

WHIMSICAL ILLUSTRATION

course curriculum checklist

KEY

QE - Quick Exercise

ML - Mini Lesson

JS - Journal Spread Tutorial

1. FACE MAPPING

Learn how to apply the basic principles of face mapping to your work and create a blueprint for your own whimsical faces.

QE. FACES IN PLACES

Practice applying the principles of face mapping to various shapes and structures.

2. FEATURE FOCUS

Learn how to draw a simple set of facial features to use in your illustrations.

QE. SIMPLIFYING

Learn how to omit details in the face for the purposes of scaling down, or simplifying, your illustrations.

ML. EXPRESSIONS

Learn which parts of the face carry the ability to form expression, and how to alter them to affect moods.

QE. DOODLE SQUAD

Create a page of expressive faces using a culmination of techniques learned in the course so far.

3. HAIR

Learn how to draw various hairstyles through identifying the basic shapes that make them up.

QE. RENDERING HAIR

Practice creative approaches to rendering hair in your whimsical illustrations.

4. THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

Learn how to construct a framework for female figures, using simple lines and spheres, then adding dynamic movement into gestural poses.

QE. PLUMB LINE MERMAIDS

Practice creating dynamic figures, drawing multiple mermaids with undulating plumb lines.

ML. SHADOW MAPPING

Use references and our own artistic interpretation to practice adding shadows and highlights to faces.

5. SHADE

Learn my specific techniques for applying shading and depth when rendering faces.

6. MIXING YOUR MEDIUMS

Look at how using different mediums can result in the same work having a different feel and mood.

QE. MIXED MEDIA MINGLE

Familiarize ourselves with our art supplies and how they interact with one another.

ML. BUILDING BLOCKS

Break our reference image down into manageable, easily replicated shapes, and use them to transcribe our image into our illustration.

7. PROPORTIONS + PLACEMENT

Learn about the key features of adding whimsy to your illustration - a blend of proportion and placement.

QE. EAT ME!

Use Alice in Wonderland as inspiration to illustrate pieces that emphasize the whimsical effect of changes in proportion and placement.

8. TEAM WITH THE THEME

Unpack my creative process to theming your illustrative works and stimulating your imagination.

QE. ON A LOOP

Use familiar and personal subject matter to complete a unique version of the "On a Loop" personalized page layout tutorial.

ML. FASHION ILLUSTRATION

Explore a simple overview of fashion illustration and create expressive fashion figures with a dry brush ink technique.

9. STRIP IT ALL BACK

Strip it all back to basics and build illustrative confidence, drawing in a simplified style with only graphite pencil.

10. A REFRESHING REVIEW

Take a look back at all the skills acquired through Whimsical Illustration to refresh our information before we complete the final 3 journal spreads.

JS. 1 - FRIDA'S MUSINGS

Follow along the step-by-step video tutorial, applying lessons learned throughout the course, to create a finished, illustrated journal spread.

JS. 2 - WALKING ON A SPRITE-ROPE

Follow along the step-by-step video tutorial, applying lessons learned throughout the course, to create a finished, illustrated journal spread.

JS. 3 - THIEVES OF THE NIGHT

Follow along the step-by-step video tutorial, applying lessons learned throughout the course, to create a finished, illustrated journal spread.

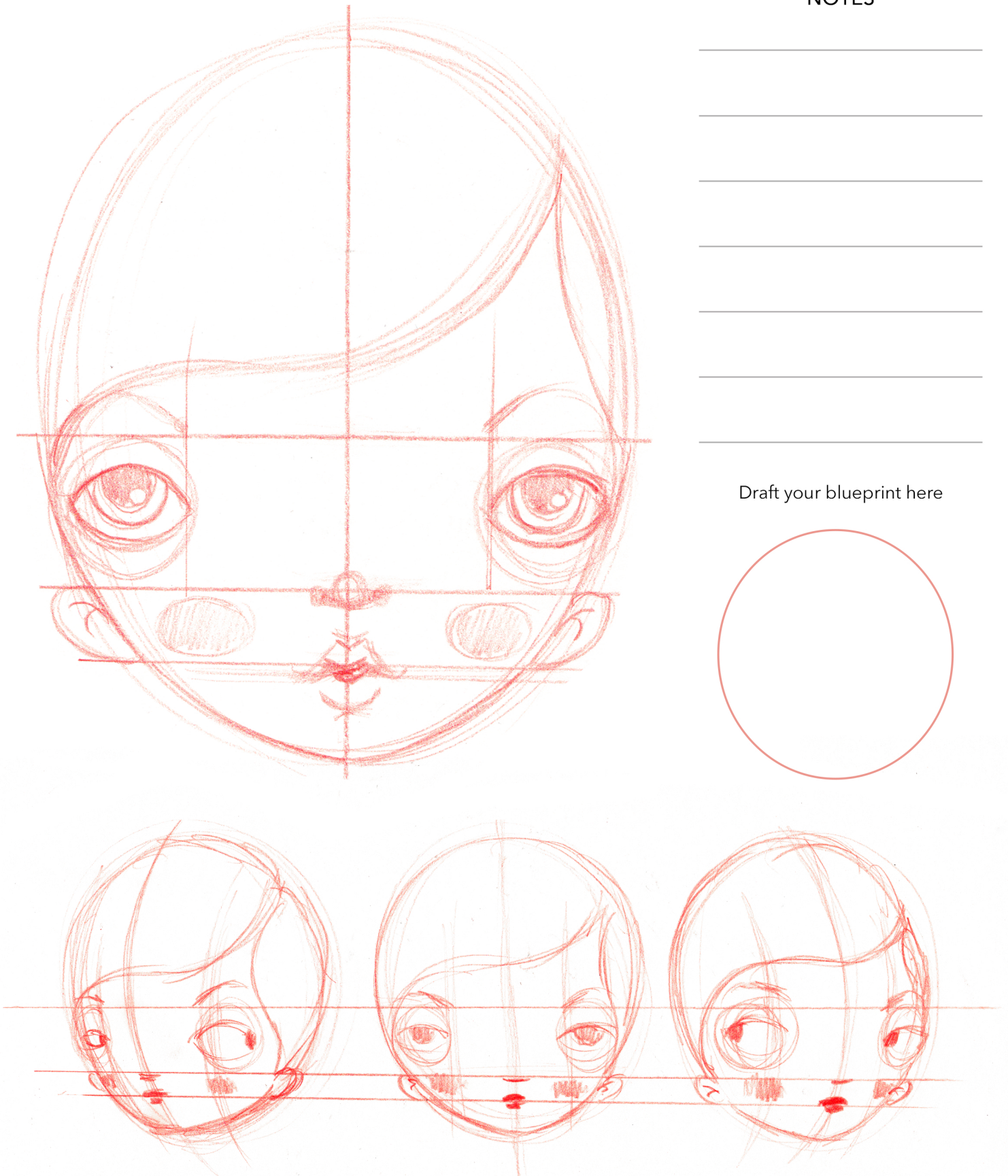
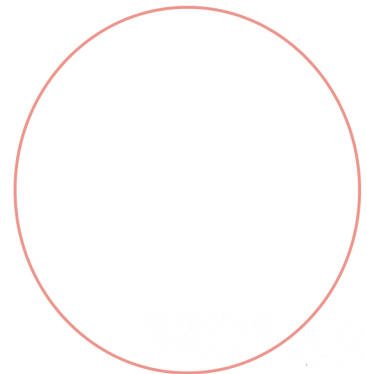


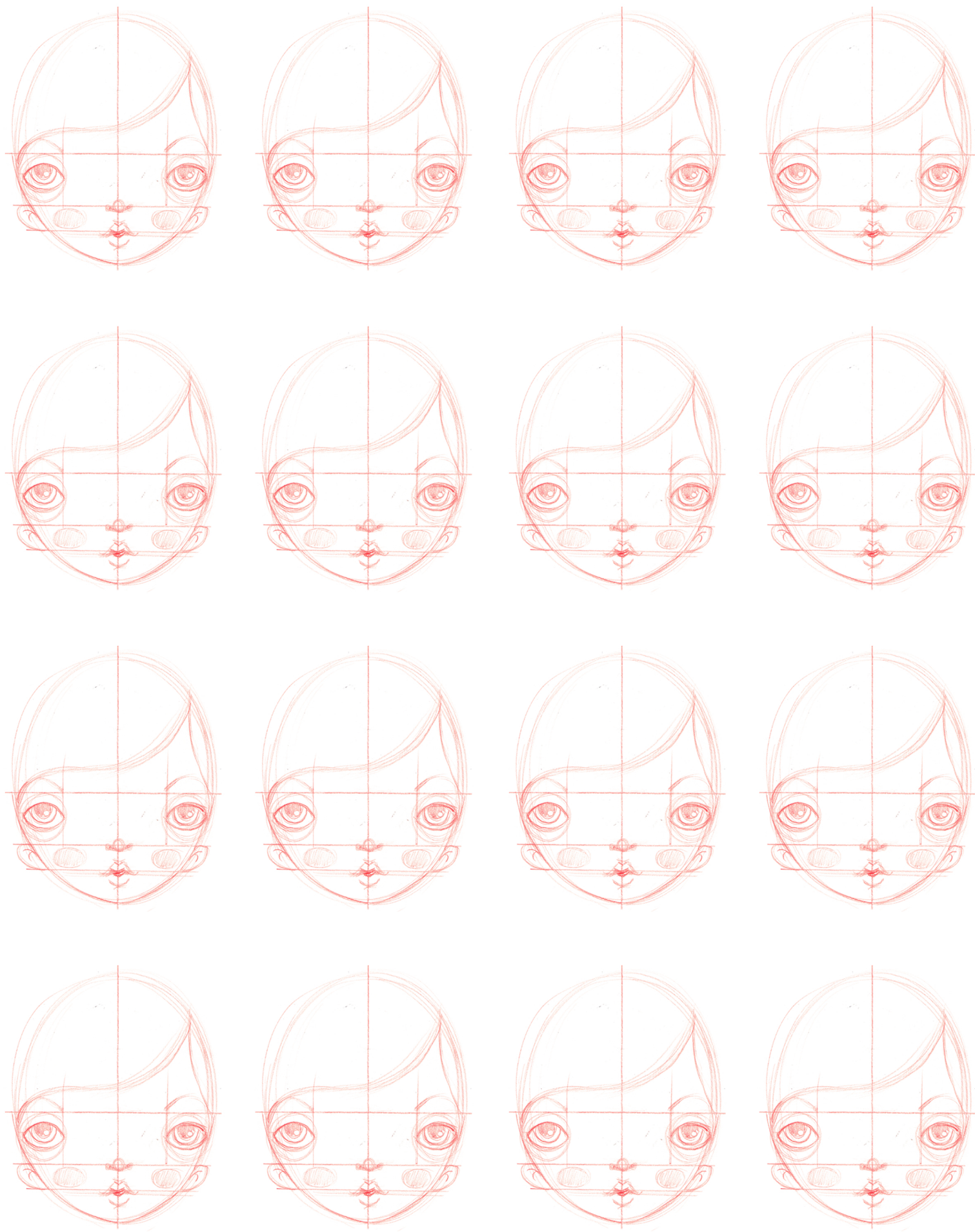
FACE MAPPING

Use the references below to trace over the layout of these features, then construct your own blueprint for your whimsical faces.

NOTES

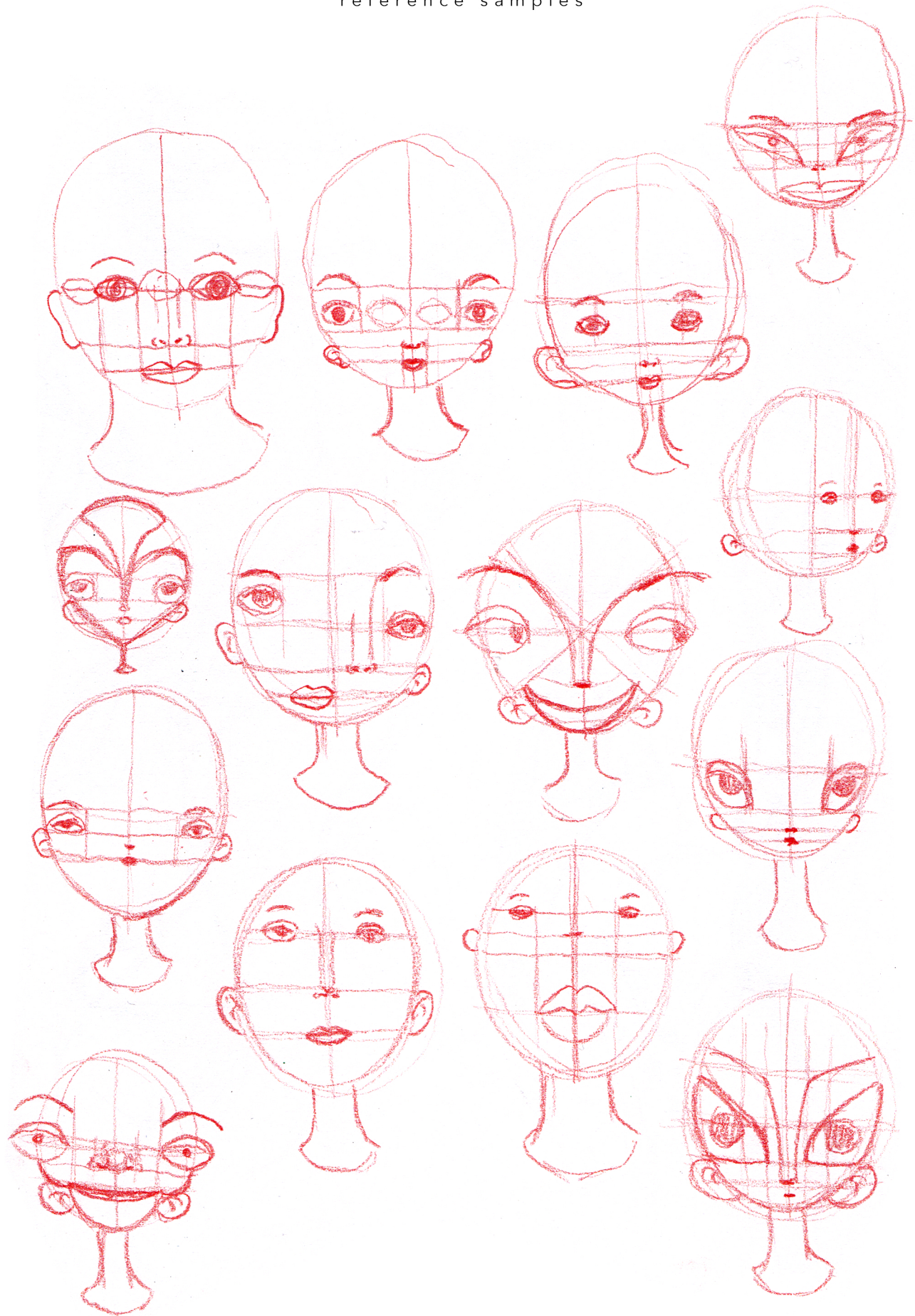
Draft your blueprint here





FACE MAPPING

reference samples



FEATURE FOCUS

step-by-step and altered samples

A FEW NOTES...

