

**GRADE 7**  
**VISUAL ARTS**

## Unit 1 Creating in 2D

### Weeks 1–3 Revealing objects using scraperboard

In the next three lessons you will draw in two dimensions, using scraperboard. There are three practical activities for you to do, one for each lesson.

The act of creating is magical, especially when using the technique of scraperboard. Starting with the simplest of lines and smallest of marks, the objects magically begin to emerge as you work. This technique lends itself to fine detail based on careful observation of the shapes, forms and textures. Broad areas can also be scraped away to create bold contrasts.

Scraperboard is a versatile and inexpensive medium, especially if you prepare your own boards in class. Professional artists generally buy prepared boards which are made with white china clay and black India ink. The very smooth surface of these boards makes it easy to work in a detailed way. Remember that tip when you make your own one!

**You will need:** White wax crayon, black waterproof ink, black tempera paint, a dash of dishwashing liquid, craft-knife and simple etching tools (sharp found objects: nails, pins, compass points, and so on), stiff paper/board – A5 or slightly bigger, a soft wide brush; photographs in visual diary, A5 tracing paper



Figures 1.1–1.3 Scraperboard images

## ACTIVITY 1 Making a scraperboard and tracing a composition

### Make your scraperboard

- 1 Using your white wax crayon, colour solidly across the board.
- 2 Brush an even layer of the black ink and tempera pre-mixture over the wax. Apply a second layer, if necessary, in the opposite direction.
- 3 Leave it to dry and rinse the brush thoroughly.

### Design your composition

- 1 Work from your photographic collection of musical or other instruments.
- 2 Trace the largest shape first, positioning it at the bottom of the tracing paper.
- 3 Then trace the other shapes, building up a pleasing design.
- 4 Try to create depth by overlapping.
- 5 Play around with the proportions of the instruments.
- 6 Use the whole format and balance the positive and negative shapes.



Figure 1.4a The tools needed



Figure 1.4b White wax crayon and paper



Figure 1.4c Painting the wax surface of the scraperboard black



Figure 1.4d The board is almost black



Figure 1.4e Finishing painting the black surface



Figure 1.4f The completed surface must now dry



Figure 1.4g Etching on the scraperboard

### ACTIVITY 2 Transfer your traced design to the scraperboard

- 1 Place the completed tracing on the dry scraperboard.
- 2 Tape it gently down on the corners.
- 3 Go over the lines with a pencil. This will leave an impression on the board.
- 4 Carefully remove the tracing. Paste it in your visual diary as a record.
- 5 Now work into the scraperboard with your etching tools.
- 6 Do not rush.
- 7 Add more lines, texture and detail.

Look at the illustrations above, as well as at the experimental lines and marks you made in Term 1 for ideas. Vary the tools to get different effects. If you remove too much, repaint that area and wait for it to dry. Stippling and cross-hatching can help you to model the forms slowly. The direction of the marks you make should follow the form itself. Be aware of tonal emphasis: what parts of the forms are lit up or in shadow?

### ACTIVITY 3 Complete your scraperboard design

- 1 Concentration is the key as you complete your design.
- 2 Go over the instructions for the previous lesson.
- 3 Work carefully and step back every now and then to evaluate your progress.
- 4 It helps sometimes to turn your work upside-down to see what is lacking.
- 5 Ask your peers and teacher for input at this stage.
- 6 Once complete, display your work.
- 7 Assess each other's work informally, making positive and helpful comments.
- 8 Suggest any improvements, but never be personal or negative.

#### Key words

- **format** – the size and shape of the artwork; you compose the elements accordingly
- **stippling** – making small marks or dots to build up a texture or tone
- **cross-hatching** – lines which criss-cross and are close together to model form and add tone
- **monochromatic** – describes usage of a single colour (or black) with tonal variations

Scraperboard or scratchboard has a history going back over 100 years. It was a popular choice for the illustration of medical and

technical books during the 19th Century in Europe. More recently, fine artists and illustrators have reintroduced it as a vibrant

graphic medium, sometimes scanning the monochromatic artwork and then adding colour digitally. See below.

