

The Anatomy of a Pencil

By [Sheila Ceccarelli](#) photographs by Miluka (Aged 14 and student at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class)

This is an AccessArt exercise designed to make you think about the potential of the pencil as a tool to create a whole repertoire of marks and lines with different weights, frequencies, depths and lengths.

Try this exercise with a variety pencils from soft (5B-9B) to hard (in the F and H range).

Top tips for making beautiful lines:

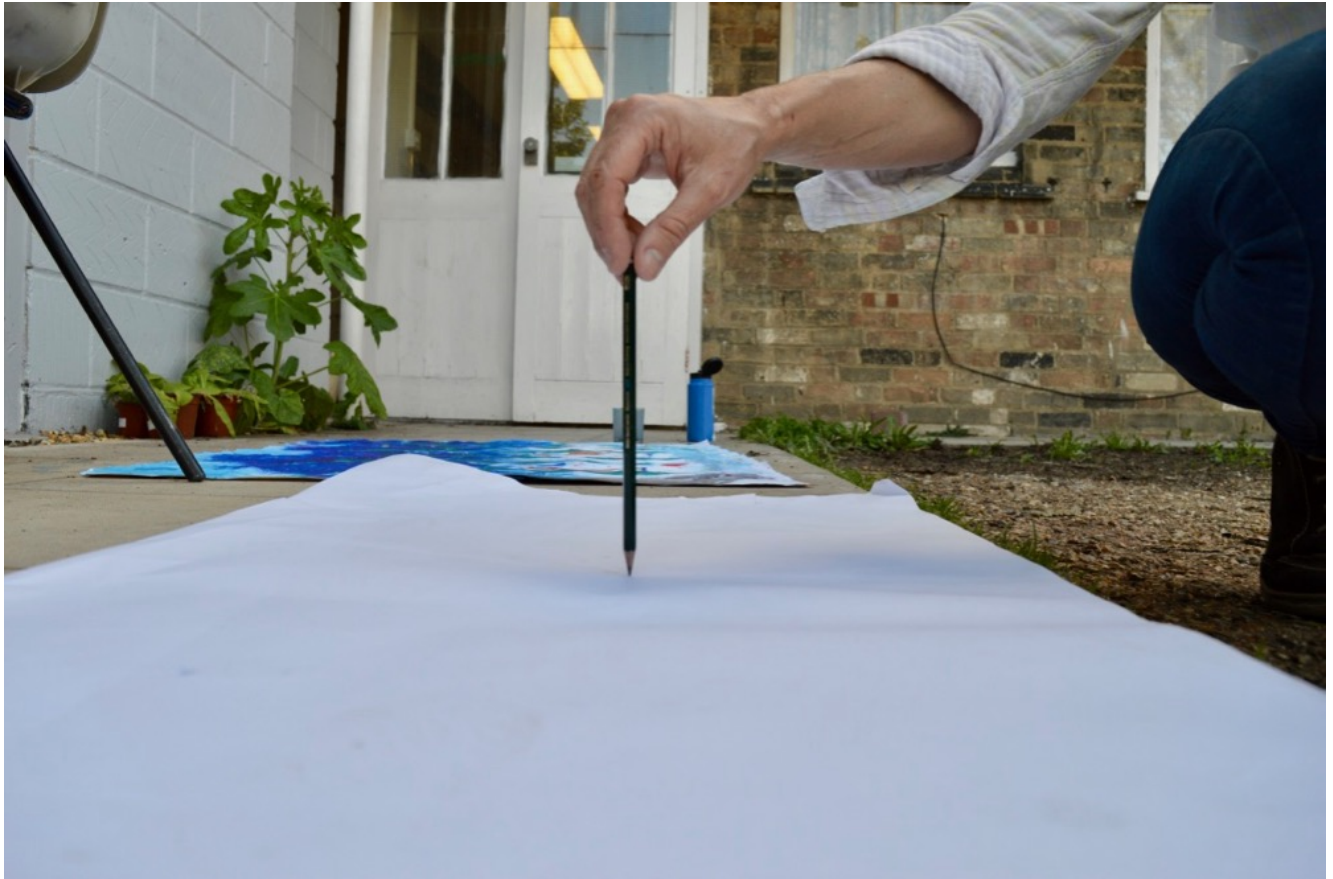
Think about the lines you are making and be 'mindful,' or in the 'here and now'.

Think about the paper as a 'place' that your pencil is exploring. You are taking the pencil on a journey on and through that space.

Enjoy exploring 'frequency' and 'tempo' of making pencil marks by changing the speed, pressure and energy with which you work.

See what happens if you apply and release pressure through the pencil and try to unlearn how to hold a pencil.

