

Finding Marks Through Drawings Made by Artists

By [Paula Briggs](#)

This resource shares a way to introduce learners to the diversity of mark making at their disposal when making drawings. By deconstructing drawings made by artists, we can begin to build our own vocabulary of marks, and start to make our own creative decisions about when to use a certain mark in a particular context, and understand how the marks we choose will affect the final drawings.

[See a zoom recording of how to use this resource here.](#)



Two maraboos (Twee maraboos) (c.1914) by Samuel Jessurun de Mesquita. Original from The Rijksmuseum. Digitally enhanced by rawpixel. CC0

By the end of this activity, learners will have created a series of mark making cards which they can use in other projects.

This resource helps learners to:

- Look critically at work made by others, finding elements within the artwork which can be used to inspire their own artwork**

Look closely and deeply to trust their instinct

- Split the bigger picture into smaller, bitesize elements
- By giving learners plenty of diverse source material to work from, learners are able to focus upon the marks which they are attracted to, and therefore build their own personal mark making vocabulary. Different learners will spot different types of marks, and interpret them in different ways.

There is no subject matter as such, and learners are not prompted to draw anything - instead the session is purely about mark making.

Learners will enjoy working alone or as part of a bigger group. Sharing outcomes at the end, seeing what kinds of marks others made, is part of the discovery process. the cards created can be used in future drawing sessions to prompt greater diversity of mark making.

Exploring Materials & Techniques

You might choose a single tool or material for this exercise (such as pencil or pen), or you might repeat the exercise on a number of occasions to explore how different tools and materials will affect the outcome. For example you might do the exercise one day with pen, another day with quill

•

and ink, or paint brush and one colour of paint.

Reflecting

Through careful questioning by the facilitator, learners will develop skills to enable them to understand the intention of the artist, and how and why the quality of the marks made in a drawing influence the way we "read" the drawing as viewer.

Building Knowledge & Experience

Some marks have names, some marks do not. By experiencing how these marks are made for themselves, and how speed, pressure, tool and medium all affect outcome, learners understanding of mark making is developed.

What does success look like? How do we spot learners needing extra help? How do we stretch more able children?

Success will look like a learner having created a variety of cards, each with a different type of mark captured on that card.

More able learners can be encouraged to explore how even greater variety of mark making can be achieved by experimenting with pressure, speed and material. More able learners will also look more deeply into the artists images to search out subtle changes in mark making.

Less able learners may need help to "see" marks. Use a simple viewfinder made by cutting a small

hole in a sheet of paper and move this across the images - this will help isolate marks.

Teacher Tips

This exercise takes 10 to 20 minutes. Remember that exercises like this can be undertaken by any age (including adults) and every time someone tries the activity they will have a different experience of it. Return to this activity whenever you feel pupils need pushing outside their safe zone of mark making.



Materials:

A mark making tool: a pen, a pencil, or at a later stage, brush and ink.

- Paper, torn into small sheets each approximately 8cm x 4cm
- Source material - you can use the images below - either digitally on screen or print them out.

Activity

	Please log in here to access full content.	
Username	<input type="text"/>	
Password	<input type="password"/>	
	<input type="button" value="Login"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Remember me
	Forgot Password	

To access all content, I would like to join as...

An Individual

▪



Creative practitioners, educators, teachers, parents, learners...

From £3.50

An Organisation...



Schools, Colleges, Arts Organisations: Single and Multi-Users
From £42

AccessArt is a UK Charity and we believe everyone has the right to be creative. AccessArt provides inspiration to help us all reach our creative potential.

See This Resource Used In Schools



You May Also Like...

