

Upside-Down Art

Copy an upside-down picture for a realistic effect.

Even professional illustrators feel a degree of tension when drawing realistically, so it's no wonder that beginners become frustrated. And it's exactly that concern with realism that gets in the way. Children tend to look at an object instead of the shape or shapes that form the object. Here's a fun experiment that seems silly, but it will actually teach children a crucial drawing maxim: SHAPE is the secret! When your students are copying an upside-down model picture, they won't be hampered by realistic content. Instead, they will be able to concentrate on lines, shapes, and the spaces between shapes, and they will be pleasantly surprised by the results!



What to Do

- 1 Give each child a copy of page 14. Pass out the pictures so they are facing upside down. Ask students to keep the pages facing that way.
- 2 Have students place the blank sheet on top of the reproducible and trace the box. Then have them place the sheets side by side.
- 3 Tell students to forget all about what's in the picture! Encourage them to draw what they see, concentrating on lines, shapes, and spaces between shapes.
- 4 When students are finished, have them turn the model drawing right side up and compare it to their drawings. They can then color their drawings with crayons.
- 5 Discuss the results as a group. Were children surprised by their drawings? What did they find out about this method? Was it harder or easier than drawing the regular way?

Materials

- © reproducible sheet (page 14)
- © pencils
- © paper
- © crayons

Bonus Activity

Have students bring in a picture of a favorite animal or person to draw using the same upside-down procedure. Then display the drawings next to the original pictures with the title "Utterly Upside Down." Include a brief explanation of the upside-down method.

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