

Exercise walk-through

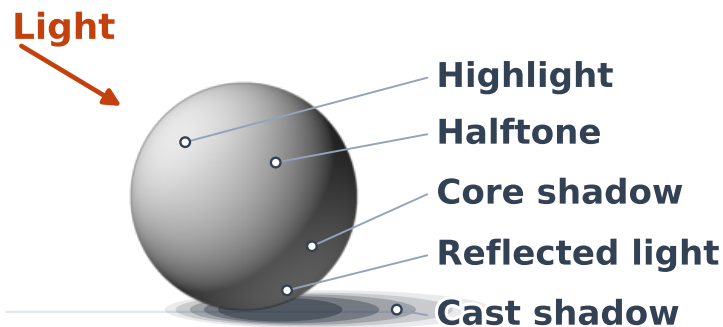
2.4

Chiaroscuro and High-Contrast Drawing

AP Drawing

What we will cover

- 1 The value scale
- 2 Light logic
- 3 Rendering form
- 4 Chiaroscuro
- 5 Tonal composition & notan
- 6 Toned grounds & subtractive drawing



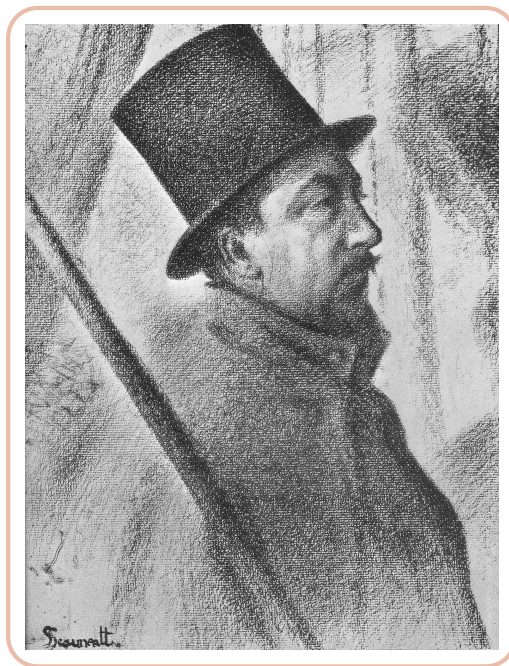
AP Drawing · Value, Light, and Form · the six zones of light on a sphere

Chiaroscuro and high contrast

Chiaroscuro uses strong contrast for drama – the language of Caravaggio and Rembrandt.

- a single strong light against deep shadow **pushes the subject forward**
- **tenebrism** is extreme chiaroscuro
- charcoal and ink wash reach **rich darks** quickly

Save the strongest contrast for the **focal point**.



Tonal drawing: value models form under one light

Planning the value design before you commit

thumbnail sketches

5–8 cm – they let you **test several value plans in minutes**

why so small

at that size you cannot draw detail, so you can only decide the *shapes*

group your values

many small lights scattered everywhere feel noisy; connected value shapes feel designed

the hierarchy

one dominant value, one secondary, one accent organises the whole page

notan

reduce the scene to two or three flat values and check the design still reads

a toned ground

start from a mid value and work in both directions – adding dark *and* lifting light

The composition is decided in the thumbnail, not on the final sheet. Five minutes of thumbnails saves a drawing that cannot be rescued later.

Exercises 2.1·2.2

2.1 Extreme chiaroscuro, where most of the image sinks into darkness, is

[1]

☐

A notan

B tenebrism

C frottage

D grisaille

2.2 Where should the strongest value contrast sit, and why?

[2]

Exercises 2.1-2.2

2.1 Extreme chiaroscuro, where most of the image sinks into darkness, is

[1]



A notan

B tenebrism

C frottage

D grisaille

2.1 B

- **tenebrism** is extreme chiaroscuro

2.2 Where should the strongest value contrast sit, and why?

[2]

2.2

- at the focal point; because contrast attracts the eye first

Exercise 2.3

2.3 Name two media that reach deep darks quickly. [1]

3 Studio & portfolio tasks

3.1 Make a **chiaroscuro study** under one strong light in a dark setting.

(a) Render a face or object with one blazing lit area and deep shadow. [4]

(b) Use charcoal or ink wash to reach rich darks; keep a full value bridge. [1]

3.2

() Work on **toned paper**: add darks with media and lights with white/eraser. [2]

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Full solution 2.3

2.3

- any two of: compressed charcoal, ink wash, black conté

3.1

- strong single-light drama; focal point carries the strongest contrast; rich controlled darks; a value bridge, not black-vs-white only

3.2

- the ground acts as a mid-value; both darks and lights added, form reads clearly