SQUIRKLING A BUMPY TEXTURE

Brenda Hoddinott

D-10 BEGINNER: SQUIRKLING

In the real world, very few objects have actual lines defining their forms. Rather, contrasting values identify the edges of the object's parts according to the lights and darks created by the dominant light source.

This lesson focuses on values and forms rather than lines and shapes. You use squirkles to draw the wonderful bumpy texture of an avocado with shading only – no outlining.

This lesson is divided into the following two sections:

➢ **FINDING THE POSITIVE:** You examine a reference photo, identify the negative space, and single out the avocado, as both positive space and the future subject of the drawing.

➢ **ADDING VALUES AND TEXTURE WITH SQUIRKLES:** Each of the five illustrated steps is on its own page, along with close-up views of a section of the drawing in progress and the original reference photo. The light source is from the upper left. Hence, the values are lighter on the upper and left sections.

You need 2H (very good for light values), HB (great for middle values), and 2B (works well for dark values) mechanical pencils, good quality drawing paper, and erasers. If you plan to use regular wood pencils instead of mechanical, you also need a pencil sharpener and a sandpaper block.

This lesson is recommended for beginners, and artists wanting to review or expand upon their current skills, as well as home schooling, academic and recreational fine art educators.

9 PAGES – 17 ILLUSTRATIONS

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FINDING THE POSITIVE

In the interest of simplicity, the subject of this drawing is the avocado only, without a background, cast shadow, or other visual distractions. *Cast shadow* is a dark section on an object or/and surface that receives little or no light.

In this section, you examine a reference photo, identify the negative space, and single out the avocado, as both positive space and the future subject of the drawing. *Negative space* refers to the background around and/or behind the drawing subject(s), such as the sky, a scene, the interior of a building, objects, people, and/or animals (etc.). *Positive space* refers to the space occupied by the drawing subject(s) and/or its (or their) various parts.

This lesson focuses on values and forms rather than lines and shapes. *Values* are the different shades of gray created in a drawing by various means. *Forms* are created in drawings by adding shading to transform a shape into three-dimensional structures, such as a circle becoming a sphere. *Lines* visually separate and/or define the forms of the various components of a drawing subject. *Shape* refers to the outward outline of a form. Basic shapes include circles, squares and triangles.

Even outlining the basic proportions before adding shading, is a no-no in this project. *Proportion* is the relationship in size of one component of a drawing to another or others. *Shading* (noun) refers to the various values in a drawing that make images appear three-dimensional; (verb) the process of adding values to a drawing so as to create the illusion of texture, form and/or three-dimensional space.

After examining the photo (Illustration 10-01), I decide to visually focus on only the avocado (positive space). To show you what I see, I use a computer program to block out all sections of the photo that are not part of the avocado (negative space). Check out the negative space (the black section) in Illustration 10-02.

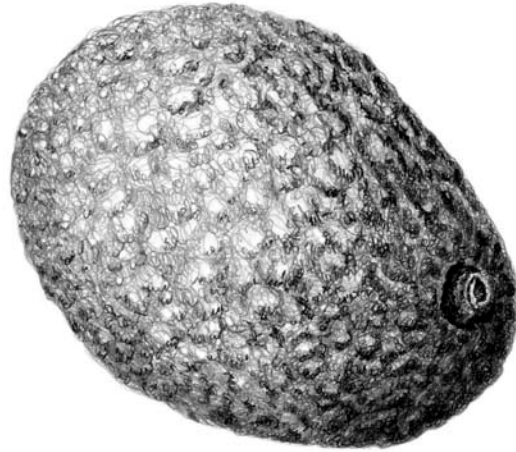| ILLUSTRATION 10-01	ILLUSTRATION 10-02

No visible lines actually outline this avocado in the reference photo or the completed drawing (refer to illustrations 10-03 and 10-04). Rather, contrasting values define the edges of the object's parts and its bumpy texture. *Texture* refers to the surface detail of an object in a drawing. The properties of a texture are identified with vision, a sense of touch, and a general knowledge of the subject.

My goal is to render form and texture. I won't be fussing with drawing every bump in its correct place. Rather, I will try to capture the essence of the surface bumps, as simply as possible.

