

# Blind Contour/Optical Art Portrait Drawing

Developed with Karen Crosby  
Art Teacher/Adjunct Professor/Retired  
Grade 5+

## INTRODUCTION

In the first part of the lesson, students will learn about contour and blind contour drawings of American artists Alexander Calder (1898–1976) and Sophie Kipner.

For the second part of this lesson, introduce students to the Op Art of Hungarian artist Victor Vasarely (1906-1997), considered the Father of Optical Art. You will also introduce students to the Optical Art of British artist Bridget Riley (1931 - ).

## OBJECTIVES

*Students will...*

Understand and apply the techniques necessary to develop a composition, including a blind contour portrait drawing with an optical art drawn background.

## STANDARDS

- Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art making.
- Experiment and develop skills in multiple art making techniques and approaches through practice.
- Demonstrate quality craftsmanship through care and use of materials, tools and equipment.



# VIRTUAL BLIND CONTOUR PORTRAIT DRAWING

Online virtual drawing may occur by asking students to adjust work space allowing students to view the computer screen and position drawing paper out of sight but comfortably within reach. The first “model” is you—the teacher. Following the demonstration instructions listed below, position yourself in a pose, giving students a limited amount of time to draw. Repeat with additional positioned poses. Recruit students to become a “model” on screen to be drawn.

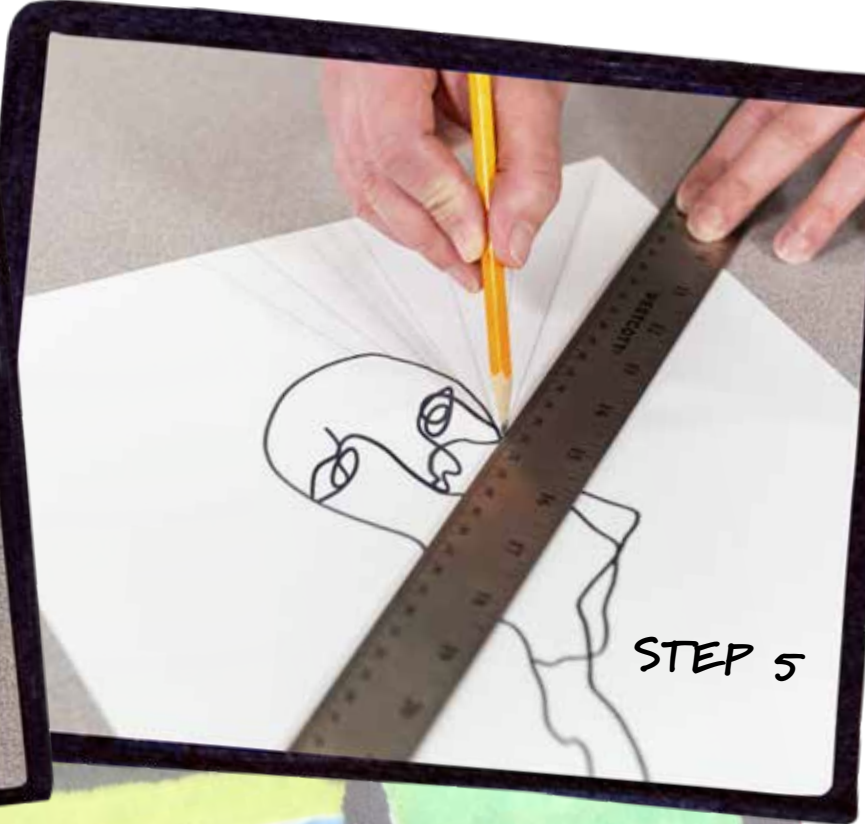
## BLIND CONTOUR DRAWING INSTRUCTIONS

1. Tape drawing paper to the table. Adjust chair to the side, your body facing away from the paper. Your drawing hand should comfortably reach the paper but you will not be looking at the paper while drawing.
2. Select something to draw. Using a permanent marker or pen, begin drawing one continuous line, very slowly.
3. Do not lift the pen. Focus on the object being drawn. All lines do not need to be drawn to represent the object. Do not peek.
4. The finished drawing will look a little strange, a bit chunky and somewhat spooky. That is part of the beauty of blind contour drawings and it is a sure sign that you did not look at your paper while drawing.



## OP ART INSTRUCTIONS

5. Use light pencil lines to create a background behind the blind contour drawing. Do not draw through the blind contour drawing.
6. You may use lines to create a zig-zag or a checkerboard pattern, a vanishing point or even concentric circles. These lines may be drawn free hand or using a ruler.
7. Plan the pattern to change in size at least once. Increase or decrease the line width and pattern to give the illusion of movement.





## MATERIALS LIST

- Nasco White Budget Paper ([4100478](#))
- Sharpie® Fine Point Black Marker ([9726841A](#))
- Crayola® Classic Colour Markers ([9729407](#))



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