



Reflective Material Observation

Tip. Put your knife fork and spoon in the same picture to make it a still life.

Photography tip: Turn any indoor lights off so you only have daylight and fantastic shadows.

Photography...a KEY aspect of an art project.

Photographs are great FIRST HAND RESOURCES as YOU set them up and take them...they're not from books or google. You are looking at them FIRST HAND.

So, grab your camera, and some cutlery and let's get experimenting.

It says to look out for

- 1) Reflections
- 2) The light
- 3) The shadows



These are what make these items very difficult to draw. BUT if you spend the time looking and studying your subject, your observation becomes easier-remember the work on the right side of the brain??



To begin any composition you need to find the right space. By a window is best, with NATURAL LIGHT. A clear table- white cloth is good to start with, our focus here is the cutlery itself.

Additionally add a lamp to play with light angles and intensity.

This is the most common composition most students opt for.

It is basic but it gives a good sense of the proportions and you can see the reflections quite well.

Take a photo from this angle so that you can observe the lengths of the cutlery. Note the comparative widths of your pieces too.

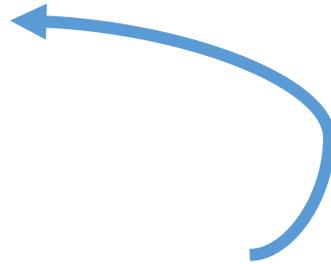
On a plain white background will give you an intense contrast.



Now lets change the lighting.

Using flash on the camera, different lighting, or angles with the window.

Take pictures of all the different shadows and intensity of light you can. This can be individual pieces of cutlery or grouped together.



How many different shadows and highlights did you create?
Which one do you think is best? Do you have a favourite angle towards the window or a certain angle of flash on the camera to create some interesting results?

Keep focusing on being creative with photography and don't worry yet about the difficulty of the drawing 😊

Now lets start to think outside the box.

We have some ideas of lighting and you may have instinctively played around with composition already. But now let's get creative with how we can lay out our cutlery.

It is good to trial sketching all of the types of cutlery as this challenges all of the forms, shadows, widths and lengths etc... but why not more forks or spoons?