ILLUSTRATION 10-03   ILLUSTRATION 10-04

ADDING VALUES AND TEXTURE WITH SQUIRKLES

Squirkling is a method of shading in which randomly drawn, overlapping curved lines create textured values. I chose this name based on the process of morphing squiggles with circles to create shading. Many of my students from the past two decades are very familiar with this word!

If you are using regular pencils, make sure you sharpen the point of the pencil with a sharpener and/or sandpaper block after each section of shading is added.

Examine the light, medium and dark values in the following close-ups of sections of the completed drawing. By varying the density (drawing the lines either far apart or close together) of the lines, you can achieve many different values. Light values with squirkles tend to have noticeable curved lines with lots of white space showing. In darker values, the lines are closer together, filling in most of the paper with the texture of squirkles. A 2H pencil is very good for light values, an HB is great for middle values, and a 2B works well for dark values.

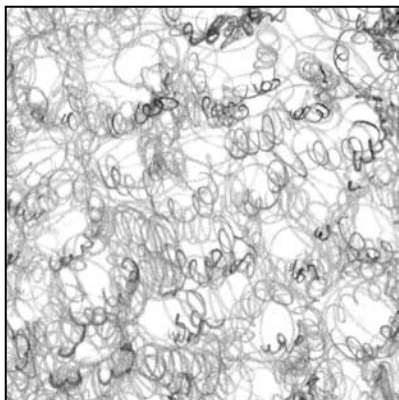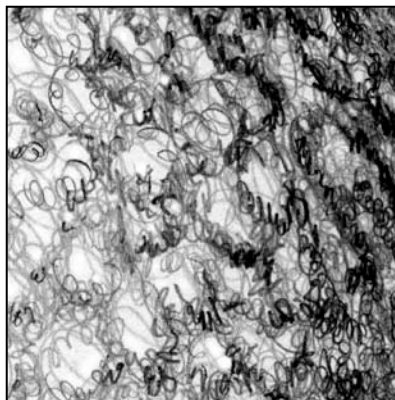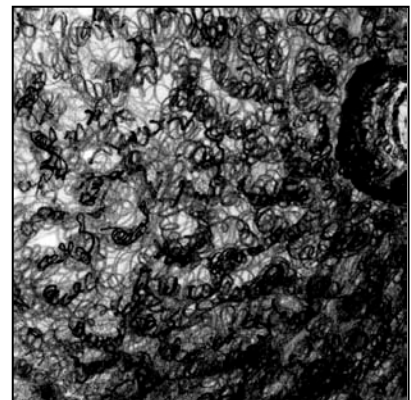ILLUSTRATION 10-05   ILLUSTRATION 10-06   ILLUSTRATION 10-07

Each of the seven illustrated steps of this lesson is on its own page, along with close-up views of a section of the drawing in progress and the original reference photo.