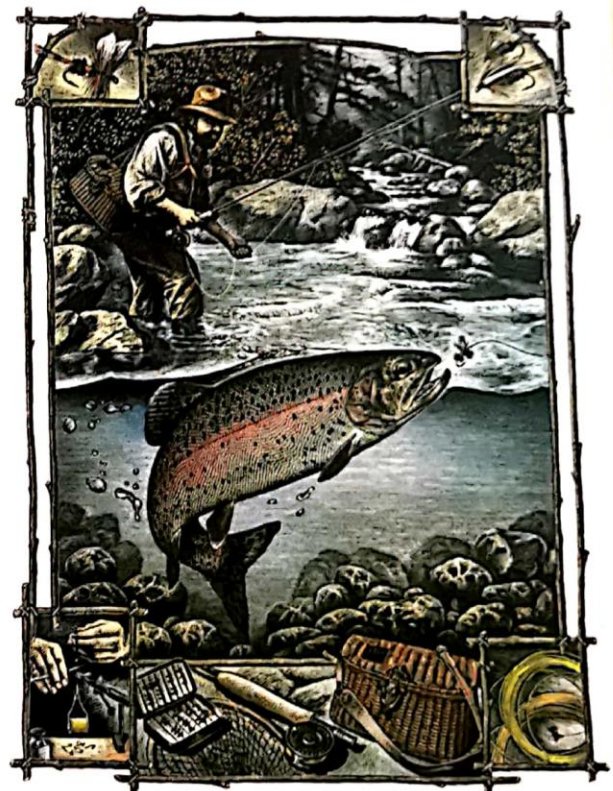
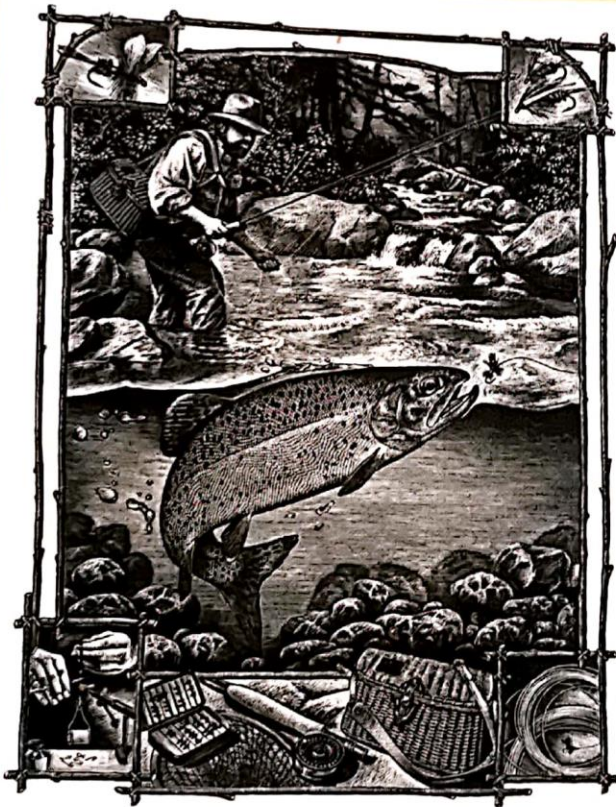


Figure 1.5 Scraperboards in black and white, with colour added later, Illustration Works

## Unit 2 Visual literacy

### Week 4 Still life tells a story

#### Symbols and still life

Artists use the genre of still life to practise their craft, as well as to express an intimate connection to the objects that surround them. Personal items are chosen either for their visual appeal or for their symbolic value. Think back to the Willie Bester still life featured in the first term.

#### Vincent van Gogh, Alexis Preller and George Pemba

The choice of items and especially the way these are composed can tell the viewer much about the artist's aim and state of mind. When Dutch artist Vincent van Gogh painted his chair with his pipe and tobacco, he was expressing his loneliness and feelings of rejection. His desire to form a painting partnership with Paul Gauguin, in a house in Arles, had just failed. They had a heated argument, which led to Van Gogh cutting off part of his own ear in anger.

