

FACES AND A VASE

Brenda Hoddinott

B-04 BEGINNER: LEARN TO SEE

This lesson is all about tricking your brain into allowing your vision to see differently. In a fun project, you exercise your brain, vision, and drawing skills with a traditional optical illusion in which you see two different images within the same drawing.

The next time you go outside on a cloudy day, examine the clouds. Your left-brain allows you to see only a cloud. But, sometimes you can look at a cloud and see the shape of something else. Your right brain often allows you to see other things in clouds, such as animals or faces.

You need good quality white drawing paper, graphite pencils, a ruler and erasers. This lesson is divided into the following two sections:

- ✚ **EXERCISING YOUR RIGHT BRAIN:** You exercise both your brain and vision with an illustrated discussion surrounding your brain's perspective on artistic perceptions. All you need is a brain, an open mind, and a little patience.
- ✚ **DRAWING AN OPTICAL ILLUSION:** From pencils to sketchbooks, many tools of drawing are integral to creating art. However, the most important drawing tool of all is your brain. This project invites you to follow along with step-by-step instructions, and draw an optical illusion by transforming two faces into a vase.

12 PAGES – 22 ILLUSTRATIONS

Recommended for artists of all ages with basic drawing skills, as well as home schooling, academic and recreational fine art educators

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EXERCISING YOUR RIGHT BRAIN

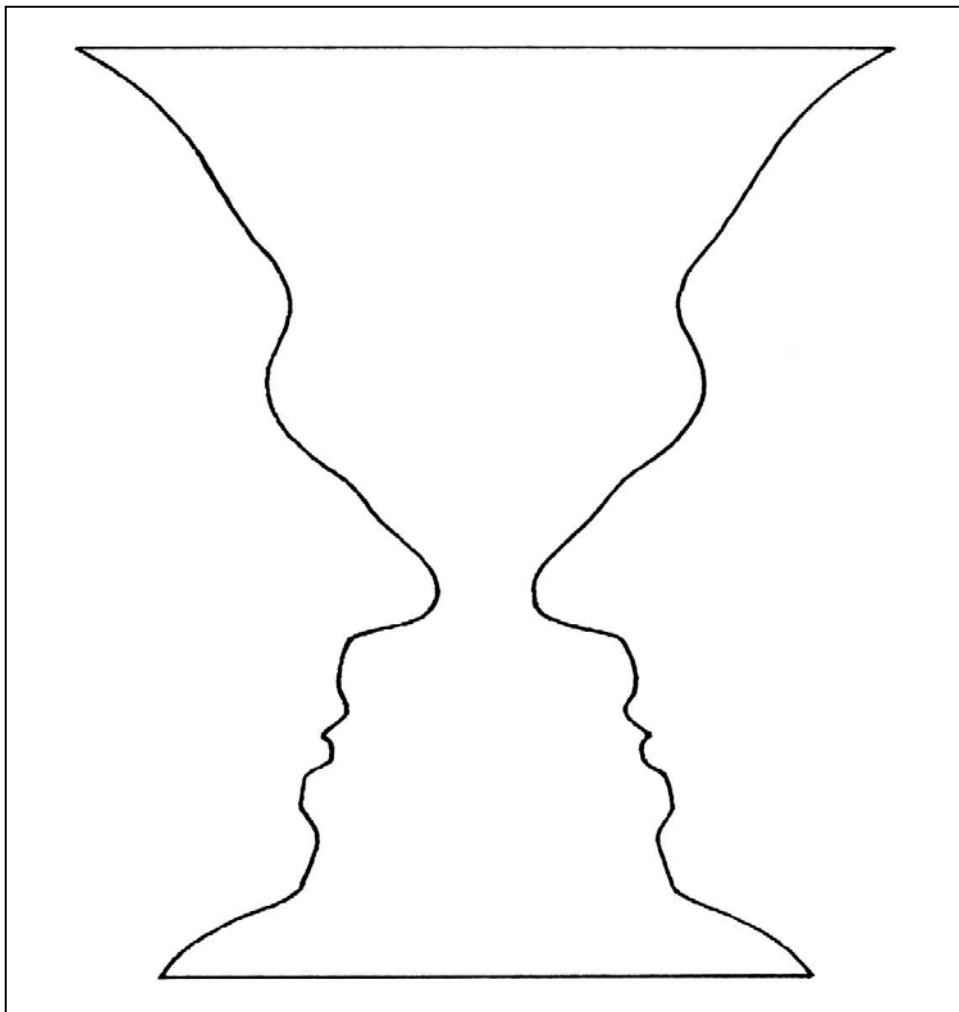
In this part, all you need is a brain, an open mind, and a little patience. With some simple visual exercises, you exercise both your brain and vision.

Your brain has two sides, the right hemisphere (right brain) and the left hemisphere (left-brain). Left-brain thinking is analytical and verbal. Right-brain thinking is visual and perceptive. You use both right and left-brain functions for drawing.

Our education system emphasizes the importance of left-brain functions. This is logical when you realize that the left-brain controls most mathematical and verbal skills. As a result, many persons are left-brain dominant. Many of the perceptive skills needed for drawing are processed by the right brain. Exercising some dormant abilities of your right brain helps you to see differently and thereby draw better.

This exercise may help you notice when your brain switches sides. It's sometimes referred to as an optical illusion. Have a look at the drawing in Illustration 04-01. What do you see? Do you see a vase? Can you see two faces?

ILLUSTRATION 04-01



If you could see both the vase and the two faces, you just experienced a switch of your right and left-brain functions. If you had difficulty seeing both, the next two drawings may help. In the first one the vase is black. In the second the faces are black. Can you see them both now?