1. Use squirkling and press very lightly with a 2H pencil, to render the lightest values.

Your goal is to draw the overall mass of the avocado. Observe how the squirkle lines cut across themselves in many places, creating lots of different shapes.
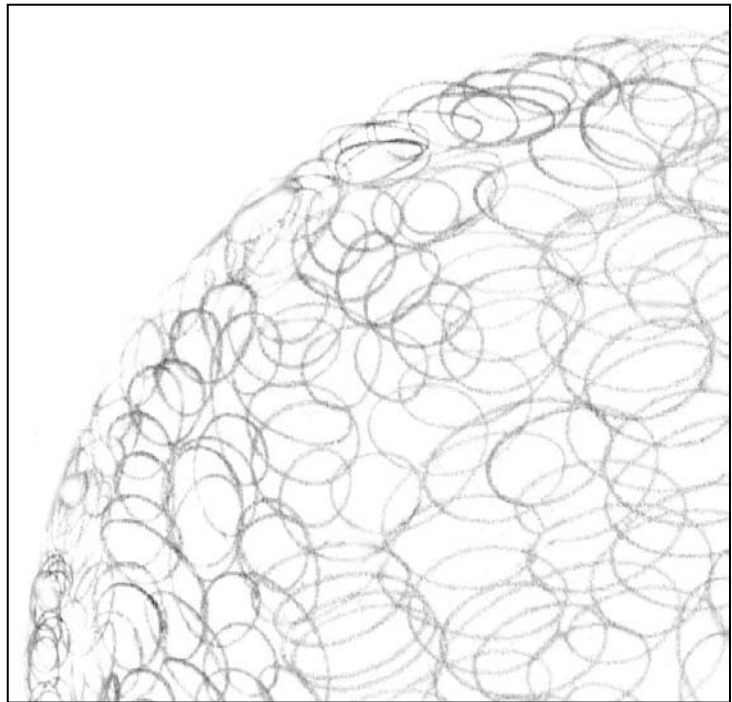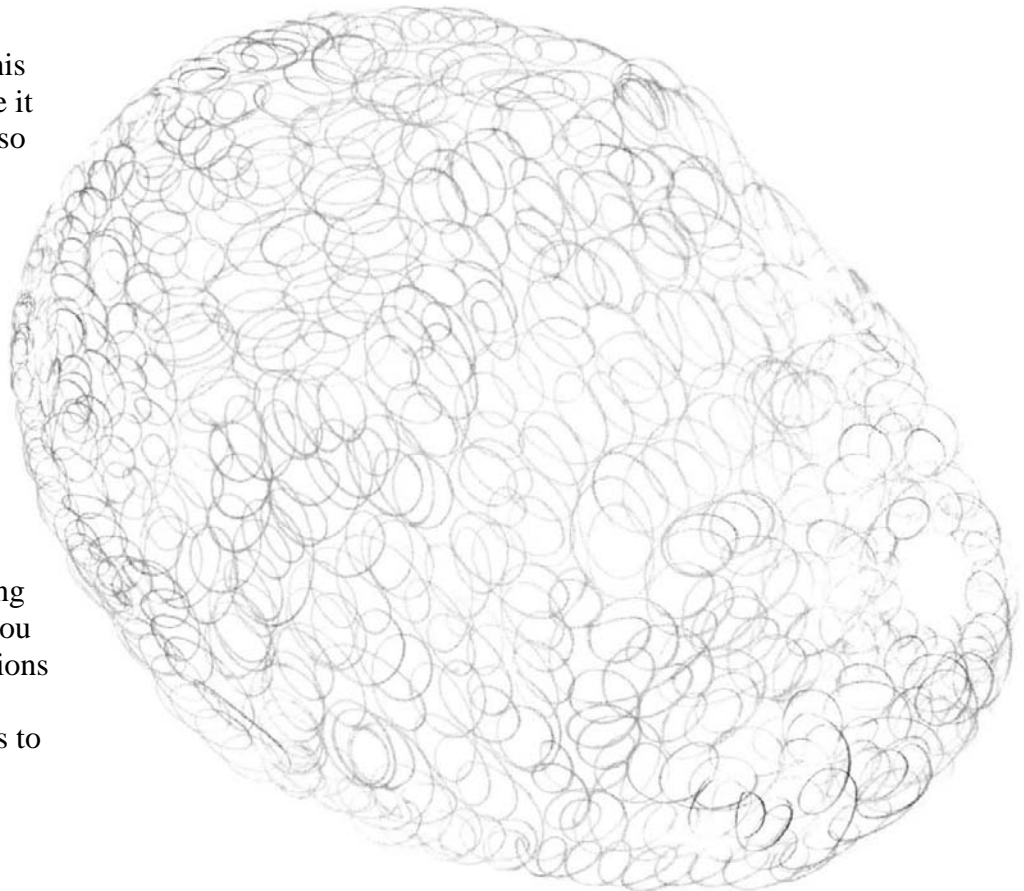
ILLUSTRATION 10-08

ILLUSTRATION 10-09

My actual drawing is even lighter than in this illustration. I've made it darker in a computer so you can see it.

The less pressure you apply to the pencil, the lighter the values become.

In my lightest shading, only the weight of the pencil itself makes the very faint values.

You can keep adjusting the overall shape as you work, by erasing sections that are too big, and adding more squirkles to make some sections larger.

