

Talking Points: Charcoal Drawings by Degas

How can charcoal be used to create a sense of movement?

Degas was a French Impressionist artist of the nineteenth century, celebrated for his ability to capture movement with expressive line work. Ballet dancers were his favourite subject, and he often turned to charcoal as the ideal medium for conveying their dynamic poses and graceful motion.

Explore his charcoal drawings using the sources below, then discuss the questions provided.

Please Note:

This page includes links and videos from external sites, verified at publication but subject to change.

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AGES 5-8

AGES 9-11

AGES 11-14

AGES 14-16

FREE TO ACCESS

Charcoal Drawings by Edgar Degas



Seated Dancer, 1873–74

Edgar Degas. Charcoal, Graphite and Chalk on Pink Paper



**Violinist, Study for "The Dance Lesson" ca.
1878-79**

Edgar Degas. Charcoal and Graphite on Green Paper



Two Dancers ca. 1879 Edgar Degas. Charcoal and Chalk on Green Paper

Questions to Ask Children

Can you describe one of the artworks above? What kinds of words would you use to describe the drawing to a person who couldn't see it?

Degas often used coloured paper for his drawings. Why do you think he did this? What does it add to the drawings?

Degas often used two materials such as charcoal and chalk, or charcoal and graphite. Why do you think he did this? What does adding two or more drawing materials add to the drawing?

In some of Degas' drawings you can see a faint grid. Why do you think Degas used a grid?

Look at "Two Dancers" and this time look at the areas of the page where there is "no" drawing. How are these areas of the drawing as important as the areas with marks on?

This Talking Points Is Used In...

Pathway: Gestural Drawing with charcoal

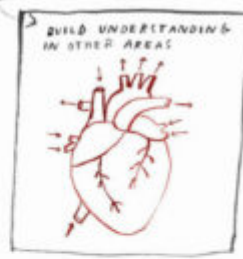
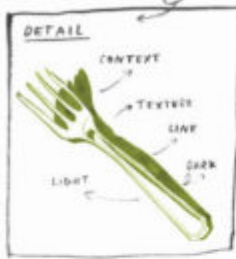


[This is featured in the 'Gestural Drawing with Charcoal' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



Show me what you see



SHOW ME WHAT YOU SEE METHOD:

1) GUIDE SEEING

"SHOW ME..."

2) RULES



3) CHALLENGE EXPECTATIONS

4) COUNT DOWN