



# DRAWING AMERICA

## The Principles of Color Assignment 1

Welcome to The Principles of Color!

### MATERIALS NEED FOR THIS LESSON:

**Your paint-stick with the 9 values on them (Jumpstart lesson)**

**PAINT:** Titanium White, Ivory Black, Portland Grey Light, Medium and Dark (Optional), Palette Knife, Palette (Wooden or glass), Assorted brushes

**PANEL OR CANVAS:** 6 x 8 to 9 x 12 inches, somewhere in this range.

### PAINTING 2 OBJECTS IN GREY

The first part of the first assignment is to paint 2 objects in black and white. The point of this exercise is to learn to think about value structure in a painting.

1. Find one object that is mid to light in value, such as an egg or melon. If you have a sphere like a cube ball from a pool set, this will work nicely too.
2. A second object that is metal, like copper, silver or has a metallic appearance. You can use a silver bowl, almost anything from a bar set but make sure it is metallic.
3. Place a white napkin or cloth underneath the setup. Paint this setup in just grey values. Here is my setup:





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## The Principles of Color Assignment 1

### PAINTING A FRUIT IN GREY

The second part of assignment 1, we will be painting 1 object in black and white. The point of this exercise is to start to think about value when seeing color.

1. This may be a bit harder than it seems. Paint one fruit such as a lime, lemon, pear, orange or apple in black and white. Consider the light source by finding the light most facing plane. Think about the local value as well and then roll forms to, or away from the light source. Add the ground plane as well so we can see the cast shadows.

**SIZE:** do this about 6 x 8 inches in size (or larger if you prefer).

Sometimes simple is poetic and beautiful! Here is a sample setup:





# DRAWING AMERICA

## The Principles of Color Assignment 1

### CONSIDER THE DIRECTION OF THE LIGHT

(page 125 in The Art of Still Life)

In my demonstration, we'll be going over the proper terminology used to define what we see. I'll show how I render values on a form in relation to a light source.

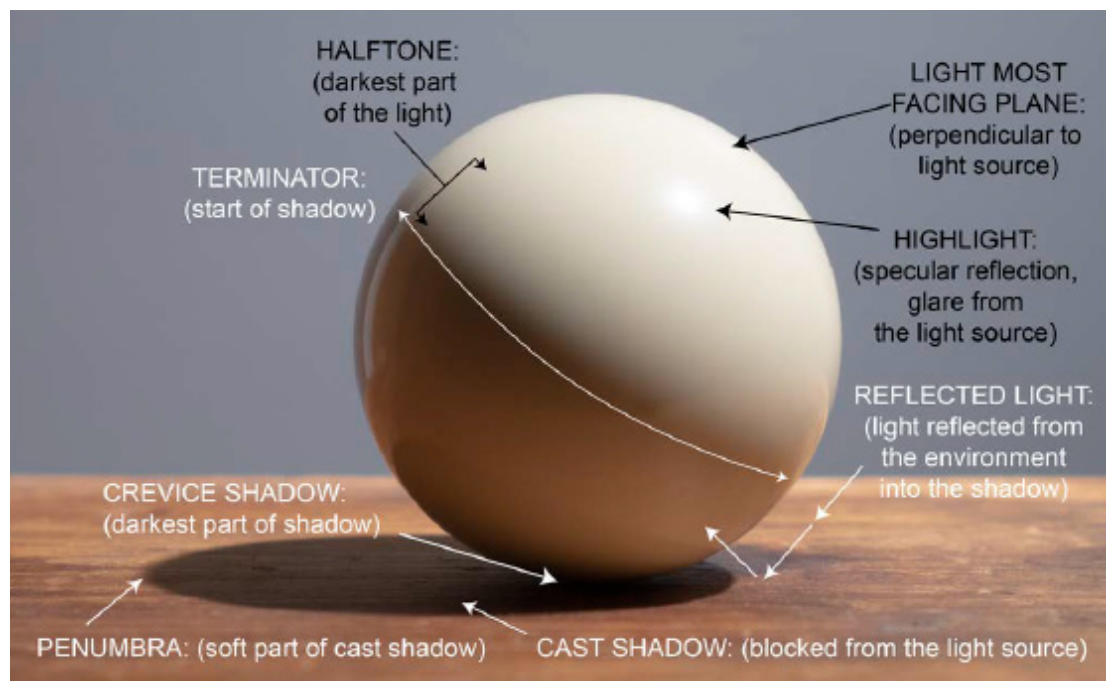
You should all understand what you are looking at and why. Here are the terms we will go over:

#### LIGHT TERMS:

Highlight  
Light Most Facing Plane  
Halftone

#### SHADOW TERMS:

Terminator  
Reflected Light  
Crevice Shadow  
Cast Shadow  
Penumbra (and Umbra)





# DRAWING AMERICA

## The Principles of Color Assignment 1

### HIGHLIGHT VS. LIGHT MOST FACING PLANE

(page 144-45 in *The Art of Still Life*)

#### A VERY COMMON MISTAKE

One of the most common mistakes I see students make is to render transitions of values to the highlight instead of to the light most facing plane.