ILLUSTRATION 10-10

2.   Press a little more on your 2H pencil to add darker values.

The light source is from the upper left. Hence, the values are lighter on the upper and left sections.
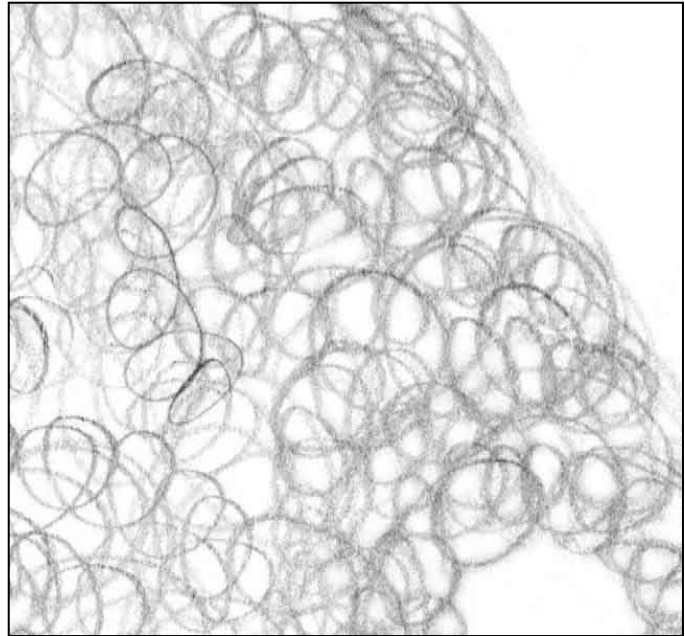
ILLUSTRATION 10-11

Light source refers to the direction from which a dominant light originates.

A light source identifies the light and shadow areas of a drawing subject, so artists know where to add different values.

As you complete each section, continuously go back over your drawing and adjust the values.

To make a section lighter, pat the squirkles gently with a kneaded eraser that is molded to a point.

