



Design for beginners

Tone in design

Steve Garner:

Activity Two is an activity in tone. Again I am going to use a thick pen to draw my pencils that appear in your modelling work book and these can be quite crude really. The objective of these three pencils is to give myself some spaces in which I'm going to draw some basic tone. So these are supposed to represent three rather chunky pencils like that and I'm going to use these nine squares or nine rectangles whatever you've drawn to practise some tone. I've got some pencils in with me. If we start with the heaviest of the pencils – the pencil is held on it's side, or as close to it's side as you can get, and gently rubbed over the surface. It doesn't matter if you don't get quite to the edges but the point with the tone is you don't see the lines of the pencil. It comes down as one flat area of tone. So I'm putting a tone across all three boxes of one pencil.

What I'm going to try to do now is to build up three weights of tone. So the second square in my pencil I'm going to go back over in a different direction. Same pencil, same weight and build up the tone there and I'll go over the third one at the same time because this last one will have at least three weights of pencil tone.

So the idea is to get one flat area and if you don't feel it's dark enough I'm trying to get a progression of light, medium and dark with the one pencil. I could go over that again like that and I could just tidy up the edges using a rubber like that.

If I go to a different weight of pencil – this is a slightly harder pencil to the previous one and that's going to give me a different type of tone and you can pick any pencils for this. It doesn't matter I've called them a soft and a medium and a hard pencil. It doesn't matter what weight you've chosen for these. What you should arrive at is a block of nine tones which demonstrate that the harder pencils give a much lighter, softer tone whereas the softer pencils tend to give you a more blacker, denser body of tone. And those skills will be quite useful when you come to putting shading in to your design drawings.

So that's Activity Two.