Paul Gauguin left southern France, spending his last years living and painting on the tropical islands of Hiva Oa and Tahiti. Both artists were known as Post Impressionists, and were very influential in the expressionistic movements of early 20th century art. (If you can, watch a YouTube version

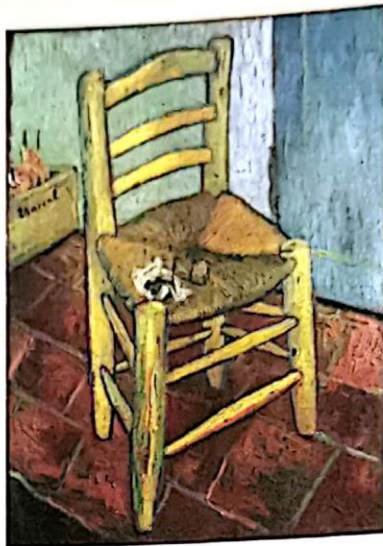


Figure 2.1 Vincent van Gogh, The yellow chair, 1888, oil painting

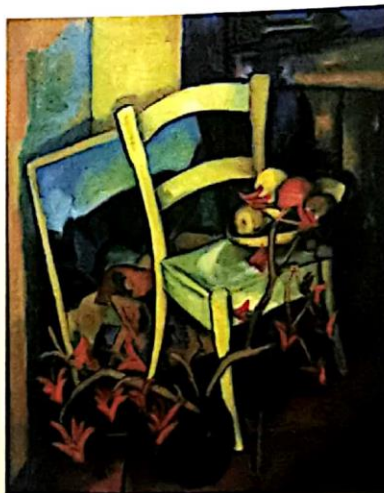


Figure 2.2 Alexis Preller, Still life with chair, 1937, oil painting

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of singer Don McLean's *Starry starry night*, which is a tribute to Van Gogh.)

The South African painter Alexis Preller was particularly inspired by the work of Van Gogh and Gauguin. You can see this in his painting, called *Still life with chair*. He also pays tribute to Gauguin by including sprigs of the exotic scarlet coral tree indigenous to Africa, and a bowl of tropical fruit, mangoes. One of his own paintings is leaning up against the wall.

George Pemba was also influenced by French artists of the late 19th Century, as



Figure 2.3 George Pemba (1912–2001) Still life: proteas, 1980, oil painting

well as fellow artist Gerard Sekoto, who lived in Paris during the years of apartheid. Pemba's style is therefore impressionistic, while remaining true to his African and particularly his Xhosa roots. He captured daily life

and the experiences of his people, joyous or sad, in a palette of warm and vibrant colour. The Order of Ikhamanga in Gold was awarded to Pemba posthumously in 2004 for his outstanding contribution to art and literature in South Africa.

### ACTIVITY 1 Compare three artists

**You will need:** pen, A4 lined paper or your resource book

Let's discuss the examples as a class and then write down the answers.

- 1 Draw up a comparative table with three columns. Write down the title, the artist's name, and the date of each work, one in column A, one in B, and one in C.
- 2 List their similarities and differences under the following headings:
  - a subject matter
  - b composition and use of space
  - c use of colour and application of paint
  - d materials
- 3 What, in your opinion, does the colour *yellow* symbolise generally, and in the works above?
- 4 How does Van Gogh show his feeling of loneliness?
- 5 Do you think that Preller's composition expresses the same feeling? Give a reason for your answer.
- 6 Can you identify any local flora in Pemba's work? Write them down.
- 7 State what else you know about the flora Pemba chose, and suggest why.

## Unit 3 Still life painting in 2D

### Week 5 Still life painting

In the previous unit you learned about still life. Think back on the works that you studied. Some of the works were traditional and some were modern interpretations of a still life.

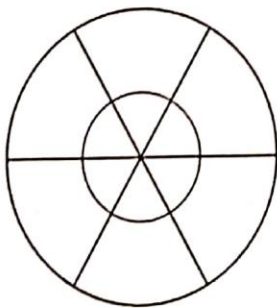
In this painting unit you will be sourcing your still life subject matter from your immediate surroundings.