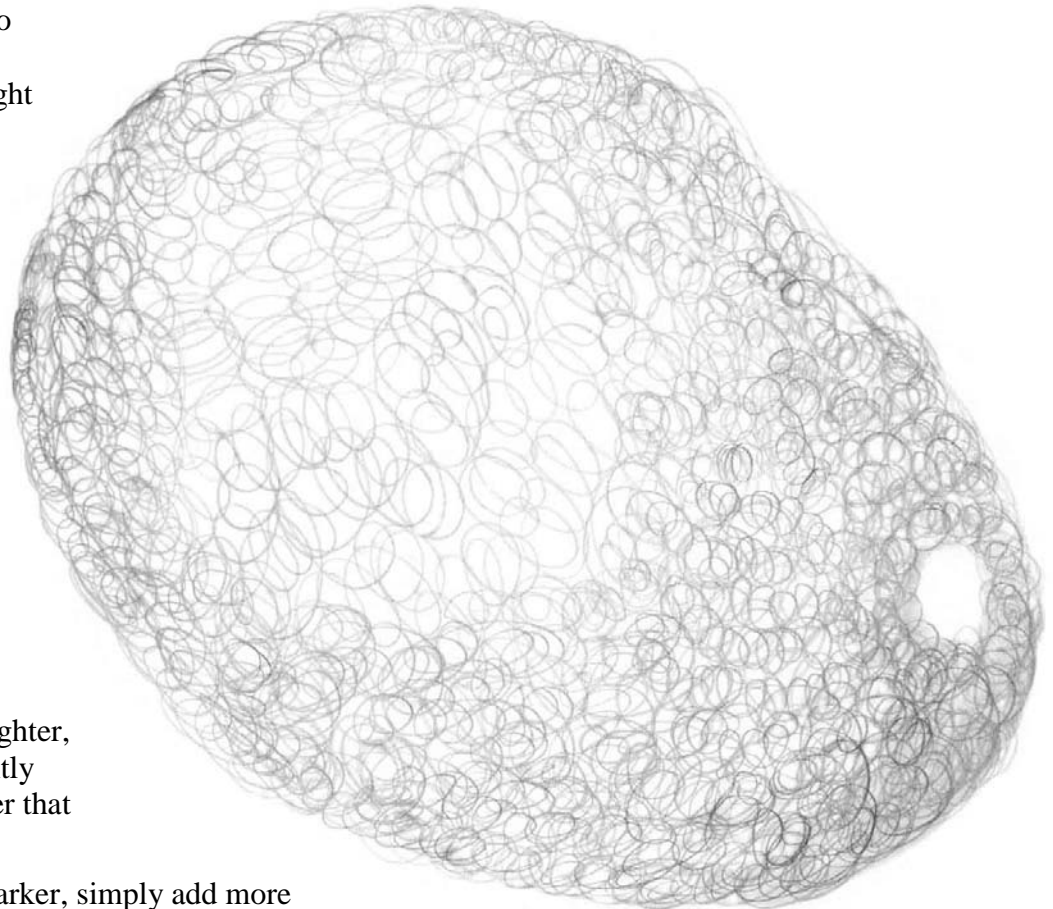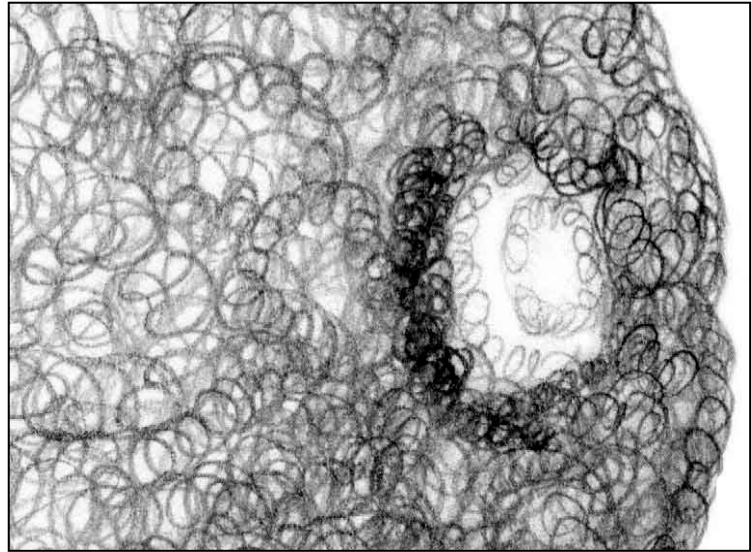