Pathway: Typography and Maps



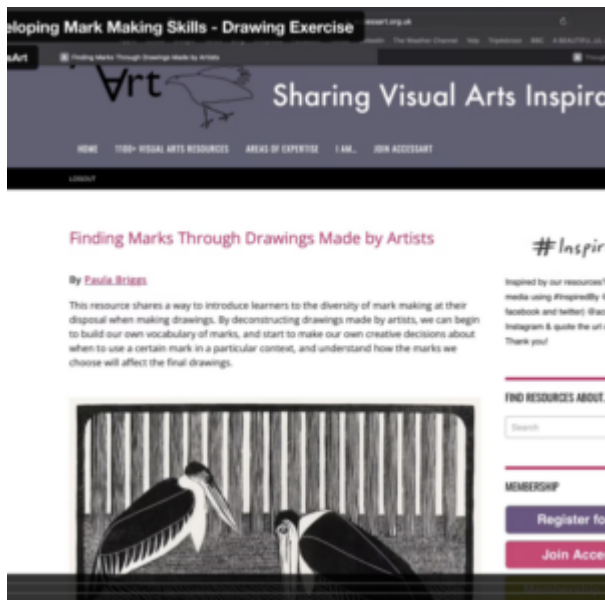
[This is featured in the 'Typography and Maps' pathway](#)

Pathway: Cloth, thread, paint



[This is featured in the 'Cloth, Thread, Paint' pathway](#)

Session Recording: Finding Marks Made by Artists

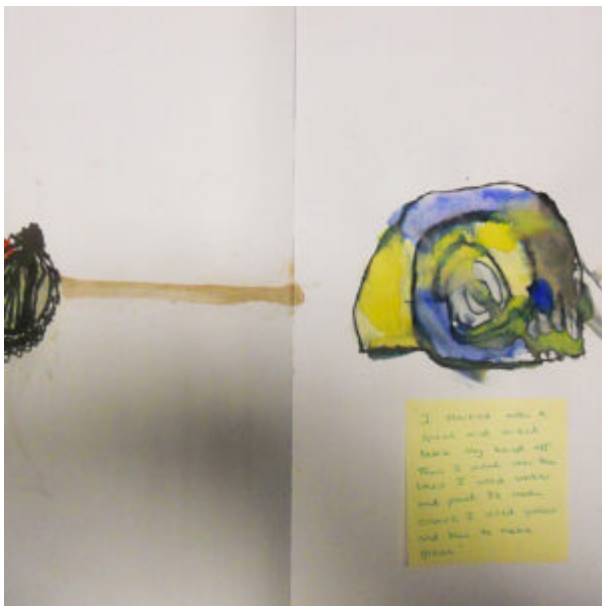


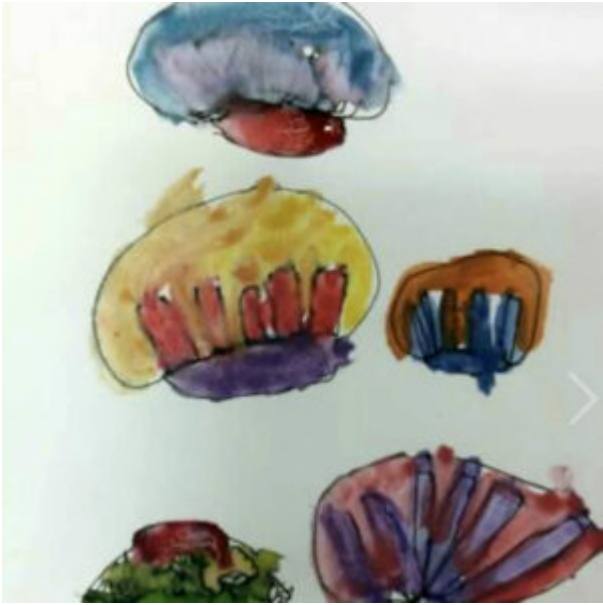
Personalising a Sketchbook with Mark Making and Collage

Making a Backwards Sketchbook

Water Soluble Felt-Tips With Complementary Colours

See How This Resource Is Used in Schools...





You May Also Like...

Pathway: Spirals



[This resource is in the 'Spirals' pathway.](#)

the drawing journey



Layered Colour Gestural Drawing



Nature Kaleidoscope

How to create a kaleidoscope using found natural objects and mirror card.

Animal Habitats: An Ecological Mural of Planet Earth

Vicki Ostersen visits her local Primary School to create a beautiful large scale mural of animals in their natural habitats.