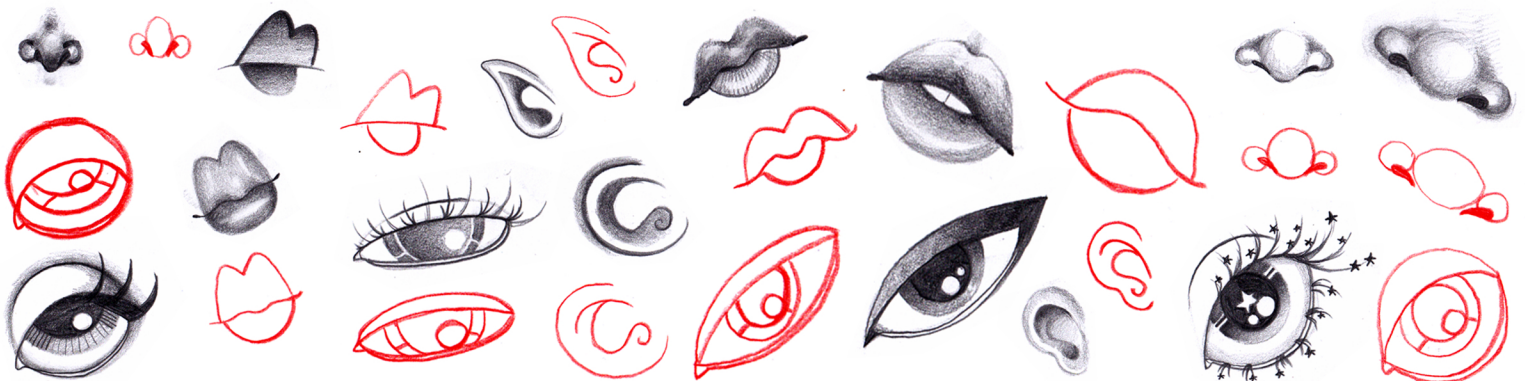
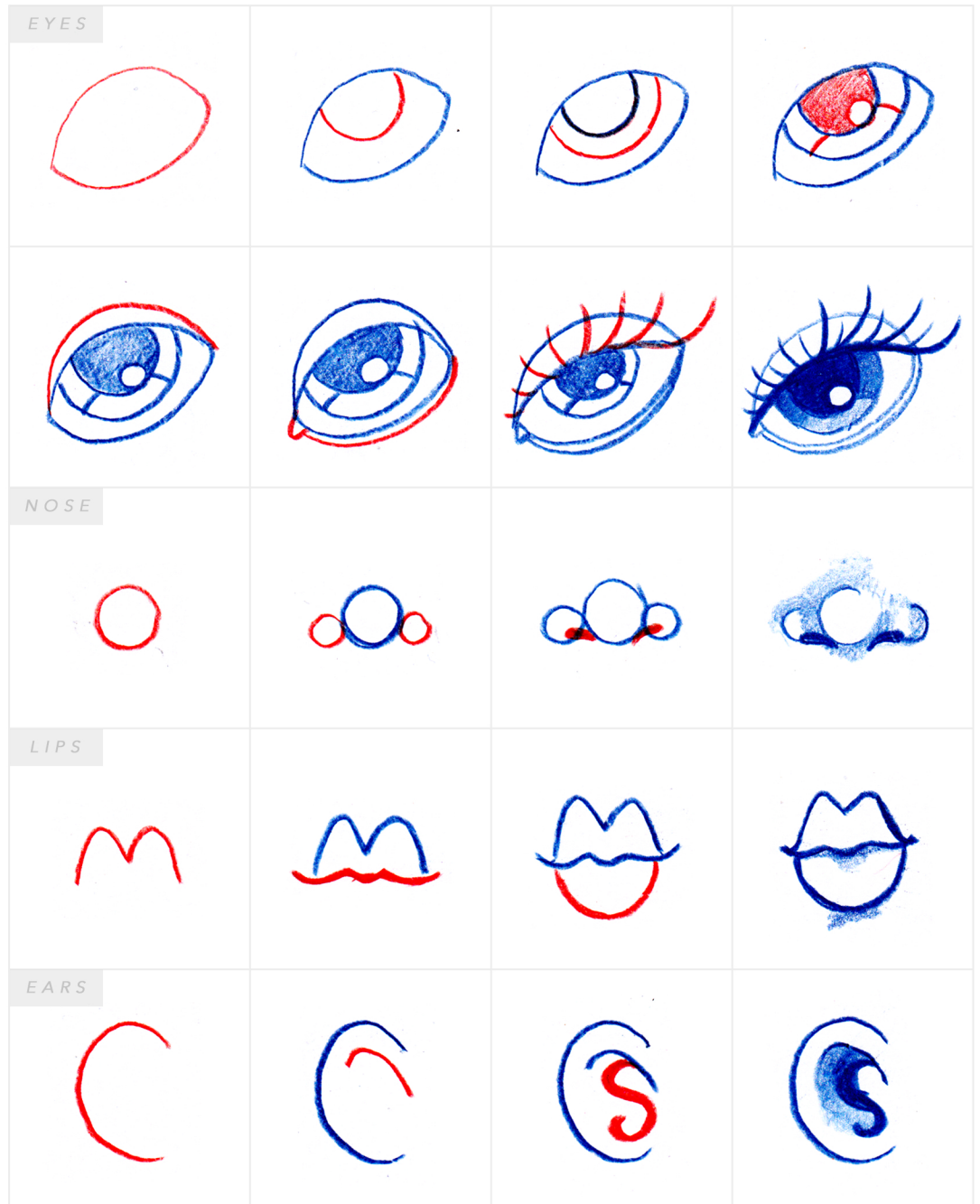
When following the step-by-step instructions, follow the red construction lines as you move from box to box.

When constructing guidelines, it is often easier to use a light, loose hand and an erasable colored pencil in a light shade. Red or pink is useful with facial features as, when coloring, they blend into most skin tones without much need for erasing.

If you have a red/blue pencil, follow the steps using the red side. Once you're happy with your guide, confidently line your features with the blue side. For more of a challenge, you could also try with a graphite pencil and ink with a brush pen.

If you can, try to avoid erasing for now. Let your sketchy lines live through your piece as you practice discerning *messy* lines from the *good ones* you want to bolden. This is a skill that will come in handy when lining quick/rough sketches, as well as revealing the charm of your process.

Below are some examples of re-working the shapes of the features. Have a go at mixing it up and see what interesting results you come up with.



SIMPLIFYING

what to leave out when scaling down

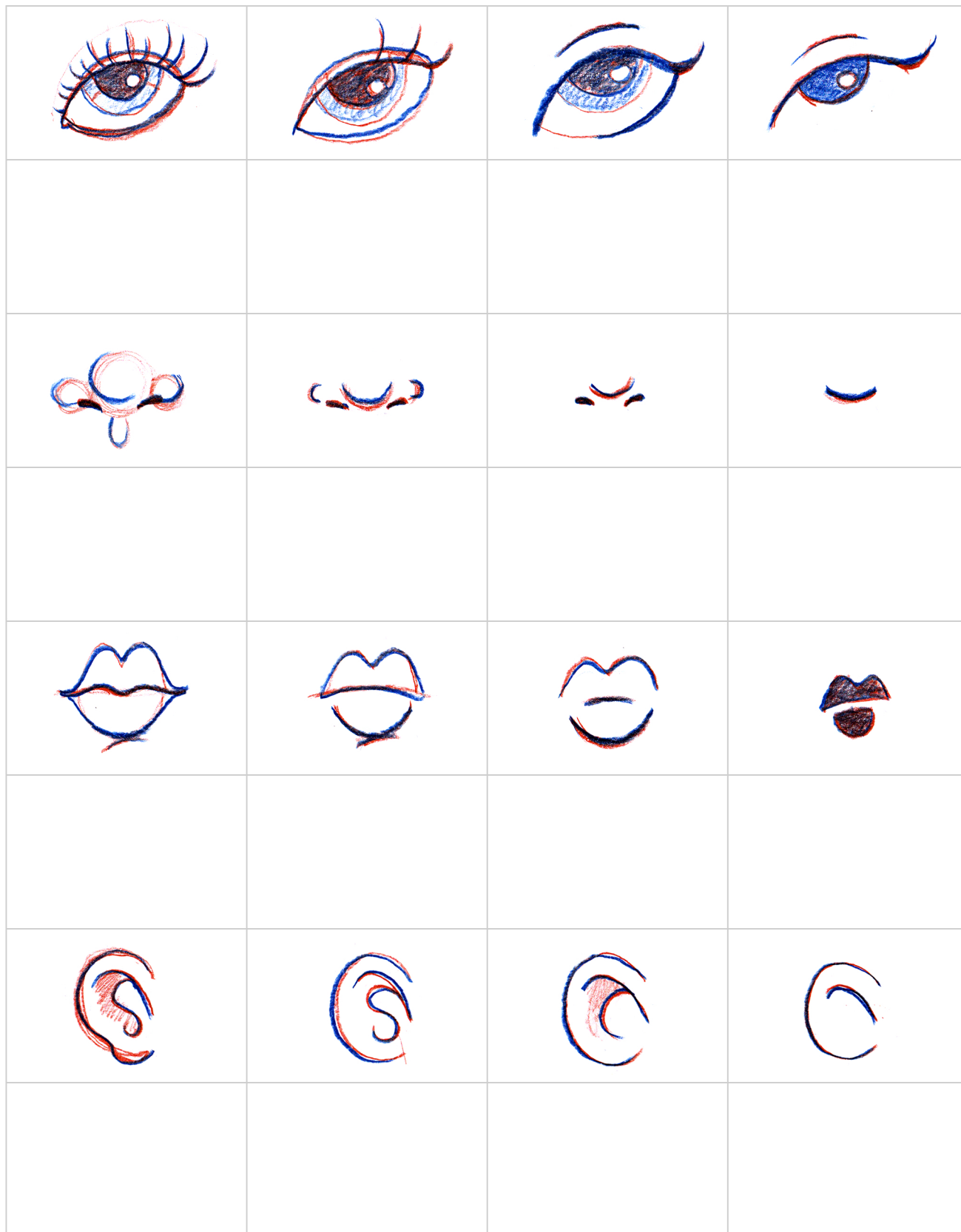
Learning the more simplified versions of these facial features comes in super handy when you're scaling your illustrations down. Practice the features below and take note of what lines become *non-essential* when simplifying. Mix and match these detailed and less detailed elements to draw attention to specific areas of the face.

ONE

TWO

THREE

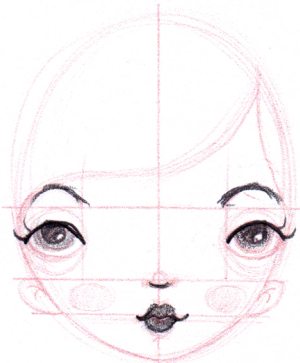
FOUR



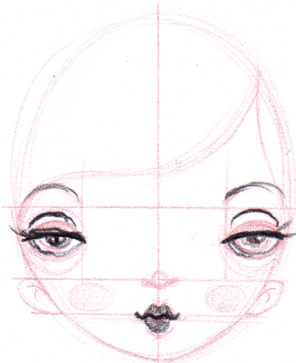
EXPRESSIONS

notes

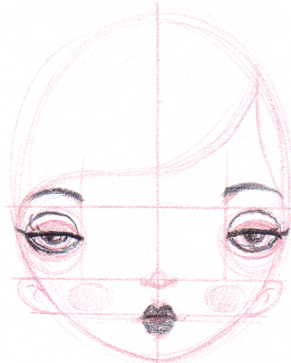
Below are the expressions completed in the Video Tutorial. When it comes to building unique expressions into your faces, I find it easier to focus on three key places: eyebrows, eyelids and mouth. Adjusting the composition of these three elements will reveal a myriad of expressions, with slight tweaks adding subtle nuances. Don't be afraid to exaggerate your shapes for more obvious expression, and play with subtlety to build mystery.



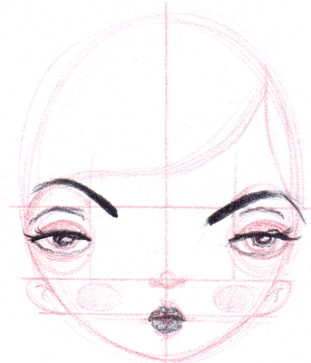
Closely follows original face map.
Rounded lids, resting eyebrows mimic lid shape. Slight smile.



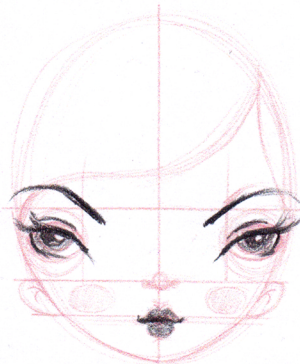
Eyelid cuts half way through eye shape.
Inner smile line more exaggerated.