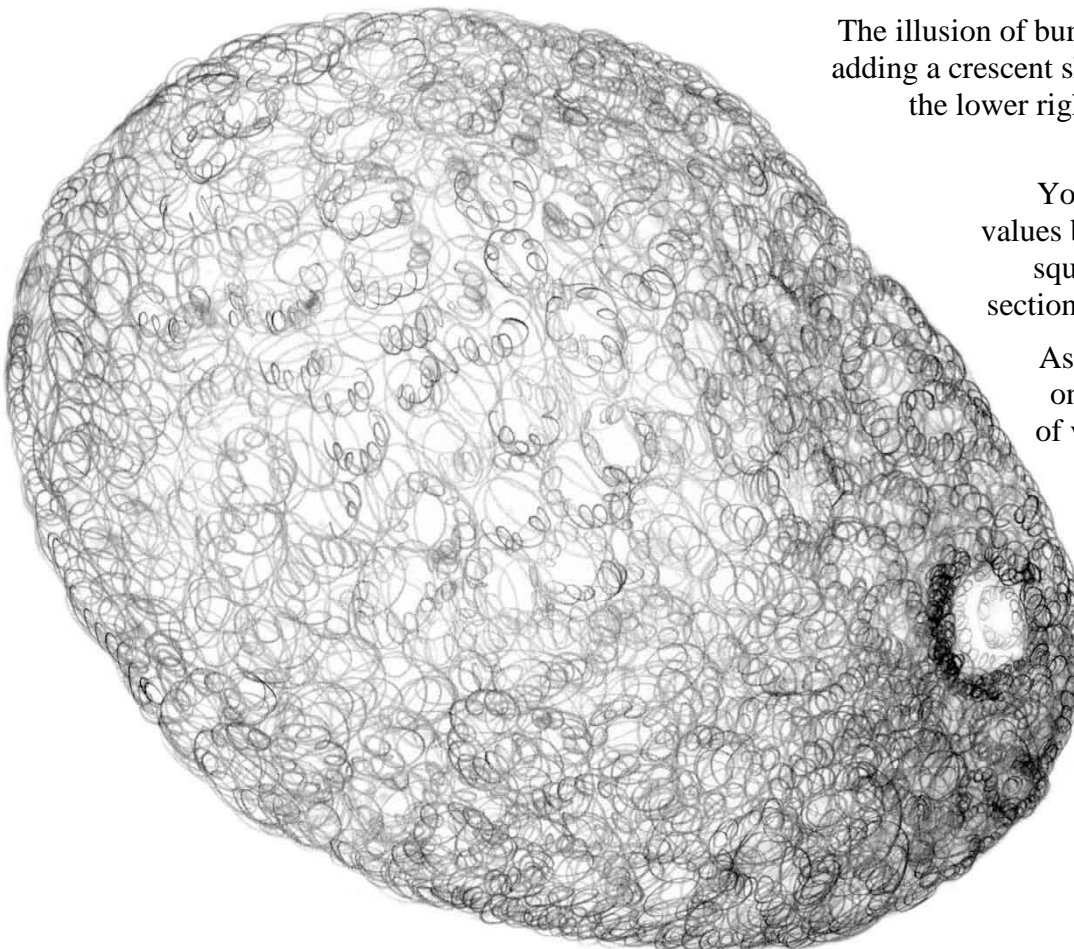To make a section darker, simply add more squirkles and/or use a darker pencil.

