

Mark Kistler's Draw Squad

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As "Commander Mark" on his national PBS TV series *The Secret City*, Mark Kistler has taught 10 million viewers of all ages how to draw. Mark Kistler's *Draw Squad* gathers all his zany, effective shortcuts to basic drawing skills into a book that will delight would be artists of all ages.

Like his TV show, the thirty lessons in this book are peppered with jokes, tips, and slogans, and organized in easy-to-follow steps. "Warm-up" exercises generate enthusiasm; the "Key Drawing Words" develop specific skills; practice pages are provided for hands-on participation; and the Commander's own lively sketches and "contests" invite you to add your own creative touches. His bubbling energy, flashes of whimsy, and talent as a teacher make learning to draw fun and easy -- even for those who swear they can't draw a straight line!

Mark Kistler is a cartoonist, an illustrator, and the producer and star of Mark Kistler's *Imagination Station*, currently airing on public television nationwide. The author of the wildly popular drawing books *Mark Kistler's Draw Squad* and *Mark Kistler's Imagination Station*, Kistler lives in Santa Barbara, California. Chapter 1

"I Can't Even Draw A Straight Line" Dissolving a Popular Myth

What if I handed you a piece of blank paper and a pencil and asked you to draw a house. What would you say? I've asked this question to thousands of adults in my workshops, and invariably they give me the same response: I can't even draw a straight line!

You've probably always believed that you needed talent before you could learn how to draw. Consequently, you've wished that you had some. Well, I've got a surprise for you -- you have enormous stockpiles of talent stored away. It's just that you've never been exposed to a systematic program, offering rules to follow, structured goals to achieve, and step-by-step lessons to build your drawing talent.

Mark Kistler's *Draw Squad* is the culmination of everything I've learned from my master teacher, Bruce McIntyre, and from my nine years of classroom teaching.

My first class began with only 20 students. Within a year the enthusiasm generated by those first students burst the classroom seams to 600 students! "Hey, I can draw!" excitement has been building ever since. From the thousands of schools where I've lectured throughout the country, to the airing of my childrens' television show, "The Secret City," on national public television, literally millions of students have been able to dissolve that ridiculous myth of "I can't even draw a straight line!"

Each of these students has conquered the flat surface of a piece of paper with what I call "pencil power." Pencil power is the understanding of the Ten Key Words of Drawing.

My philosophy is simple. I'll teach you the Ten Key Words of Drawing. You take these words and nourish them with a daily 20-minute drawing workout. In one week, you'll see an incredible difference in your drawing skills. Once you understand the Ten Key Words, you will be drawing creatively and confidently in three dimensions. I promise. It's that simple. I call it "The Drawing Diet." Don't get alarmed; it's the easiest diet you'll ever go on!

Are you still skeptical? I mean, sure kids can learn to draw. They're brimming with imagination just waiting to get out. What ever happened to that creative spontaneity we once had in kindergarten, anyway? What happened to that "art attack" (this is what I call that uncontrollable need to draw...Draw, Draw, Draw!) enthusiasm we once had back in the first grade? Remember plunging your hands into a milk carton of bright wonderful paint and splashing it across an oversized sheet of paper? Remember splashing it across your entire desk, your clothes, and the kid sitting next to you (now that's an art attack!)?

Where has our childhood magicland of imagination gone? Ah...I truly believe this wonderfully powerful imagination hasn't gone anywhere at all. It's sitting there inside of us just where we left it years ago. It's back with all those other childish things we slowly lost confidence in and eventually traded for adulthood.

But, you can avoid this breakdown in confidence and creativity. I believe that it stems, in part, from the fact that no one has approached the teaching of drawing skills in the same successful method that reading and mathematics have been taught; that is, starting with the fundamentals.

In mathematics classes, students begin with simple, simple, simple addition and subtraction (with visual aids, I might add! Three oranges minus one orange equals...). After that comes multiplication and division, and after that the more complex branches of math, but even so, the fundamentals are always maintained.

Reading and writing are treated in the same systematic way. First the alphabet is introduced, then a vocabulary is built, then sentences, etc., etc., etc., and, oh, yes, lots of books need reading and lots of essays need writing, but still, the most important element is daily practice! I think you see my point now. We can't expect a student to solve math problems by giving him or her a piece of paper and a pencil and saying, "Okay, do math." Yet, it's very common to give a student that same piece of paper and pencil and say, "Okay, draw, and by all means, be as creative as you like!"

That's exactly what happened to most of us as kids. After thousands of attempts at drawing and very little success at conquering a simple piece of paper, we found a way out, the I-can't-even-draw-a-straight-line escape. This is what I call "The Creativity Crunch Syndrome."

