

INTRODUCTION

Search for the word **illustration** on the internet and you will be presented with a vast and often contradictory mass of definitions and opinions. Illustration is:

- * Often confused with the act of drawing;
- * Both a profession and a way of communicating;
- * Subject to the personal interpretation of not only the artist, but possibly the person who commissioned them (and then everybody who views the work).

And of course this is just one opinion 😊 Add to this the intricacies of copyright, project management, seeking and securing illustration work and method.....and you can see how difficult it was for us to decide what we would base this course upon.

We have decided that regardless of why or how you are illustrating, or for whom, that at the heart of this subject is the act of producing a piece of artwork which will visualise words or concepts. How the art is produced, under what contractual terms (if any), and what happens next are all secondary to that amazing moment when you engage your imagination and attempt to visualise a series of words. We believe that represents illustration in its purest form, and this is the heart of what the course will concentrate on.

Through six assignments we will use our experience to mentor you through six illustration projects. These six projects will enable you to practice interpreting six different pieces of writing or concepts, producing rough sketches and finished pieces of art for each, all with a tutor alongside providing encouragement and advice whilst simultaneously acting as the 'client'.

At the end of this course you will have the basic skills required to be an illustrator, and you will have tried out a number of different disciplines. You may then decide to specialise as a comic book artist, cartoonist, a children's illustrator, a graphic designer, something broader or a combination. You will also have begun to build a portfolio of sketches and project material, which will be invaluable if you intend taking this further.

There have to be constraints though with a subject this wide. You can't put a limit on creativity, but it is sometimes necessary to limit how it is displayed. So whilst illustration is only limited by what you (or your client) want to do, the projects in this course will only be assessing 2 dimensional illustrations. Also, whilst photography is certainly a valid means of illustrating, the college already have a course which covers that discipline, so pure photography is not acceptable for the projects that follow. Digital, watercolours, mixed media, pencils, pens etc. are all accepted depending on your personal style.

Practice these shapes. Now your practice regime has expanded to line drawings of everything around you to everything around you plus shapes. Whilst you are doing this, look around you and see all the geometric shapes in your world; your room is a cube (for most of you), your cup is a cylinder, that apple is a modified sphere and so on.

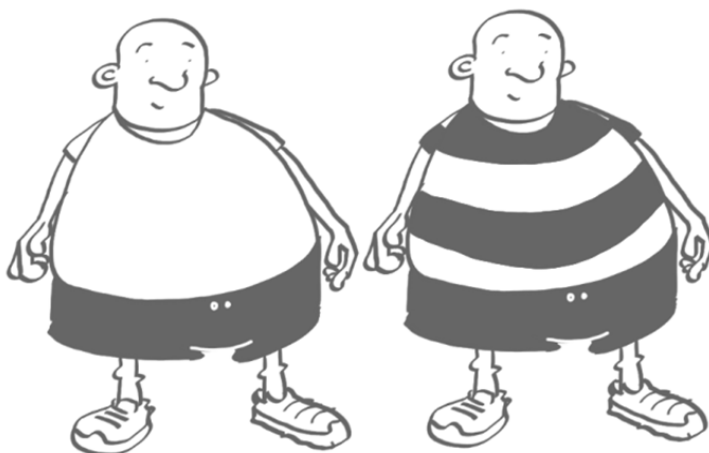
Draw, observe and then draw some more until these shapes become second nature to you. When we look at the human form later, knowing how to draw three dimensional shapes will help you.

In the drawings of the shapes I used a dotted line to draw through what you could see to suggest the solidity you couldn't see. When you need to represent this in your drawings you achieve it with either shading or clever use of lines. For example:

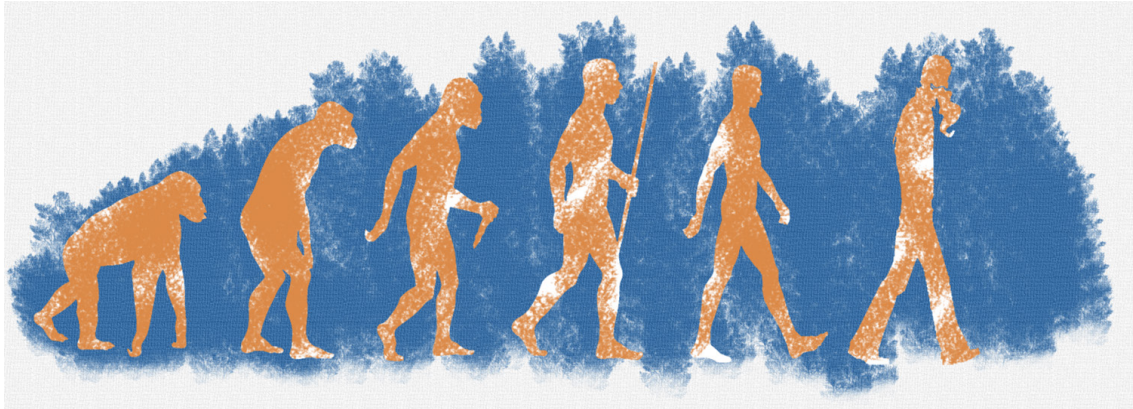


The circle on the left looks flat, the one in the middle has some hatched lines drawn on it to suggest shadow from a light in the top left, and the one on the right is the same but the shadow is applied using grey marker pens. The two on the right give a suggestion to the viewer that they are solid because of the illusion of light and shade we have added.


