

Sketch some fruit!

Jim Folsom, Director Emeritus of the Botanical Gardens, poses an interesting question: “How do you describe a pineapple to someone who has never seen one before?” Let’s try! Describe a pineapple. You might say that the bottom half is golden yellow and bumpy, while the top part looks like a spiky green crown. Are you able to visualize a pineapple with just that description? Folsom believes you can learn more about an object by drawing it than by observing or by photographing it. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés (1478–1557) and Maria Sibylla Merian (1647–1717) were artists who each drew pineapples after viewing them in nature. They wanted to show them to people who had never seen pineapples before. Zoom in to Oviedo’s pineapple drawing [here](#). Do their drawings of pineapples look realistic to you? Why or why not?

Click on the image to watch a short video about drawing from nature with Jim Folsom.



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vvd4eyE-9v8>

Time to make your own fruit drawing!

Materials

- A piece of fruit or a photograph of a fruit
- Art materials (crayons, markers, colored pencils, paint, etc.)
- Paper

Steps

1. Choose a fruit to do a close-looking drawing. It could be a fruit you have never tasted or seen before or a fruit that you love.
2. Spend at least five minutes just looking at this fruit. Look at it from all sides and angles. If you have the physical fruit, try and notice the textures and how it feels.
3. Now, draw your fruit. Think about colors, shading, texture, and scale.

Questions

1. Try describing your fruit to someone without telling them the name of the fruit. Were they able to guess your fruit based on your verbal description?
2. Do you think closely looking at and drawing the fruit helped you explain how it looks? Why or why not?
3. What fruit did you choose? Why?

