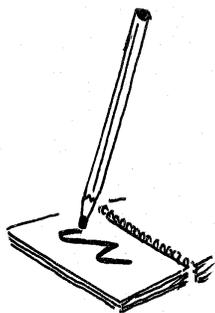


DRAWING MATERIALS AT OPUS

Drawing is a versatile medium which can be done just about anywhere with very few tools, materials, or preparation. This handout will introduce you to some of the basic drawing supplies, specifically dry media, which are available at Opus. See our handout on Choosing Pens at Opus for more information on pen and ink supplies.

CHARCOAL

Charcoal is available in compressed sticks, willow (or vine) sticks and in pencil form. Normally, we think of charcoal as thick chunks of coal, however, it is also available encased in wood – great for less mess.



Charcoal pencils are useful as a quick sketching tool and are convenient to take on outdoor sketching trips. They are cleaner than the other forms of charcoal and more durable because they are encased in wood.

Both charcoal sticks and willow sticks are excellent for quick sketches or warm-up

exercises. Compressed charcoal is a denser charcoal and is often used as a final medium because of the darkness that can be achieved. Compressed charcoal is available in hard, medium and soft grades thus allowing for a variety of marks and effects.

Willow charcoal is excellent for rough, gestural and preliminary drawings. It lifts off the page easily, allowing initial line studies to be invisible in the final image and easily worked back into with other media.

Willow is available in a variety of sizes from thin wispy sticks to chunky blocks. It is available in assorted packages so that you can experiment with all of the different sizes. It is a light and easy tool to hold, making it the perfect tool to loosen-up those tight drawings.



CHARCOAL PASTELS & OCALDO SKETCH STICKS

Charcoal pastels and OCALDO sketch sticks are much softer than compressed charcoal. They are an inexpensive tool for sketching on all sorts of paper and are made in square pastel form. Charcoal pastels are generally available in black, while OCALDO sketch sticks are available in the traditional drawing colours of sanguine, sepia, black and white. The softness of these drawing tools make for great density, heavy shadows, and easy blending. Their 'sticky' fibres easily adhere to textured surfaces – sitting in the dimples of the paper surface.

CONTÉ CRAYONS

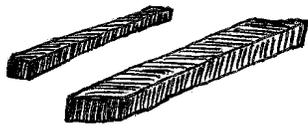
CONTÉ crayons are used for preliminary sketching, warm-up drawings and finished fine art applications. They are made from natural pigments, clay and a binder, and may be used to create a variety of effects. They come in a 'sketching' range of blacks, white, sanguine hues, grey and bistre. They are also available in a 'colour' range of both portrait and landscape colours. The density and quality of the pigment in CONTÉ crayons allows for vibrant colours on dark papers. Try using different coloured papers when working with CONTÉ and treat the colour of the paper as a part of the drawing. CONTÉ is ideally used on textured paper as the texture of the paper tends to 'grab' the pigment creating a textured and varied surface.

GRAPHITE STICKS

Graphite is familiar to many of you in wood pencil form, probably one of the first lettering or drawing implements you learned to use (next to crayons). Graphite is also available in stick form, which is produced in different thicknesses and hardnesses. This is another great media for use in building up and working back into your drawings. Due to the coverage quality of graphite, it is excellent for creating dense finishes or filling in areas of a piece where you want depth or shadow effects. As graphite particles are very

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smooth, you will notice a real sheen to areas where you have applied the graphite quite thick. Contrast this to a



charcoal or pastel material which will appear quite flat or matte by comparison. The larger surface area

of graphite sticks makes them ideal for making rubbings of different textures. Use paper stumps, tortillions, Colour Shapers or your fingers to blend and soften your marks no matter what dry drawing media you choose to use.

GRAPHITE & CHARCOAL POWDER

Drawing powders in either of these forms are great for techniques where you want to cover a large surface area, blend shadows, or fill out an area of a drawing. When filling an area with Graphite or Charcoal powder, a regular eraser can be used to 'draw' with as it takes the powder away and reveals the white of the paper beneath.

As these powders are essentially raw media (no binders or additives), they are quite enjoyable to use when you want students to experience hands-on blending techniques or where you want students to experiment with their materials. By removing the idea of a drawing implement per se, you can open up a whole new realm of possibilities. For instance, have your students apply the powders to a section of their drawing where they have sprayed glue or paint, mix the powders into different types of media, or move the powders around on a flat surface with a feather, brush, straw or hands. Or for something different choose a 3-dimensional object, prime it with a solid colour, and selectively rub the charcoal or graphite powder on the surface to create the illusion of light and shadows.

Of course you should ensure that students wear proper dust masks when using these powders, as powders of any kind can be dangerous when inhaled repeatedly.

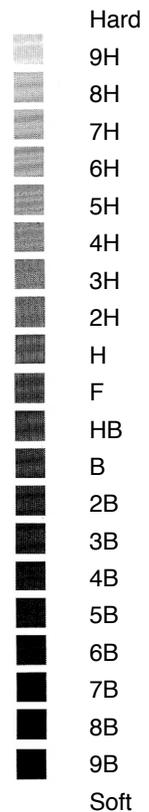
PENCILS

Pencils are available in different hardnesses from 9H (this will produce the lightest, thinnest line) to 9B (this will produce the darkest, thickest line). HB is the middle point of hardness and is probably the pencil you are most familiar with as it is the most common for writing with in the classroom. The range of hardnesses allows for a variety of mark making techniques. The darkest pencils are great for smudging or for areas that require little detail, whereas the lighter pencils are great for detail where little smudging is desired.