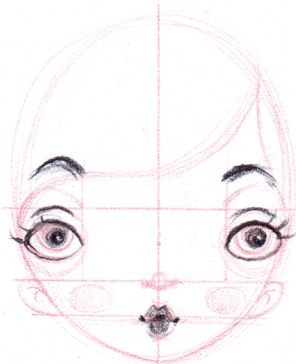
Eyebrows flattened off.
Eyelid cuts flat through eye shape.
Expressionless inner mouth line.



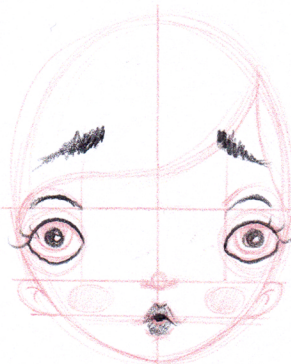
Eyebrows heavily arched and exaggerated.
Top eyelid crease moved slightly upwards.
All other features same as example on left.



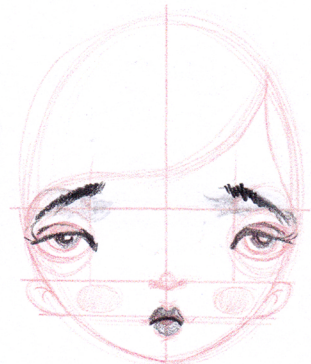
Eyelid slanted upwards and pinched outwards.
Heavily angled eyebrows.
Eyelid crease close to eye.
Slight smile line in mouth.



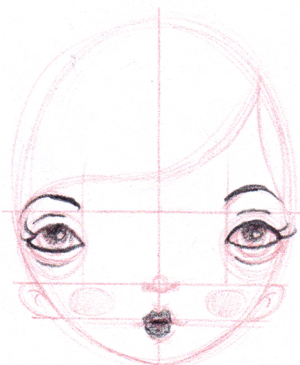
Eyebrows smaller, stronger arch and lifted higher. Small pupils in eye, more negative space in eyeball.
Puckered, smaller mouth.



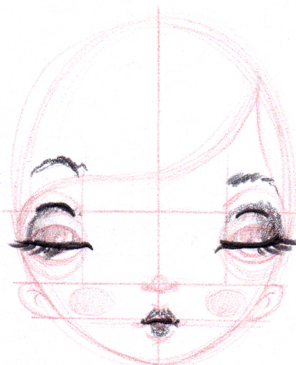
Eyebrows angled in and upwards.
Eyelid crease higher.
Puckered, small mouth, without corner smile details.



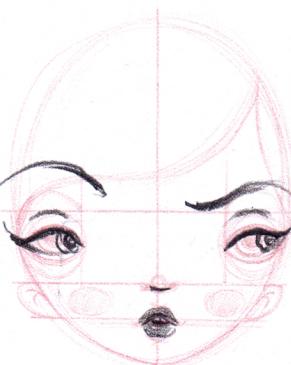
Eyebrows lower, heavier angled towards eyelid.
Eyelid shape sloped down towards outside.
Exaggerated sad inner mouth line.



Lower eyelid lifted into eye shape.
Expressionless mouth.



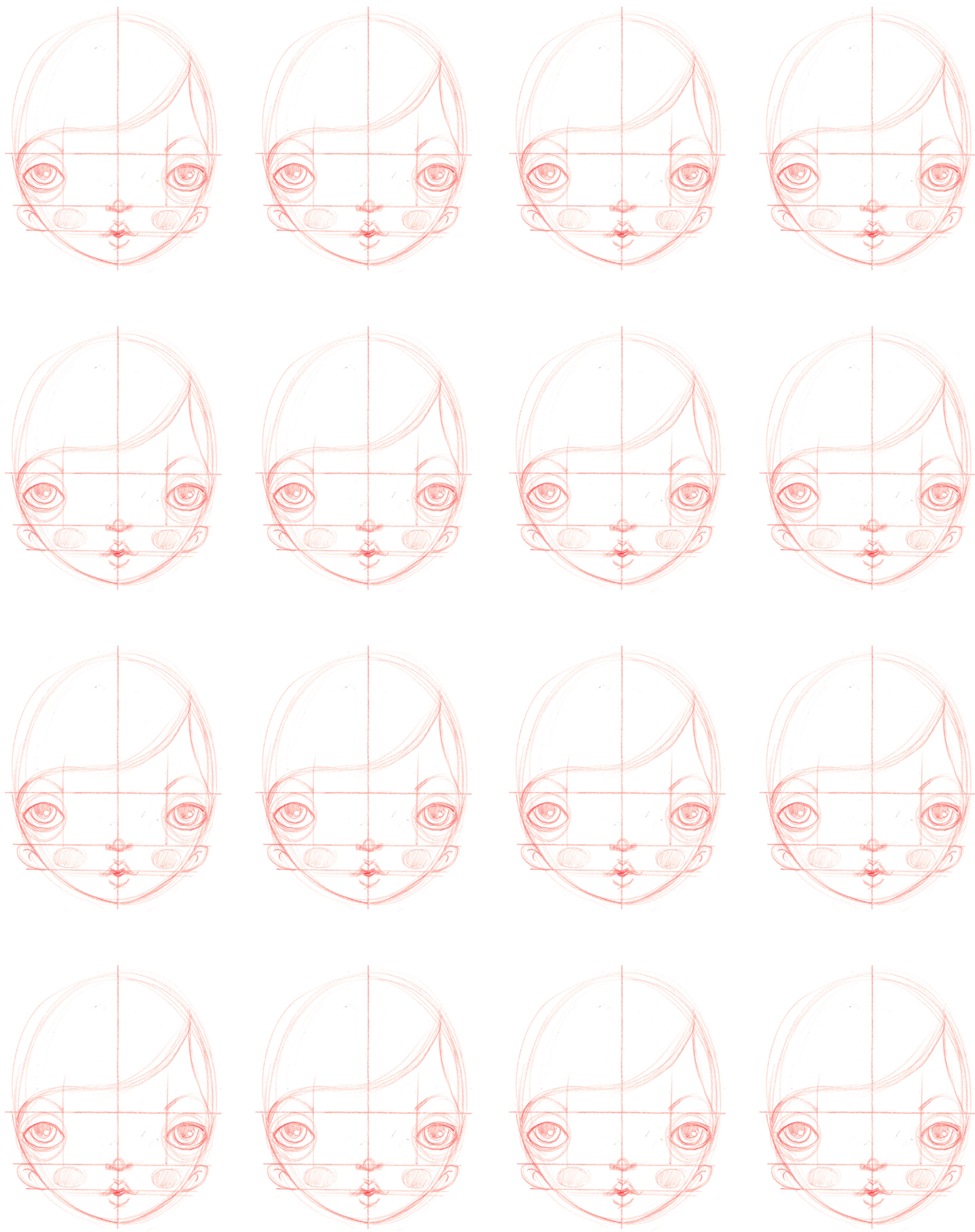
Eyes closed. Eyelid crease and eyebrows lifted higher.
Subtle smile line.



Eyebrows exaggerated and angled differently.
Pupil moved to corners of eye shape.
Model Mouth pout.



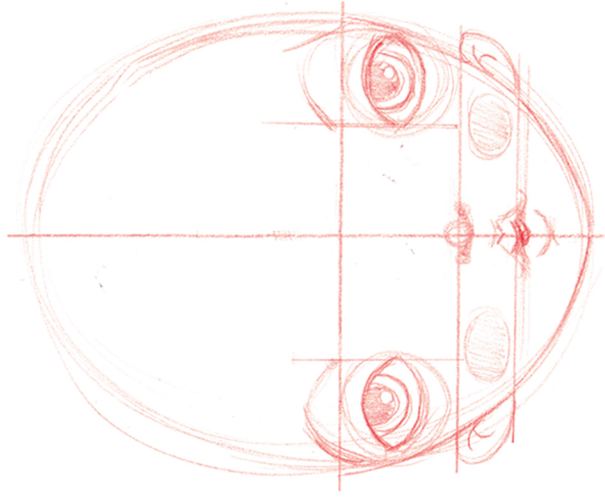
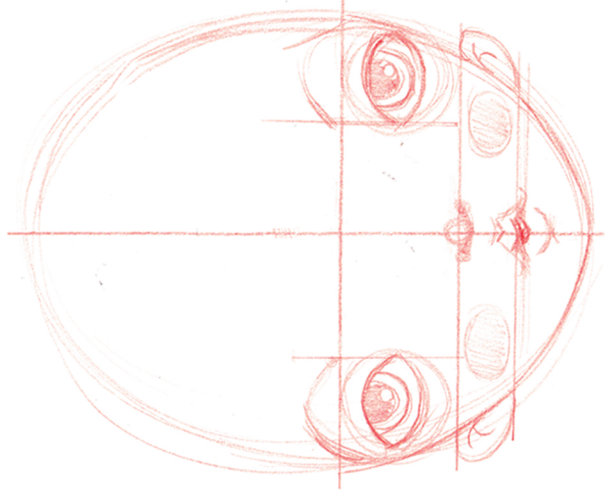
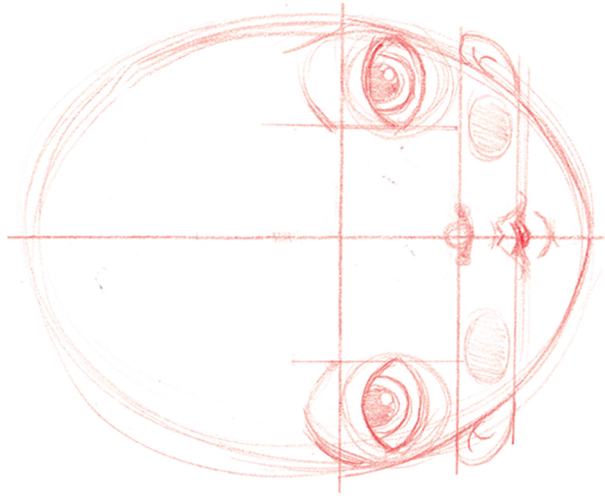
Eyebrows connected and exaggerated.
Eye shape tilted and pinched to cat-eye effect.
Large Model Mouth pout.



DOODLE SQUAD

reference samples





HAIR

notes from the lesson

Below are scans from all examples shown in the *Hair* video tutorial. When attempting various hairstyles, take note of the shape of the overall outline of the hairstyle. Translate that shape to your face map and take note of how the hairline cuts into the forehead and the way the hair extends from the head, especially around the eyes and ears.



Practice changing up the hairlines and the way they curve onto the face. Remember to add breaks to your bangs and the ends of your hair styles if they're looking a little too structured. Basic shapes and sweeping "S" curves are your best friend when creating hairstyles; rarely are things 100% straight, although, rules were made to be broken...

RENDERING HAIR

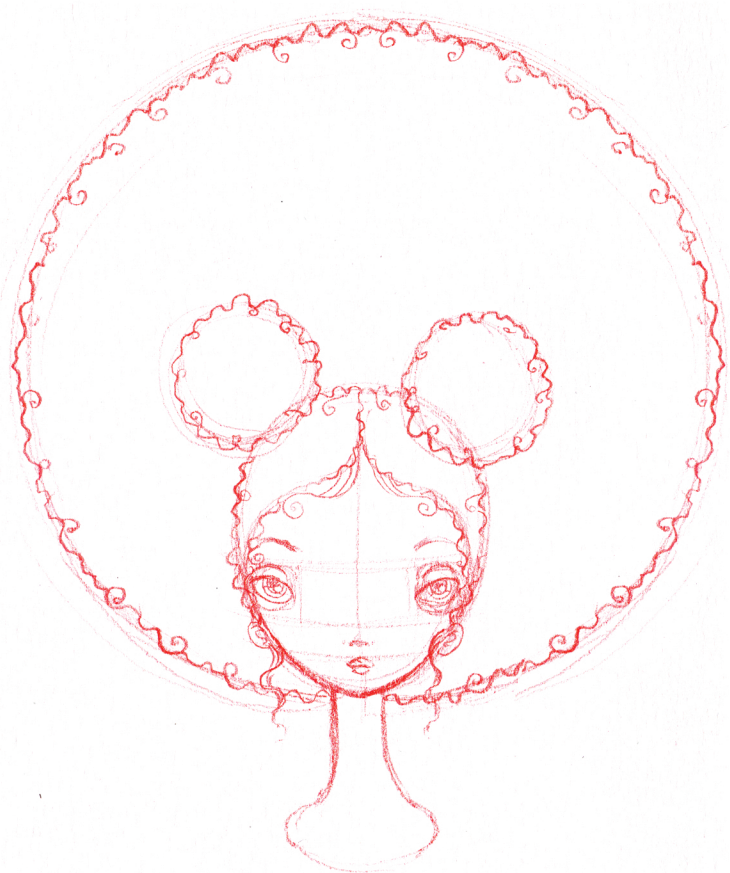
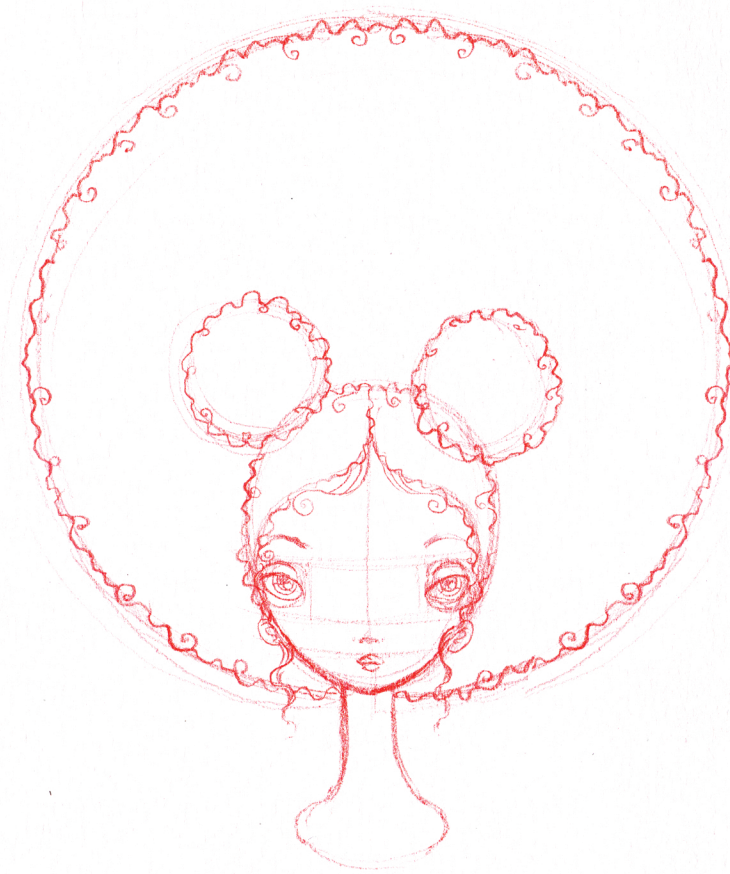
creative approaches to hair...

