# The Anatomy of a Pencil

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

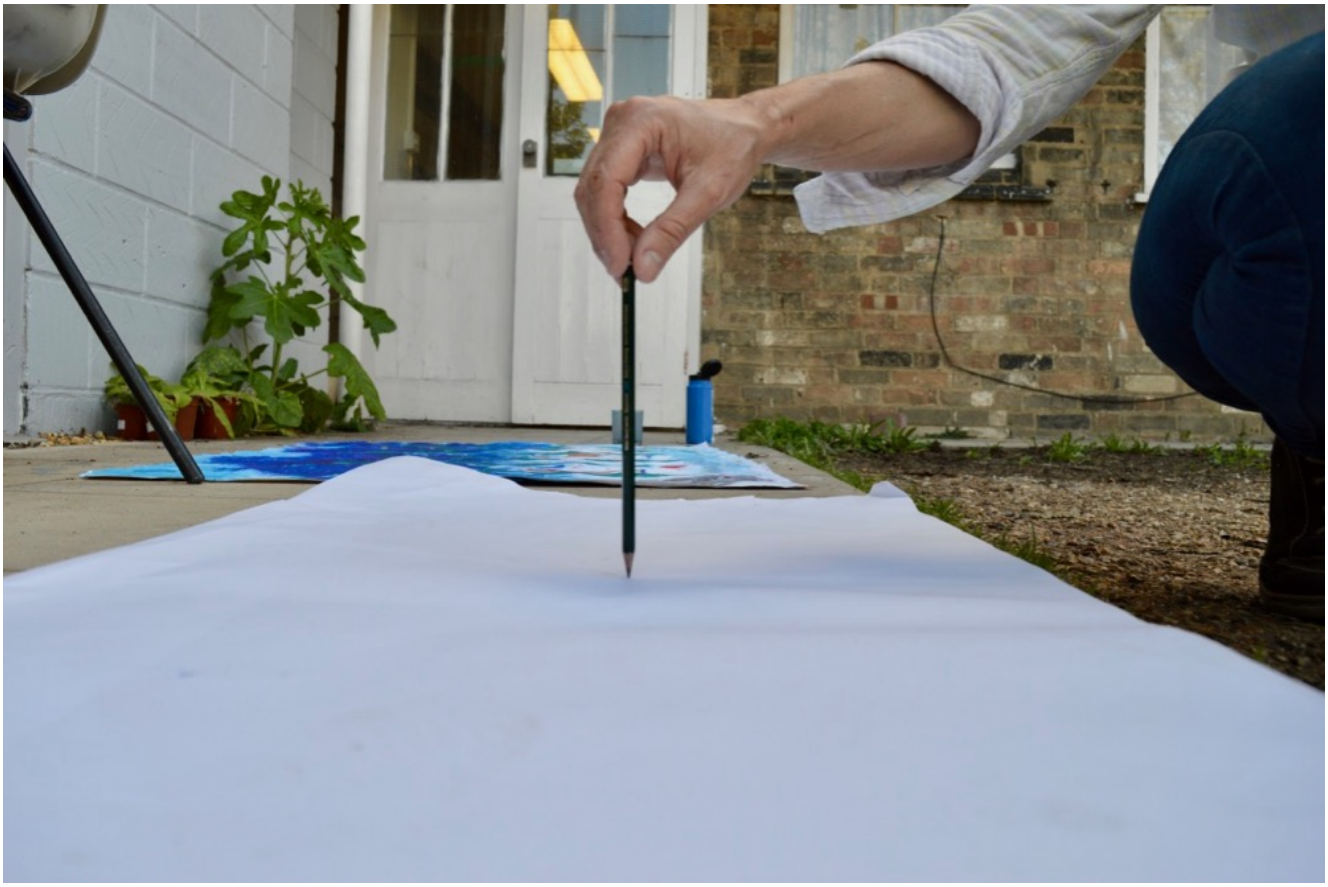
This is an AccessArt exercise designed to make you think about the potential of the pencil as a tool to create a whole repertoire of marks and lines with different weights, frequencies, depths and lengths.

