

THE VALUE OF ART

From white to black and the colors between, read along to see what we mean!



Marko Spalatin, **XXI**, 1973, Screen print,
Gift of the estates of Timothy John
Wyngaard and his daughter, Elizabeth
Eleanor Wyngaard, 2005.32.8.



Toni Dusek, **Apple on Plate**, 1986, Gelatin silver print,
Gift of Janice and Jean-Pierre Golay, 2004.84.39.

Did you know artists use “blocks” to produce art? Known as the elements of art, they are the building blocks which artists use to communicate. **Value** is used to show how light hits a work of art and can include **highlights** (light areas) and **shadows** (dark areas). Value is used by artists to trick the eye into seeing three-dimensions in flat images like the two works above.

LOOK

Look closely at the artworks above. Can you see the highlights in each artwork? How about the shadows? Now imagine there is an imaginary beam of light shining on each of the works. Where do you think the light is coming from? What do you see that makes you say that?

MAKE

Value is not just found in art, but it’s everywhere around us! Find 5-7 objects around your home that are in the same color family. Do you have a bunch of bananas? Blue markers? Green leaves from outside? Now, turn to the attached page to see what happens next!

DO

Grab a flashlight and take your value scale to a dark room. Shine the flashlight on your value scale at different angles and take photos. Take a close look at the photos and look for the highlights and shadows. What happens when you shake the flashlight around? How does light change the appearance of your objects?

VALUE SCALES

A value scale arranges colors from lightest to darkest

Supplies Needed

5-7 objects in the same color family
Drawing tool—marker, crayon, or pencil will do!
Imagination— Required! Let your mind go wild!
Camera—optional



A value scale shows the lightest to darkest ranges of a color. You can make a value scale out of any household objects. We love this artist's creative use of bread!

1

Gather 5-7 objects from your home that are in the same color family (all blue, all yellow). Need inspiration? Do you have a bunch of bananas? Blue markers? Green leaves you found outside? Look around—value is everywhere!

2

Arrange your objects in a line from lightest to darkest. Use the example of toasted bread above to help guide you.

3

Use a cell phone or camera to take a picture of your creation! For added fun, upload your photo to Instagram or Facebook and tag @chazenartuw.

4

Use a drawing tool and try to draw your value scale using only ONE tool. This step can be tricky, but the key is to use different amounts of pressure to make a lighter or darker shade. Use the template below to try to match the tones. Start with the lightest shades first, holding your tool softly, and then move to the darker shades, adding extra pressure on your tool as you go. A pencil or crayon works best for this.