- Look around your garden or your neighbourhood and try to find some plant foliage – perhaps indigenous plants like aloes and proteas, or grasses, small branches from trees and shrubs or cut flowers.
- Look for plants and flowers that have interesting shapes or contrasting textures. Make sure to ask permission from either your parents or your neighbours before you cut a plant for your still life.
- Once you have cut them, place them into a jar or vase of water so that they do not wilt.
- Bring these to your next lesson.



Figure 3.1

Figure 3.2  
Line diagram showing spaces for the primary and secondary colours



#### ACTIVITY 1 Revise the colour wheel

In Grade 6 you learned about the colour wheel. Let us recap a little on what you learned.

- Your teacher will give you a photocopy of the diagram on the left. Stick this diagram into your visual diary.
- Using your paints, select the primary colours and paint in the spaces provided on the diagram. You need to use only a very small amount for each triangle of colour.
- Remember to use tiny amounts of water to make the application of the paint a little easier.



- Then take equal amounts of each primary colour and mix the secondary colours and paint in the appropriate triangles.
- By the end of the lesson you should have a completed your colour wheel.

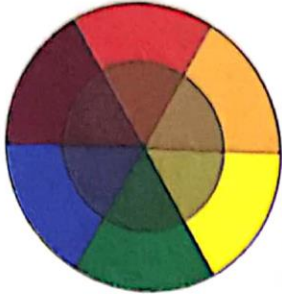


Figure 3.3 Colour wheel tones – darker towards the wheel centre

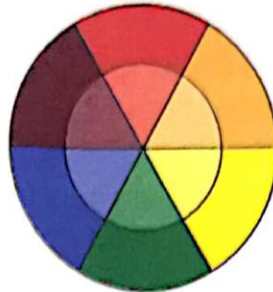


Figure 3.4 Colour wheel tints – lighter towards the wheel centre

### Key concepts

Above are two colour wheels showing you tints and tones.

A **tone** is what you get when you mix small amounts of black into the colour to make it gradually darker. See Figure 3.3.

A **tint** is what you get when you mix small amounts of white into the colour to make it gradually lighter. See Figure 3.4.

### ACTIVITY 2 Homework

Choose either a primary or a secondary colour that appeals to you.

Draw out the grid below into your sketchbook. Use squares of 2 cm for each block.



- 1 Start with the saturated colour in the far left-hand block and then, using very small amounts of white, create a tint gradation of your chosen colour.
- 2 Repeat the process again for the tones, using the smallest amounts of black.
- 3 Bring these two grids to class for your next lesson.

## Week 6 Start your still life painting

### ACTIVITY 3 Start your still life painting



Figure 3.5 Finding the right view

- Arrange all of the foliage into various containers or vases for your still life painting. You should have a varied and textured display of plant life in front of you.
- Using a viewfinder, walk around the still life and find a suitable composition by looking through your viewfinder. See Figure 3.5.
- Then position yourself in a place from where you would like to paint.
- Using A2 paper and a pencil, carefully draw out your composition. Make sure to fill the page with detail on your drawing.
- Draw the outlines of the table's surface.

### Skills support

To make a viewfinder, take a small piece of paper (A5) and, using a cutting blade, cut a rectangle in the middle of the page. This then makes a little 'window'; you can look through it to decide on a suitable composition for your painting.

## Week 7 Colour wash

### ACTIVITY 4 Colour your drawing

By now you should have a pencil drawing of the still life drawn out onto your A2 page.

- Get a palette, water, paint and your brushes.
- Using only primary colours, black and white, mix your lightest colours and start by painting the light tones on your painting.
- Choose slightly broader brushes for the washes and this initial stage of the painting.
- You can also create a wash colour (a thinner application of paint, mixed with more water) for the background.