A lot of what makes something whimsical is the "unexpected" or perhaps sometimes "odd". Hair affords us an opportunity to work in a lot of unexpected and strange ideas (when you're not so much looking to build "odd" into your faces). Below are the examples from the video tutorial and finished sample pieces. Have a go at making some bold choices in your approach to different hairstyles, and challenge yourself to think of hair as anything BUT hair...



If you're looking to pull themes into your work, consider taking ideas or motifs from your theme and add them when rendering hair. The Wizard of Oz is one of my favorite films and adding a yellow brick pattern to the hair whimsically ties my illustration to my love of the movie. Once I saw the brick road, I felt like an Emerald City crown would be fitting. Not missing a chance to throw some journaling in, I added "there's no place like home" to a few bricks and BAM! 3 elements from the movie in the hair alone! Try finding a theme you enjoy and explore adding the different patterns, colors, motifs, lyrics or quotes to your hair!

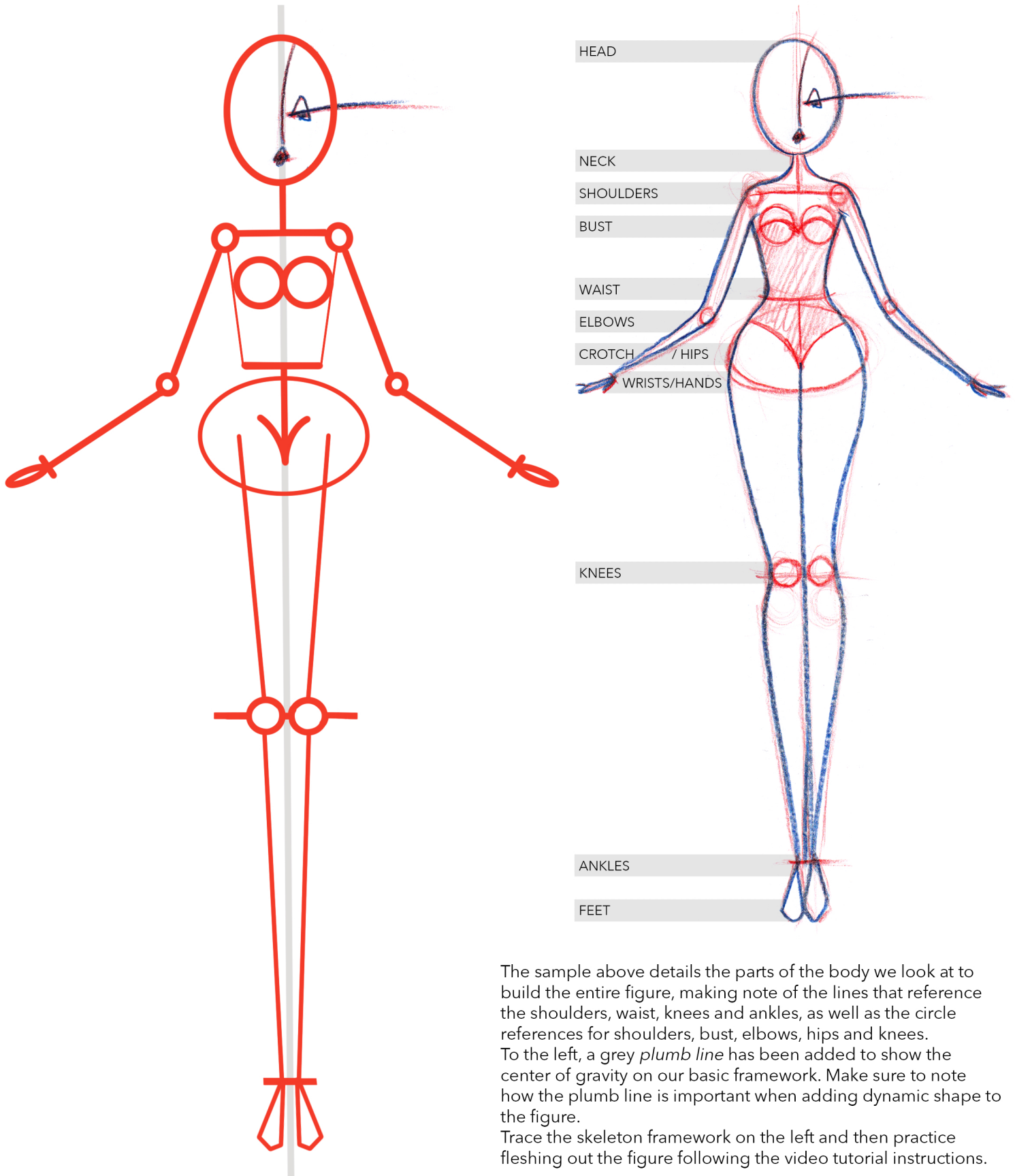




THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

figuring out figure drawing

Bodies are a beautiful thing, but drawing them can sometimes seem like a daunting task. Following the video tutorial, use the *skeletons* below to identify and practice composing figures using basic line and circle joint structures.

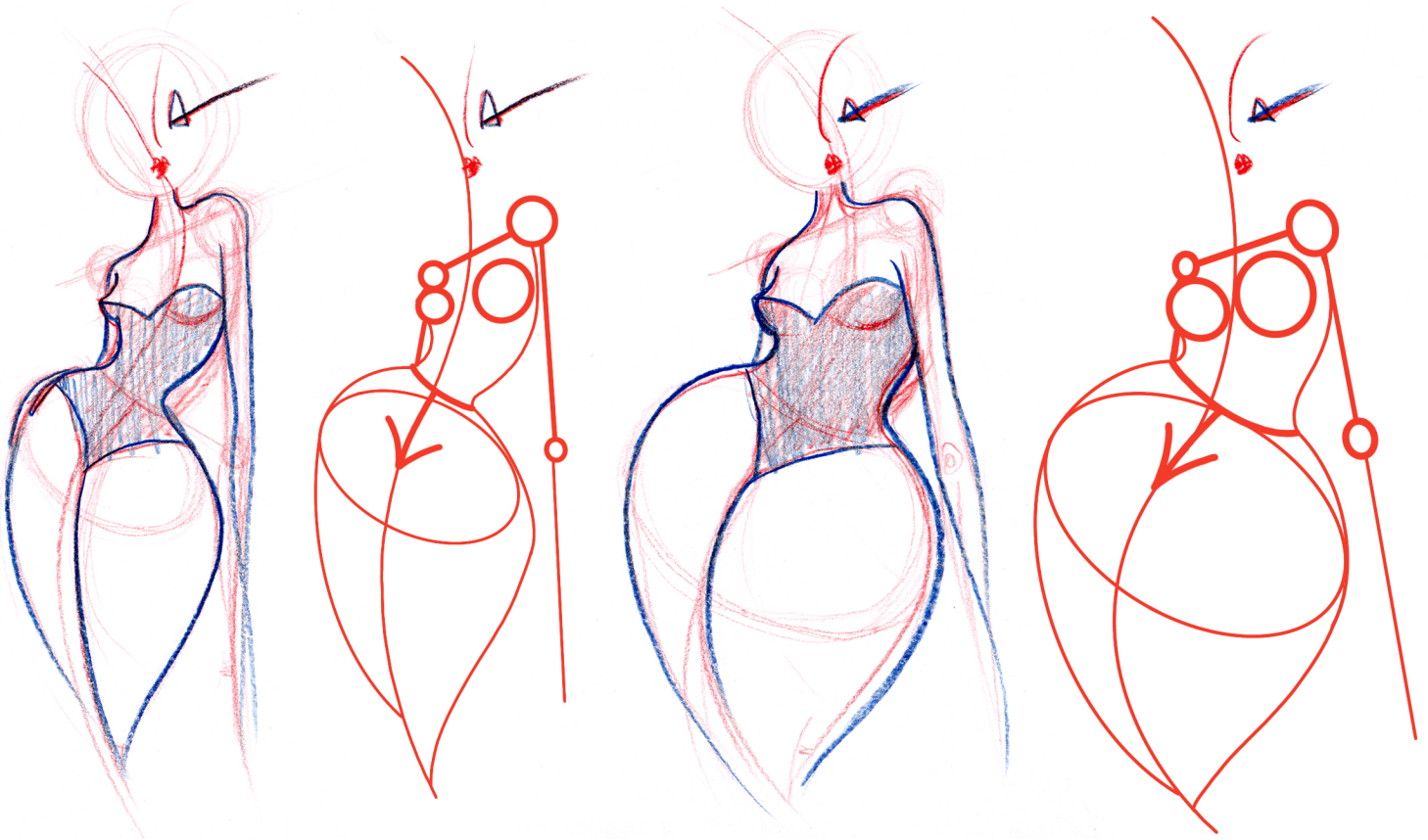


The sample above details the parts of the body we look at to build the entire figure, making note of the lines that reference the shoulders, waist, knees and ankles, as well as the circle references for shoulders, bust, elbows, hips and knees. To the left, a grey *plumb line* has been added to show the center of gravity on our basic framework. Make sure to note how the plumb line is important when adding dynamic shape to the figure. Trace the skeleton framework on the left and then practice fleshing out the figure following the video tutorial instructions.

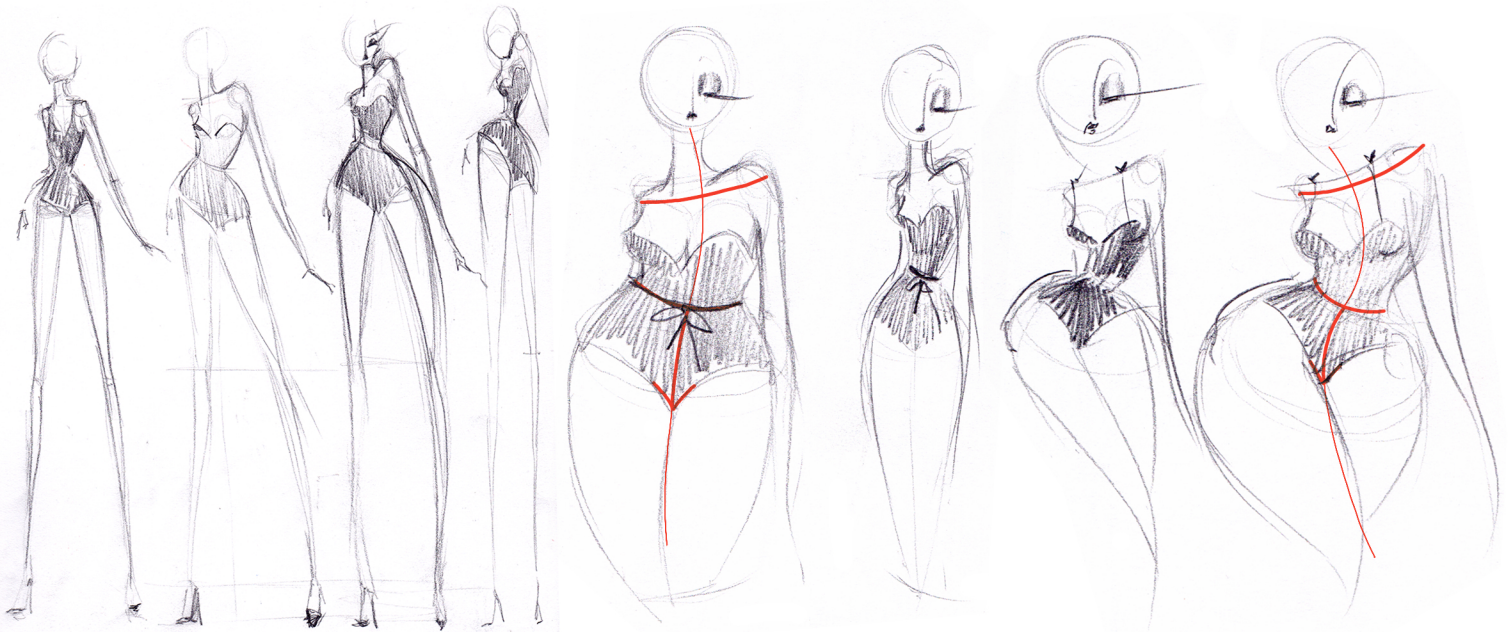
THE BODY BEAUTIFUL

plumb lines and fuller figures

For our purposes, the *plumb line* indicates the center line, or flow through our figures. It is a helpful guide when fleshing out our torso, but also a great way to add more dynamic shape to the body. Play with varying “S” curves for your *plumb line*, like shown below, and couple that with shoulder and waist lines tilting at different angles. Trace the guide below and flesh out with the video tutorial, noting how adding fullness to figures doesn’t always mean sizing up every part of the body.



