Still Life Drawing: Shape Blocking and Tonal Shading

Topic reference / ordinary illustration



Ordinary topic reference. Hypothetical dimensions in the four tasks are supplied in their own text; this illustration is not their measured answer.

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Worked example / complete source key

A student arranges a mug, a small box, and a round fruit on a table. The paper is 30 cm wide and 40 cm tall. The mug is 8 cm wide and 9 cm tall, the box is 12 cm wide and 10 cm tall, and the fruit is 6 cm wide. The light comes from the left. Describe the blocking and shading plan using the five-step value key.

Answer: Draw a frame with 3 cm margins, leaving a 24 cm by 34 cm drawing area. Block the box first as a rectangle 12 cm wide and 10 cm tall, then block the mug as a rectangle 8 cm wide and 9 cm tall overlapping the box on the right, then block the fruit as a circle 6 cm wide in front. Mark midlines. Assign the box base value 3 and shadow value 4, the mug base value 2 and shadow value 4, and the fruit base value 3 and shadow value 5. Shade the right sides darker and leave left-side highlights as paper white. Check that margins are equal within 1 cm and that each object shows at least two values. Note: the box (12 cm) plus the mug (8 cm) would span 20 cm if placed side by side, which fits the 24 cm width; the fruit overlaps in front, so the group stays inside the frame.