

# Gesture Drawing

Grade 4 – Lesson 1  
(*Art Connections*, Level 4, pgs. 20-23)

## Big Idea

*Quickly drawn repeated lines (gesture drawing) can capture the feeling of motion.*

## Learning Targets and Assessment Criteria

**Target 1:** Identifies and interprets gesture drawing. (Arts EALR 1.1 *Elements of art: Descriptive line – gesture drawing*; 2.3 *Applies a responding process to the arts – art analysis*)

**Criteria 1:** Describes the characteristic lines of a gesture drawing, and analyzes how they can imply movement.

**Target 2:** Creates a gesture drawing. (Arts EALR 1.2 *Skills and techniques: Gesture drawing*)

**Criteria 2:** Uses quickly drawn, repeated lines to represent a figure in motion.

**Target 3:** Uses values to suggest 3-D form.

**Criteria 3:** Paints monochromatic brushstrokes on one side of figure to imply shadows.

## Local Art Reference



**Dueling Men**, 17<sup>th</sup> century  
*Attributed to Jacques Callot*  
53.150

Seattle Art Museum

(NOTE to Teacher: See **Art Background** section at end of lesson for more information about this work of art.)

## Looking at Art Questions

(Note to Teacher: Show Callot's *Dueling Men* above, Flack's *Self-Portrait* and Fragonard's *Rodomonte and Mandricardo State their Case before Agramante* from *Art Connections*, Level 4, pgs. 20-21.)

1. Look closely at these three works of art and find lines that show movement.
2. Can you find a repeated line that suggests movement?
3. Which figure seems to be most lively? What kinds of lines did the artist use to draw that person? (Quickly drawn, sketchy lines)
4. What else did the artist do to create a sense of movement? (Active poses or gestures). A **gesture** is a pose. Active gestures - with arms or legs splayed, or torsos bent or twisted – help suggest motion in a work of art.

5. How does each artist use detail or not in these works of art? (Most details are left out to emphasize the essence of the figure in motion)
6. What similarities do you find between these three works of art?
7. The kind of drawing in which an artist uses quickly drawn, repeated lines to suggest movement is called **gesture drawing**. We are going to do gesture drawings today of each other.

## Art Making Activity

(See the **Create** section *Art Connections*, Level 4, pg. 19)

### Make an Expressive Gesture Drawing

*How can you show action or motion in a drawing?*

1. We are going to take turns being models and artists. Gesture drawings are quick, so each model will hold his/her pose for only about 30 seconds.
2. If you are the model, try to make the most active gesture or pose that you can (arms and legs wide, body bent or twisted) *(Have whole class try active gestures before one models.)*
3. Remember, we are going to use quick, repeated lines – almost scribbly lines – circling around the parts of the body, to try to capture the sense of movement in the gesture.
4. After we do several quick gesture drawings, we'll do one more on a piece of heavier paper to which we'll add a wash of ink to suggest some of the values, or shadows on the figure.

#### Each Student Needs

##### Activity 1 – Gesture Drawing

- Several sheets (12x18) of plain newsprint
- Soft lead drawing pencil, 4B or 6B

##### Activity 2 – Gesture Drawing with Values

- One 11x17 sheet of watercolor paper
- Soft lead drawing pencil, 4B or 6B
- Soft watercolor brushes
- Watercolor paint
- Water containers

#### Vocabulary

Gesture	Values
Gesture drawing	
Implied movement	

#### Tips for Teachers

##### *Before Class*

- Set each place with drawing boards with 12 pieces of newsprint clipped on each one
- Re-sharpen Ebony pencils (soft lead leads to dull points pretty quickly)

##### *During Class*

- Demonstrate that gesture drawing is quick, repeated lines – almost scribbly lines – that circle around and around the forms of the figure to suggest motion.
- Remind students that they don't need to erase in a quick sketch like a gesture drawing. If you want to "correct" a line, simply draw over it.

##### *After Art-Making*

- Ask students to point out and describe which gestures (poses) and which lines seemed to express the most movement.

## Self-Assessment

After you finish your gesture drawings, choose the one you feel suggests the most movement. Then in your sketchbook, please answer the following question about it:

*Which gestures or lines create the greatest sense of motion in your drawing?  
Why do you think so?*

## Reflecting on Our Art (from *Art Connections*, Level 4, pg. 23)

- **Describe:** Describe the different gestures you captured.
- **Analyze:** What techniques did you use to suggest movement?
- **Interpret:** Which lines seem to express the most movement, or which techniques were the most effective?
- **Decide:** Do you feel you successfully captured the gestures of your classmates? How might you try to express even more motion in your next gesture drawing?

## Art Background (for *Dueling Men*, by *Jacques Callot*)

**Jacques Callot** (c. 1592 - 1635) was a [baroque printmaker](#) and [draftsman](#) from the [Duchy of Lorraine](#) (an independent state on the North-Eastern border with France). He is an important figure in the development of the [old master print](#). He made over 1,400 brilliantly detailed [etchings](#) that chronicled the life of his period, featuring soldiers, clowns, drunkards, Gypsies, beggars, as well as court life. He also etched many religious and military images, and many prints featured extensive landscapes in their background.

His most famous prints are his two series of prints each on "the Miseries and Misfortunes of War". These are known as "Les Grandes Miseres" of 1633 (18 prints) and the earlier and incomplete "Les Petites Miseres" - referring to their sizes, large and small (though even the large set are only about 8 x 13 cm). These still alarming images show soldiers pillaging and burning their way through town, country and convent, before being variously arrested and executed by their superiors, lynched by peasants, or surviving to live as crippled beggars. In 1633, the year the larger set was published, Lorraine had been invaded by the French in the [Thirty Years War](#) and Callot's vision still stands with [Goya's Los Desastres de la Guerra](#) (The Disasters of War), which was influenced by Callot, as among the most powerful artistic statements of the inhumanity of war.

**Excerpted from:** [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques\\_Callot](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacques_Callot)

## Assessment Checklist

Student	Describes the characteristic lines of a gesture drawing, and analyzes how they can imply movement	Uses quickly drawn, repeated lines to represent a figure in motion	Paints monochromatic brushstrokes on one side of figure to imply shadows	TOTAL 3
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<b>Total Points</b>				
<b>Percent Comprehension</b>				

*Teacher Notes:*

## Letter Home

*Dear Family,*

*Today we learned that an artist can suggest **movement** in a drawing by using quickly-drawn, repeated lines. This is called **gesture drawing**. We learned that **gesture** also means a pose. We looked at gesture drawings (by Callot, Fragonard, and Audrey Flack). We made quick gesture drawings of each other, and then made one to which we added shadows (**values**).*

*At home, you could play Pictionary as a way to practice gesture drawing, or write down a list of action words (verbs), and take turns posing in gestures that suggest the actions and drawing each other with quickly-drawn repeated lines.*