COPIC® teacher resources

Here's Your Sign: A Lesson in Hand Illustration

Lesson Length:
7-10 Day

Materials:
      Copic Sketchbook Paper or *X-Press It Blending Card*
      Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones (Sketch Set)
      Copic Multiliner SP - Orange 0.5 mm Ink Pen (Optional for Preliminary Sketch)
      Copic Multiliner SP - Sepia 0.5 mm Ink Pen (Optional for Preliminary Sketch)

National Visual Arts Standards Applicable:

3B (9-12) – Apply subjects, symbols and ideas in their artworks and use the skills gained to solve problems in daily life.

5A (9-12) – Identify intentions of those creating artworks, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works.

6C (9-12) – Synthesize the creative and analytical principles and techniques of the visual arts and selected other arts disciplines, the humanities, or the sciences.

Objectives/Essential Learning/Teacher Point:

A. Students will learn about sketching hands and creating skin tones with color with Copic Markers.

B. Students will utilize life drawing, overlap, foreshortening, layering/blending, and value scale to create anatomically correct hand drawings.

C. Hand Drawings must include accurate sign language symbols depicting a word or theme, and a symbolic hand gesture in addition to the language symbols (i.e. – Praying hands, Peace sign).

D. Students will create the hand drawing using the ***Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones*** sketch set. Students will face the challenge of creating a balanced composition, applying realistic skin tones to their hand drawings, and creating a symbolic piece of imagery.

Procedure:

Day 1:

Provided with a variety of "hand art" by famous artists including Robert Birmelin and M.C. Escher, students will see how different artists use hands symbolically in their work. As more artwork is shown, students will discover optical views of hands from many different angles and perspectives.

Day 2/3:

Introduction of elements and principles of art and sketching concepts.
> Discovery of forms and planes
> Explanation and example of foreshadowing

Students are given a presentation on technical anatomy drawing and shown how hand drawing fits into a variety of contexts including medical illustration, symbolic art, and sign language, etc.

Sign Language is chosen as the main focus for the drawing because of its connection with special needs language system communication and reasonable real-world application.

Students are then presented with a demonstration on technical gridding/graphing that will assist with step-by-step anatomically accurate hand drawing.

Creation of 3-5 thumbnail sketches based on chosen subject: starting to explore gestural sketching and landscape ideas.

Day 4-7:

Students are given demonstration of **Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones** sketch set techniques, and shown several different skin tone varieties from light to dark, and in-between. Teachers should discuss the relevance of many factors in realistic skin/flesh tone drawing including ethnicity, age, and light source.

After conclusion of demo, students are asked to pre-sketch sign language composition either with **E00 Skin White** (lightest color from **Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones** sketch set) or **Copic Multiliner** (flesh tone matching color such as orange or sepia). Using a graph or grid for the hands/fingers may also improve accuracy (grid can be drawn in pencil, hands drawn with the **Copic Multiliner**, and then grid can be erased).

Use of foreshortening, overlap, and perspective will help achieve accuracy.

Once hand contour is finished and accurate, students can start to render with skin tones. Students will proceed to layer all 6 of the flesh tones until desired skin color is achieved.

Formative Assessment

- Introduction of Copic Skin Tone sketching
- Introduction of Accurate Hand Drawing
- Evaluation of thumbnail sketches
- Evaluation of preliminary Sign Language hands and hand gesture symbol composition
- Continuous student critiques of in-process marker techniques/studio work.

Summative Assessment:

Final Project Evaluated based on completion of studio objectives:

1. Accurate drawing of sign language hands placed together to spell a word
2. Use of all 6 colors from **Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones** sketch set
3. Extensive layering and blending between dark and light flesh tones
4. Evidence of hand gesture (in addition to sign language hands) based on overall theme or symbolic meaning
5. Finished drawing – White space only present in "highlight" areas

Vocabulary:

Form   Grid
Sign Language Symbols   Contrast
MC Escher   Flesh/Skin Tones
Robert Birmelin   Foreshortening
Planes

Project Directions

1. The color of our skin is dependent on many factors including our cultural heritage, age, source of light illuminating us and even the season (summer, winter, etc). This tutorial illustrates explorations with symbols, sign language, and hand drawing techniques using *Copic 6-Piece Skin Tones* sketch set. The finished product may vary based on artist preference and skin tone reference.

Sign Language Hands Sketch should be drawn with the lighter colors in the *6-Piece Skin Tones* sketch set (*E00 Skin White*) and (*E11 Barley Beige*). Varying line weight and direction allows for separation of planes and textures, thus creating more anatomically realistic fingers, palms, wrists, and angles.

2.   The artist chose to represent the word "fly" with the sign letters and symbolized a "bird in flight" with the larger hand gesture to connect with the theme. In this drawing, actual hand sizes are drawn nearly life-sized – this is important to allow for focus on all visual aspects of skin: wrinkles, highlights, shadows, and textures.

Add *E11* in all "mid tone" areas. The white of the paper will serve as the "highlight areas" and shadows will be represented with other dark flesh tones in the set.

Layer *E00* across *E11* to lighten, blend, and create a transition between white highlight areas and mid-tone *E11* areas.

3. Add the next darkest flesh tone *(E13 Light Suntan)* to represent some of the more shadowy areas and bolder textures. The lighter colors from the previous step should be layered across the edges of *E13* to create consistently smooth transitions from dark to light areas.

Add *(R20 Blush)* in various areas. Use *R20* sparingly; pink hues can be overwhelming if overused when illustrating skin tones. *R20* can also be used on fingernails where a bolder pink hue may be relevant. As repeated before, layering/blending with *E00* may help create more subtle transitions.

4.   One of the two darkest flesh tones in the set is *(E15 Dark Suntan).* For skin tones similar to this drawing, use darker colors only for areas of deepest shadow. These darker colors can very quickly overwhelm the subtle quality of lighter colors – it is important to be aware of the bold color transition from *E13* to *E15*.

After adding *E15* in shadow areas and on winkles/skin folds, soften up these darker areas, first with *E11* and last with *E00*.

Finished Project

5. For the final steps of the drawing, the artist focused on creating a background, and creating bold, realistic contrast on the hands.

Add *(E18 Copper)* in darkest areas, especially those completely absorbed by shadows such as cracks between fingers or bold edge-lines. Use *E00* to lighten up all skin tones as desired – extended layering with this light color allows for "washing out" and lightening of even the darkest areas.

If desired, add background, using *E13* followed by *E11* and blended/softened up with *E00*. "Flicking" these colors with consistent directional lines creates the illusion of movement in the background -- in this case, movement is very relevant to the theme of "fly."