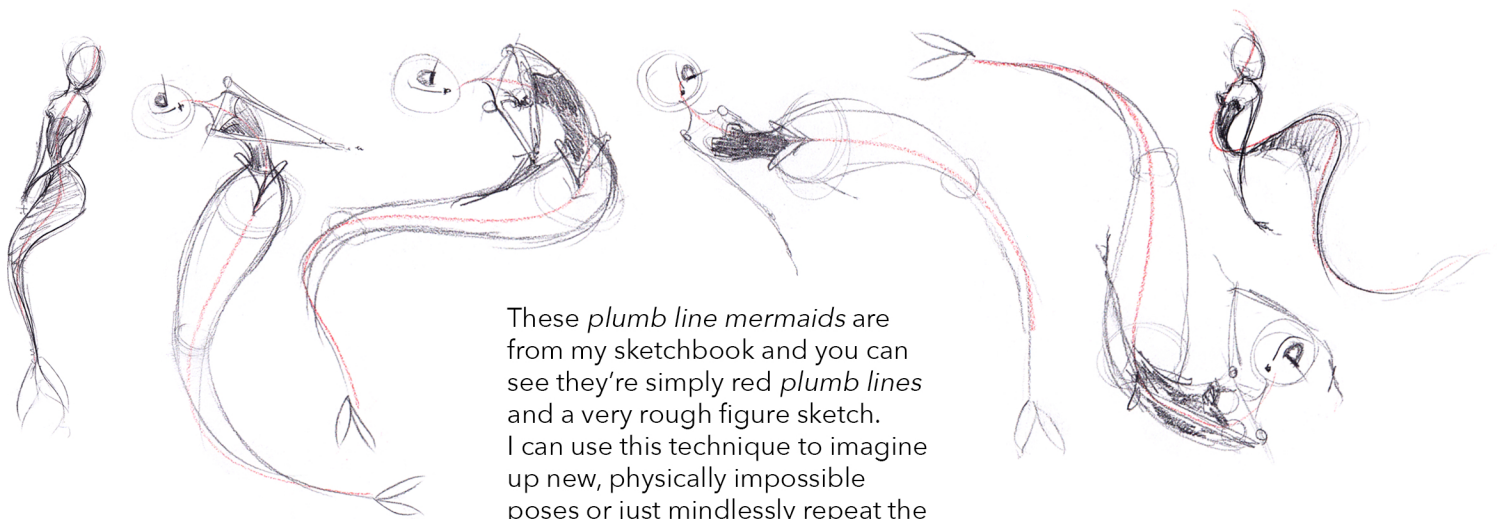
Below are scans from my sketchbook that detail the process I took to create the bodies above. From Left to Right, I started with a reference from a pose online. Once I identified the framework for the pose I started to push the angles on the shoulder and waist lines. I kept playing until I went one step too far, then settled on the 3rd from left. After that, I looked at creating fuller and slimmer versions of the pose, simplifying the arms. I liked it, but I wanted something a little more dynamic, so again, I angled the shoulders and waist in sharper opposition. This resulted in a wavier “S” curve for my *plumb line*, and a figure I was much happier with.



PLUMB LINE MERMAIDS

free flowing fish friends

Using a combination of all the tricks up our sleeve, we're going to create this illustration for the video tutorial quick exercise "Plumb Line Mermaids". Our goal is to stay loose and sketchy. When learning and locking in new techniques it is about quality AND quantity, so don't be afraid to fill a page with your mermaid doodles.



These *plumb line mermaids* are from my sketchbook and you can see they're simply red *plumb lines* and a very rough figure sketch. I can use this technique to imagine up new, physically impossible poses or just mindlessly repeat the process over and over (the repetition makes you quicker and more likely to experiment).

SHADOW MAPPING

where to shade faces?

Using the reference images below, trace over the contours of the shadow areas you see on the face. Focus on mapping out the deepest, darkest shadow areas first and then map out secondary shadow areas if you wish. Take note of how different light sources cast unique shadows to the face. Also take note of the lightest areas of the face. These points are the highlights and can be used to add extra dimension to your face shading.

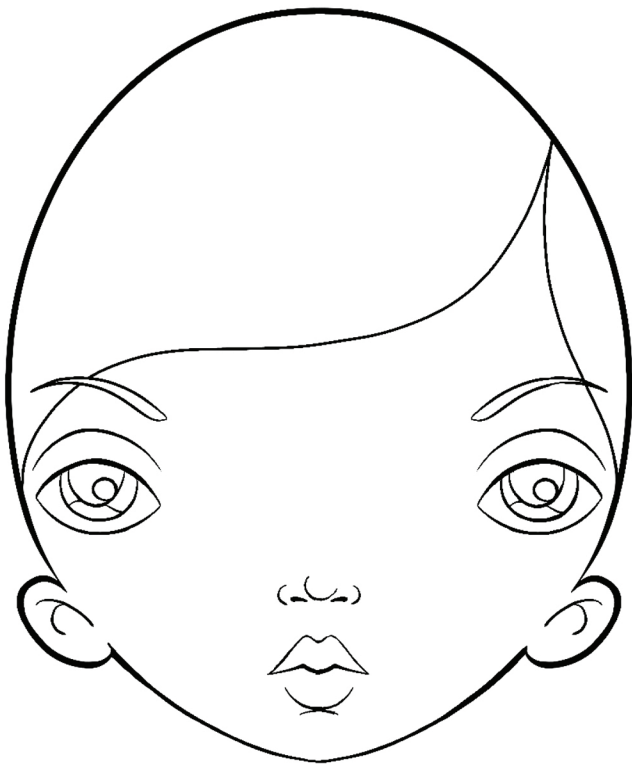
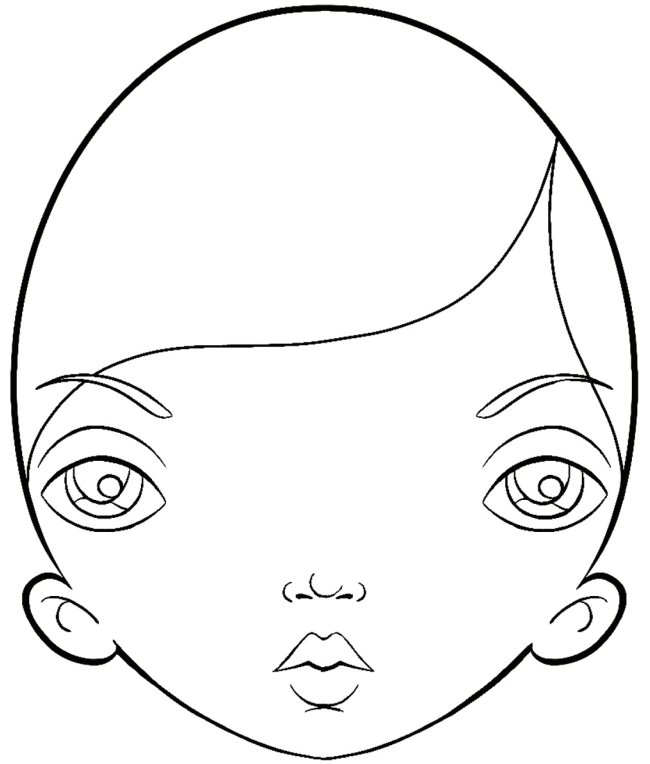


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SHADOW MAPPING

where to shade faces?

Using the contour lines traced onto the previous reference images, map out the shadow areas (highlights optional) onto the faces below.



SHADE

the jlbcreative way

Below is the completed sample from the video tutorial "Shade". Whilst I don't cling to any particular rules when it comes to shading (or anything for that matter) I do have a formula that I use 99% of the time. Not because it is the most natural, or even the most interesting, but because I love to color the EYES! I live for the eyes! The cheeks are guilty by association, so they get some heavy shading too... If there's a facial feature you particularly enjoy rendering, build a shadow map that places heavy shadows in that area. Add multiple layers of color to those shadow areas and focus building vibrant depth to the features, accentuating the enjoyment you have for them.

When watercoloring, add droplets of clean water and puddles of pigment over your base for fun blossoms and blooms.

A loose wash of watercolor is a great way to start your piece with an nice midtone that works well with other mediums.

Lashes... Always add lashes!

Add fun color and highlight details to the eyes.

Blush the tops of the ears, the nose and shoulders.

Draw/line your illustration with a colored pencil. Reds/Pinks blend into lighter skin tones well, for a less intense outline.

Try gel pens, they're fun.

Have fun! Make a note of what you like and want to try again and chase down any creative frenzies you find yourself in during the tutorial.

Repeat colors throughout the piece. Any color that stands alone will pull focus, so I usually reserve it for the eyes.

Try working without black. you might find you don't need it.

Add a subtle shadow under the lash line for a dreamier look.

Darken eyebrows towards the outer edge.

Focus multiple layers of color to the shadows around the outside of the eyes, deepening up the vibrancy in the eyelid crease.

Add glistening white highlights to the nose, eyelid, brow bone and cheeks.

Add speckles and freckles.

Work in light layers and build cautiously. I tend to sample colors and intensify them once I am happy.

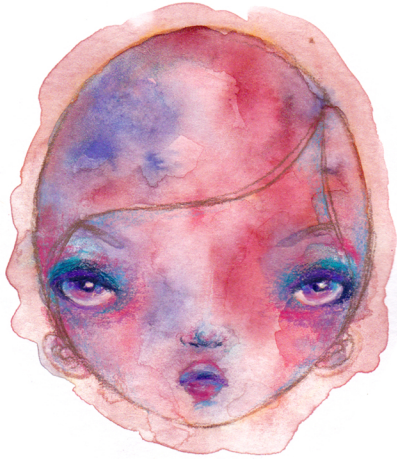


You can tell by the abundance of notes on this PDF that I LOVE shading/rendering faces. It's always such a magical experience to watch a blank piece of paper take on a new life right before your eyes. To move your tools across a page and have someone staring back at you when you're done. This formula is a favorite of mine, and a guilty pleasure when I'm just having a fun afternoon illustrating. If you're ever stuck for a new idea for face shading, or want to challenge yourself, try referencing makeup artists and their makeup looks. Often times they will bring new ideas for color palettes/shapes/textures/finishes and they're already mapped out on a face! Only difference is you're trading eyeshadow for pencils and a face for paper.

MIXING YOUR MEDIUMS

mood and style with mixed media

Half the fun of Illustration is the drawing... the other half - coloring! Well, the split might be more 30/70 for me, but without a foundation of how-to-draw I wouldn't even have drawings to color. There are an abundance of art supplies out in the world and it's sometimes hard to know which to invest in. I've found that sampling a few of EVERYTHING was a nice starting point and, as I enjoyed the supply, I could add to the collection. Below are the samples from the video tutorial. Note how the rendering was all derivative of the "Shade" lesson, but the mixture of coloring mediums challenged me to change my approach. Experiment with combinations of your art supplies and explore how the mediums you use to render can completely change the style, and mood of your work.



WATERCOLOR +
COLORED PENCILS

Watercolor

Xanadu Art Studio -
colors unavailable, seller
produces
handmade watercolors in
various quantities

Faber-Castell Polychromos

178 nougat
156 cobalt green
124 rose carmine
101 white
145 light phthalo blue
136 purple violet
138 violet
160 manganese violet

Caran D'Ache Luminance

083 ultramarine pink
171 turquoise blue
112 manganese violet



ALCOHOL MARKERS +
PASTEL PENCILS

Copic Markers

E57 light walnut
E77 maroon
V25 pale blackberry
B39 prussian blue
RV66 raspberry
Y02 canary yellow

Faber-Castell Pitt Pastels

1122-102
1122-103
1122-169
1122-180
1122-191



GEL PENS + GRAPHITE
PENCILS

Gel Pens

OHTO Fude Ball 1.5
MUJI gel ink pen 0.25

Graphite Pencils

Pilot Opt. 0.5 mechanical
pencil
Palomino Blackwing

NOTES



ACRYLIC PAINT + WATER
SOLUBLE CRAYONS

Acrylic Paint

Matte finish acrylic paint -
source unknown

Tim Holtz Distress Crayons

abandoned coral
worn lipstick
spun sugar
shaded lilac
tumbled glass

Caran D'Ache Neocolor II Aquarelle

cobalt blue
white
turquoise blue

MIXED MEDIA MINGLE

making friends in the forest

I'm all about learning... Even as the instructor of this course, I am learning. I have an endless list of styles, techniques and mediums I want to try and I will be on a lifelong pursuit to complete that list. I feel like there is no better learning experience than a hands-on exercise. Art can be made up of so many rules and trying to memorize them all frustrated me, especially when I found out that some existed for no real reason at all... In this exercise I want you to throw caution to the wind! Layer your mediums, test what you have; play. If some of your treetops don't want to be friends with each other, that's fine, remember that for next time and find them a new friend.



completed sample from video tutorial



patterns added to finish piece

I hope you get a better feel for your mediums during this process. I have played with my supplies a million times and still managed to find an INCREDIBLE accident mixing the drying paint marker with my watercolors. If you would like to finish the piece pop some patterns over your treetops. This can be further experimentation with your mediums, but also gives the exercise a completed look... People will see a fabulously textured forest scene and never suspect this was a practice page.

BUILDING BLOCKS

sketching from reference



When referencing from real life, it helps to break down the object you're looking at into its basic shapes, or "building blocks".

To practice, we are going to trace over the picture below, isolating the shapes within the image and build our sketch with those blocks.

When shading your sketch, it is easiest to block in solid colors first and then add depth with shadows. A reference photo is helpful with identifying the shapes and contours of your shadow areas, as light in real life can adjust in brightness and location; thus re-shaping your shadows as you're rendering.