Vertical pencil movements and positions:



Vertical: Try holding your pencil lightly from its top and dangling it over the paper and create gentle marks across the page

Words to help you make marks: *flick, stroke, float, crawl, flutter, tap, dart, pirouette, pivot, touch, comb, drip, drop*



Vertical: Grip the pencil from the top of the pencil and start to apply a little more pressure across the paper

Words to help you make marks: *bore, stop, skid, flip, drill, collide, wedge, pause, twist, stir, poke, rotate, skip, dive*



Vertical: Now grab the pencil and enjoy dragging it across the paper applying variant pressures to create different thickness of line

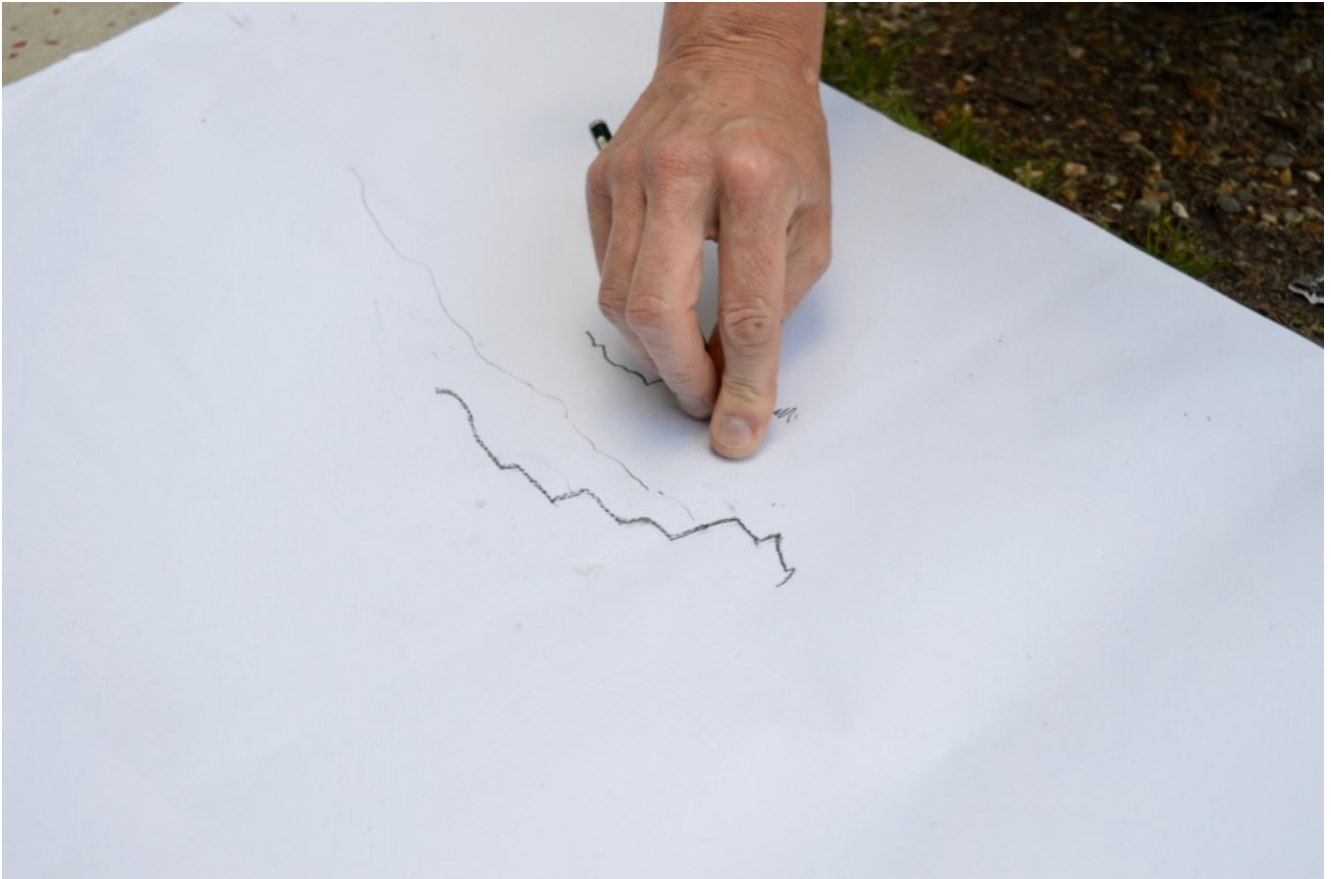
Words to help you make marks: *drag, release, stop, start, apply, pause, collect, hesitate, proceed, staccato, strike, pulse, jig*

Horizontal pencil movements and positions:



Horizontal: Now drop the pencil so it's lying horizontally across the paper

Words to help you make marks: *relax, gentle, release, flow, push, bare, ponder, forget, zig-zag, melt*



Horizontal: And use the tip of the pencil as though it is an extension of your own finger. Try digging it into the paper to punctuate a stop and then ease the pressure and drag it again across the paper

Words to help you make marks: ***guide, stop, press, stop, meander, stop, ebb, stop, move, consider, journey, stop, vibrato, consider, oscillate, stop, forge, press, step, stop, consider, slip, stop.***

Many thanks to Miluka from AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class, for spontaneously taking photographs for me to do this demonstration.