Don't worry. The teaching of drawing hasn't been completely abandoned. A giant art wave is sweeping through our nation's school system. Teachers everywhere are realizing the importance of drawing in the classroom. We are starting to notice the impact of years of brilliant work by international, national, and statewide art education associations. Moreover, the publication of the thoughts and programs of such geniuses as Bruce McIntyre (Drawing Textbook), Betty Edwards (Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain), Mona Brookes (Drawing With Children), and the former president of the Texas Art Education Association, James Clarke (The 4th "R" in Education is Art!) have contributed enormously. In addition, such institutes as The National Art Education Association, The Getty Foundation, and The John

F. Kennedy Center have, through innovative research and classroom application, developed many workable and results-oriented programs. With all of these super brains behind quality art education, I'm confident students today won't need to endure the "creativity crunching years" like we did.

Let me give you a little history on how I became so involved in the systematic teaching of drawing. I was fortunate enough to study for 12 years under the guidance of Bruce McIntyre, a man so dedicated to kids that he left Walt Disney Studios for them. He decided to dedicate his life to teaching kids how to draw. Building from Bruce's 44 years of experience, I developed a series of drawing lessons designed to strengthen a child's self-esteem. My success-oriented drawing lessons first splashed across the country in my 1985 national public television role as "Commander Mark" of the Secret City, a wonderful show of fun, fantasy, and adventure. Millions of viewers learned how to draw using the very system that you are about to learn. Over 150,000 letters from kids, parents, grandparents, and teachers motivated me to turn my program into an informative, yet enjoyable book. During the past two years, since the show began airing, I've compiled notes from my classroom video productions, classroom lectures, summer art "flight" schools (we let our pencil leads do the flying), and a national school assembly tour.

And, here it is...30 incredibly fun, enriching, sequential lessons that will teach you how to blast across a two-dimensional surface with pencil power. You will learn how to turn that simple white piece of paper into an amazing three-dimensional space! In a few short weeks, I know you'll be looking at your "Daily Drawing Journal" and saying exactly what all of my students say:

"Wow, like this is totally rad, man. I really can, like, draw. Wow!"

So, are you ready to get started? Complete the following pre-test:

The Pre-Test

"Oh, no!!! Not a drawing test! Augh! I can't even draw a straight line!!!"

I knew you'd say that. I assure you, this is only a gauge for you to measure your current drawing skills. As time goes by, you'll have this pre-test as a reference with which to judge your progress, and as a "before-and-after" journal entry.

When I ask elementary school kids to draw me a house, these little, creative geniuses don't just draw me a house, they draw barns and castles and space stations. It takes a lot of coaxing to get adults' creative self-esteem high enough to allow them to draw.

Before I show you how most adults draw a house and why they draw it the way they do, I want you to put aside that I can't even draw a straight line notion, and draw a house. Relax, loosen your fingers...and let your pencil fly!!!

Take another couple of minutes and draw me an airplane. What? I heard what you

muttered under your breath, but you're wrong. You can draw! The house and the airplane drawings are important in proving a point! So, even if you think these drawings look like over-cooked spaghetti, keep them for comparison's sake. I promise you. You're going to be amazed by your progress in less than an hour! Now, draw an airplane.

Okay, so you're wondering what's the point? Are you keeping your hand nonchalantly over your sketches out of amused embarrassment? Ninety-eight percent of the adults I've worked with respond the exact same way. Their drawings look like these:

How do your drawings compare? (In my seminars, most adults would be laughing hysterically right now, especially when I have some kids' drawings on a chalkboard in front of the group!) The kids and adults are drawing on the same skill level. The house drawing above is a two-dimensional, flat symbol for a house. We all loved to draw when we were very young, but, unfortunately, the skill of drawing was not taught with a thorough, sequentially structured program such as math or reading. Our drawing skill abruptly stopped developing before our creativity had a chance to blossom.

I call these pre-test houses "McHomes" because million of people draw exactly the same symbol for a house. The same for "McPlanes." A subtle revenge against the airlines for too many delays, too much turbulence, too much lost luggage...running out of honey-roasted peanuts! We could crank out these McPlanes in no time. Just think, a lifetime supply of soggy, turkey sandwiches, vacuum-packed in plastic baggies, each served with a single leaf of lettuce, half a pickle, and a radish!

Okay, enough is enough. You're probably thinking, "Gee, what a sensitive drawing teacher." Honestly, most adults draw exactly like they did as children because that's when their artistic development stopped. But, the jokes and hysterical pointing do have a point. I'm breaking down the Creativity Crunch Syndrome! The resiliency of people is so inspiring. These same adults who laugh hysterically at their own drawings (I hope you're laughing by now!), will throw away 30, 40 and even 50 years of creativity crunching, pick up a pencil, flip over their pre-test (saving their "flat" drawings for comparison's sake), and will keep right on drawing with me! Each one walks out of my seminars with a fistful of excellent three-dimensional sketches, a positive, creative attitude, and an uncontrollable desire to buy three large sketchbooks!

