Have you ever heard of a still life? Still-life drawings or paintings show objects such as food, books, flowers and dishes, often arranged on a table. These drawings are good practice for beginning artists. For one thing, whatever you’re trying to draw can’t wiggle! You can play around with different arrangements, or compositions, by moving things. You can try painting many shapes, from round grapes to rectangular books, and interesting textures like fuzzy peaches or shiny drinking glasses.

Even very skilled artists enjoy painting objects. One of the best American still-life painters was William Harnett (1848-1892). His paintings of things like books, violins, sheet music, and even dollar bills were so lifelike that people had to be told not to touch the artwork to see if they were real!

Try this!

Take a careful look at the still life above, painted almost 250 years ago by Dutch artist Jan Van Os. Below are some scrambled names of things in the painting. Unscramble the words, and then circle them in the still life.

Fruits: P A R G E
P A P E L
P E E N L I P A P

Vegetables: H A S Q U S
N O R C

Animal: S O U M E

You be the artist!

Find some objects around your room, house or classroom. Gather a mix of sizes, shapes, colors and textures. Arrange them how you like. Then get to work drawing your own still life below!

Paper People

You can do this art project at home! All you need are a few supplies, and a lot of creativity. Follow the steps below to make your own paper people.

Supplies:
- Colorful or patterned paper (Don’t have patterned paper? Make your own with white paper and markers!)
- Glue stick
- Scissors
- Tape
- Markers

Steps:
1. Start with a full sheet of paper. Cut the paper in half.
2. Fold the paper like an accordion until the whole sheet is folded.
3. Fold the folded paper in half, and glue together the middle.
4. Using a slightly smaller piece of paper, fold it like an accordion.
5. Fold the smaller piece of paper in half and glue it to the top of the first folded paper.
6. Your paper person needs a head! Place a piece of tape around the top of the paper. Cut out a round shape from the paper of your choice, and decorate the face. Attach the circle to the tape.
7. Now you need some hair! Fold a small strip of paper around the head, and glue it into place.

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Answers:
Grape, apple, pineapple, squash, corn, mouse

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