

# Exploring the World of Art

By Angela Beeson

## Unit One: Colored-Pencil Drawing - Animals

In this project, we will create a colored pencil drawing of an animal.

Supplies needed for this project:

- Sketching pencil
- Eraser
- Sketching paper\*
- Set of colored pencils\*

\*Most sketching paper works well with colored pencils although there is special paper designed specifically for colored pencils if you'd rather get that. Check what the package says. If it says "works well with all dry mediums," it will work for both pencil and colored pencil.

\*You can purchase a good set of colored pencils at any craft store. I don't recommend getting a cheap brand such as Rose-Art. Crayola colored pencils are fairly high quality as are others such as Sargent Art. If you want an extremely high quality brand, you can go with Prismacolor, although it is also expensive.

### Lesson One: Pencil Sketch

Supplies needed:

- Drawing pencil
- Eraser
- Drawing paper

This week's project is a colored-pencil drawing of an animal of your choice. Today's lesson will be the basic sketch of the animal. After you gather your supplies, you will need to choose a picture of an animal. You can look in a book or on the Internet for this. Try to find a colorful animal or one with a lot of color surrounding it. For example, you could choose a plainer animal such as an elephant, but it can still be a colorful picture if it's an elephant in the savanna. If you are able to, print off your picture roughly the same size that



you want to draw it; this way it is easier to get the correct proportions on your own drawing.

You can choose to draw this sketch with colored pencil if you wish, but colored pencil does not erase very well so I would recommend using a graphite pencil for this first line drawing. Set your photograph close to your paper and look at it a lot while you draw. The more you look at it, the more familiar you will become with the shapes and lines in it and the better your own drawing will be.

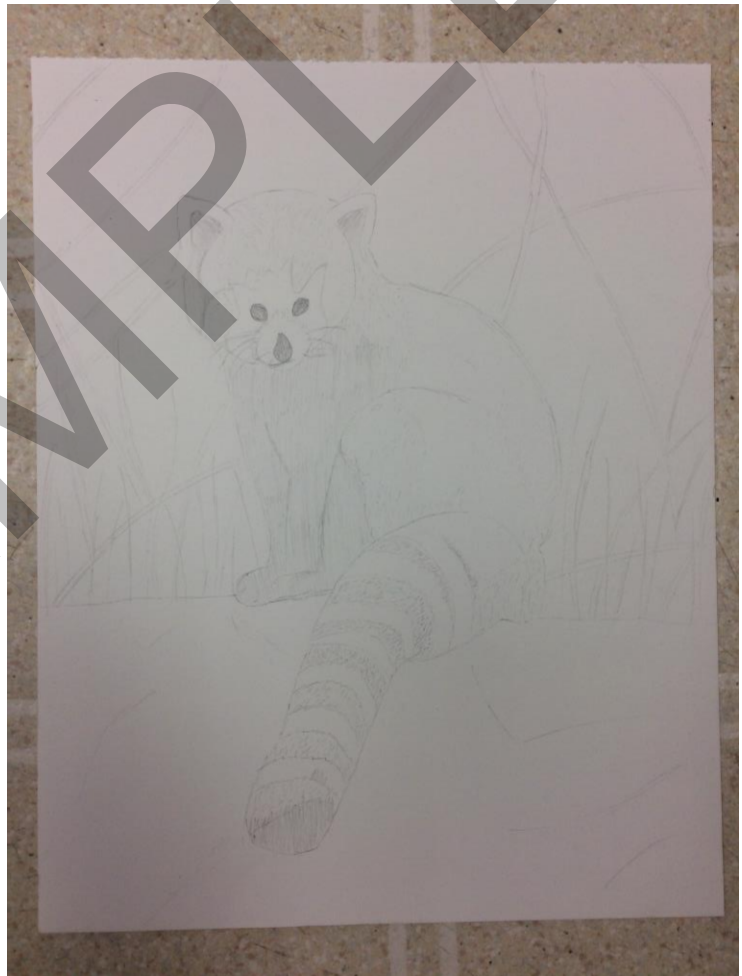
Before we start, please remember that there are no mistakes in art. This is hard to believe if a project does not turn out as you had imagined it, but it is true. Your drawing will be unique and completely your own creation.