ILLUSTRATION 04-02

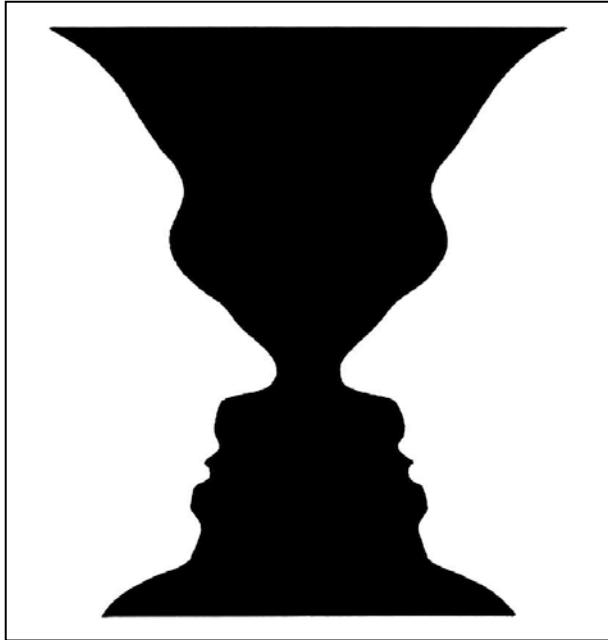
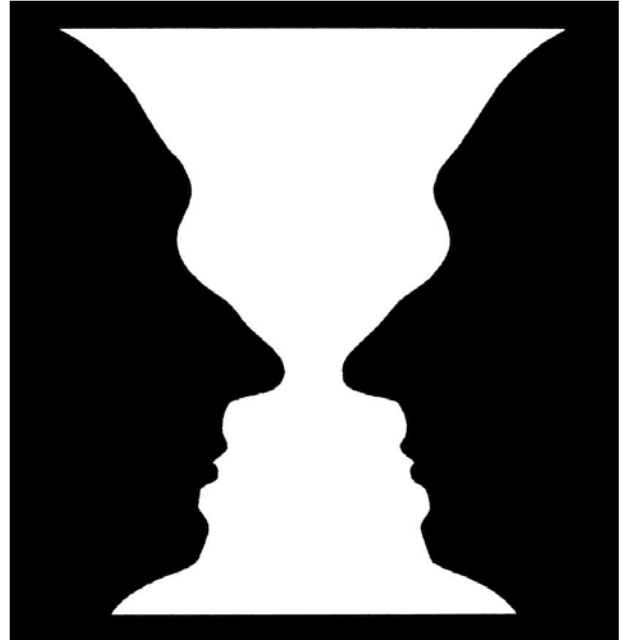


ILLUSTRATION 04-03



Many of the perceptive skills needed for drawing are processed by the right brain. Your creative and insightful right brain plays various roles in drawing, such as:

- ❖ Seeing abstract connections between lines, shapes, and spaces,
- ❖ Helping with the process of drawing in a non-narrative context by instinctively seeing proportions,
- ❖ Combining the varied visual components of your drawing subject to form a whole image,
- ❖ Planning instinctive compositions
- ❖ Allowing you to better concentrate on drawing by blocking distractions and sometimes even losing track of time.

The primary functions of your left brain include:

- ❖ Using mathematical logic to establish proportions, such as examining measurements of lines and spaces, and drawing grid lines,
- ❖ Naming the individual parts of the person you are drawing,
- ❖ Analyzing the numerical and verbal sequences of step-by-step instructions
- ❖ Keeping track of time frames.

The next illustration provides you with another opportunity to see both the faces and a vase. The solution to this illusion is in the two illustrations following this one.

