

# **It's Okay to Erase on This Drawing!**

## **Natalie Shumka**

[www.natalieshumka.ca](http://www.natalieshumka.ca)

This workshop will guide you through the techniques you need in order to create a beautiful imaginary planet. These techniques of applying and then erasing some areas of charcoal can be used to create any other drawing project you can imagine. Charcoal can be intimidating, but Natalie will help guide you through the process step by step. You will walk away with a full art lesson plan, an example to show your class as you teach, and an understanding of the medium of charcoal that can be applied to future lessons. Let's have fun while creating something imaginary, realistic, or both!

### **Is there anything that attendees need to bring**

copy paper or drawing paper, at least 8.5"x11" Please keep in mind that heavier paper works better than copy paper, if you have it

something firm to draw on, like a clip board

1 or 2 sticks of willow or vine charcoal

white eraser

kneadable eraser if possible, but not necessary

## Class Aims:

**Artistic Aims:** To create an understanding of tonal value (shadows)

- ~create realistic drawings which have 3D qualities
- ~foster sense of imagination,
- ~give children a sense of control right now when the world feels out of control. They can make any planet they like!

**Other Classroom Aims may include:**

- ~hand-eye coordination
- ~biology (what's a healthy biome)
- ~literature (Le Petit Prince, bien sur!)
- ~science (gas giant v terrestrial planet)
- ~geometry (circle v sphere)

## First Step:

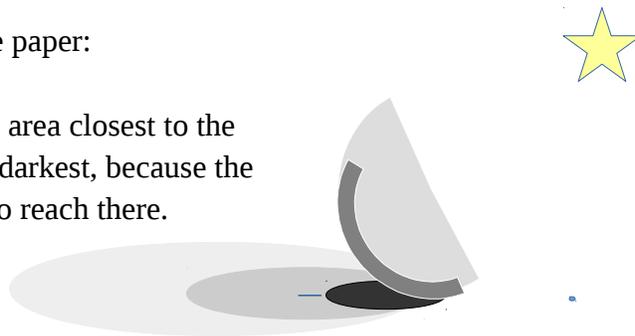
Have the children experiment with creating different tonal values (shades of grey) on a separate piece of paper.



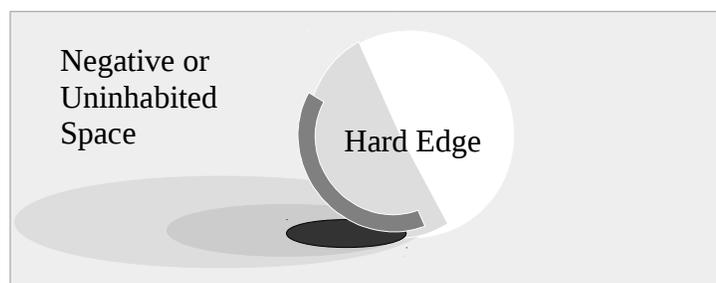
On a second piece of paper, you may do one of two things: either lightly shade the entire piece of paper with a middle gray value, or start right away by discussing the direction of the sun/light source

To start with white paper:

~Point out that the area closest to the sphere will be the darkest, because the light is least able to reach there.



~Add the background, (Negative space) in order to help define the shape of the sphere.



~Then add details as you and your students see fit, always keeping in mind that you can use the eraser to reveal highlights, and emphasize shadows.

~**Remember to blend!** There is a difference between a hard edge and a soft edge.

~Hard edges are visible in shiny objects, like chrome coffee pots, clean cars, and polished apples.

~Soft edges help objects appear to be round, and you need to blend the charcoal in order to achieve this look.

~Remember that objects often have both hard and soft edges. A peach will have a hard edge surrounding it, but soft edges within, because it has a fuzzy surface.

~**You can use your eraser to:**

~sharpen edges, to make your drawing stand out.

~create the appearance of fine lines, such as whiskers on a cat, or steam from a hot cup of coffee

~add highlights, in order to create shape and emphasis form.

~**Using charcoal in this way is a lot like using clay.**

~Remember that the eraser is as much a drawing tool as the charcoal, just like clay you can keep adding and subtracting charcoal.

~As long as the charcoal is applied somewhat lightly, you'll be able to lift it, to create subtleties in your drawing.

~It's always easier to add charcoal, than to subtract it later. Start lightly and add to create dark areas.

~Make sure you include some dark areas in order to emphasise the shape and volume of your object.

~**Finally, Draw BIG!** It's far easier to draw with charcoal when the drawing is large. In a small drawing, details get smudged very very easily.

## **For the Classroom!**

**Pick a theme for the children to focus on.** Planets are really fun, in my experience, because the kids who want a realistic planet will create one, and kids who want an image where they control everything they add to their own planet can.

Is this a section on Astronomy? Each child could pick a planet to draw. Or a constellation to create. Or both!

Draw a planet, and add trees, oceans, animals, anything could go! It doesn't have to be to scale.

Are you studying nutrition? How many fruits and vegetables are round? That would work really well!

**Have the kids practice making marks with charcoal before hand.** Otherwise, you may find you have 25 drawings of black paper. Get them to practice erasing the charcoal, even writing their name with an eraser could be really fun, and drawing in the negative space gets them used to drawing outside the sphere!

**Then, as shown above, think about the light source, and the direction.** Lightly draw in the shadow underneath the sphere (unless it's a planet, there won't be one!) and then the shadow on the dark side. Blend, blend, blend! You want soft edges.

Draw the negative space, to create a hard edge around the sphere.

Add details using both charcoal and eraser!

And you're done!