

ART LESSON 2

LO: To develop observational skills

Do you know what botany is?

Botany is the scientific study of plants.

Here are some botanical illustrations of different plants:



When we compare these botanical illustrations to photographs of the plant, we can see that the drawings are extremely accurate.



Why do you think they were drawn with this level of accuracy?

Botanical illustrations were originally created so that people could easily identify a range of different plants and flowers. (this was before the invention of the camera) The drawings were printed in books and magazines.

This is a botanical illustration of a blackberry plant, dating from the 6th century.



A tea made from the flowers of the chrysanthemum plant is said to help relieve fevers, headaches and colds.

They had to be scientifically correct (accurate in size, shape and colour). This was important as many plants were used for food or as an ingredient in medicines, so they had to be identified correctly - including poisonous plants to avoid.



This is a botanical drawing of the plant Coast Banksia, discovered and drawn in Australia by botanical artist, Sydney Parkinson, during the voyage of the HMS Endeavour between 1768 and 1771.

Between the 15th and the 18th centuries (during The Age of Discovery), artists travelled with explorers and scientists to new lands where they drew a huge variety of plants that were as yet undiscovered.

This is a botanical illustration.
It is drawn with scientific accuracy,
And it shows the life cycle of the
Plant. Its purpose is to help people
Identify this plant.



This is a flower painting.
The artist has focussed on creating
Something that is pleasing to look at.
It is not as accurate as a botanical
illustration and is drawn in the artist's own style.

Which of these paintings
do you prefer, and why?

In order to make your artwork as accurate as possible, you need to remember 'CAP'

C

 Constant observation

Many people make the mistake of looking once or twice at the start of their drawing, and then 'making up' the details instead of drawing what is actually there! In botanical illustrations, it is especially important that you keep looking throughout the time it takes to create your drawing, as it needs to be accurate.

A

 Attention to detail

Make sure you look at the smallest of details, for example, the edges of the leaf, how the leaf is connected to the stem, or the different shades of colour.

P

 Patience

Remember - drawing an accurate representation of anything takes time!

Which of these skills do you think is going to be the most challenging for you?

YOUR TASK

Now it is time for you to
create your own botanical
illustrations!

1. Find a leaf that you would like to draw.
2. Look closely at it for three minutes.
3. Now cover it up and sketch it from memory.

Try to make your drawing the same size and shape as the actual leaf but don't be tempted to look at it again while you are drawing it.

4. Uncover your leaf and compare it with your sketch.
Which parts did you draw accurately?

Which parts needed more detail?

5. Now leave your leaf uncovered and draw it again remembering 'CAP'.

6. Compare both of your sketches.
Which do you think is the most accurate?

Remember to post your work on twitter
because we love to see it and you can collect
house points!