ILLUSTRATION 04-04

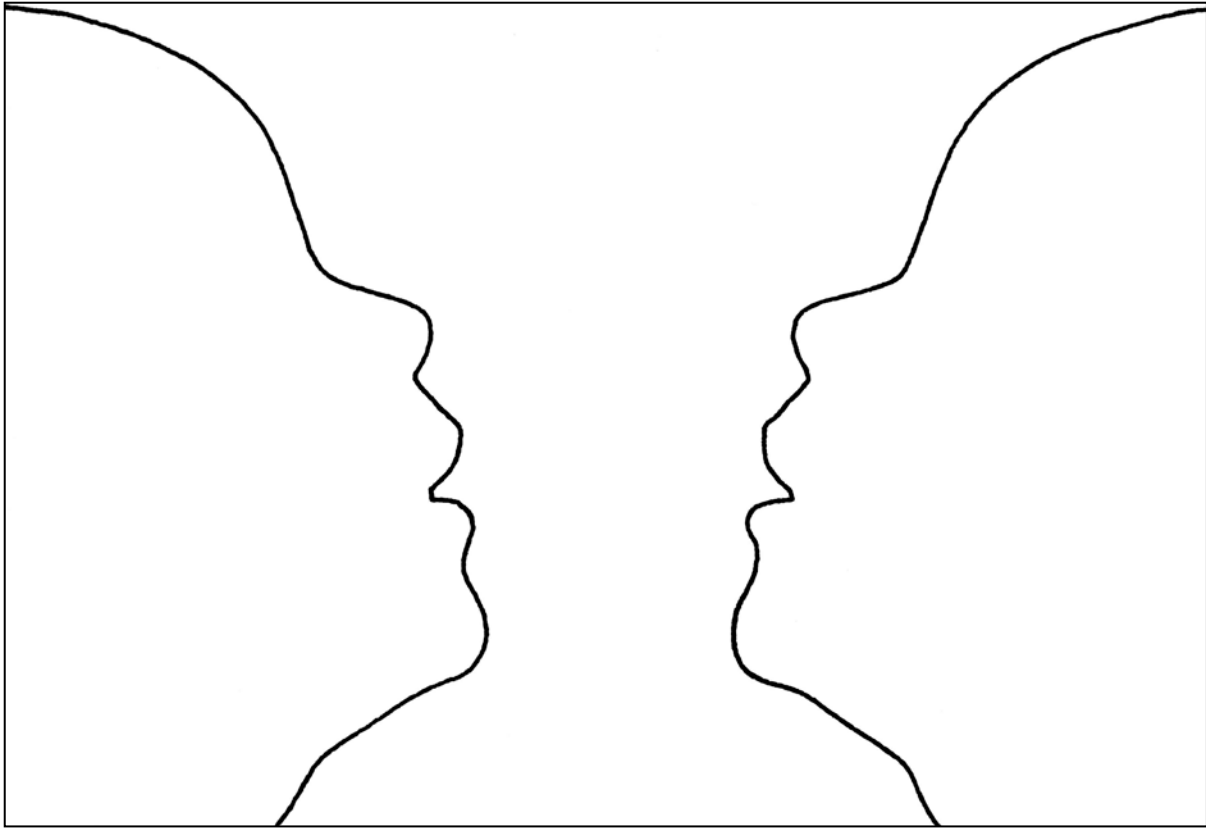


ILLUSTRATION 04-05

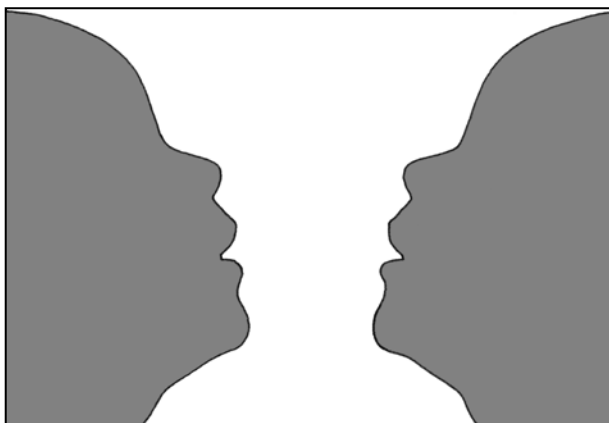
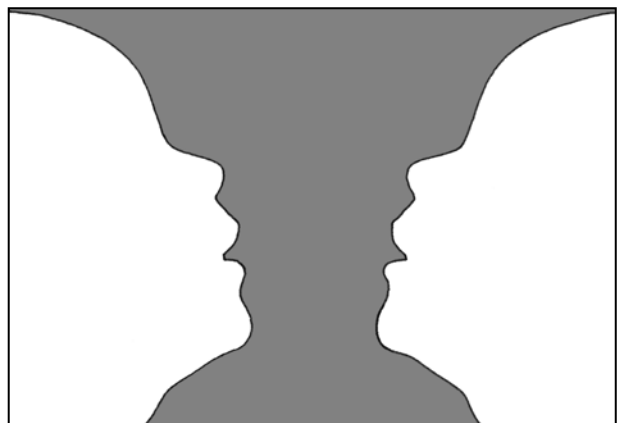


ILLUSTRATION 04-06



Symmetry in drawing is a balanced arrangement of lines and shapes on opposite sides of an often-imaginary centerline. Many drawing subjects, including frontal views of vases, faces, wine glasses, flowerpots, and forms such as spheres, cones, and cylinders, look more realistic when drawn the same on both sides.

Can you see the symmetry in the beautiful chalice in Illustration 04-07? Imagine a line of symmetry right down the middle of this drawing, dividing it in half vertically. Each side is a mirror image of the other. Both sides are symmetrical. Can you also see the two old witches?

