

Name :

Hour :

Figure Sculptures

The human figure has been a favorite subject of artists throughout time. Prehistoric artists painted hunters on cave walls creating some of the earliest known images of humans. Since that time artists have drawn, painted, carved, and sculpted human figures using a wide variety of media. Think about **figurative artwork** (figurative artwork depicts the human body) that you have seen. What materials did the artist(s) use?

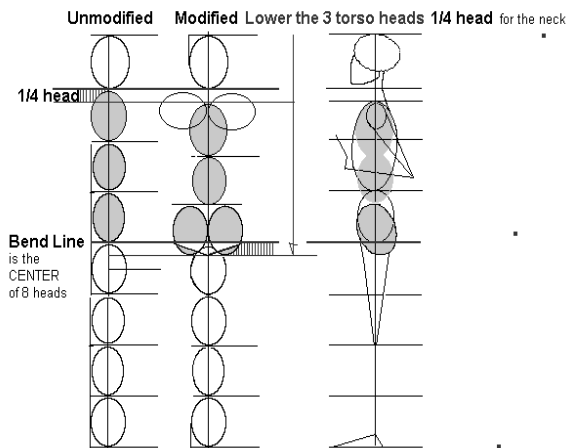
For this project we will be studying the human figure. We will create a series of **gesture drawings**, discuss proper **proportions** of the human body, and create a final **sculpture** of a figure in action.

GESTURE DRAWING

Gesture drawings are quick **sketches** that capture the **basic pose** of a figure. Even though gesture drawings are made quickly, they are based on careful observation. Here are some tips for creating effective gesture drawings:

- Look carefully at the figure. Where is the **activity or tension**? (Examples: folded arms, outstretched limbs, twisted torso, weight on one foot, etc.)
- Do not worry about outlining the figure. **Stick figures are OK!**
- Work on the **entire drawing**; don't get caught up in one area.
- When you have the basic lines recorded on your paper, draw **basic shapes** you've observed.
- Don't get frustrated if your drawings seem rough or disjointed, gesture drawings become easier with **practice!!**





The bend line remains the center of the body, 4 heads up.

FIGURE PROPORTIONS

In general, the human body is 7 or 8 “heads” tall. Here are some guidelines for establishing ideal proportions in the human figure.

- Shoulders are 2 head lengths (not widths) wide
- Chin to chest is one head length
- Chest to belly button is one head
- Belly button to where legs meet body is one head length
- Legs are 3-4 head lengths
- Arms are 3 heads to finger tips

FIGURE SCULPTURES

1. You will be using a variety of materials to create a **figure sculpture** in an action pose. You must create **6 thumbnail sketches** before beginning the construction of your sculpture. Fold a large piece of manila paper into 6 sections and brainstorm ideas for your sculpture. What are good action poses?
2. After completing your thumbnail sketches, choose the sketch you think is the most interesting and effective. **On a separate piece of paper,** lay out the proportions for your sculpture. You must show this to the teacher before you will receive the **armature wire** for your sculpture.
3. An **armature** is the skeleton of a sculpture. (Your armature should NOT include all of the bones in the body. A basic stick figure is sufficient.) An armature gives the forms of sculpture strength. Using your fingers and/or wire tools, create the stick figure that will become your finished sculpture. Remember to use proper **proportions!!** Are there any **accessories** you can add using cardboard?
4. Attach your armature to a wooden **base**.
5. Build up your figure; give it depth. Fold, crumble, tape, etc. newspaper to give your figure thickness. Cover your sculpture with one or two layers of **papier-mâché**. LET IT DRY COMPLETELY.
6. Use acrylic paint to decorate your sculpture and base.



Created by Sophie Wagner-Marx