Course work and printable materials provided in *Whimsical Illustration* ©jameslukeburkecreative

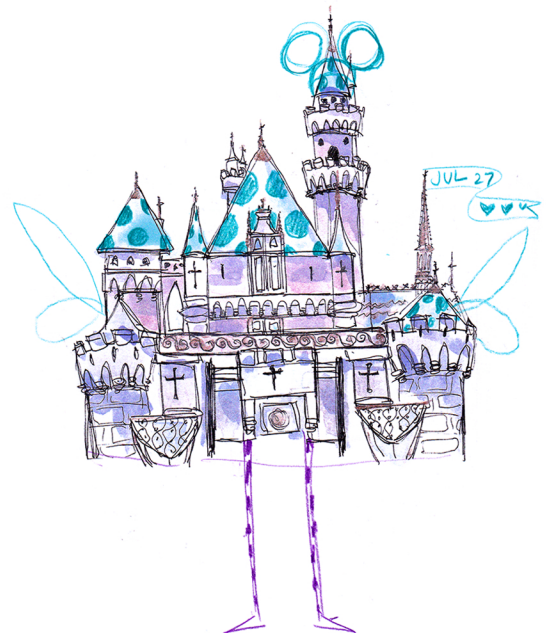
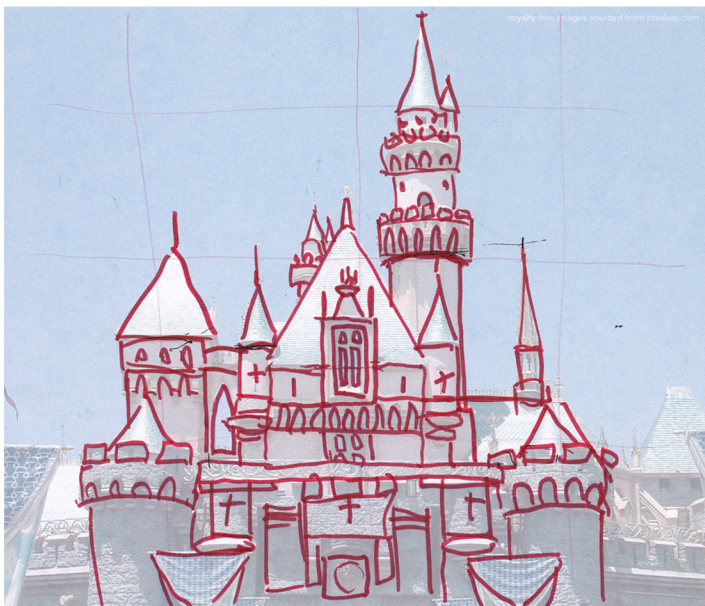
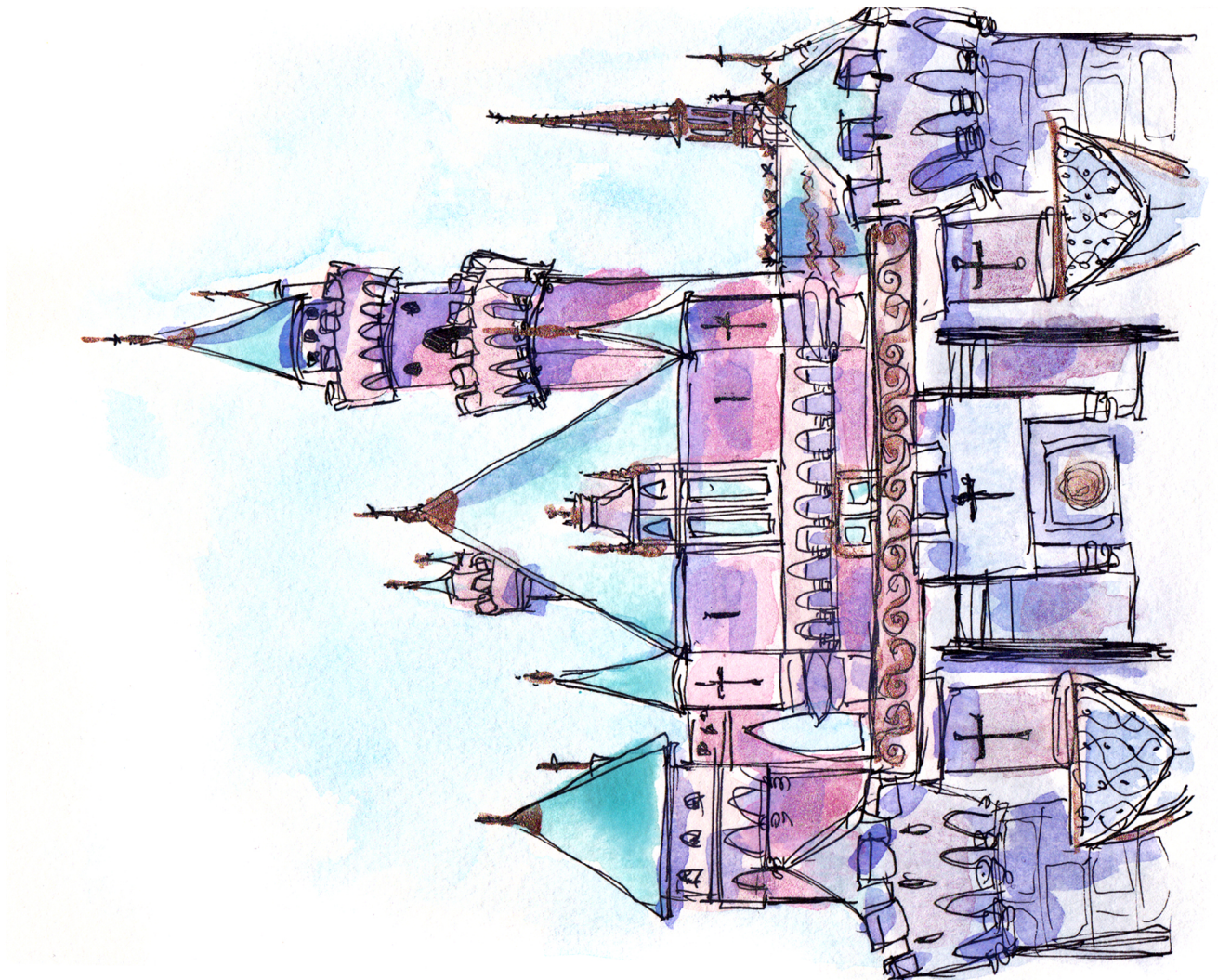
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BUILDING BLOCKS

reference samples

I have provided the completed example from "Building Blocks" for you to reference in the lesson. Below is also a copy of the tracings I used to transcribe the castle to my paper, as well as the photocopy mockup created at the end of the video tutorial.



PROPORTIONS + PLACEMENT

the keys to whimsical illustration

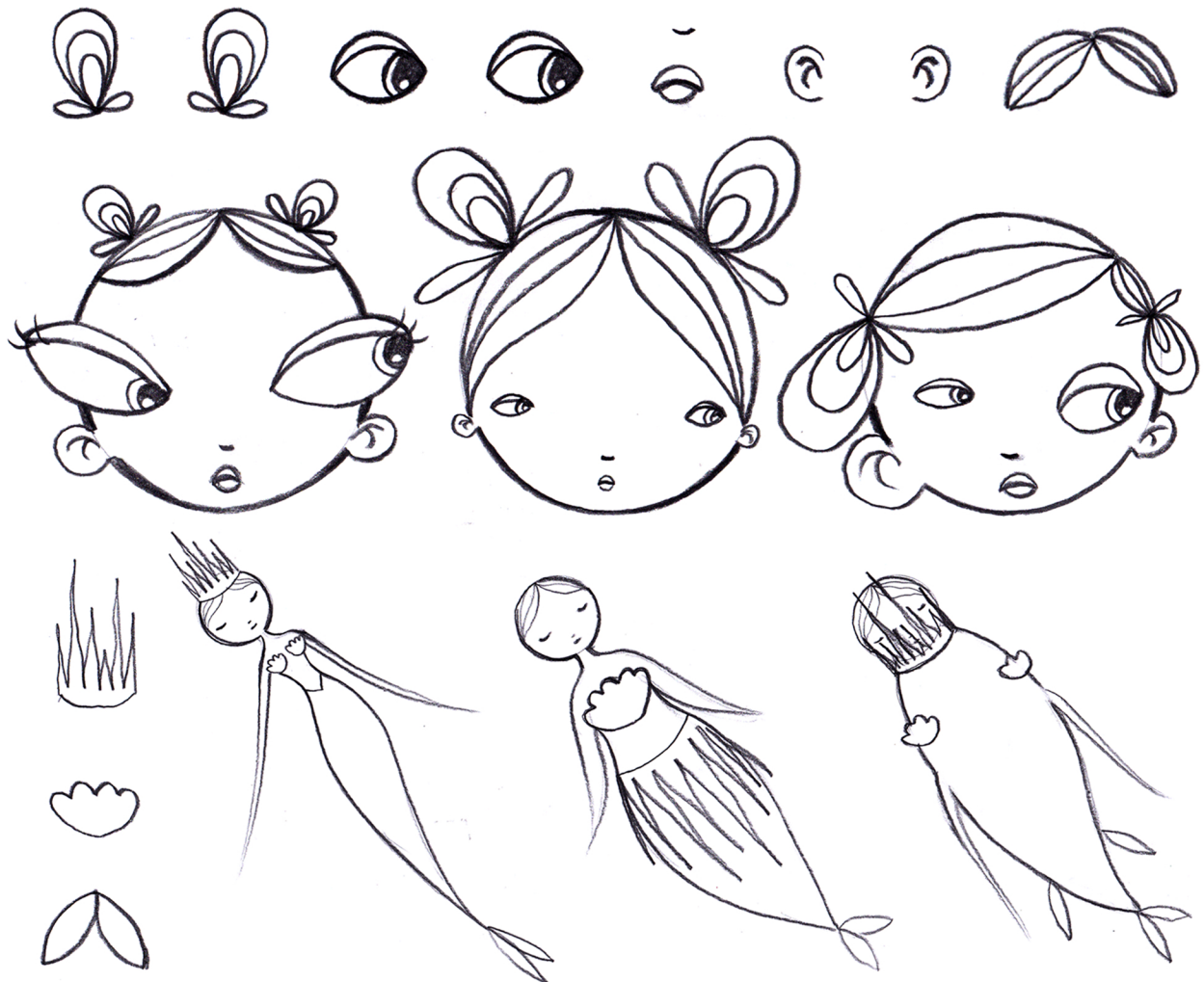
There is a lot of foundation work that we have already looked at when it comes to illustrating, and you might not be fully aware of it, but we've actually been playing with these ideas of proportion and placement.

A lot of how we judge our work comes down to our understanding of these principles and how well we think we did achieving the expectation we had for ourselves to get "the head the right size" or "the legs in the right place". But a lot of what makes something whimsical is the idea that it doesn't always exist in our reality, or we didn't expect to see something presented a certain way (eg. oversized carrot bunny ears on a bonnet).

I've noticed through my learning, that flipping peoples' subconscious expectations about what you're drawing allows them to perceive your work with a more open interpretation. Children are great for this, because their imaginations are active and therefore not difficult to tap into. Adults, however, tend to look with a more critical eye and have too many visual cues/memories to pull from to simply expect that they'll *open up* when they see your work. We can try to tap into their imaginations though... by taking what they think they should see and delivering it in a different way.

Of course, we're not really aiming to please the viewer, or even stir something up in them, we ultimately want to satisfy our own imaginations! In this case, thinking of proportion + placement becomes a vital tool in allowing yourself to explore and stimulate your own curiosities. If I told you to "draw something that has never existed before", how do you think you might do? I would be overwhelmed and probably stress knowing where to start... But if I asked you to "draw me a face and exaggerate, then move to a new position, your favorite facial feature", my guess is you would find the task easier to approach and still deliver me something I wasn't expecting to see. Proportion + placement are tools to help you think a little differently - how you use them will reveal your *imagination at work*.

REFERENCES FOR VIDEO TUTORIAL

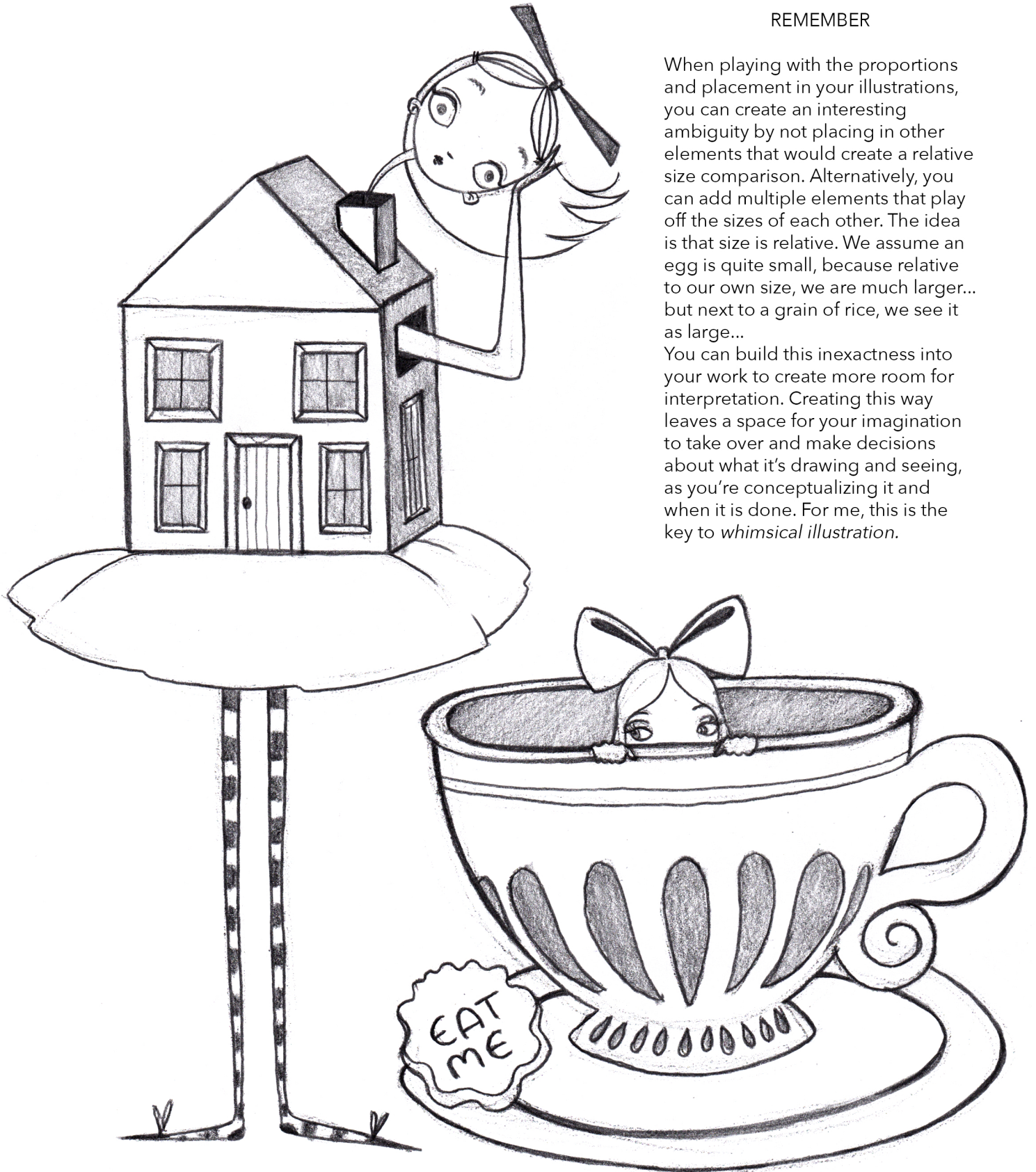


Try creating your own examples with different proportions + placement to the ones shown above. See if you can create at least 3, but if you're feeling up to it, see how many you can create before you start running out of curiosity.

