

# Haley Prestifilippo | Session 1:

## Using Traditional Mediums in Nontraditional Ways

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### List of Required Supplies:

- Be aware that any mediums or materials provided might be destroyed in the process!
- A selection of various traditional mediums, which could include but is not limited to:
  - ▷ Crayons
  - ▷ Water based markers
  - ▷ Alcohol markers
  - ▷ Pencils
  - ▷ Colored pencils, watercolor pencils
  - ▷ Soft or oil pastels
  - ▷ Watercolor palette
- Other possible tools or mediums, traditional or nontraditional – creativity is encouraged with this. This could include but is not limited to:
  - ▷ Cotton swabs or blending stumps
  - ▷ Brushes, sponges, other devices for wet media
  - ▷ Rubbing alcohol
  - ▷ Water
  - ▷ Scissors and/or pen knives
  - ▷ Iron file
  - ▷ Cheese grater
  - ▷ Apple peeler
- Mixed media, watercolor or other thick paper, able to withstand water media.
  - ▷ Sized recommended between 9"x12" – 18"x24"
  - ▷ A pad would be easy to share
  - ▷ Students may want to use more than one sheet, extras are suggested
  - ▷ Drawing paper can be used but cannot take as much rough handling
- Small cups as students need, for water, rubbing alcohol, or whatever else they decide
- Paper towels
- Small plates or old lids, for placing materials such as paint or powders
  - ▷ Enough for each student to have at least one

**Additional Links (optional):** 15-minute video: Ted Talk by Tim Hartford, “How Frustration Can Make Us More Creative”

[https://www.ted.com/talks/tim\\_harford\\_how\\_frustration\\_can\\_make\\_us\\_more\\_creative?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_harford_how_frustration_can_make_us_more_creative?language=en)

**Space/Facility Requirements:** Tables, table coverings (inexpensive tablecloth or butcher paper), sink for cleaning up after.

**Student Time Required:** Flexible; 2-3 hours recommended but can be compressed or divided into multiple classes.

### **Step-by-step Instructions:**

Students should bring an object to class that is small, but meaningful. A photo of the object works, but the object itself is best, so that they can have a tactile experience with it. Alternatively, the instructor can provide small, interesting objects, such as old fast food toys or small thrifted objects.

### **Vocabulary**

- **Medium:** The material used to create an artwork. For drawing, this is traditionally pencil, charcoal, graphite, or pastel.
- **Marks, mark-making:** The act of putting a medium on to a surface. These can be smooth, rough, quick, short, long, etc. Ask students if they can name other types of marks.
- **Concept:** The idea behind an artwork. This could include the artist’s goals, a theme, a question, an answer, etc.
- **Formal elements:** The basic elements of a drawing. This includes the size and shape of the drawing.

### **Exercise:**

1. Begin with short discussion about drawing:
  - a. What is mark making?
  - b. How can we use mediums to create new marks? Descriptive and emotive marks?
  - c. How can we use marks to evoke an emotion with our work, rather than simply illustrate a concept through imagery?

2. Show the 15-minute clip of the TED Talk by Tom Hartford, [https://www.ted.com/talks/tim\\_harford\\_how\\_frustration\\_can\\_make\\_us\\_more\\_creative?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/tim_harford_how_frustration_can_make_us_more_creative?language=en)
3. Students will experiment using traditional mediums in nontraditional ways, inventing new ways to make marks. (30-45 minutes, depending on length of class)
  - a. They should use the object they brought in as the subject of this drawing.
  - b. Encourage students to be as inventive as possible, to break their assumptions of how these mediums must be used.
  - c. Students will most likely choose to work with one or two mediums.
  - d. Students should come up with 2-3 new ways of making marks; at least one must alter the usual form of the medium.

**Examples:**

- i. Grating a crayon and using shavings
  - ii. Using Q-Tips to apply rubbing alcohol to paper, drawing on the still wet alcohol with alcohol marker
  - iii. Popping watercolor discs out and drawing with them, then throwing water on the drawing
4. Gather and discuss each other's discoveries briefly, using vocabulary words. (15-20 minutes)
  - a. Work can be pinned or taped as a group to a wall with painter's tape, depending on how space allows.
  - b. Work could be laid out on floor together.
5. On a new sheet of paper, students try each other's methods to create an image of their object. (30-45 minutes)
  - a. Focus on trying to evoke a specific mood with their object using the new marks and mediums they've discovered.
  - b. It does not have to be fully representational – it's more about the "mood" being evoked or using the marks to convey a sense of something related to an idea.

6. Gather the class and look at everyone's work together to discuss what they made. (15-20 minutes)
  - a. Exciting discoveries made
  - b. Difficulties encountered – how were these overcome? Were they successful?
  - c. How does this change their view of mediums and their relationship to an artwork?
  - d. Any other observations. Can students think of examples of artists using mediums and marks to support their concept, rather than simply using images.
7. If the next class session will be continuing with experimental drawing, exploring nontraditional mediums, give the students the homework to bring in objects to use as mediums for next class. Be aware that some students may have allergies. A few ideas include:
  - a. Nature: dirt, leaves, acorns, rocks, pollen, flowers, etc.
  - b. Food: carrots, broccoli, tomatoes, cocoa powder, matcha, powdered Jell-O,
  - c. Candy: chocolate, Twizzlers, SweetARTS, etc.
  - d. Liquids: coffee (brewed or grounds), tea, juice (orange juice, grape, cranberry), milk
  - e. Spices: turmeric, cinnamon, etc.
  - f. Other: bar of soap, candle

**Student examples. All images courtesy of the artists.**