When you are ready to begin, look at the outside edges of your animal first. How far away are they from the edges of the paper?

Start by lightly drawing lines that show the edges. Try to have good proportions and not make your animal go off the paper because you started drawing it too high or too low. When you draw lines that aren't quite right, try to go over them and fix them rather than immediately erasing them. What shapes do you see in the animal? Does it have a round circular body, or is it more like a rectangle? Keep these things in mind as you sketch.

Keep redrawing, erasing lines that don't belong. Little by little you will see the animal more clearly and accurately. You can do some shading if you want or keep it simple and do only the lines. (I did some shading on my red panda to indicate which parts need to be a darker color.)

Once you've got it close to how you want it to look, congratulations! You're finished! In the next lesson, we will start adding color.



## Lesson Two: Adding Color

### Supplies needed:

- Sketch of animal created in Lesson One
- Colored pencils
- Sheet of drawing paper

If you would like more drawing practice, feel free to draw your animal again on a new sheet of paper before adding colors. However, if you are happy with it and feel like you have a good concept of sketching, you can use the one you've already drawn.

I recommend getting a good brand of colored pencils for the best color results. Work with what you have, but if you really want to create high-quality art projects, it's worth a small investment to purchase good pencils.

Before applying color to your picture, test out the colors on separate paper. Sometimes, the colors look different on paper than they do in the box. Practice making smooth, even strokes.

When you're ready, start to fill in spaces of the animal with color. Today, we're not doing the background or surroundings, just the animal. Use light pressure and even tones as you draw back and forth. You want lines so close they overlap. Don't push too hard with your colored pencils. The fibers of your paper will be crushed if you push too hard, and it will be impossible to add more color on top if that happens. Don't worry about shading or mixing colors just yet either; that will come later.

As you can see on my example, there were some areas where I did not draw as evenly as I should have so it is not as smooth as it could be. That's all right; a big part of art is learning as you go and recognizing how you can do it better next time.

Once you have filled in your animal and you are satisfied with your work, you are finished for the day! Next time, we will work on blending values!



## Lesson Three: Adding Full Value of Color

### Supplies needed:

- Previously drawn picture
- Colored pencils

Compare your drawn picture to the original. Look closely and see which areas are darker and lighter. See where the shadows are. Today, we are going to work on shading and adding more colors to our animal. Using the same or different colors, go over your animal again. (Remember, it is probably a good idea to test out new colors before adding them.) Pay attention to which areas appear darker and apply more pressure on those. Often, all you need to create a difference between a light and dark spot is the pressure applied, not the color chosen.

Look at the red panda example. On both the head and tail, there are areas where I used a new color and areas where I just colored it darker.

Sometimes, the blending process can be aggravating. Be patient. Keep at it, little by little, and your animal will come to life.

In the next lesson, we will bring it all together by adding background colors!



## Lesson Four: Background Color and Final Details

### Supplies:

- Colored picture
- Colored pencils

Just like you added color to the animal, start adding color to the background. Apply light pressure at first until it's all filled in. Then add darker pressure in the areas needed. If there are shadows, add those as well. Eventually, your background will begin to take shape.

Choose colors for your background that make the animal stand out. This was a mistake I made on mine. After I finished it, I realized that I should have chosen a greener color for the background, rather than the brown I used. The panda tends to blend in with the brown more than I'd like.

After you've finished the background, take a look at your animal. Are there any last-minute details you should add? Any areas that need highlighted with a black colored pencil? Now is the time to add them.

When you are happy with the details and shading you have added, put your pencil down. You are done! Congratulations!