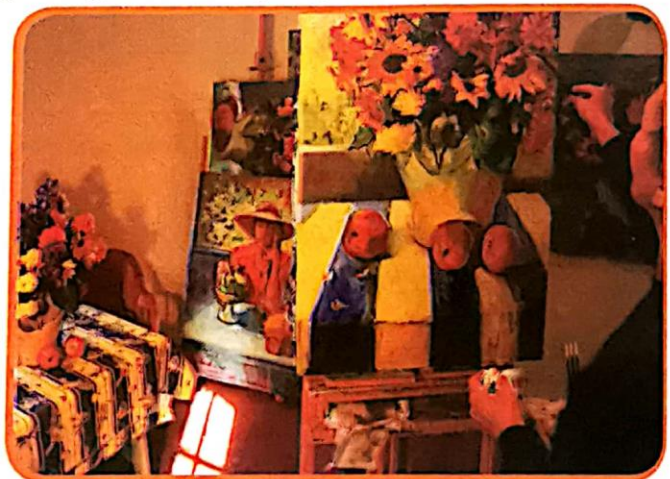


Figure 3.6 The painting and the subject

- You can then mix some darker tones and start to fill in those areas too.
- By the end of this lesson you should have covered your page with washes of light and dark tones.
- You should now have an idea of what your final painting might look like.
- Make sure that you clean up your painting area and that you wash all of the paint out of the brushes and palettes.

### Key words

- **subject matter** – the content or things represented in the artwork or painting
- **foliage** – branches, cut flowers, twigs
- **pigment** – the substance that makes up a colour
- **apprentice** – a trained helper who assists the artist in his or her studio

## Week 8 Add texture and detail

### ACTIVITY 5 Final lesson for your painting

This is the final lesson for your painting. It is time to add the textures and detail to the foliage and background.

- Choose smaller brushes for this lesson.
- Mix your paints and colours for the detailed areas.
- Observe carefully and decide whether an area looks spiky, rough, jagged, smooth etc.
- You want to try and recreate the texture of the plants visually.
- Also look at where the sunlight is coming from and how the light falls onto the plants. This could create a sense of atmosphere for your painting.
- By the end of this lesson you should have a completed still life painting.

Before the invention of oil paint in tubes, all artists had to grind and mix their own paints and pigments by hand. Some artists had an apprentice to help them. One of the most expensive colours to make was ultramarine. The name ultramarine came from the Latin word '*ultramarines*', which means 'beyond the sea', as this semi-precious stone was originally imported from Asia by sea. It is called lapis lazuli.



Figure 3.7 Lapis lazuli rock and ground pigment, with its vibrant blue colour

## Weeks 9–10 Local craft

## Key words

- **traditional** – styles and techniques handed down from one generation to the next
- **contemporary** – modern or of the present time
- **craft** – skill or technique like weaving or wire work, where objects are made by hand
- **technique** – the method or the skill used to create an object (for example, the way a painter will apply the paint to the paper or canvas)
- **materials** – the objects, substance or things used to create an artwork (for example, paint, wire, plastic)

South Africa has a long history of arts and crafts, dating back to the Iron Age (about 500 BCE). Many of these traditional craft items were made out of clay, wood and metals such as bronze and iron. These craft items were made for a specific function, such as carrying water or storing grain. Some of the jewellery found from this time was made from ostrich eggshells and cowrie shells.

Today we live in a vibrant and creative South African society producing a wide and inventive range of arts and crafts. Craft objects have a global appeal. Many tourists buy craft items as a reminder of the foreign countries that they have travelled to. It would not be unusual to find a beaded Zulu doll in a home in Sweden. Some crafters make and sell their works on the streets, while others operate from shops and export to overseas countries.

Crafters often use traditional materials such as beads, fabric, leather, wood and clay, and many crafters have great wisdom about how best to find and use them – and how to look after the natural resources. This is an important way in which people use our natural environment.

Today, some artists are making use of new materials such as telephone wire, tin cans, bottle tops and plastic bags. They use these materials to create many craft objects such as cars, motorcycles and radios. They also stitch or knit together yarns made from plastic bags and make them into handbags. Decorative chickens are also made out of plastic bags. See Figures 4.1 to 4.3.

Most craft items today have a function or a purpose. However, objects are often created for decorative reasons, and are used in shops, homes and hotels to create a sense of atmosphere, or merely to decorate a room.

