A spider forms when too much air pressure pushes too much paint onto the paper.
10. The paint should be dry almost as soon as it hits the paper.

Chapter 2: Using Templates

11. Frisket paper is made from a self-adhesive plastic film.
12. Stencils can be cut out of frisket paper.
13. You can avoid applying too much colour by laying it down slowly and gradually.
14. You cut acetate by scouring a line with the knife and then bending it until it snaps.
15. You have to be careful not to cut through the plastic sheet and mark the artwork.
16. A hard-edged line is achieved when you hold the frisket paper firmly against the paper.
17. When you hold the frisket paper slightly away from the paper you achieve a soft-edged line.
18. Applying the paint through a screen will give interesting textural effects in your artwork.

Chapter 3: Cleaning

19. If left in the airbrush the paint will dry everywhere; in the cup, in the throttle body, in the head and in the workings.
20. You clean an airbrush by running a cleaning fluid, or water, through it until it comes out clear.
21. Spitting can occur when the airbrush is not clean or water comes through the compressor due to humidity.

Chapter 4: Materials and Final Product

22. Yes, different surfaces have different textures and this will come through in the work. It is therefore important to experiment.
 23. Yes, it's important to have everything planned out beforehand.
 24. Yes you can reuse templates in the same artwork or in others.
 25. You build up the colours from the light colours to the dark colours.
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ART: THE BASICS

Perspective

Getting the Basics

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Program Introduction

Artists have used perspective in their art to show the illusion of space since before the Renaissance, but we had to wait until then before it was formalised into the system of drawing that we know today. Pre-Renaissance artists, such as Giotto (1266-1337), often ran into problems when showing multiple objects in space. It wasn't until the introduction of the single vanishing point by the Renaissance artist Uccello (1396-1475) and others, that these problems were overcome. Now perspective can be used as a powerful tool, by the artist, to create the illusion of three dimensional space on a two dimensional surface.

For the Renaissance artist, perspective allowed everything to be drawn in the correct proportions, something seen as important at the time. The use of perspective meant the artist could fool the eye by painting an illusion of a real thing. This eventually leads to 'Illusionism' and a style of painting called 'Trompe l'Oeil', where fooling the eye and the illusion was everything.

A perspective drawing can use just one vanishing point to create simple three dimensional forms or multiple vanishing points to represent more complex shapes, and show them from different viewing angles. There are always problems associated with representing three dimensional forms on a two dimensional surface but perspective drawing is one tool the artist can use to tackle the issue.

Vocabulary:

Renaissance, Illusionism, Trompe l'Oeil, Engraving, Parallel.

Perspective: QUESTIONS

1. Perspective drawing helps reveal what sort of space?

Chapter 1: A History of Perspective

2. Giotto, the Italian painter, used perspective to help represent which structures in his paintings?
3. During which period did perspective drawing develop into a science?
4. In which year was the world's first book on perspective drawing published?
5. Which new media were the engravings of German artist Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528) ideally suited to?
6. Knowledge of perspective is especially important in what sort of drawing?

Chapter 2: Single Point Perspective

7. Where does the picture plane sit on your drawing?
8. The line that marks where the earth meets the sky is called what?
9. What is the point called where things seem to disappear off into the distance?
10. In a drawing using parallel perspective, one side of an object must be parallel to what?
11. The sides of an object that show depth converge towards which point?
12. If an object is below the horizon line, will you see the top or the bottom of it?
13. What do you usually begin with when you start a parallel perspective drawing?
14. If there are two objects in the picture plane that are not parallel to each other, can parallel or one point perspective be used to draw them?

Chapter 3: Angular Perspective

15. How many vanishing points does angular perspective use?
 16. What do you usually begin with when you start an angular perspective drawing?
 17. To which point do the lines that convey depth converge to in angular perspective?
 18. If an object is located well above or below the horizon line, what do you have to do to make the perspective work?
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Perspective: ANSWERS

1. Perspective drawing helps reveal a three dimensional space.

Chapter 1: A History of Perspective

2. Giotto used perspective to help represent the architectural forms in his compositions.
3. Perspective drawing developed into a science during the Renaissance period.
4. The world's first book on perspective drawing was published in 1505.
5. The engravings of Albrecht Dürer were ideally suited to the printed media and therefore books.
6. Knowledge of perspective allows architectural drawings to take on another dimension and has affected the way we see and plan our artificial environment.

Chapter 2: Single Point Perspective

7. The picture plane sits, like a window pane, just in front of the paper on which you are drawing.
8. The horizon line marks where the earth meets the sky.
9. The vanishing point is where things seem to disappear off into the distance.
10. In parallel perspective one side of an object must be parallel to the picture plane.
11. Those sides that convey depth to a viewer converge towards the vanishing point.
12. If the object is below the horizon line you will see the top of it.
13. You usually begin by drawing a profile of the object you want to draw.
14. No, parallel perspective can not be used as there will have to be more than one vanishing point to indicate the depth of each object.

Chapter 3: Angular Perspective

15. Angular perspective uses two vanishing points although both are on the one horizon line.
 16. You usually begin by drawing a line, an edge or a corner that locates an object in space.
 17. Those lines that convey depth to a viewer converge towards the vanishing point.
 18. With an object located above or below the horizon line you need to draw a third vanishing point so that the vertical lines can also converge.
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