EAT ME!

reference samples

Use these line art reference images to assist in the illustration process of the "Eat Me!" video tutorial



REMEMBER

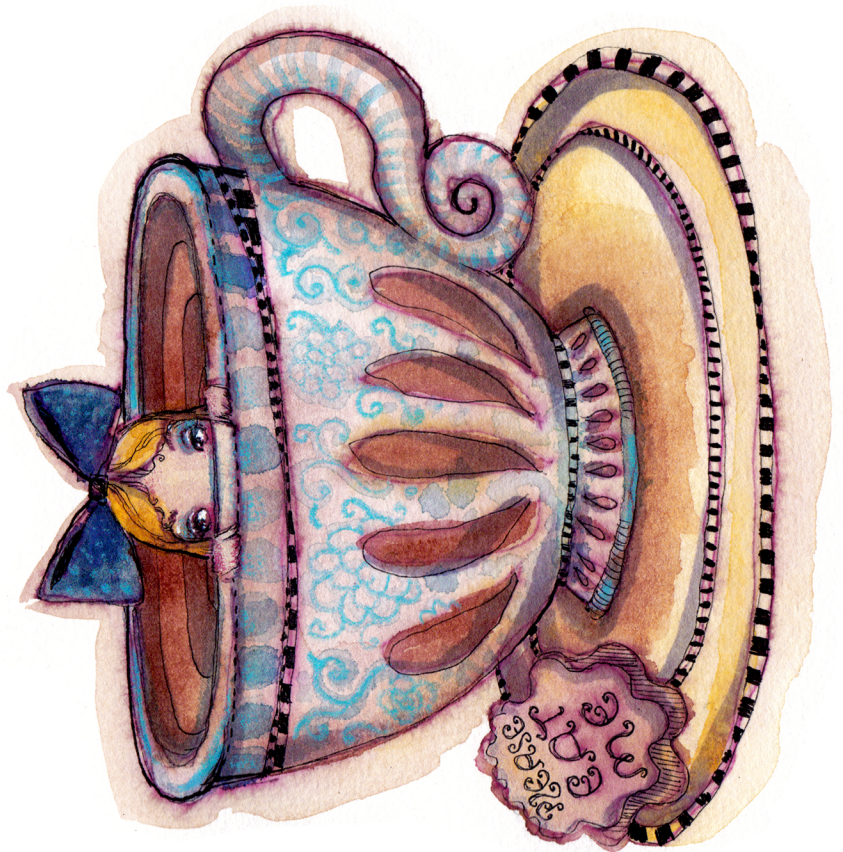
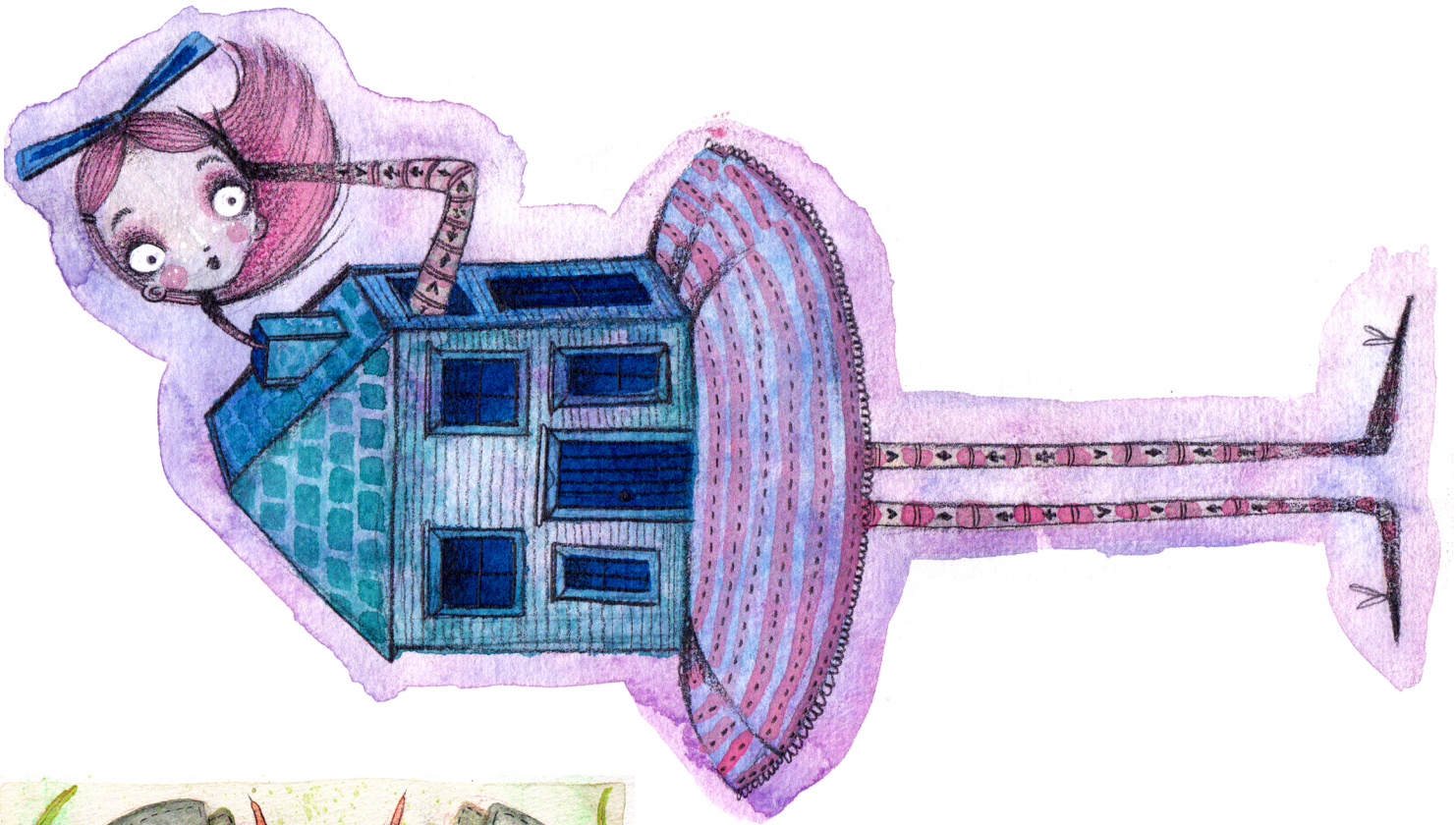
When playing with the proportions and placement in your illustrations, you can create an interesting ambiguity by not placing in other elements that would create a relative size comparison. Alternatively, you can add multiple elements that play off the sizes of each other. The idea is that size is relative. We assume an egg is quite small, because relative to our own size, we are much larger... but next to a grain of rice, we see it as large...

You can build this inexactness into your work to create more room for interpretation. Creating this way leaves a space for your imagination to take over and make decisions about what it's drawing and seeing, as you're conceptualizing it and when it is done. For me, this is the key to *whimsical illustration*.

EAT ME!

reference samples

Below are the reference images from the "Eat Me!" video tutorial.



TEAM WITH THE THEME

unpacking my creative process

When I sit down to illustrate, I have a bunch of subject matter and themes that I typically create with. If ever I want to create with an unfamiliar theme, or create a cohesive series of illustrations, I like to use the formula below to get my imagination flowing.

1. PICK A THEME TO EXPLORE
2. DIAGRAM THE ELEMENTS/KEY FEATURES OF THE THEME
3. CHOOSE A SET OF MOTIFS FROM THAT "RESEARCH"
4. SKETCH THOSE MOTIFS OUT
5. MIX + MATCH INTO THUMBNAIL SKETCHES - HAVE FUN!



After you're familiar with this process it can become a very intuitive process and you may not need to write/draw through the steps - although I still find it helpful to get a visual down, especially when I'm trying something new. If you've ever seen one of my *Holiday Swatchdoll* tutorials on YouTube, this is how I approached each of those videos.

If you find straight sketching your ideas to be challenging, you can also draw out your motifs and collage your concepts together to reference. "Team with the Theme 2" PDF has the elements I used in the video tutorial, if you want to play mix and match with those.

Below are some cleaner thumbnail sketches from the class. Please feel free to use these ideas to practice your illustrations, or challenge yourself to use the motifs in a way you don't see listed here. Remember to play with unusual proportions and intentional placement for an elevated, whimsical style.



FULL PIECE



FULL BODY



HALF BODY



FACE

TEAM WITH THE THEME

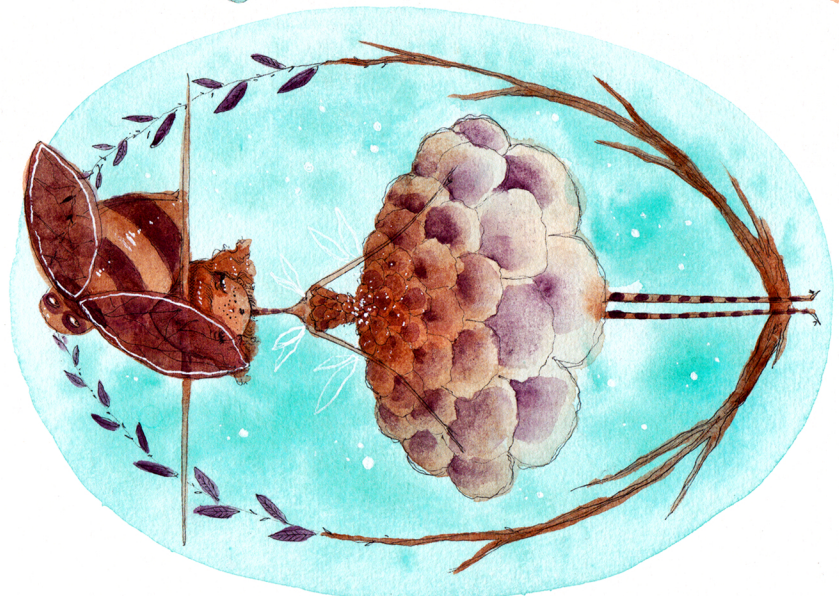
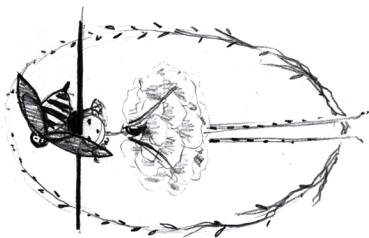
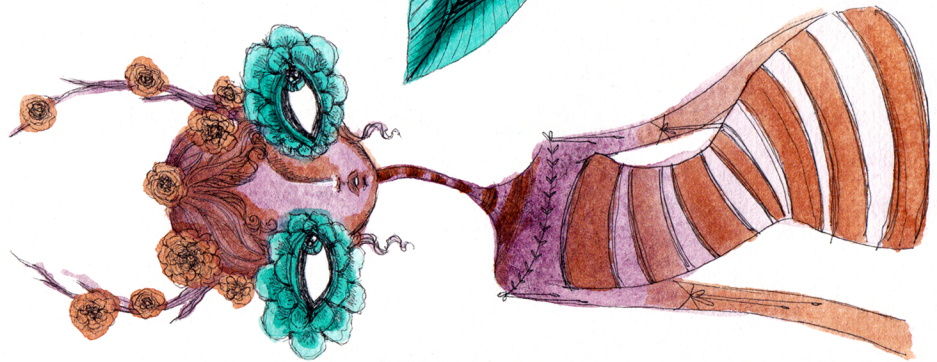
motifs

If you want to collage your concepts together and reference for your illustration,
cut out the motifs below to mix and match.