ILLUSTRATION 04-07

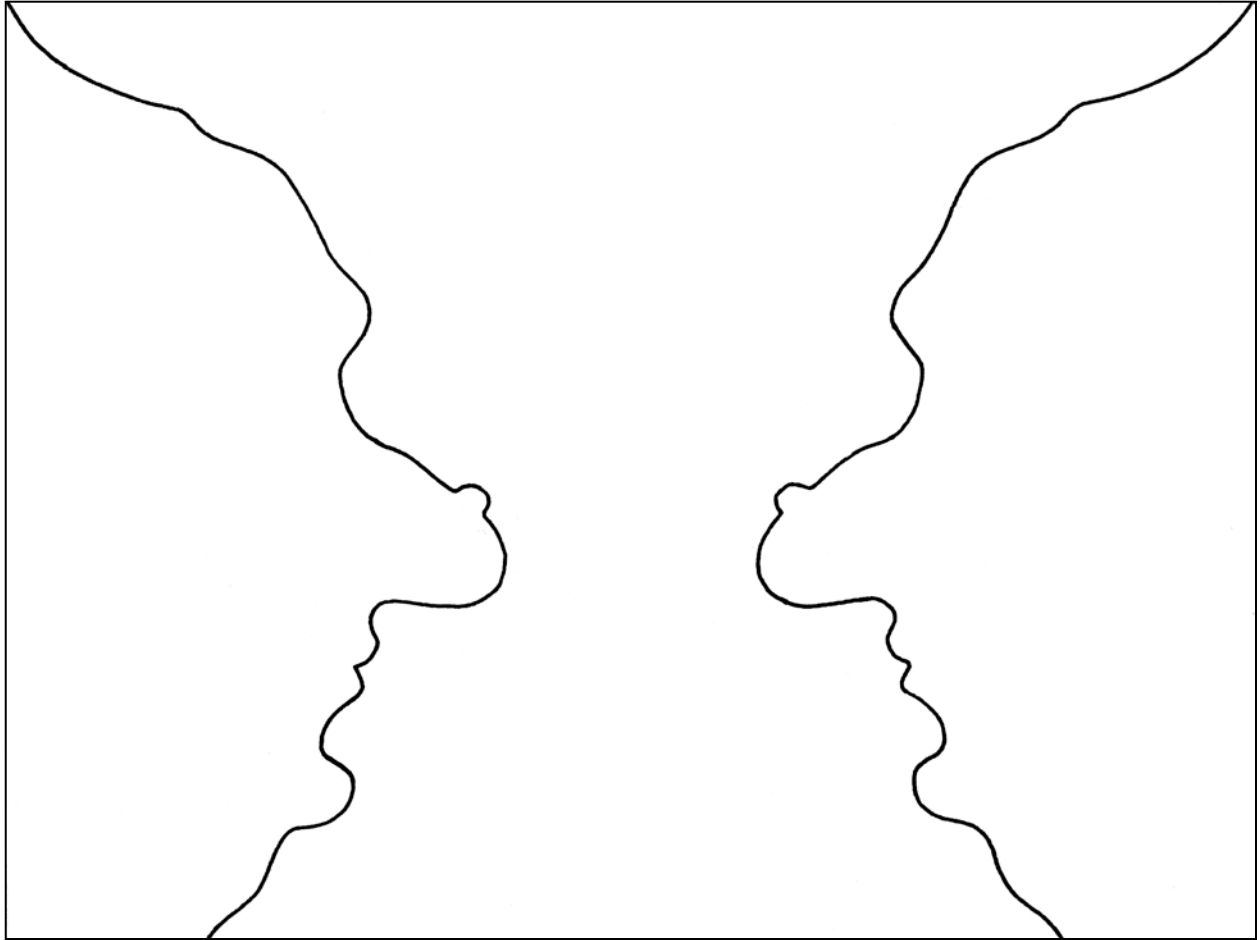


ILLUSTRATION 04-08

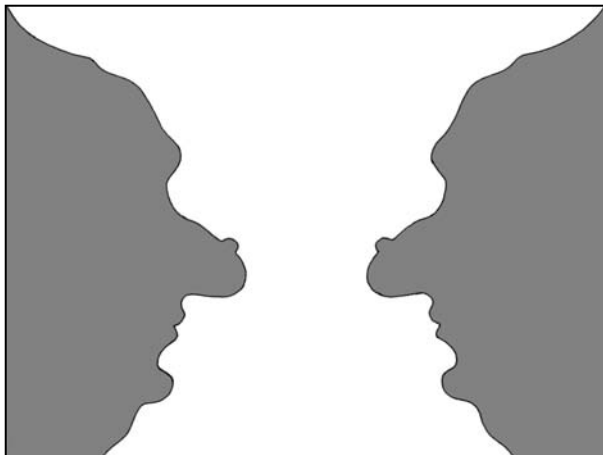


ILLUSTRATION 04-09



DRAWING AN OPTICAL ILLUSION

From pencils to sketchbooks, many tools of drawing are integral to creating art. However, the most important drawing tool of all is your brain. In this simple step-by-step exercise you use both sides of your brain to draw your very own optical illusion! You need a ruler, pencils, and an eraser. Read carefully through all the instructions for the entire project before you begin.

1. Establish a vertical drawing space.

A *drawing space* (sometimes called a *drawing format*) refers to the area of a drawing surface within a specific perimeter, outlined by a shape of any size, such as a square, rectangle or circle. The rectangular shape of a sketchbook or drawing paper can be turned vertical (sometimes referred to as a portrait format). Another option is to use a ruler to draw a vertical rectangle similar in shape to mine.

2. Use your ruler to measure the horizontal midpoint of your drawing space and very lightly draw a line down the center.

This line serves as a reference to help keep both sides of your drawing symmetrical. Symmetry is a balanced arrangement of lines and shapes on opposite sides of an often-imaginary centerline.

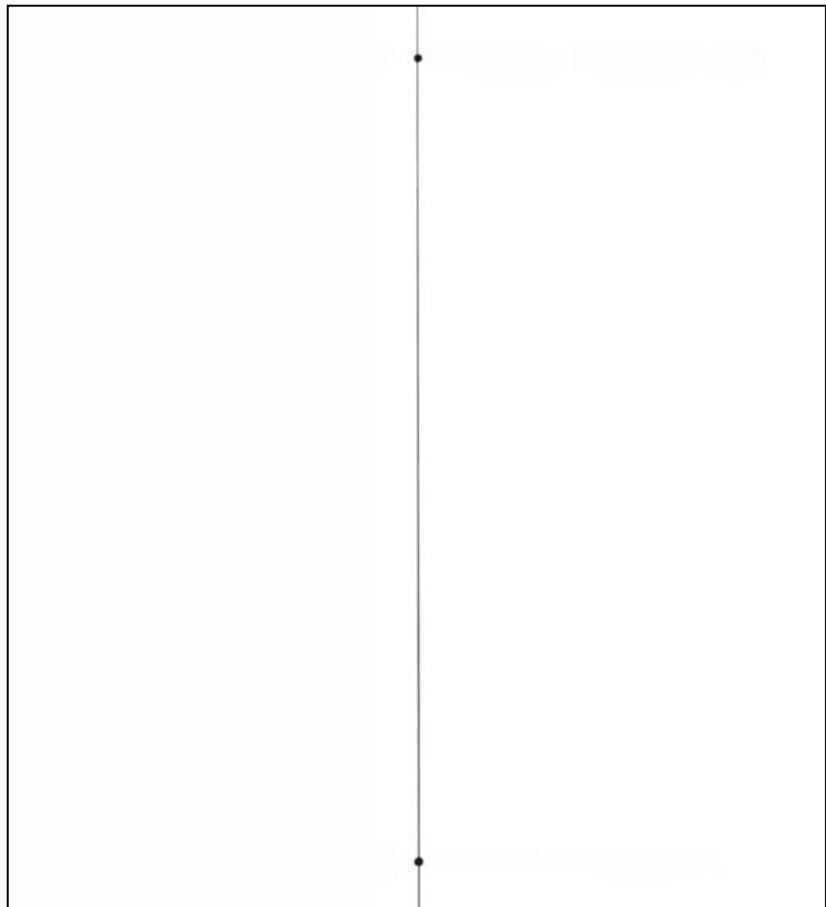
ILLUSTRATION 04-10

3. Use your ruler to measure an equal distance along the line of symmetry from both the top and bottom of your drawing space, and mark them with dots.

The distance from the top and bottom should be very short. The dots will be helpful later in this project. For now pretend they're not there.



The farther the facial profiles are from the line of symmetry, the wider the vase will be. For a narrow vase, draw the faces closer to the center line.