Art Club Cafe

Use a range of making and modelling techniques to create a cafe, including modroc doughnuts and fabric pizzas!

Shadow Puppet Making and Performance

How Middle Eastern architecture was the inspiration behind a shadow puppet show for a year 4 class. A great opportunity for children to learn the technical aspects of making puppets, but also using narrative and story to create a performance.

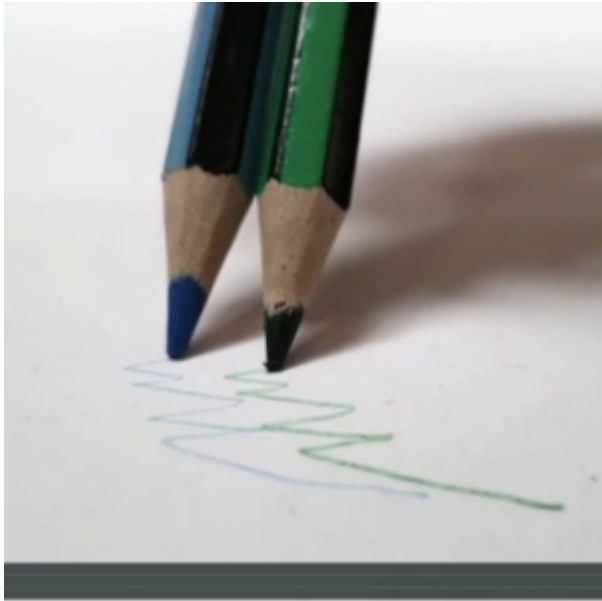
Back – Painted Portraits

How to create portraits using an effective back painted technique. A great activity to explore less traditional portraiture methods that is suitable for a wide range of primary age groups.

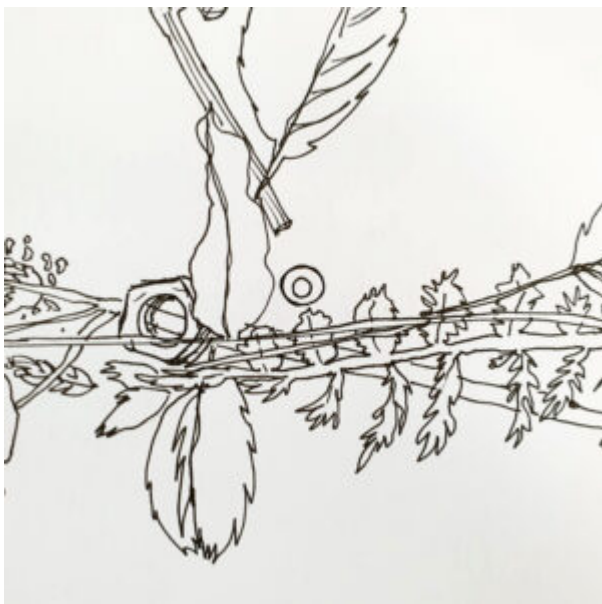
Mark Making & Sound: Part One

You May Also Like...

Mark Making & Sound: Part Two



Mark Making & Sound: Part Three



Pathway: Music and art



[This is featured in the 'Music and Art' pathway](#)

Drawing to a Slow Rhythm



Inspired by Miro



Drawing to Music



Ink Collage Inspired by The Wolf Wilder

Using a well loved children's book as a starter for creating a beautiful and varied collage using different inking

techniques.

Introduction To Forest Of Imagination

Patterns with Nature

You May Also Like...