Another way to suggest a solid form is by adding a pattern. Look at this:



In the drawing on the left we suspect that this cartoon guy has a big round stomach. By adding stripes to his t-shirt, and giving the illusion they are bending around his big round stomach, we have provided enough visual clues to tell our viewer what they are seeing. If we added shading too it would become very obvious.



I imagine this could be placed at the top or bottom of the article as shown below:



Beard trend is 'guided by evolution'

The ebb and flow of men's beard fashions may be guided by Darwinian selection, according to a new study. The more beards there are, the less attractive they become - giving clean-shaven men a competitive advantage, say scientists in Sydney, Australia.

When 'peak beard' frequency is reached, the pendulum swings back toward less-bearded ones - a trend we may be witnessing now, the scientists say. Their study has been published in the Royal Society Journal Biology Letters. In the experiment, women and men were asked to rate different faces with four standard levels of beardedness. Both bearded and clean-shaven faces became more appealing when they were rare.

The pattern mirrors an evolutionary phenomenon - 'negative frequency-dependent sexual selection' - or to put it more simply, 'an advantage to rare traits'. The bright colours of male guppies vary by this force - which is driven by females changing preferences. Scientists at the University of New South Wales decided to test this hypothesis for men's facial hair - recruiting volunteers on their Facebook site, The Sex Lab.

'Big thick beards are back with an absolute vengeance and so we thought underlying this fashion, one of the dynamics that might be important is this idea of negative frequency dependence,' said Prof Rob Brodie, one of the study's authors. The idea is that perhaps people start copying the George Clooney and the Joaquin Phoenix and start wearing those beards, but then when more and more people get onto the bandwagon the value of being on the bandwagon diminishes, so that might be why we're not peak beard.

'Peak beard' was the climax of the trend for beards. In professions not naturally associated with a scruffy one - bankers, film stars, and even footballers began sporting facial hair.

Some say the Rubicon was crossed in January when Jeremy Corbyn, the BBC Newsnight presenter, shaved his beard off, saying 'beards are SO 2013'. Corbyn's beard - which briefly trended on Twitter - sparked a debate about **possible** - the tear of beards.

In this latest experiment, 1,453 women and 213 men were asked to rate the attractiveness of different samples of men's faces. Some were shown mostly full beards. Others were shown mostly clean-shaven faces. A third group were shown an even mixture of all four varieties - clean-shaven, light stubble, heavy stubble and full beard. Both women and men judged heavy stubble and full beards more attractive when they were rare than when they were common. **possible** faces, negative frequency-dependent preferences may therefore contribute to changing beard fashions, Prof Brodie concludes.

'We know beards go through cyclical fashions. People used to speak about a 30-year timescale,' he said. 'There is a wonderful paper studying photographs of men from 1871 to 1972 in the illustrated London News. Sideburns moved on to moustaches, then full beards. In the 1970s it was handker moustaches. In the 80s it was Magnum P.I. moustaches. In the 90s we saw a lot of clean shaven men, and now big bushy beards are back.'

The recent boom may have its roots in the financial crisis of 2008, Prof Brodie suggests.

'I think one of the reasons beards have made a comeback now is that it's a difficult time. Young men are competing to attract someone when work is not easy to come by, so we might expect some aspects (of masculinity) to get turned up to eleven. After the Wall Street Crash in the 1930s there is some circumstantial evidence that beards got big again. So maybe economic conditions have set the stage for the recent comeback in beardedness. When Greece's economy tanked - did beards take off? That's something we're going to look at.'

One of the paradoxes of evolution is that genetically strong traits favoured by one sex do not simply become fixed in the other - a level of diversity is often maintained. Though beard styles are of course not spread via genes, there may be other visible human traits which are.

'With female hair colour, there has been speculation that red, brown and blonde spread via their novelty - but the evidence is very ambiguous. Dr Brodie told BBC News.

His team plan to continue their **possible** investigations and are looking for volunteers for their latest experiment testing how people like faces with varying levels of beardedness.

'Heavy stubble seemed to be the best in our last study. **possible**. But those describe average tendencies,' he said. 'Luckily in real life, we never mate with an average. We mate with an individual.'