Opus also carries woodless pencils by PROGRESSO. These pencils are an alternative to the wood encased pencils and are much cleaner than graphite sticks because of their lacquer coating. The tips are all graphite with no wood. This makes them excellent for shaping with sand paper or knives. These are available in a soft range of hardnesses which make them velvety smooth and nice to draw with.

PROGRESSO also makes a water-soluble woodless pencil which can be used to sketch out watercolour paintings. When you have finished sketching and begin applying watercolour, the pencil will dissolve with water making it easy to blend into the picture.

PROGRESSO woodless pencils are great for both rough sketches and finished pieces.



PASTELS

Pastels are available in both a soft "chalk" version and oil. Pastels are an excellent way to explore colour with your subject as you can work rather spontaneously with the medium and the variety of colours that are available. Whether you



DRAWING MATERIALS AT OPUS

choose soft or oil pastels will depend on what effect you want. Both blend nicely, but each has a distinctive look.

Soft "chalk" pastels are made from pastes prepared with a water-soluble binder. They are available in a number of colours because two or more pigments can be mixed to produce a wide range of colours. The consistency of these pastels can be altered to be made harder or softer by adjusting the proportions of the ingredients used. These pastels are lighter than their oil counterpart. Soft pastels can be blended and rubbed into the paper and yet they seem to remain a more delicate and lighter colour/surface than oil. Soft pastels are also water-soluble.

Oil pastels have more body and thickness to them. These colours are made with pigments which are mixed into a paste with a fatty (mineral or linseed oil) binder. The consistency of oils will vary from brand to brand. Harder oil pastels will scrape away the previous colour laid down, whereas the softer oil pastels will add an additional colour. When working with pastels, use either willow charcoal or a heavier black charcoal for the preliminary work. After setting up your composition you can then start to work into the drawing without having to concern yourself with the formal qualities. Pastels can be easily blended, scraped or layered to create a wide range of effects. Much like paints, pastels are available in both a student and artist grades. The student grades of pastels contain more of the binding agent than the artist grades, and often contain less expensive or synthetic pigments. Artist grade pastels, on the other hand, contain less binder and higher quality pigments for lightfastness.

ERASERS

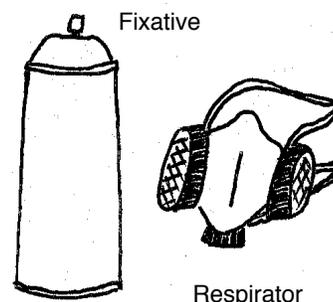
Pink pearl and gum erasers are probably the most common erasers in the classroom, however, there are many other types of erasers. White vinyl erasers are great for cleaning up pencil work on drawings and softer white erasers are perfect for harder to clean-up dry media such as charcoal, pastel and graphite powder. Soft white erasers and kneaded erasers make great erasing tools, but they can also make great

'drawing' tools. They can be used to make 'marks' by taking away areas of graphite or charcoal and making the paper colour visible. Kneaded erasers can be broken off in pieces and shaped for erasing fine details and working in tight spots. Or by applying less pressure than when you are erasing, they can be used to blend most dry media. When your kneaded eraser gets really dirty and is no longer useful for lifting colour you can either toss the kneaded eraser out or take advantage of the particles it has retained and use it to leave marks instead of lift marks. Art Gum erasers are another versatile eraser, which due to their very soft texture are great for erasing without damaging the delicate surface of most papers.

WORKABLE FIXATIVES

When working with dry media which produces loose particles such as

dust, for example Charcoal, CONTÉ, chalk pastels, and graphite, it is important to fix your work with a workable fixative as you go. The fix will protect the work you



have already done from smudging and dusting, but it still allows you to continue to work on these areas and build up layers of colour and texture. As this is an aerosol spray it is important to protect yourself from harmful fumes by working in a well ventilated area and using a respirator. When your drawing is completely finished you can use a final fixative such as a matte finish or gloss spray to ensure that your drawing is properly protected. KRYLON produces economical workable and final fixatives. Be aware, however, that once a final fixative is applied you can no longer work on your drawing.

DRAWING MATERIALS AT OPUS

Drawing Tips

- *Combine rubbings and line drawing techniques for richer drawings.*
- *Try mixing dry media, ie. OCALDO sketch sticks and traditional and coloured CONTÉ.*
- *Soft Charcoal pastels and soft coloured pastels work well together. They are both generally available in a square stick form.*
- *Experiment with drawing surfaces, different types of paper (smooth for cleaner, technical drawings and rough paper for varied lines and texture).*
- *Try working with darkly coloured surfaces. Work with your drawing media from dark to light rather than light to dark, using the darkness of the paper to be the dark areas of your drawing.*
- *Use GOLDEN Acrylic Ground for Pastels to enable you to work on alternative drawing surfaces or forms. Paint this versatile acrylic medium onto board, let it dry and then begin drawing.*

NOTES:



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