TEAM WITH THE THEME

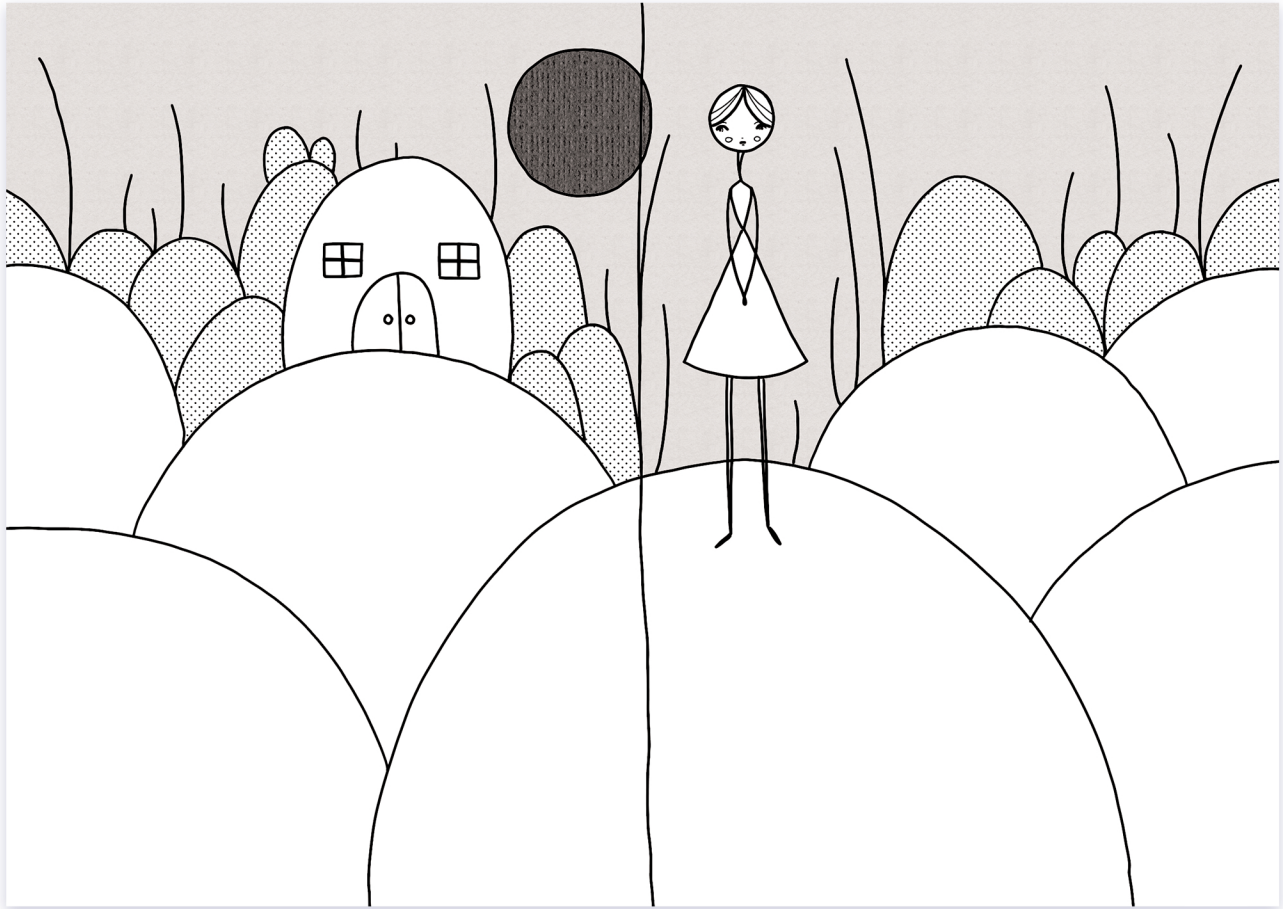
reference samples



ON A LOOP

personalized page layout tutorial

Below is the blueprint for our "On a Loop" personalized page layout. Use this as a reference in conjunction with the video tutorial to continue your practice pulling themes and personal subject matter into your illustrations.



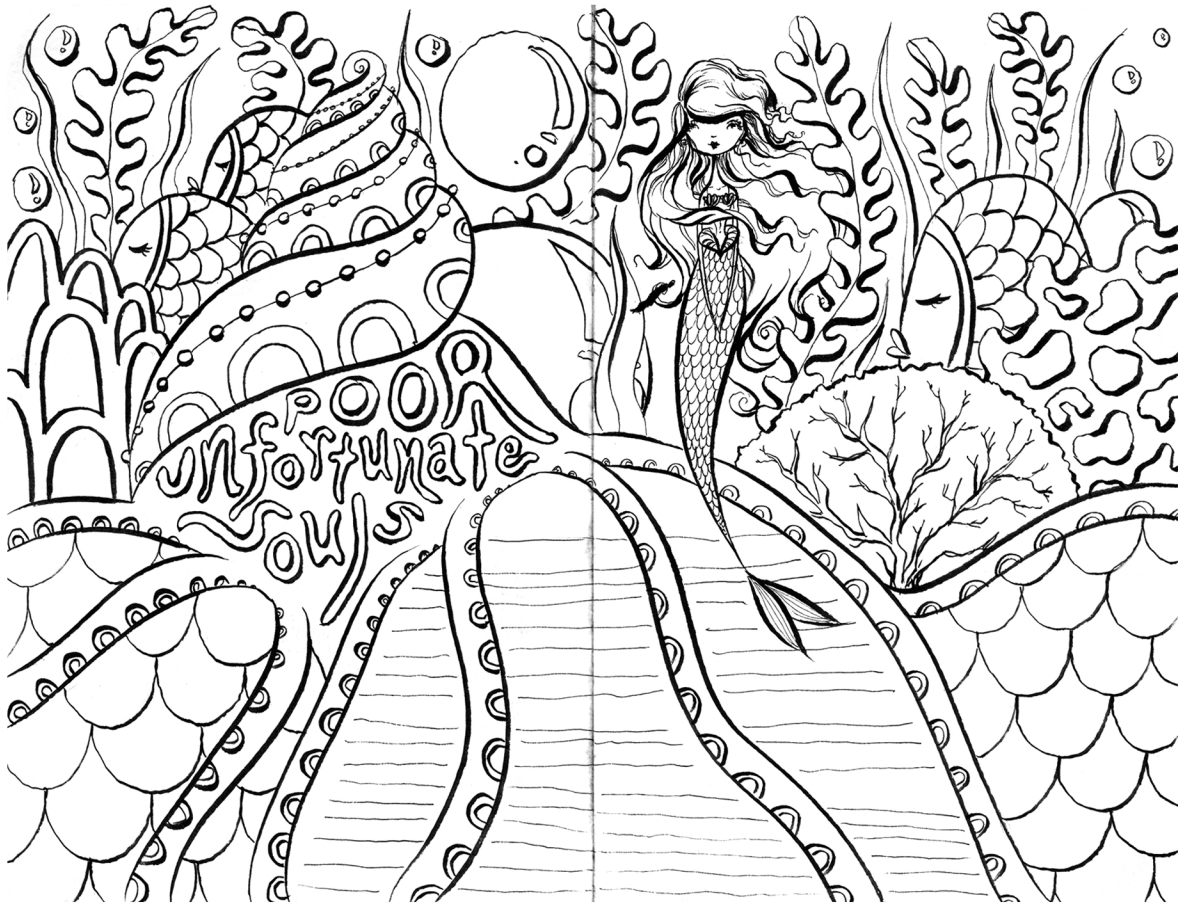
STEP - BY - STEP

- Choose a theme
- Gather simple motifs and a color palette to suit
- Thumbnail sketch your ideas
- Add your theme to the blueprint
- Render and detail
- Repeat with a new theme!
- Have fun (always have fun)



ON A LOOP

reference samples



FASHION ILLUSTRATION

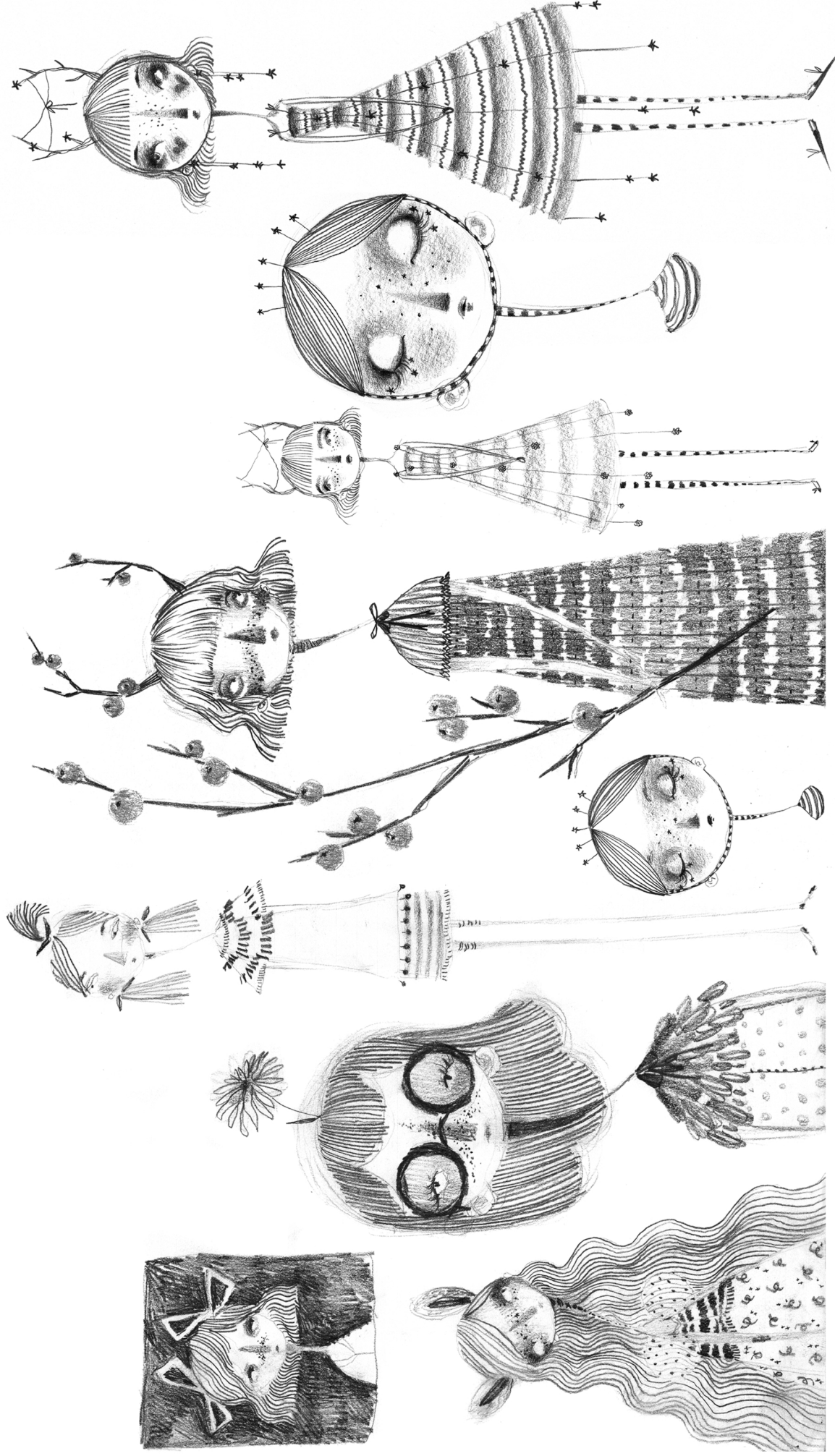
reference samples

Use liquid
ink and a
calligraphy
brush to apply bold,
expressive brush strokes to
your elongated fashion
figures.



STRIP IT ALL BACK

reference samples



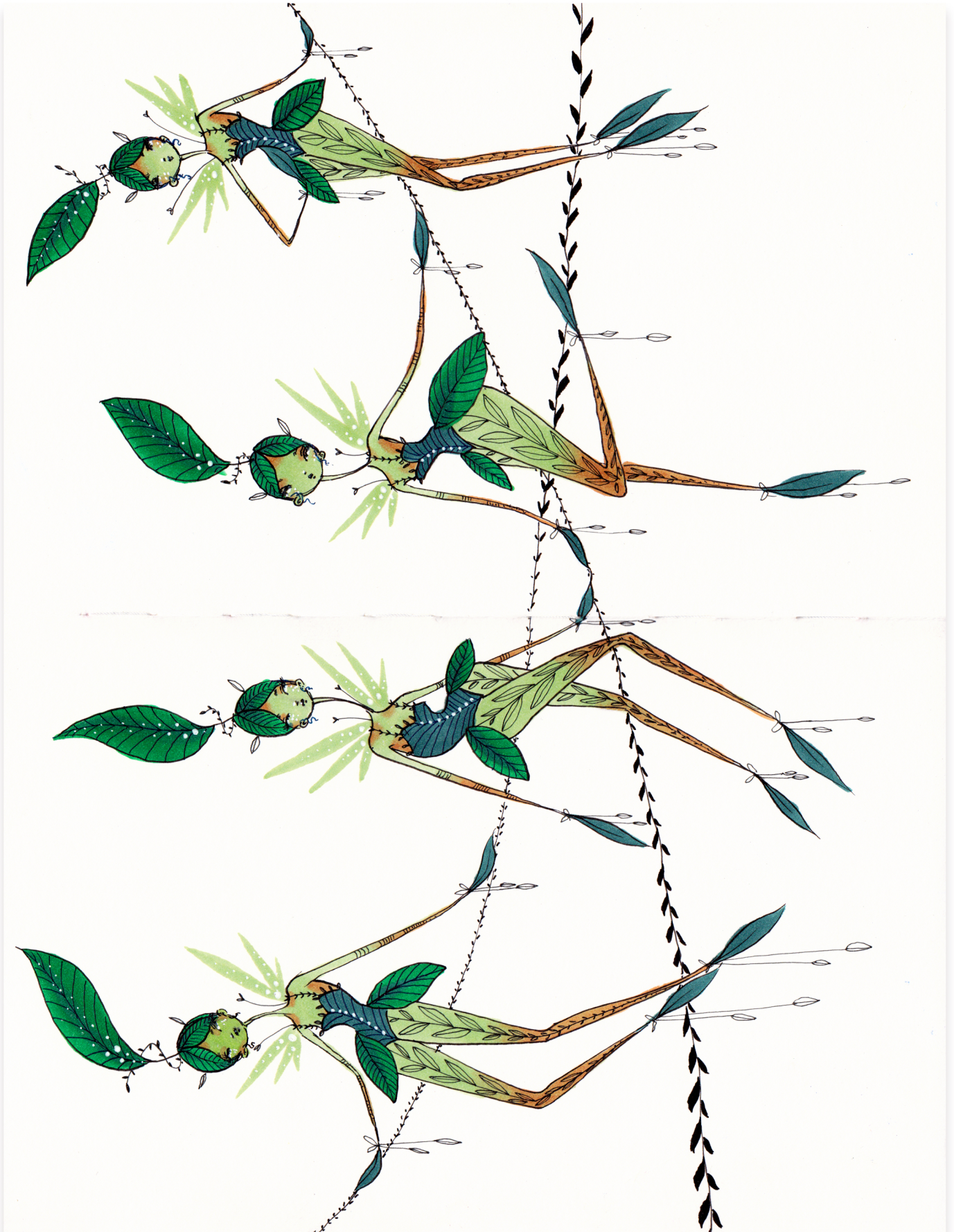
FRIDA'S MUSINGS

journal tutorial reference sample



WALKING ON A SPRITE-ROPE

journal tutorial reference sample



THIEVES OF THE NIGHT

journal tutorial reference sample

