

Expressive Line #1



Activity page for:

Image 22: Ernst Ludwig Kirchner, *Toilettenmachende Mädchen/Girls at their Toilette*, 1910

Image 20: Käthe Kollwitz, *Selbstbildnis im Profil/Self-Portrait in Profile*, 1927

Image 12: Käthe Kollwitz, *Weberzug/Weaver's March*, 1897



For some artists, the **quality of line** can be seen as an expression of his/her style. Line quality can also contribute to the mood of the work. Think about soft, irregular lines of a quick charcoal sketch vs. the crisp, carefully placed lines of a finished ink drawing...

Follow this link to see examples, and to read up about the expressive qualities of line: <http://char.txa.cornell.edu/language/element/element.htm>



Think about it:

Discuss the following questions with a partner. Refer to gallery notes for more information.

1. Describe the use of line in each of the following pieces: Beckmann's *Girls at their Toilette*, Kollwitz's *Self-Portrait in Profile*, and Kollwitz's *Weaver's March*. How would you compare Beckmann's line style with Kollwitz's pieces? Is any one a "better" piece than the other? Explain your opinion.
2. How does line quality contribute to the mood, or expressive quality, of each one of these pieces?
3. Have the artists used any *other* methods or techniques to convey expression in their pieces? Explain.

Try this:

Option A (for the artistically inclined)

Find someone willing to pose while you make a drawing of their hand. Ask your model to position his or her hand comfortably. Begin by attempting to create a drawing in Beckmann's style. Try using a soft conte crayon, or the side of a softer (4B–8B) graphite pencil. Use few lines. Think "less is more".

Now, make a drawing of the same person's hand in a line style similar to either one or both of Käthe Kollwitz's approaches. You might use ink and a nib pen to complete your drawing. When you are finished, think about which one of these line styles was the most difficult to imitate.

Option B (for everyone)

Attempt Option A, but substitute an easier object (an apple, a box, a juice container). Substitute an HB pencil and a regular ink pen for the materials mentioned above, if they are not available.