Follow thumbnails below to see more examples of an anatomy and use of a pencil.

AccessArt has over 850 resources to help develop and inspire your creative thinking, practice and teaching.

AccessArt welcomes artists, educators, teachers and parents both in the UK and overseas.

We believe everyone has the right to be creative and by working together and sharing ideas we can enable everyone to reach their creative potential.

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We Need To Make More Banners!



**WE NEED TO
MAKE MORE
BANNERS**

Come on!

**Let's put our passion in the visual arts
, and belief in the importance of arts
education, to good use. Let's make more
banners to get our message across!**

**The Suffragettes did it, and Trade Union
Associations still do it. Bob and Roberta**

Smith is great at it.

Banners can be eloquent, beautiful and powerful.

They can help build community and challenge preconceptions.

Think carefully:

What would your banner say, and how would you say it?

[Send us your images of banners you have made #makemorebanners](#)

Using Sketchbooks to Take Ownership of Ideas

Conquering SATs Stress with Seats

After two terms of sitting on the same blue chairs being taught (and taught very well!) the same curriculum, artist, Paula Briggs wanted to remind these year six children, that

they were all individuals with different areas of skills and unique personalities and that they were all valued as such.

Be Inspired to Inspire

“Heart-Work” an Arts and Wellbeing Project for Young People

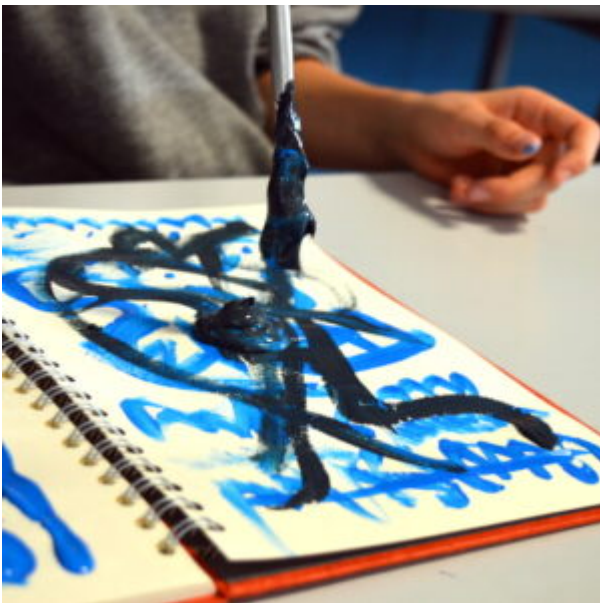
Arts and Minds: Time to Introduce Ourselves – A Sculpture Challenge



Arts and Minds: A 'Heart-Work' Conversation



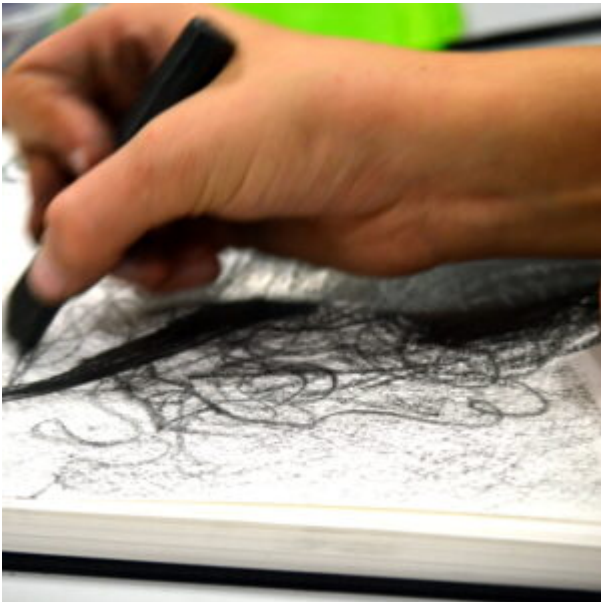
Arts and Minds: Asemic Writing and Invented Text