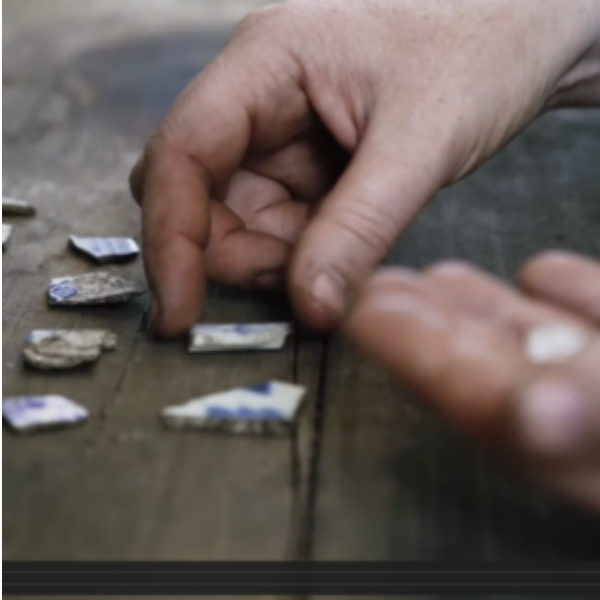
Pathway: Explore and Draw



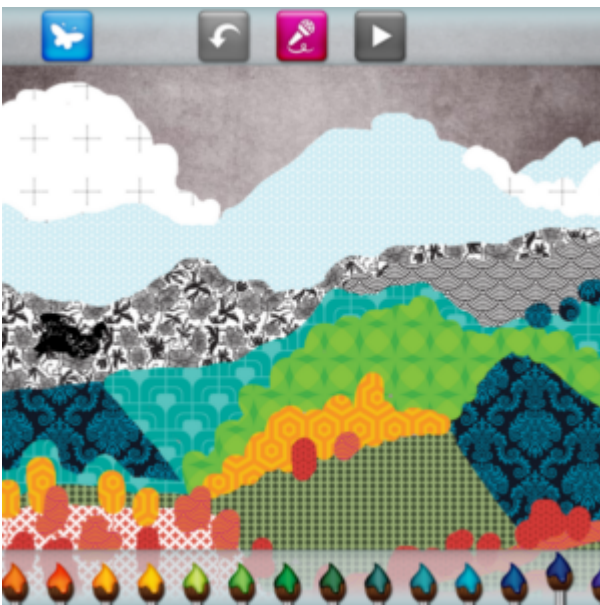
[Featured in the 'Explore and Draw'](#)

Pathway'

Talking Points: Artists as Collectors and explorers



AccessArt Digital Resources



Making a Scroll Drawing

Shells: Observational and Imaginative Drawing

You May Also Like...

Still Life Compositions



[Create and paint your own still life composition inspired by Cézanne](#)

Drawing Spiral Snails



[Explore spirals found in nature with this mixed media workshop](#)

Drawing Spirals



[Explore drawing using whole body movements](#)

Collaborative Public Mural Project

Shakespearean Sock Puppets

How to make textile and wood sock puppets using Shakespeare's Macbeth as inspiration.

Looking for Hope in the Small Things

One Roll of Paper, Two Activities

Get Connected! Cardboard

Robots with Movable Joints

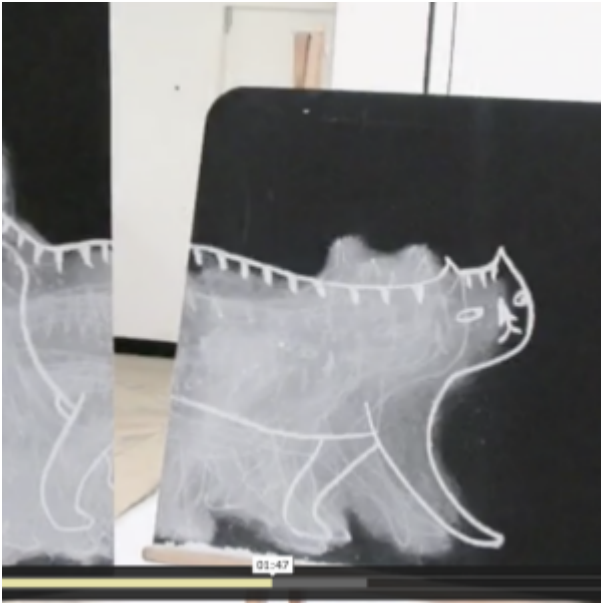
You May Also Like...

Pathway: Making Animated Drawings



[This is featured in the 'Making Animated Drawings' pathway](#)

Talking points: Making drawings move



Talking Points: paper cut puppets



Talking Points: Lauren child



Talking Points: Lotte reiniger