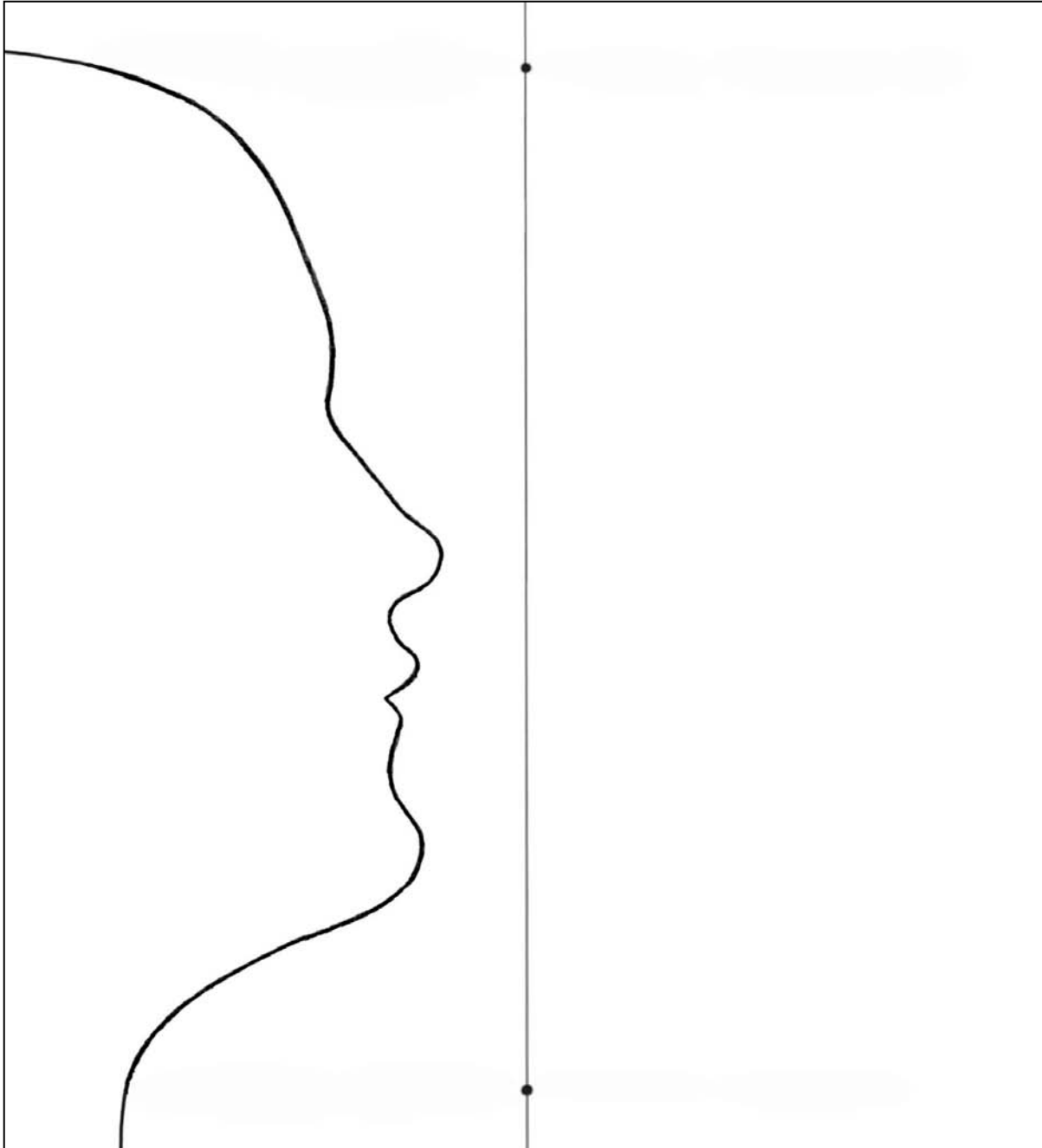


4. **Draw a facial profile (facing the right) on the left side of your paper (If you are left handed, draw the profile facing the left on the right side of your paper).**

Take note that the top of the head begins on the side and not the top of the drawing space. Also the point where you begin to draw is at the same height as the upper dot.

As you draw each part of the face, think about its name: forehead, nose, lips, chin, and neck. This is a very left brain exercise.

ILLUSTRATION 04-11



5. Draw a second facial profile facing the first.

As you draw, don't think about naming the parts of the face. Constantly refer to your first drawing on the opposite side of your paper. Imagine you are drawing its reflection in a mirror. Think about the shapes of the spaces in between the two profiles. *Shape* refers to the outward outline of a form.



Turn your paper upside down or sideways to draw the second face. Drawing upside down or sideways exercises your right brain by confusing your left-brain. When the left brain can no longer identify and name the individual parts of a face, it gives up. Your right brain jumps in and takes over.

ILLUSTRATION 04-12

Concentrate on the lines and the directions in which they curve, their angles, and the lengths of the lines as compared with your first drawing.

You may notice that you are drawing somewhat differently for this second profile.

Your right-brain is now in charge!

