# The formal elements, one object.

*One object from your theme, looked at six ways. Same object, same position, every cell. Four minutes a cell. Speed is the point: I want to see what you reach for, not what you can polish.*

**NAME** **THEME** Natural Forms / Still Life **OBJECT** **DATE** 7 Sep 2026

## 1 Line, contour

4 MIN · FINELINER OR PEN

1 · CONTOUR

**HOW**

Eyes on the object, not the paper. One slow line round the edge you can see. Press harder where the edge turns, lighter where it runs straight. Do not lift the pen until you have to.

**THE TELL**

The proportions can be wrong. The line cannot be dead.

**UNDER IT** *one decision, rejection, or observation*

## 2 Line, structure

4 MIN · 2B

2 · STRUCTURE

**HOW**

Axis first: the line the object stands on. Then the shapes it is made of, ellipse, box, cylinder, drawn all the way round, the far side included. Then the edge. Light lines, repeated. The wrong ones stay.

**THE TELL**

A stranger could rebuild the object from this drawing.

**UNDER IT** *one decision, rejection, or observation*

## 3 Tone and form

4 MIN · 2B TO 6B

3 · TONE

**HOW**

No outlines. Find where the light comes from, then build the object out of light and dark shapes only. Shadows are shapes. Reach the darkest dark the pencil can make, somewhere.

**THE TELL**

An edge that exists only because one tone meets another.

**UNDER IT** *where the light comes from, and what it hid*

## 4 Texture

4 MIN · ANY TOOL

4 · TEXTURE

**HOW**

One part of the surface, three times larger than life, filling the frame. Change your mark to fit the surface: shell, glass, cloth, crust, bark, metal. Surface only, no outline of the whole object.

**THE TELL**

Cover the label and a stranger can still name the material.

**UNDER IT** *which mark told the truth*

## 5 Shape and space

4 MIN · PENCIL

5 · THREE THUMBNAILS

**HOW**

Three small frames inside this one. The object placed three ways: large and cut by the edge, small with room around it, off to one side. Silhouette only, blocked in dark, no detail. Circle the one that works.

**THE TELL**

The empty space is a shape you chose, not what was left over.

**UNDER IT** *why that one, in one line*

## 6 Color

4 MIN · COLORED PENCIL, OR WORDS

6 · COLOR

**HOW**

Three swatches: the color you see in the light, the color in the shadow, the color where the object meets the table. Under each, the mixing route: the two colors that make it and the one that dulls it. No colored pencil? Write the three routes in words. The thinking is the study.

**THE TELL**

No swatch is a color straight from the box.

**UNDER IT** *the color you were most wrong about*

**WHICH ELEMENT TOLD THE TRUTH ABOUT YOUR OBJECT?** *the cell a stranger could learn the most from*

Circle one: **1** contour **2** structure **3** tone **4** texture **5** shape **6** color. Then say why, in two sentences. Name the part of the object that decided it.

**TEACHER** LINE | TONE | TEXTURE | COMPOSITION | COLOR | ANNOTATION | BAND