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***

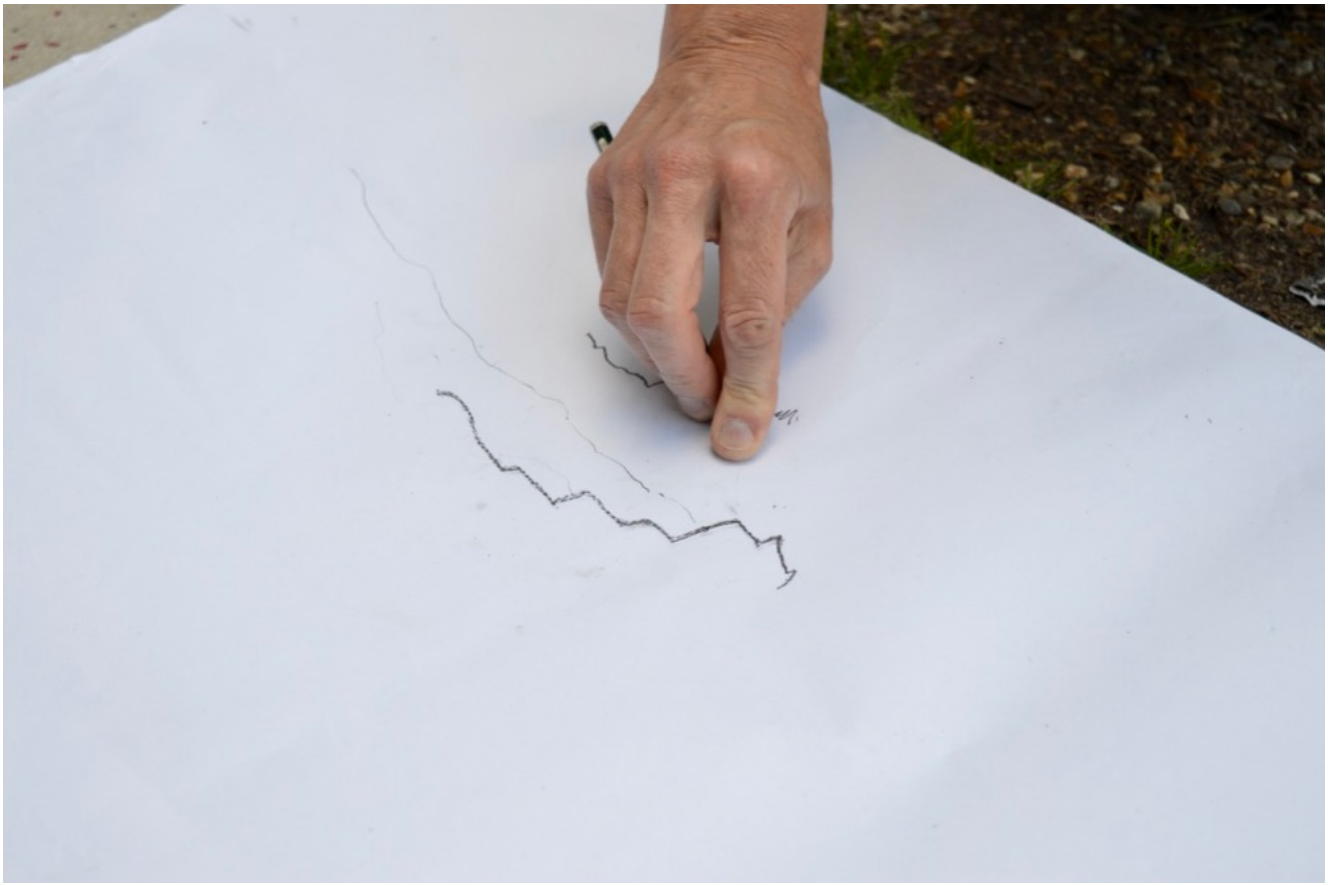
Vertical: Now grab the pencil and enjoy dragging it across the paper applying variant pressures to create different thickness of line

> 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.

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