

## Why It Matters

### Examine the materials, processes, and techniques used in the making of art

#### Introduction

In this module will will discuss some of the major materials, processes, and techniques used in making art.

Creating a work of art is a process. When an artist chooses to work with a certain medium, or use specific techniques, those choices are some of the most defining parameters of the entire creative process.

Let's return to the caves at Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc, where, roughly 35,000 years ago, humans transformed the space into a kind of canvas. Those prehistoric artists were using the technologies available to them—charred bones or charcoal from the fire. It's surprising how the nature of the work surface figures into the end result, too. In the same way that a painter might select a particular type of brush for the kind of brushstroke it will produce, the prehistoric artists made thoughtful choices about where to place specific renderings of animals so they could use the natural contours and fissures in the cave rocks to create bas-relief giving a horn, a hump, or a haunch realistic depth (Thurman, 2008, *New Yorker*).

If art is a process of seeing, imagining, and making, as Henry Sayre explains, then media and techniques give voice to the imagination (3). All media bring specific visual effects that affect how we interpret them as viewers. As you work through the content in this section, consider how the visual effects of a figure drawn by hand with charcoal are different from a figure drawn with a digital vector-based drawing program. How would an artist's drawn rendering of a scene in a courtroom be different from a photograph of the same thing?

#### Works Cited

- Sayre, Henry. *A World of Art*, Sixth edition. Boston: Prentice Hall, 2010. Print.
- Thurman, Judith. *First Impressions, What Does the World's Oldest Art Say About Us*. *New Yorker Magazine*. 2008. Web. 31 May 2015.

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