ILLUSTRATION 10-12

3.   Press lightly on a HB pencil to add medium values to sections that need to be darker.

Examine both the reference photo and my drawing.

ILLUSTRATION 10-13

The illusion of bumps is created by adding a crescent shaped shadow to the lower right of some of the lightest sections.

You create medium values by layering more squirkles over some sections of light values.

As you work, focus on the broad range of values that exists in between the darks and lights.

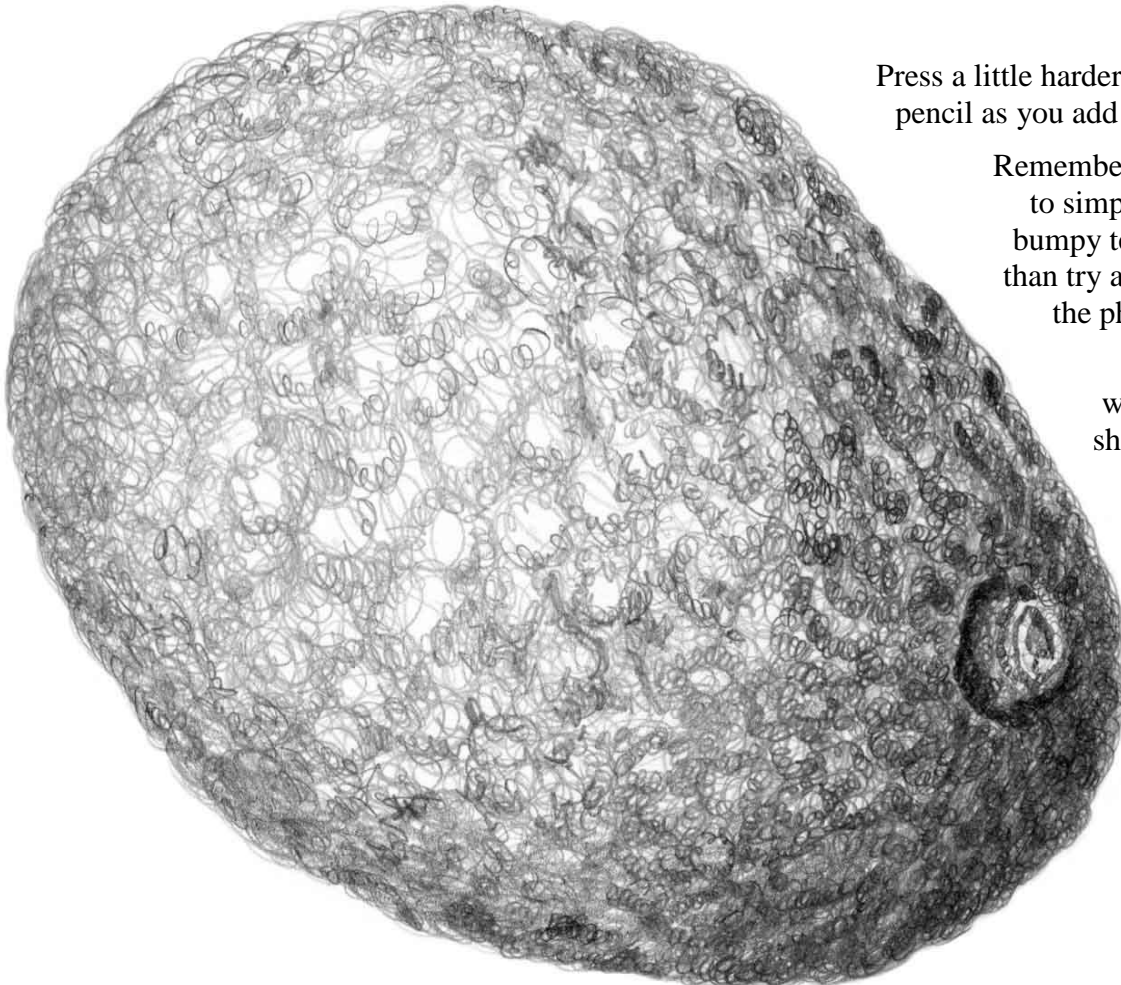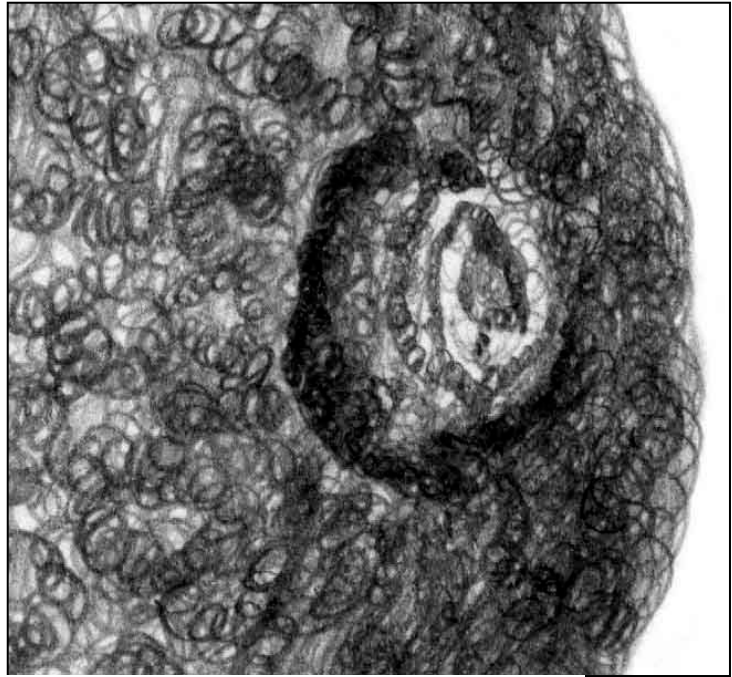Very light and very dark values are fairly easy to achieve.