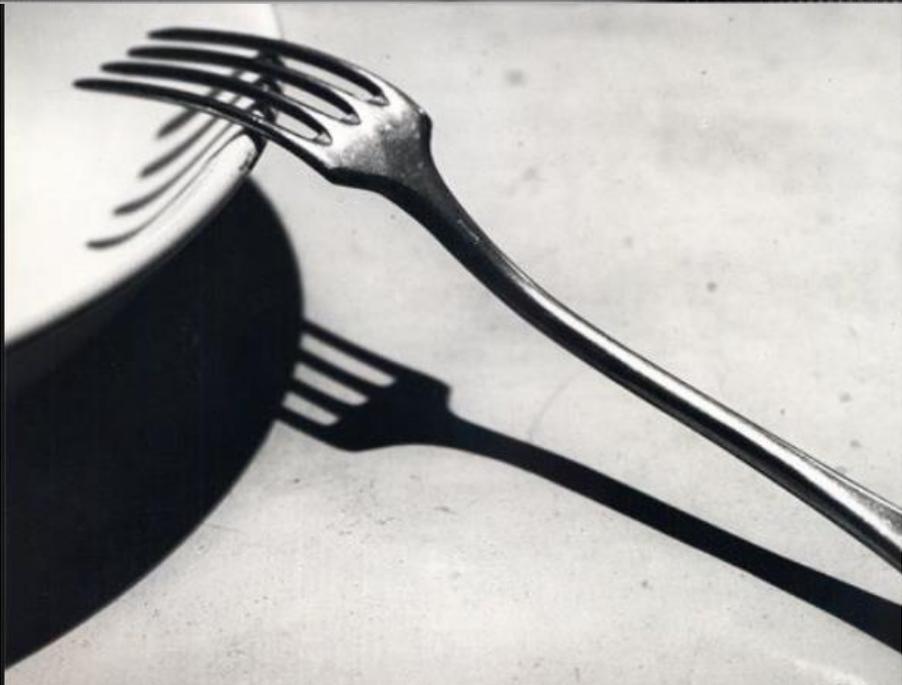
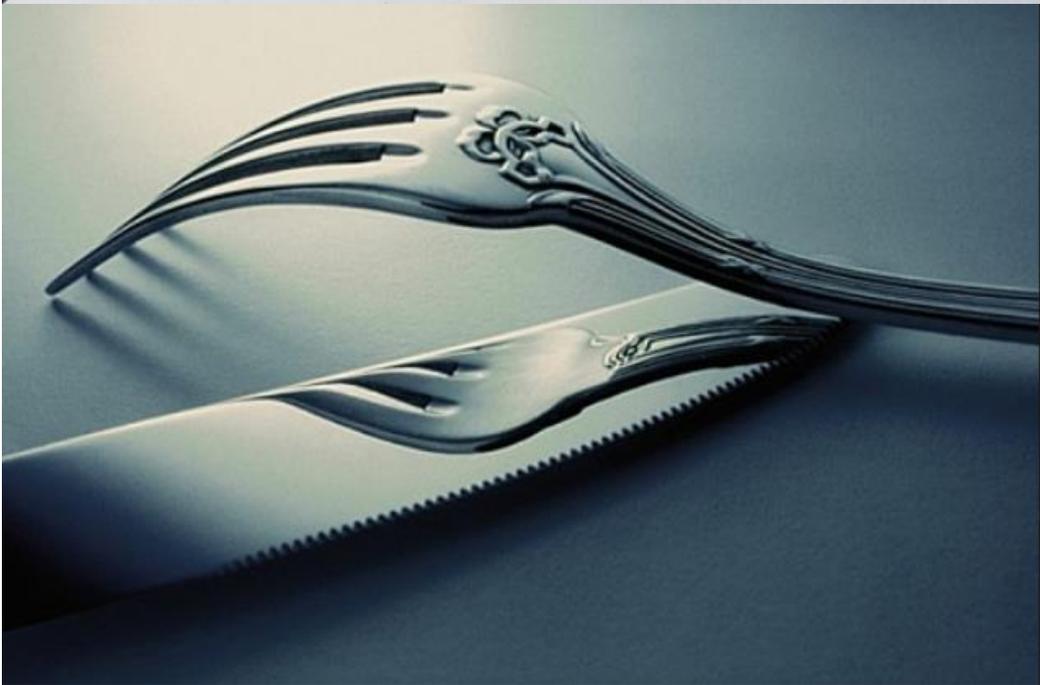
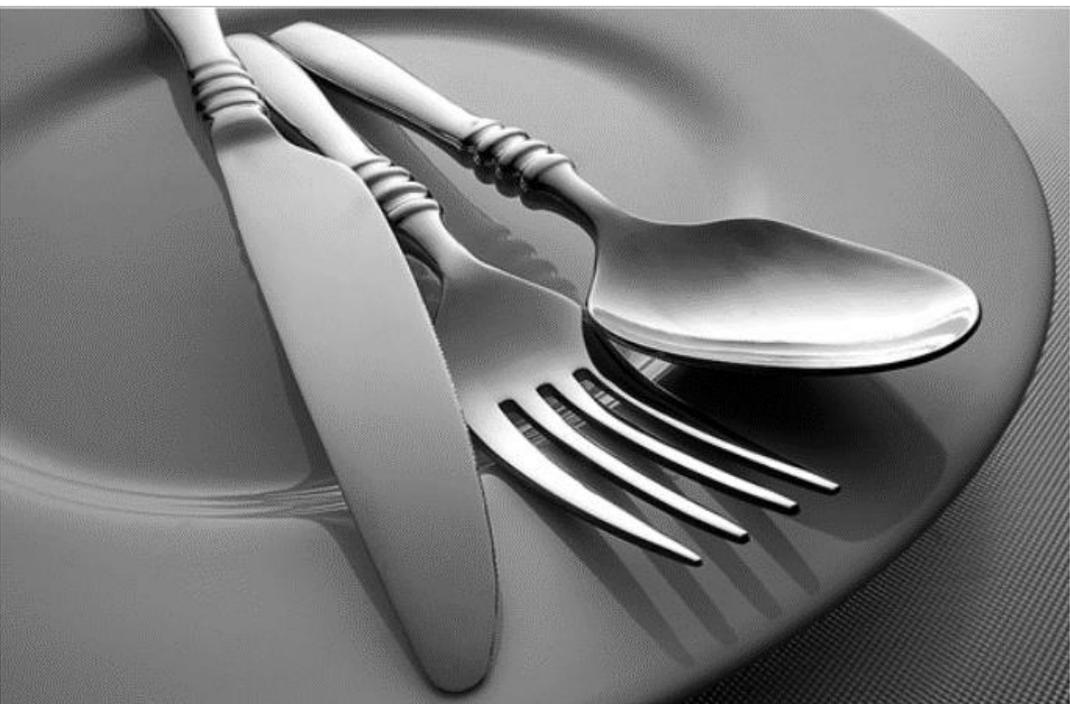
Let's see how many compositions you can come up with. Here are some ideas:

- 1) Overlap them
- 2) Drop them (small height!) and see where they land
- 3) Interwoven-prongs of the fork?
- 4) Add more cutlery
- 5) Take photos of interesting angles
- 6) Zoom in closely on parts of the cutlery





Reflections?
Highlights?
Shadows?



At the end, you should have an array of quality photographs to sketch from.

Insert them all into a document and observe them closely, annotating which ones work and why you think that is



Set up your cutlery in front of you like this.

Get the lighting as you liked it so that you create the best shadows, highlights and reflections.

This can just be a preliminary sketch but it will check you have the proportions and that you understand your subject.

Give yourself a set time of about 10 minutes, using any mark making technique you like, to sketch the proportions of each piece of cutlery. If time, you can mark out where the shadows are.

This can be done in a sketchbook, no bigger than A4.



Give your sketch a quick evaluation.

Is there one piece that looks out? Why is that?

Are the sizes right? Width and heights?

Which is the best? Why?

Can you see their forms or do they need more shaping with tone?

Doing this will aid your development before the real thing. It will highlight to you where things aren't right. If you're not sure, upload your photo and drawing for a quick evaluation from your tutor. It helps to have another eye on your work.



I strongly advise to try out different papers. Brown parcel paper is cheap and can be so much fun to work on. It is slightly textured and you can add white and black very easily using graphite, pencils, charcoal, pastels and chalk! This task is about highlights and shadows so it is a good time to experiment further with this subject.

This paper is strong enough to withhold a lot of ink if using Quink and then can be bleached...glue some black tissue paper on top and bleach that to create amazing sketches too...experimenting is the key.



Now that you have your first sketch you might decide to continue with this composition. It will reinforce your observation as you can now go back and be more detailed and fix those mistakes first time around.

OR

Why not get your cutlery into a more interesting composition?

You've done your experiments and you have your photography. You can work from this but in ADDITION to the real life composition in front of you.

Photos are good to turn upside down or intensify shadows, but the original objects should always be in front of you 😊

So let's set up your favourite composition- quick sketch first, or straight into your final graphite/charcoal artwork.





These are student artwork... I know, good eh?
What I like it the composition and the focus on certain details.

Remember the focus?

- 1) Reflections
- 2) Highlights
- 3) Shadows



Later on you can go onto paints or inks for this subject. Cutlery can be beautiful art, if it is considered and thought through.

This looks like an acrylic medium. The scale of the finished piece needs to be considered for each type of media you use. Graphite can be smaller due to the nature of detailed lines that can be created. Charcoal and acrylic tends to be bigger.

This could be created using Quink Ink and bleach. It creates the most incredible effect.

Lesson 5

Make a drawing of a Knife fork and spoon using either charcoal or pencil.

Make sure you are shading light, shadows and reflections.

