

## Monochromatic Still Life Painting

### Supplies:

- One colour of watercolour paint or paint alternative such as strong brewed coffee/tea, or food colouring.
- Paint brush(es)
- Water
- Paper ( heavy weight or watercolour paper if possible )
- Masking or painters tape (optional)
- If no paint or alternatives are available pencil crayon, wax crayon, or graphite pencil could be used in their place using dry medium layering techniques instead. Remember to stay with one colour though!

### Motivation:

Value is an important element of art. Refining your ability to see different values and value ranges in the things you are trying to draw or paint can help you to push your art further.

In this 2 part exercise you will practice creating, observing and applying a range of values.

### Part 1: Create a Value Scale

At the top or side of your paper create a long thin rectangle divided into 8-10 numbered pieces.

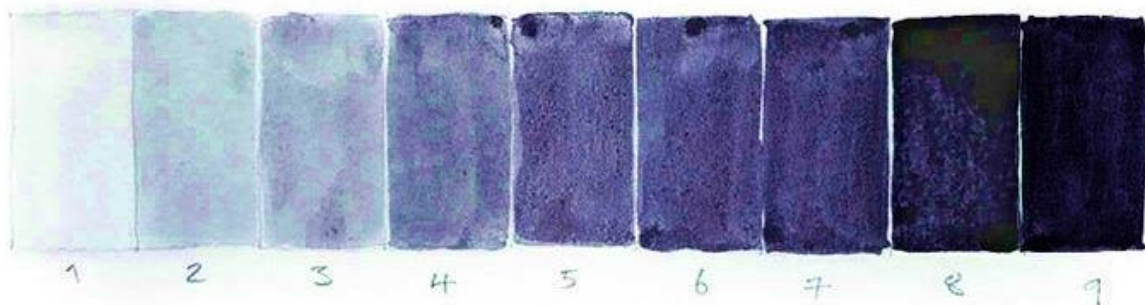
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Start with your paint or paint alternative **at full strength** and fill in the 10<sup>th</sup> square.

*Note\*\*\* If you are using dry watercolours, add a small bit of water and work your brush around on the paint until you have a fairly thick, and well saturated colour on your brush. Use a scrap of paper to test it out until it is nice and opaque and looks like the colour on the palette. If you are using a dry medium vary your pressure, and work in layers to achieve the different values.*

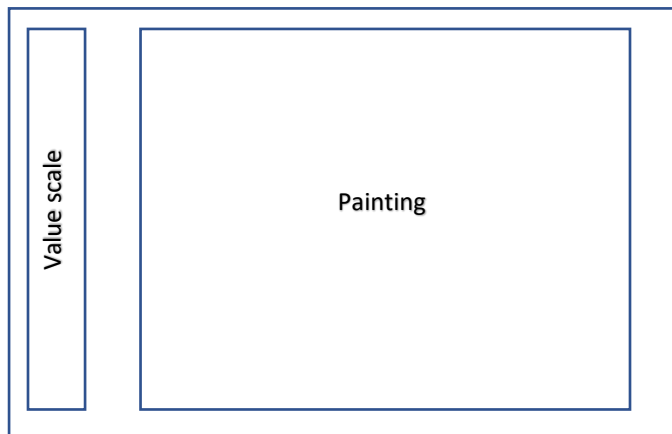
Add a little bit more water to dilute your colour each time you move to the next square. If you don't want to end up wasting a lot of paint try using wax paper or aluminum foil as a palette.

When you are done you should have a nice tonal range that looks something like this:



## Part 2: Still life painting

Tape off a square or rectangle on the main section of your paper, making sure that the tape does not go over the value scale you just created. If your paper is small feel free to use separate sheets for your value scale and painting.



Using 3 or more items found in your house, set up a still life that you feel is interesting to look at. The kitchen is a great place to scout for items – fruits, veggies, mugs, utensils... So much to choose from! The items do not have to be the same colour but should have a range of values (lights and dark tones). **Sketch your composition lightly in pencil.**

Remember the rules for effective composition:

- Use an odd number of objects
- Create interest by overlapping or grouping the objects
- Use the rule of thirds and place objects to one side rather than in the center
- Zoom in! Avoid having a lot of empty space around your objects. Don't be afraid to let your items get cropped on the sides, bottom or top.

Starting with the lightest areas, begin adding your paint. You can flood the area with water and then add the paint (wash technique) or you can dilute the paint on your palette to the correct tone and paint directly on to the paper (wet on dry technique).

Paint all the light tones first then go back and repeat the process with the next darkest tone to build up the **range of values** and sense of shading and form in your objects. Remember to **look for the highlights even in dark objects** and be sure to not over work those areas. You may need to let some areas dry before adding more layers to prevent the paint from bleeding into areas you want to leave light.





Your final piece and value scale should look something like this



*Demo in Ultramarine Blue by Varo, 2015*  
<https://i.imgur.com/vqbbKnh.jpg>



*Life*  
Sylvester Banahene  
2010

<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/life-sylvester-banahene.html>

**Photograph your final work and submit it on the TEAMS assignment page.  
You can also share it on social media using the hashtag #IBartsHSB if you like!**