The real challenge is creating graduations of medium values.

ILLUSTRATION 10-14

4. **Add dark values to the shadow sections of the bumps, and the sections of the avocado that are farther away from the light source.**

ILLUSTRATION 10-15

Press a little harder on your HB pencil as you add dark values.

Remember, the goal is to simply indicate a bumpy texture rather than try and duplicate the photo exactly.

Very little white paper is showing in the darker sections.

Many more lines make up dark values, and the lines are much closer together.

ILLUSTRATION 10-16

5.   Use a 2B pencil to add the darkest values.

Again, focus primarily on the shadow sections of the bumps, and the sections of the avocado that are farther away from the light source.
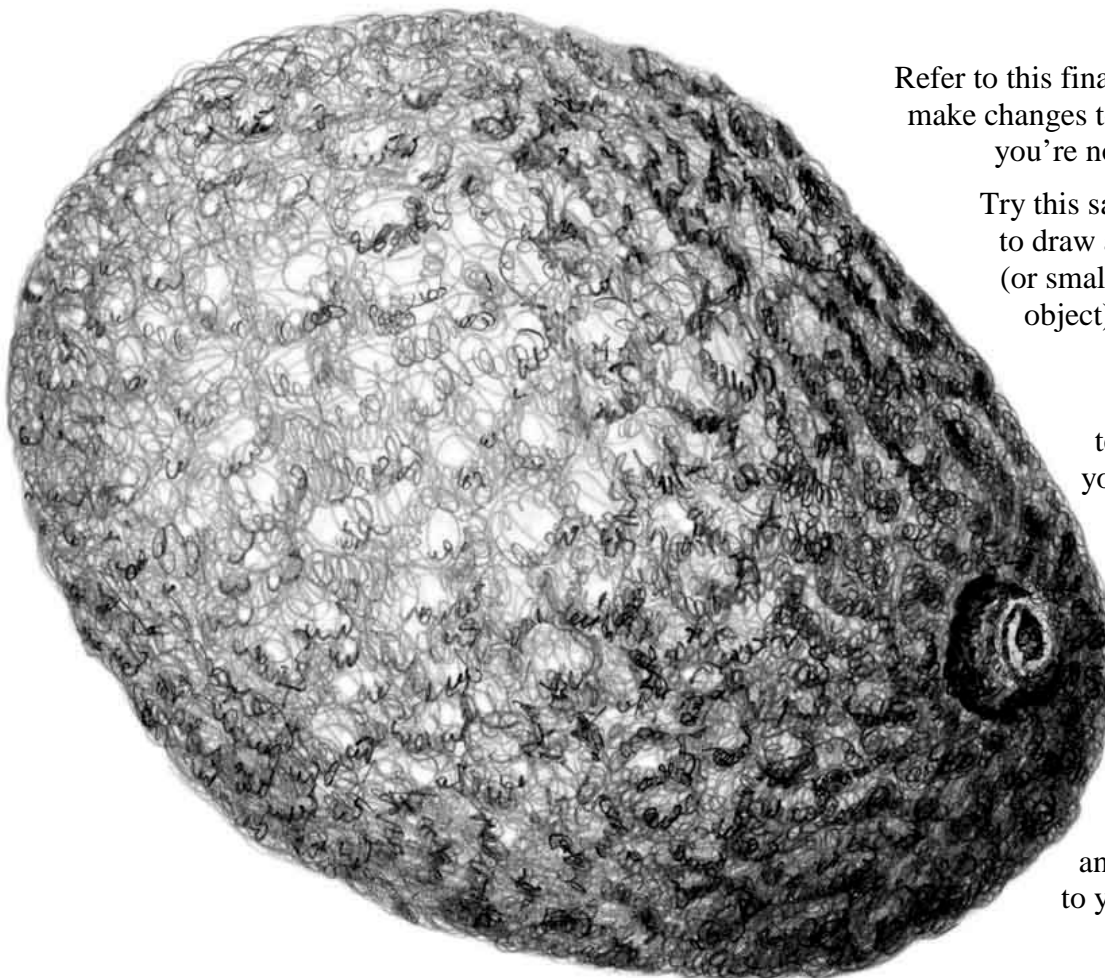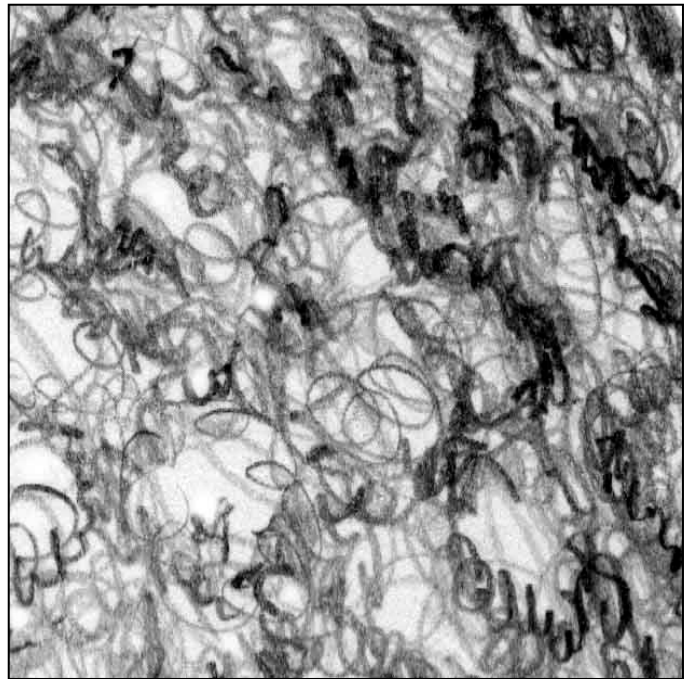
ILLUSTRATION 10-17

Refer to this final drawing and make changes to any sections you're not happy with.

Try this same technique to draw another object (or small section of an object) from either a photo or life.

The more technical skills you acquire, the better your drawings become.

You also feel more confident to use your creativity to make changes and adjustments to your drawings.

BRENDA HODDINOTT - BIOGRAPHY

As a self-educated teacher, visual artist, portraitist, forensic artist, and illustrator, Brenda 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 incorporates her unique style and innovative approach to curriculum development. This site offers 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. This site is 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.