Or across the bottom of the facing pages centred on the gutter as shown below:

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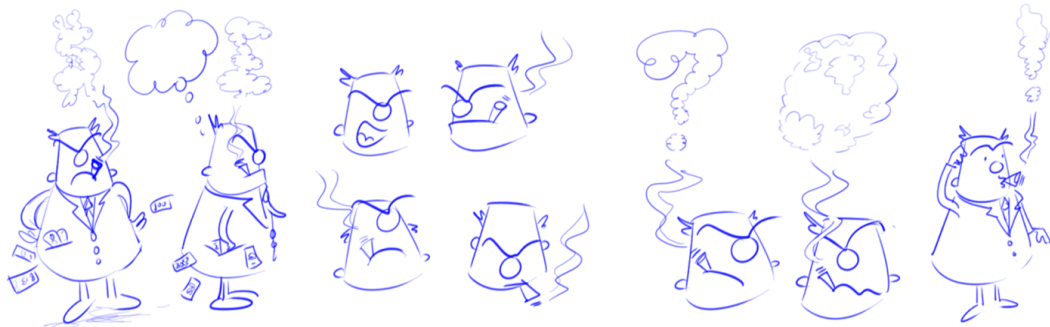
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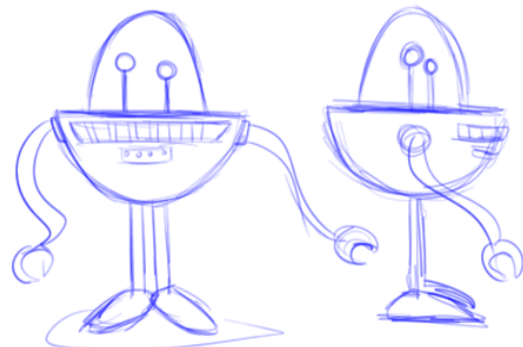
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If you are sitting doodling, bring one or more characters into your head and fill a page or more with them. Play with their expressions and different ways to portray them. The more familiar you are with them the easier it will be to use them to tell a story. Here is a page of doodles from a recent project of mine:



Notice how the guy at the top evolved into the one at the bottom. This happened as I continually drew him, and in conversation with the writer.

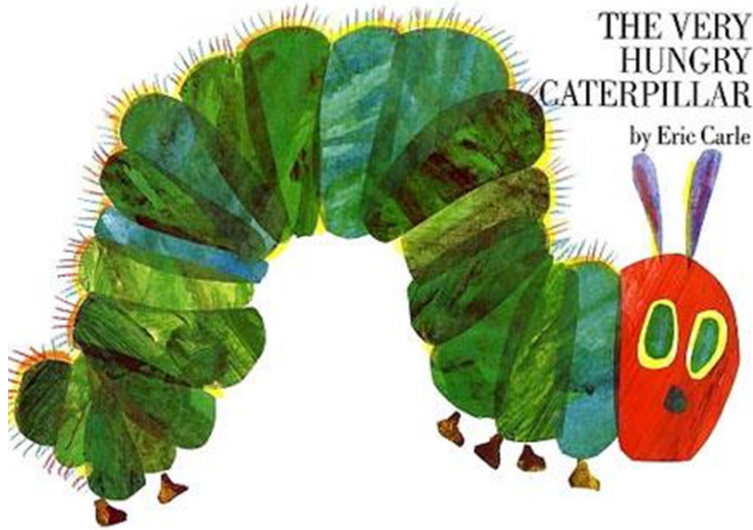


The robot character also changed completely after sitting drawing him for a while until he felt right.

You can't see it from these sketches, but I also drew the cast of characters together so I could decide on their heights in relation to one another, and ensure that I liked the feel of them as a group. Setting this is also useful reference for later when I drew them in different panels within the pages to ensure consistency.

What is a picture book?

Maurice Sendak, writer and illustrator of the classic 'Where the Wild Things Are' described them as a 'visual poem'. They tell a story, most commonly in 32 pages with a combination of words and pictures which blend together harmoniously to stimulate a child's imagination.



Eric Carle, author of The Very Hungry Caterpillar started as a graphic designer. In an interview he said:

“To me pictures need writing and writing needs pictures. A child once called me a picture writer, and that’s a good way to describe me”

During my research for this section of the course I read a number of books on the subject and conducted a lot of internet research. I wanted to present the definitive top ten picture books of all time as examples, but it is a very tricky list to agree on. Here then, is a list of six books which combine favourites of mine, ones which have won awards and those which everyone seems to mention;

This is self-indulgence on my part as this is one of my favourites. I buy it for every child I know as I think it is superb. First published in 1964, this 24 page book tells the story of an indignant mole on a search to find who it was who pooped on his head. Kids love it and so do I. It comes in a 'plop up' version to! Wolf Erlbruch won the Hans Christian Anderson award for illustration in 2006.

