Monday 25th January 2021

Art: observational drawing – focusing on tone and colour

Observational drawing is drawing what you see. It's as simple as that!

Tone refers to the scale of light and dark sketching to create depth in the drawing or sketch.

Types of tone

- Light
- Dark
- Mid tones

white

black

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9

mid value

Tone is best learnt using just one colour because it is easier.

Using your grey pencil, have a go at creating your own similar scale on a piece of scrap paper. Now do the same with a coloured pencil of your choice.

What do you notice you are doing to create the different shades and tones?

Tone is crucial in drawing and painting, a **tonal value** means how dark or light something appears. We can see tones more clearly when a direct strong light falls on an object or subject.

A Tonal Scale – Light to Dark Tones

When light falls from a primary light source it is easy to see the **shadows** and **highlights** it creates. We see the highlights where the light is shining directly on an object or subject as the lightest tones, sometimes pure white. We see the areas where the least light is hitting the subject or object as shadows.

Not having enough tonal range (the lightest to the darkest tones) leads to work that can look a bit flat and lacks depth.

Look at your sketch from last week. Is there anywhere you could add more depth by using different tones of your pencil?

Your task:

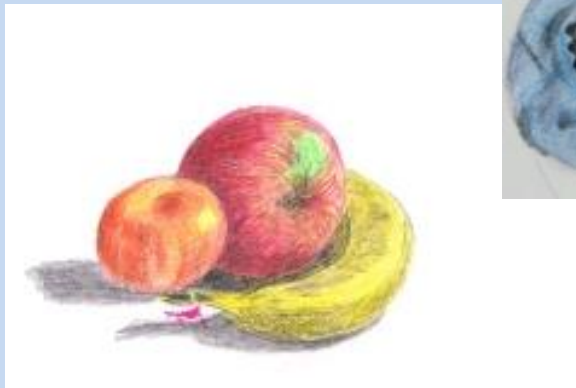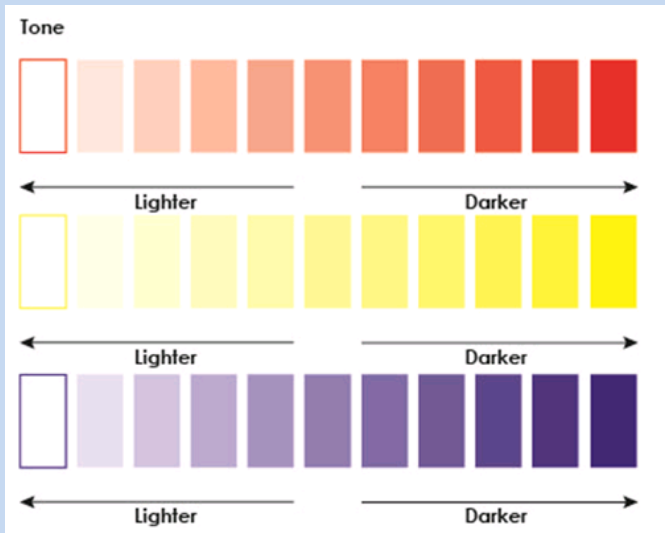Choose something to sketch. Choose one **coloured** pencil to sketch with.

At the top of your piece of paper, create your own tonal scale, like the ones in the previous slides, going from light to dark.
You will probably want about 7 different shades. Use this to help you when sketching.

Using your observational drawing skills from last week, sketch the outline of your object first.
Then, add more detail as you go, remembering to take note of the way the object looks in the light and how you can use tone to show this.

Don't be afraid of the dark tones, they will create more contrast and depth to artwork, making it appear more three dimensional.

Some inspiration

Once you have established the tones in one colour it becomes easier to establish tonal values when you are drawing or painting using all the colours.