

# VALUE

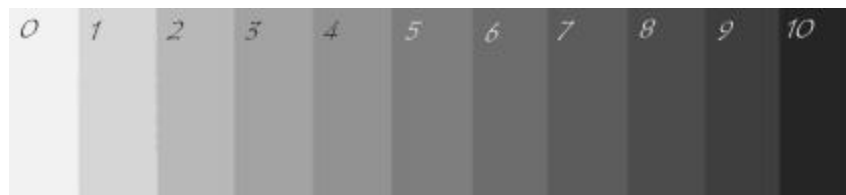
## Understanding Value – The Value Scale

**Value** in drawing/painting, refers to a scale of lights and darks.

Zero (0) on the scale, refers to the lightest value possible (white).

Ten (10) on the scale, refers to the darkest value possible (black).

Five (5) on the scale, would be a mid-tone half way between zero and ten.



## Painting with Value (Skill Builder)

### Lights and Darks (Initial Block-In)

- Step 1 Establish an accurate gesture drawing (using sighting and measuring to refine).  
**Squint** at your subject to identify the light and dark areas (values) of your drawing  
Lightly draw contour lines to indicate the separation of the light areas from the dark areas of your drawing.
- Step 2 Block-in the above indicated light and dark areas using only 2 values...  
 > Value 1 = the white of the canvas or paper, which will represent the lights.  
 > Value 2 = a light mid-tone number #2 on the value scale, which will represent the darks.

### 3 Values and White (Refining the Block-In)

- Step 3 Refer to your value strip (white, #2, #5, and #8) from instructor.  
Within the dark mass (previously established #2 value), squint to identify the darkest area and fill in with value #5.  
IGNORE any detail.
- Step 4 Within the darkest mass (previously established #5 value), squint to identify the darkest area and fill in with value #8.

### The Value Key

- Step 5 Once you have arrived at this stage, identify your lightest light mass and your darkest dark mass. This is your value key. Never paint outside of this key... nothing should be painted lighter than your lightest light, and nothing should be painted darker than your darkest dark.

### Variations (Modeling)

You will now begin the process of “**modeling**”, which is differentiating and recording the value shifts within your established lights and darks. Modeling can be simple, as we are doing, or it can be complex – determined by the number of values you choose to utilize within each mass.

**Modeling = Value Shifts** – A greater number of value shifts, equals a more detailed drawing or painting.

- Step 6 In each large established mass (dark and light) there will be value shifts. Identify these shifts in each mass and begin to paint a single variation in each mass... still ignoring detail.
- Step 7 When you have broken each mass down once go into each newly established mass, identify and paint another value shift.
- Step 8 Continue with this process, but ensure that you work each mass consistently with the others. **Do not work and refine one area until you have worked them all to the same degree or you risk losing your value key and losing your established relationships.**

As well, if you continue to work the painting consistently in all areas, your painting will have a visual look of completion – even though you have not painted any detail (which in many cases becomes unnecessary).

## Advanced Value – Chiarascuro

**Chiaroscuro** – This is a form of modeling that heightens drama and creates depth. Your focal point is the lightest area with the most detail. Your darkest areas will have very little detail. Think “active lights and passive darks”.

**Note:** Be careful of rendering reflected light within the shadows. This will flatten your drawing or painting and detract from the effect you are trying to achieve.

### Inverse Square Law

- The amount of light falling on the surface of an object is inversely proportional to the square of the relative distance of the object from the light source.
- Angle of incidence also has to be considered as objects parallel to the light received more light than ones angled to the light.
- When a surface is curving away from the light the leading edges need to be softened to create the illusion of recession.

Caravaggio & Rembrandt intuitively understood this law and became the pioneers of this form of modeling.

### Chiaroscuro Method:

In creating drawings and paintings using chiaroscuro, you use the same method as blocking-in using value, except to create the dramatic light effect you will “push” your shaded areas up the value scale.

- Pick your brightest shape, which will be closest to the light source (see Inverse Square Law).
- Only one to three shapes will remain white.
- All other shapes/surfaces will be “pushed” up the value scale (i.e. if you see a # 2 on the value scale you would “push” it to a #4 or #5).
- You are exaggerating the darks to make the whites glow.
- The light areas will have the most modeling (detail).
- The shadow areas will have only subtle variations.
- This is what meant by “*active lights and passive darks*”.