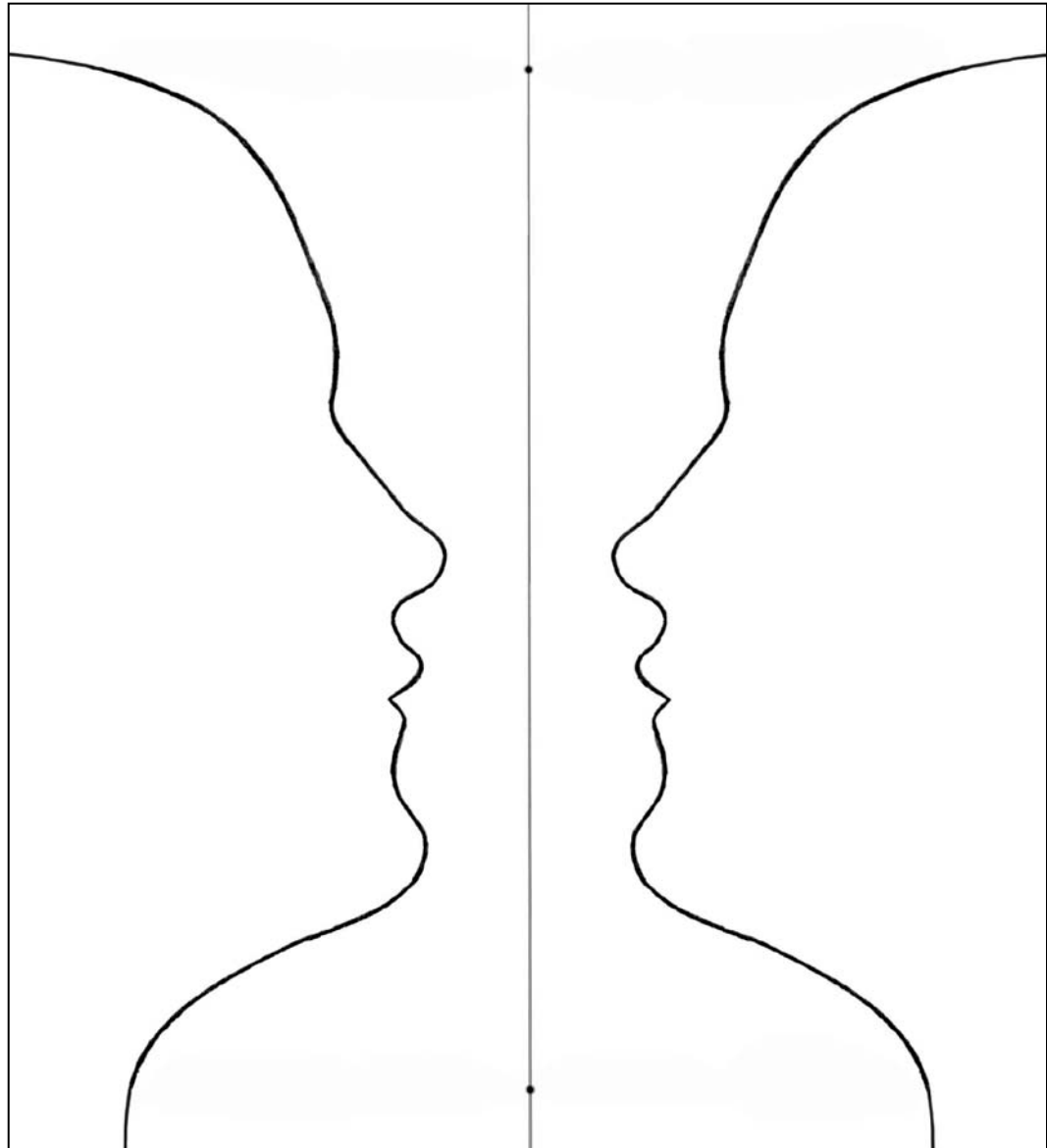


ILLUSTRATION 04-13

6. **Draw horizontal lines across the top and bottom of your paper through the dots you marked in Step 2.**

These lines don't have to be the same length. However, the points, where the ends of these lines meet the facial profiles, should be the same distance from the line of symmetry.

7. **Erase the line of symmetry, and any extra facial lines outside the perimeter of the vase.**