Feeling Through Drawing



Drawing for Mindfulness



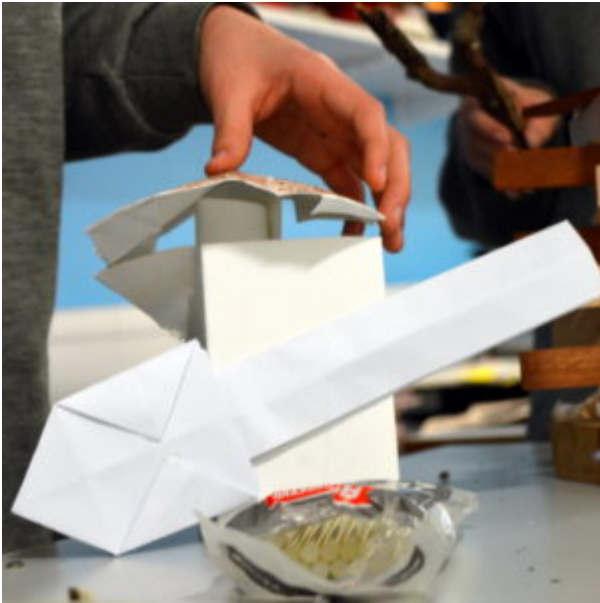
Arts and Minds: Expressive Monoprinting on a Big Scale



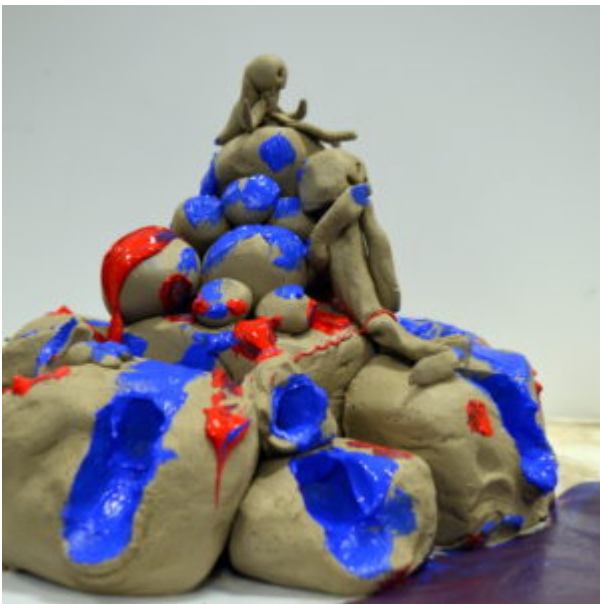
Constructing the World with Collage



Building to the Limit



Manipulating Clay with Water



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Artist/Educators

One of AccessArt's most unique features is our [evolving collection of visual arts resources](#) which help inspire teaching, learning and practice. We now have over 1500 resources aimed at all ages and abilities and covering all areas of the visual arts.

We are continually building our collection of resources: if you are a [full member of AccessArt](#) we'd love you to contribute!

The Benefits of Contributing

- Raise the profile of your teaching/school
- Raise cash for art materials for your school, or earn money for yourself
- Add value to your teaching and give a lasting legacy to your project
- Work to the greater good!

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- Be a [Full Member of AccessArt](#)
- Be a teacher or artist/educator

You can also [Suggest a Resource here](#).

Landscape Painting: Expressive Mark Making

Exploring Casting with Latex Animal Moulds

Paula Briggs describes how one of her first experiences of understanding the casting process was through the use of latex moulds and fine casting plaster (plaster of Paris) and how exciting it was to reveal the plaster forms!

Quick Guide to Mixing Plaster

Drawing Into Space with Melissa Pierce Murray

In this session, artist Melissa Pierce Murray invited students to create three-dimensional drawings from tape, string and paper, using the entire room as our canvas.

Inky Objects with Melissa Pierce Murray

In this workshop I introduced the idea of thinking of the piece of paper as an object to shape, rather than a picture plane to fill.

Questioning the Canvas

Animating with Charcoal

Decorative Eggs

A project based on Ukrainian Pysanky eggs using broken beads.

Landscape Painting: Plein Air Painting

World in a Matchbox

Children love working on a miniature scale where they can create worlds which they can control and oversee. AccessArt and Mencap have devised the “World in a Box” activity to enable children plenty of creative freedom resulting in fantastic autobiographical artwork.

Making Finger Puppets

AccessArt and Mencap have got three great ways for you to make finger puppets depending on your time or level of expertise. Starting with a simple print, colour, cut and stick and moving on to a full blown sculptural version, we hope you are inspired to make some puppets and possibly put on a show!

Drawing with Objects by

Melissa Pierce Murray

Teenagers explore ideas of placement with artist Melissa P Murray by arranging or assembling objects to make compositions or maquettes.