

Henry Moore's Shelter Drawings

This resource shares how schools might use Henry Moore's Shelter Drawings to inspire creativity in the classroom. [See this resource as part of a pathway for use in schools here.](#)

The Shelter Drawings can be used to:

- Develop visual literacy skills
- Explore watercolour, ink and wax resist
- Explore how to convey form in drawings by using contour lines
- Explore Chiaroscuro (light / dark) to convey mood
- Explore perspective to build sense of claustrophobia / confinement
- Explore themes of shelter, confinement, safety, being trapped

Context & Background



Tentoonstelling beeldhouwwerken Sonsbeek Arnhem. Family Group (Henry Moore), Bestanddeelnr 905-1531.jpg

Henry Moore was a sculptor and draughtsman.

When introducing his drawings to children, it's important to remember the fact that he was a sculptor - his drawings have a characteristic "sculptural" feel. Understanding this will help children explore how they convey form in their own drawings. Moore's sculptures were monumental, inhabiting the landscape, but his studio was full of small maquettes (models) inspired by fist sized pieces of flint and bone. Even his drawings of these small objects feel "sculptural" and solid.



Three Reclining Figures 1975 HMF 75(8) watercolour wash, charcoal, chalk, gouache on blotting paper 263 x 217mm photo: The Henry Moore Foundation archive, Michel Muller. Reproduced by kind permission of the Henry Moore Foundation

The Shelter Drawings



Row of Sleepers 1986 by Henry Moore. Reproduced by the Henry Moore Foundation

Some records say Moore made his shelter drawings after taking shelter one night in 1940 in Belsize underground station, when Moore was fascinated by the families camping out underground. Other records say Moore took many underground journeys and saw the figures in the platforms as the trains passed by.

Returning to his studio, the Shelter Drawings were often made

from his memory of the experience. The images capture feelings of confinement and claustrophobia; the figures are anonymous but relationships between figures are clear. The figures in the underground, often seated or reclining, also reminded Moore of his sculptures.

[See this resource as part of a pathway for use in schools here.](#)

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