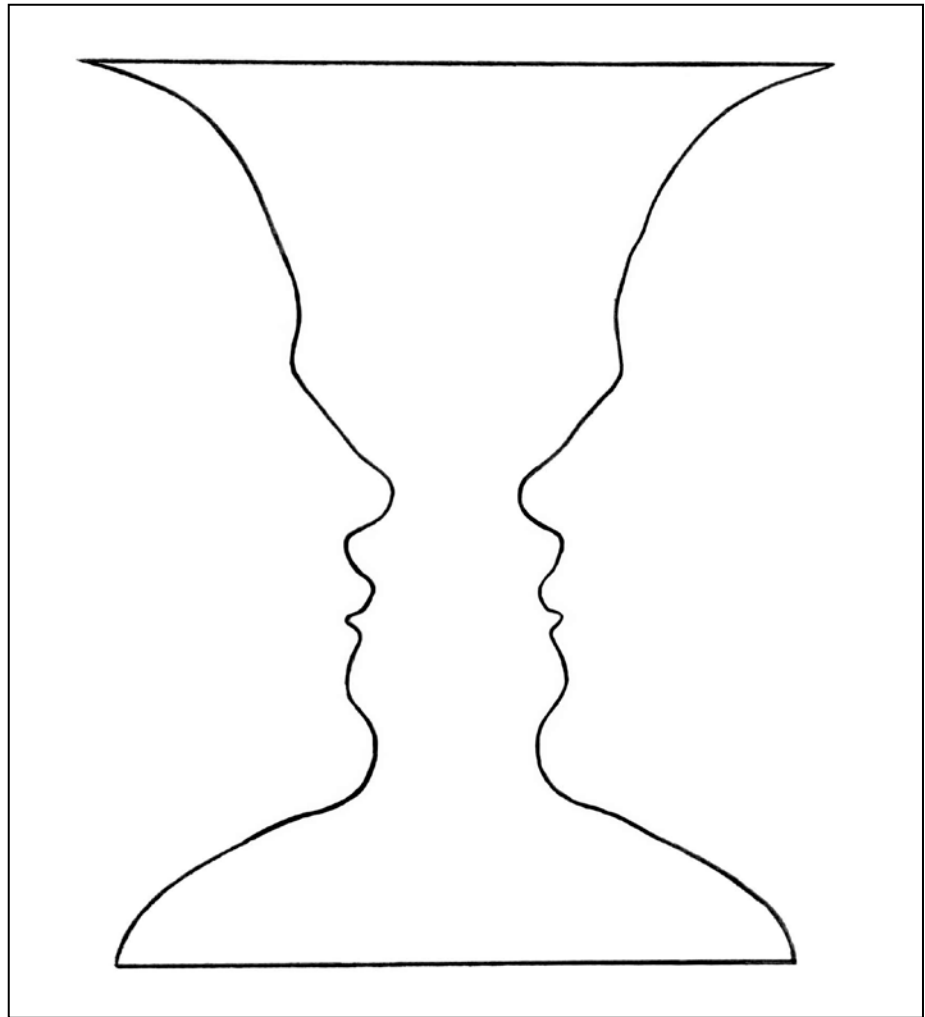


ILLUSTRATION 04-14

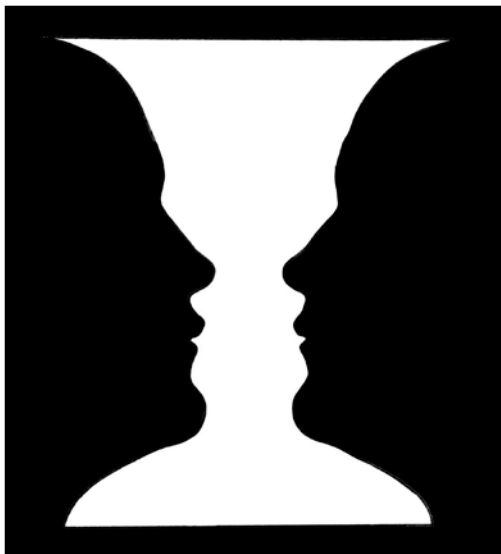
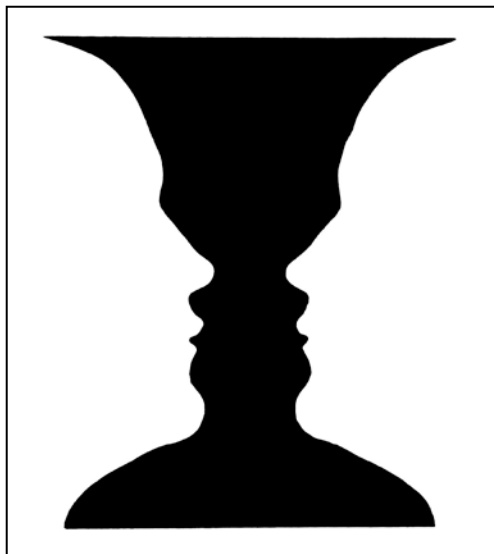


ILLUSTRATION 04-15



The magical illusion of faces and a vase is complete.

You can more clearly see the illusion when the vase is filled in with black, and when the faces are filled in with black.

The following four illustrations show you another way to draw the same illusion without drawing dots on the line of symmetry. You simply begin drawing the faces from the top of your drawing space rather than the sides.

When you use this method, you don't have spaces above and below the vase. Neither method is right or wrong – it's simply a matter of which you prefer!

ILLUSTRATION 04-16

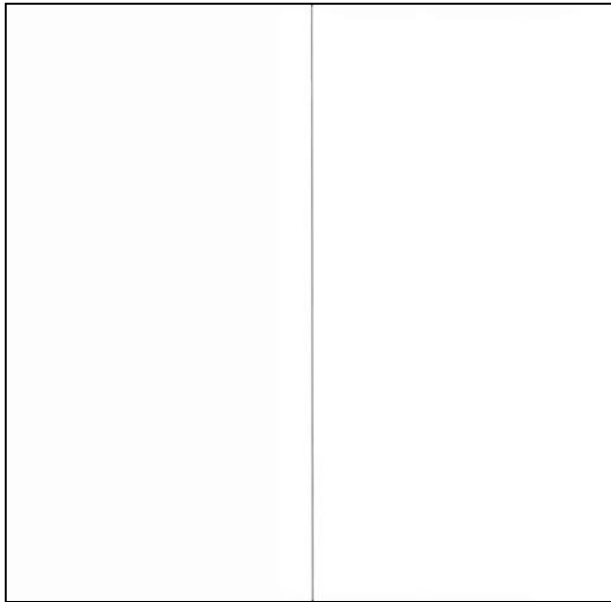


ILLUSTRATION 04-17

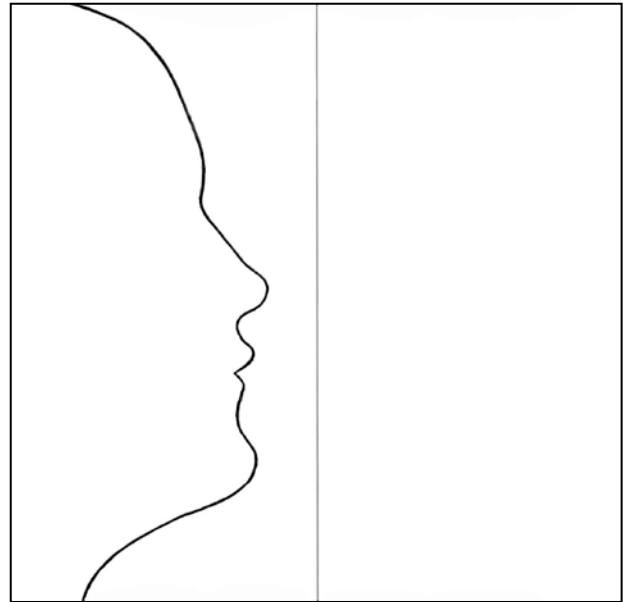


ILLUSTRATION 04-18

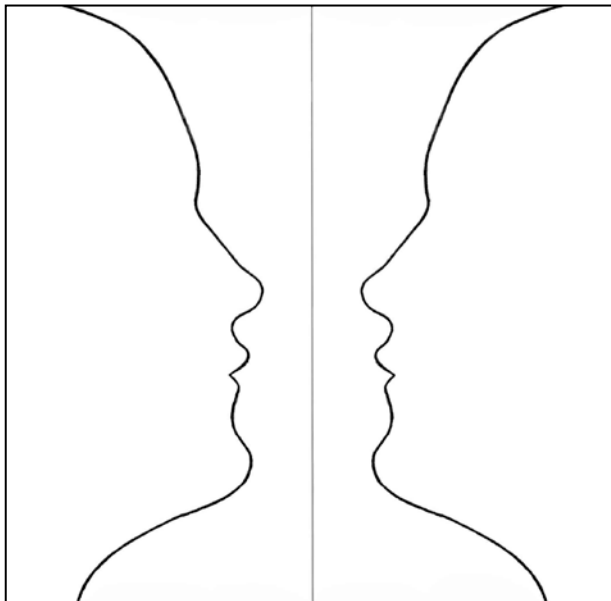
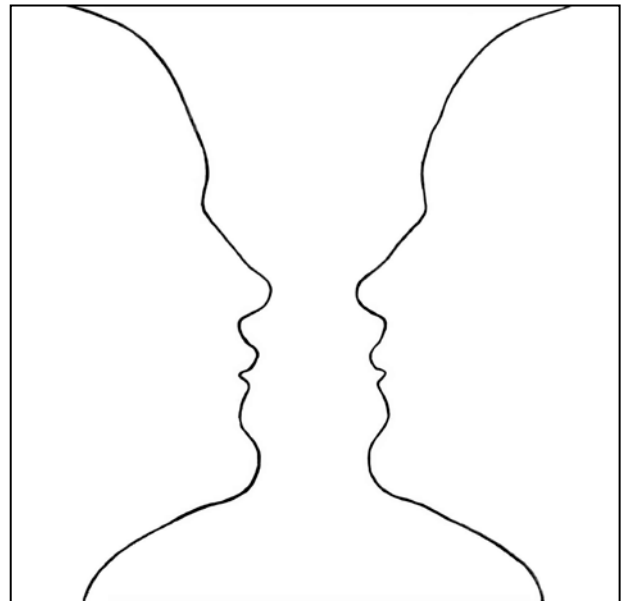