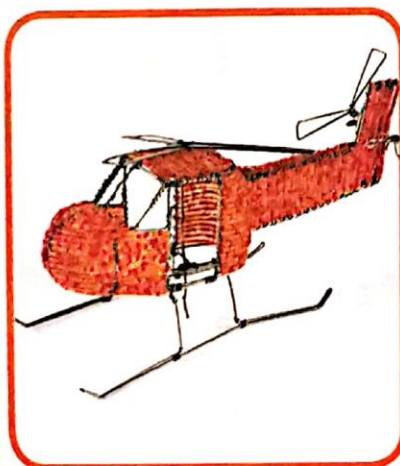


Figure 4.1 Helicopter

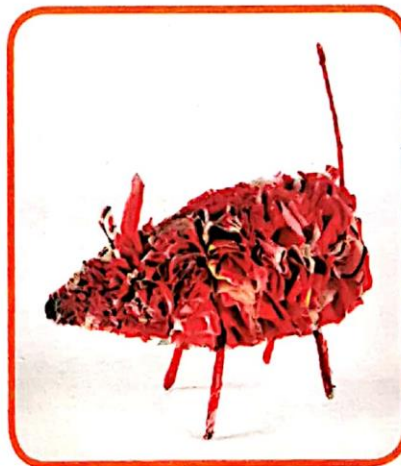


Figure 4.2 Recycled plastic pig



Figure 4.3 A handbag

## ACTIVITY 1 Identifying craft

Look carefully at Figures 4.4 to 4.11 below and on the following page. These are works made by South African crafters.

As a class, see if you can identify and match the technique used to make and create each craft work.

Now, see if you can match the materials used to create these craft items.

Previously your teacher asked you to bring a craft item from home. Place these objects on the table in front of you. Choose any two objects and, together with your partner, compare them, using the table on page 270. Copy this table into your resource book and answer the questions that follow on the next page.



Figure 4.4

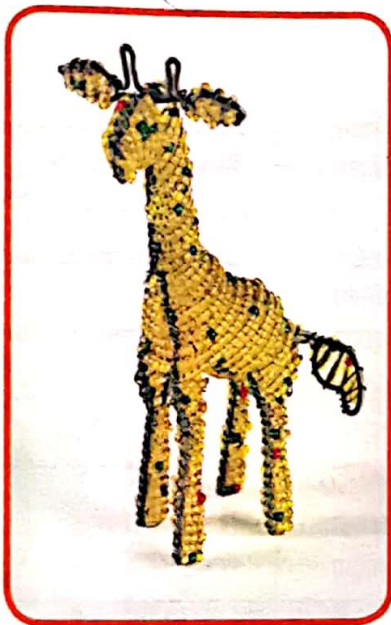


Figure 4.5



Figure 4.6



Figure 4.7



Figure 4.8



Figure 4.9



Figure 4.10



Figure 4.11

	Figure number	Figure number
What materials have been used?		
Is the object traditional or modern?		
What colours have been used?		
Where do you think this object could be sold?		
Who do you think made the object?		
What do you think the purpose or the function of the object is?		

## Case study: Atang Tshikare

Atang Tshikare is an inventive artist who was born in Bloemfontein. He originally started out as a street artist, but now he creates innovative

designs for sneakers. His talent was spotted by a top international sports brand, and they have commissioned him to make and craft his designs onto

their shoes. He works under the name 'Zabalazaa', and uses anything from graffiti markers to aerosol paint and fine liners to create his designs.



Figure 4.12 The customised sneakers decorated by Atang Tshikare (left)



Figure 4.13 The artist himself (right)

### ACTIVITY 2 Research and investigation of a local crafter

Formal assessment:  
20 marks

**You will need:** your notebooks, pens and pencils for this activity

- Together with your partner, go the library or make use of the internet to research a local crafter.
- Find someone who works and creates craft in your community or area. Ask your teacher for advice if you need to.
- Find an artist that appeals to you and your partner.
- Then choose one craft object made by the crafter and complete the following:
  - 1 Write a short description of the work (about five sentences).
  - 2 Discuss the materials used.
  - 3 Discuss the technique used.
  - 4 What do you think the purpose or function of the object is?