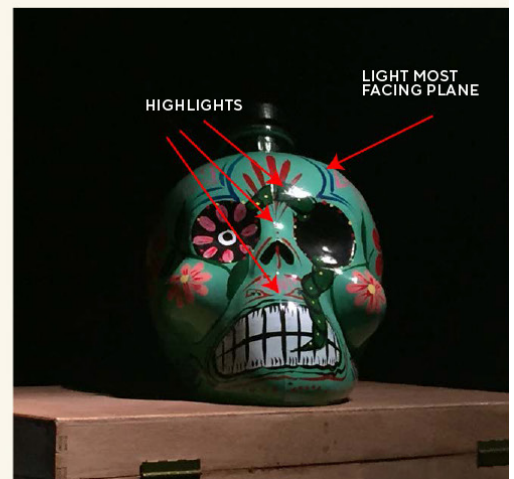
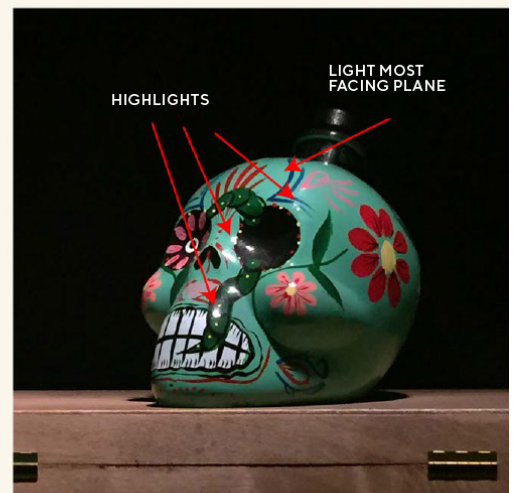
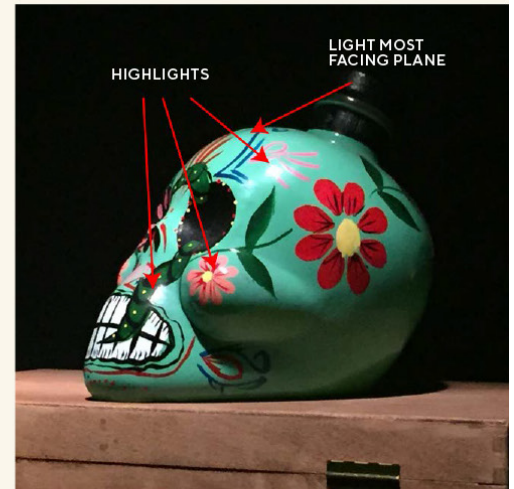
The geometry of the light stays consistent no matter where you are standing in relation to an illuminated object, and it's that geometry that defines the light most facing plane. The highlight, however, does not stay constant as you move around an object. The highlight's position will change depending on where you are viewing the object from.

The light most facing plane and the highlight need to be separated and articulated correctly. When rolling form (see pages 246-251), the gradation of values should be applied to the light most facing plane, not to the highlight. The highlight merely shows where the artist was standing while creating the artwork. The difference can be clearly seen in the images here, which show how the highlights change as the viewer changes position while the light most facing plane always remains the same.

**RIGHT, TOP TO BOTTOM:** As we move around an object, the highlights change position as the geometry of the light most facing plane stays the same.

**OPPOSITE:** Todd M. Casey, *Mezcal Tequila*, 2018, oil on panel, 6 × 8 inches (15.24 × 20.32 cm). Private collection.

In my painting *Mezcal Tequila*, the transition of values is rendered to the light most facing plane.







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### WHAT IS IN LIGHT AND WHAT IS IN SHADOW?

It's often difficult to distinguish where the light ends and the shadow begins. Remember: the halftone is part of the light, but it can often get wrongly grouped with the shadow instead.

Holding a tool such as a pencil or paintbrush up to an object in your setup can help you quickly identify what is halftone and what is shadow. When the cast shadow from the paintbrush merges with the dark area on the squash, that's where the terminator—the beginning of the shadow—is.