ILLUSTRATION 04-19



The next two drawings show first the vase and then the faces filled in with black, so you can see how each part of this illusion looks when drawn by this method.

ILLUSTRATION 04-20

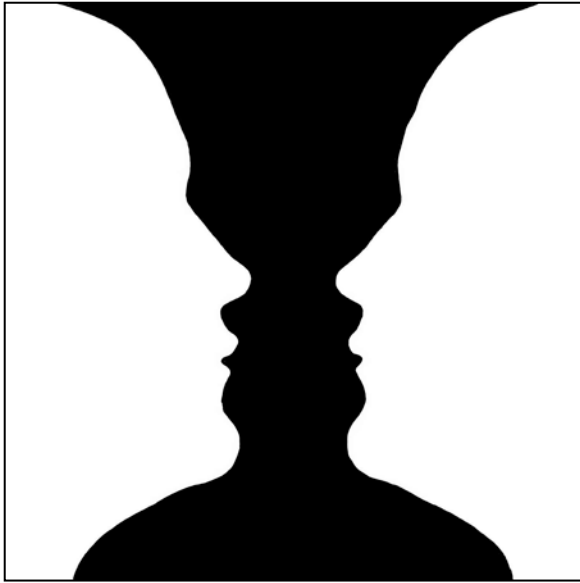
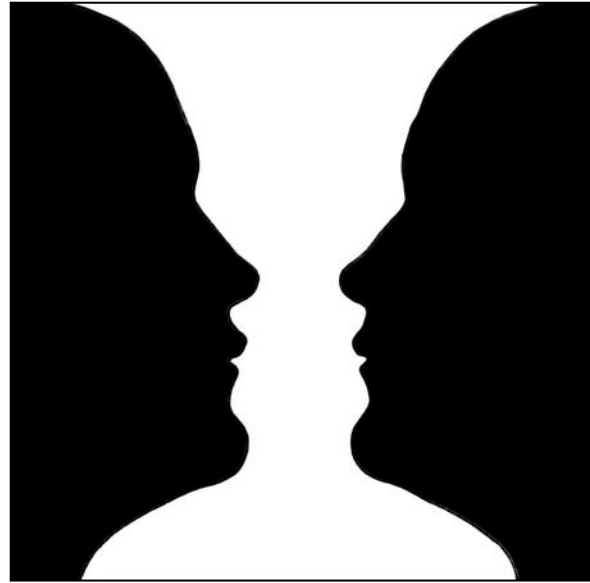


ILLUSTRATION 04-21



You can have lots of fun creating and sharing a personalized collection of faces and vase drawings. Think about creating making unique gifts for your family and friends with this amusing illusion. Consider the following options:

- ❖ Dig into your imagination and make up a unique facial profile.
- ❖ Have a friend or family member pose sideways and make a contour drawing of his or her profile.
- ❖ Take a photo of someone's facial profile, and use it as a reference for drawing.

ILLUSTRATION 04-22



When you have an outline of the side of a face, you can follow the previous instructions to create your personal optical illusion.

This photo was the inspiration for my optical illusion.

You enhance your artistic development by practicing mental and visual exercises, such as optical illusions.

So, put your brain in gear and your pencil in motion and see how many unique illusions you can create!

BRENDA HODDINOTT - BIOGRAPHY

As a self-educated teacher, visual artist, portraitist, forensic artist, and illustrator, Brenda Hoddinott utilizes diverse art media including graphite, technical pen, colored pencil, chalk pastel, charcoal, conté crayon, and oil paints.

My philosophy on teaching art is to focus primarily on the enjoyment aspects while gently introducing the technical and academic. Hence, in creating a passion for the subject matter, the quest for knowledge also becomes enjoyable.



>Brenda Hoddinott<

Born in St. John's, Newfoundland, Brenda grew up in the small town of Corner Brook. She developed strong technical competencies with a personal commitment to self directed learning, and the aid of assorted "Learn to Draw" books. During Brenda's twenty-five year career as a self-educated civilian forensic artist, numerous criminal investigation departments have employed Brenda's skills, including Royal Canadian Mounted Police and municipal police departments. In 1992, Brenda was honored with a commendation from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, and in 1994, she was awarded a Certificate of Membership from "Forensic Artists International".

Her home-based art career included graphic design, and teaching recreational drawing and painting classes. As supervisor of her community's recreational art department, Brenda hired and trained teachers, and designed curriculum for several children's art programs. In 1998, Brenda chose to end her eighteen-year career as an art educator in order to devote more time to writing, drawing, painting, and developing her websites.

Drawspace <http://www.drawspace.com> incorporate her unique style and innovative approach to curriculum development. These sites offer downloadable and printable drawing classes for students of all abilities from the age of eight through adult. Students of all ages, levels and abilities have praised the simple step-by-step instructional approach. These sites are respected as a resource for fine art educators, home schooling programs, and educational facilities throughout the world.

LEARN-TO-DRAW BOOKS BY BRENDA HODDINOTT

-  **Drawing for Dummies (2003):** Wiley Publishing, Inc., New, York, NY, this 336 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.
-  **The Complete Idiot's Guide to Drawing People (2004):** Winner of the Alpha-Penguin Book of the Year Award 2004, Alpha - Pearson Education – Macmillan, Indianapolis, IN, this 360 page book is available on various websites and in major bookstores internationally.