To Teachers (society's true heroes):

Chapter 3 is a "Teachers' Section" where I'll outline why drawing is critical in your classroom, how drawing can be used as the hub of your curriculum, and how you can harness the enthusiasm this program generates to build each student's self-esteem. I'll share with you some "hot" classroom drawing techniques with a guarantee to extend "on task" project time. Yes, every chatterbox, eraser-throwing, tack-taping-on-chairs Johnny will sit quietly for LONG periods of time, completely engrossed in geography, social studies, math, or any subject where drawing is used as a teaching vehicle.

To Parents:

Chapter 6 is a "Parents' Section" where I'll outline activities for you to try with your children to utilize that powerhouse of creativity within them. It wouldn't hurt for you to do the activities with them. I'd also recommend that you check out the "Teachers' Section." There are some great ideas there that I don't go over in your section. But of course you'll read it: You're a 24-hour-a-day teacher!

To High School Students:

Chapter 8 is a special note for you. I tell you about my personal story of drawing success. How I've utilized drawing to visualize and achieve my dreams (one of which is this book). Use my story as an enthusiastic energizer to launch your dreams! Say "Yes to Drawing and No To Drugs."

To Kids:

You're about to launch into the world of drawing, a place of exciting adventure! A place where your pencil will blast across the paper to create wonderful three-dimensional drawings. Beginning with Lesson 1, I'll guide you through 30 drawing adventures. Each of these will ignite your imagination and will keep you drawing all day long. Grab your paper and pencil and get ready to Draw, Draw, Draw!

One Last Thought

Before you actually begin the lessons, let me leave you with one last thought, no, one MORE thought (I never have a final thought!). So, think about this. Visualize your progress. Eventually (sooner than you think), you'll be drawing it! So, get ready. This systematic drawing program into which you are about to plunge will be like surfing the crest of an artistic tidal wave.

You are about to taste the fruit of confident creativity. Bon Appetit!

The Draw Squad's

TEN KEY WORDS OF DRAWING

These Ten Key Words can be successfully combined to create the illusion of three-dimensional drawing.

This method, which has worked tremendously well in my classrooms, teaches the students fundamental drawing skills in a structured format to ensure success. I've found that the "idea launch" or the "extra button" is the motivator in getting students to use the Ten Key Words without copying my illustrations. This helps each student develop his or her own style of skilled visual expression.

Foreshortening

Distorting objects or parts of an object to create the illusion that one edge is actually closer to your eye.

Shading

Adding darkness to a surface that is opposite an imaginary light source adds depth to your drawing.

Surface

Drawing objects or parts of an object lower on the surface of the paper makes them appear closer (with the exception of objects in space i.e. birds, clouds etc.).

Size

Generally, objects drawn larger will look closer, except when overlapping.

Contour Lines

Lines wrapped around the contour of a round object adds volume and shape to the object.

Overlapping

Objects drawn in front of others will make the front objects appear closer.

Density

Images drawn darker, and with more detail, will appear closer than images drawn lighter and with less detail. This adds "atmosphere" to the drawing.

Shadows

Shadows are cast off the object from the shaded side. This anchors the object firmly onto the surface. Shadows can also be used to create an "overhang" or "hover" illusion.

Attitude

A student's self-esteem and confidence are critical elements to be nurtured when teaching any skill. The previous key words produce results which enhance attitude. However, positive role-modeling, quotes, ideas and encouragement are constantly needed. Remember, keep a POSITIVE MENTAL ATTITUDE.

Daily Use

All nine of the previous key words are practically useless to the student's pencil power without daily application.

Your Drawing Lesson Format

Each of the following 30 lessons is broken down into nine components. These lessons follow a student-tested sequential format. Within this format, you will learn the Ten Key Words of Drawing. These important, basic ideas will help you understand and apply all the techniques I'm going to teach you.

Before we start, let me give you a short description of each of the components that comprise a lesson.

Component 1: The Warm-Up

An imagination exercise loosens up your fingers and your creative mind. Athletes stretch their muscles before work...

Other Books

Christian Home Educators' Curriculum Manual, "Reviews, goal setting, what to teach, learning styles, how to teach, planning and record keeping, resource addresses"--Cover.
? ? ? ? ? . For Instruction in Righteousness Topical Reference Guide for Biblical Child - Training For Instruction in ... Child - Training by Pam Forster (Doorposts) \$ 25 spiralbound ; \$ 27 looseleaf binder This 300+ page book can be used in a ..."