

BASICS: NOT SO BASIC BASICS

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An Art Skills Tutorial

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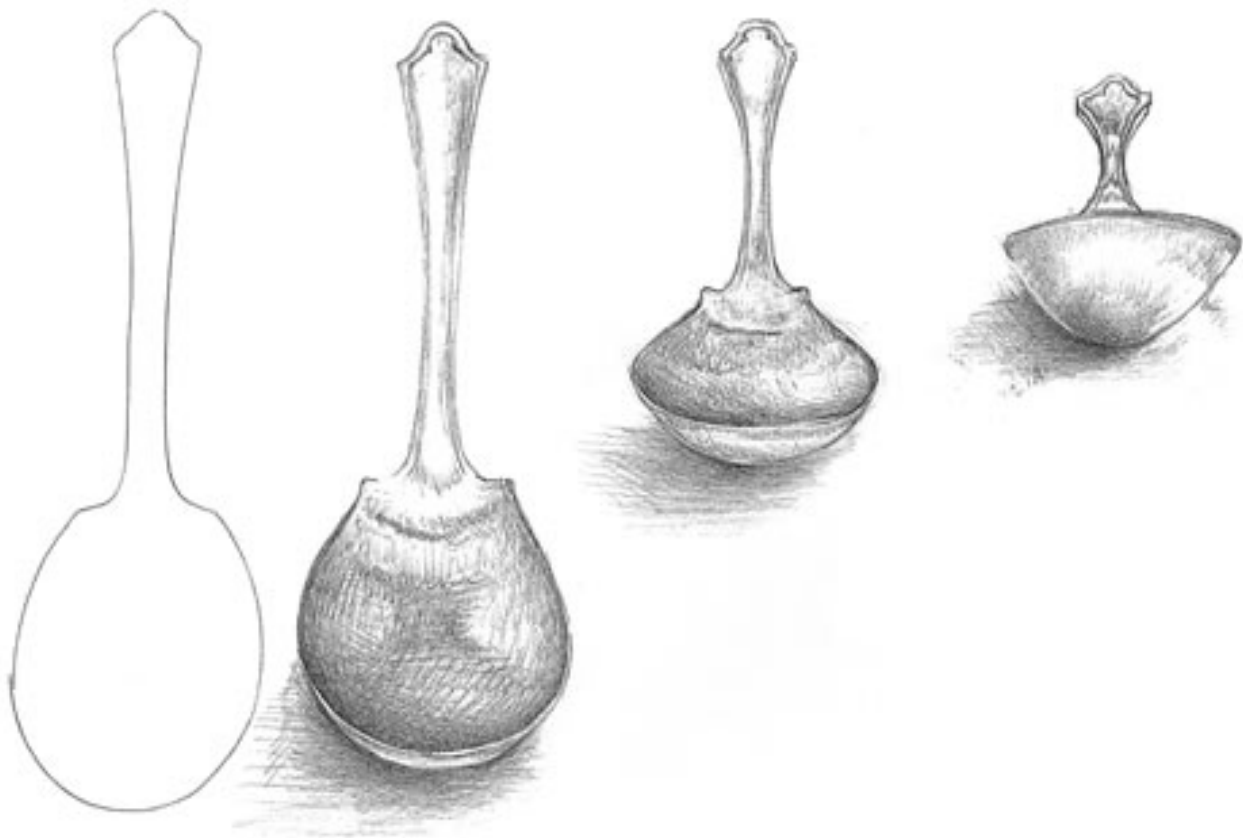
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FORESHORTENING

Think about the word. The principle of foreshortening is when the subject appears shorter when seen from the front, (the “fore”), than when seen from above.



The outline was drawn by tracing the object from above, holding the spoon down, and carefully keeping the pencil erect.

Any tilt of the pencil from the vertical will distort the outline.

The views from left to right move from below eye level to eye level.

Compare the length of the spoon from the top to the bottom of the page.

You can see that the object appears to get shorter in 2-D as the view point changes to be more frontal.

EXERCISE: BOWL AS CIRCLE AND ELLIPSE

Trace a simple bowl from the top.

You of course will have a circle on your page. Be attentive, keeping your pencil vertical.

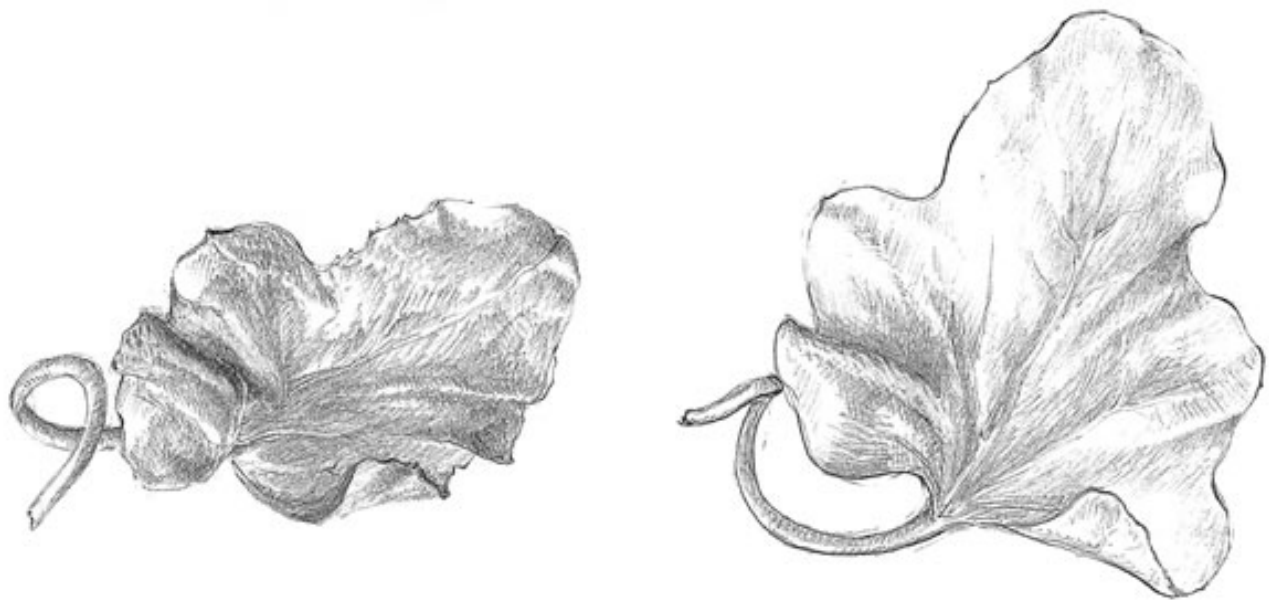
Pick up your bowl.

First hold it at arm's length below your eye level, looking straight down on it.

Here is your circle.

Next, hold it at arm's length in front of you, slightly below your eye level.

The top edge will now form an ellipse. The closer to eye level the narrower the ellipse, until it disappears when all you can see is the side of the bowl.

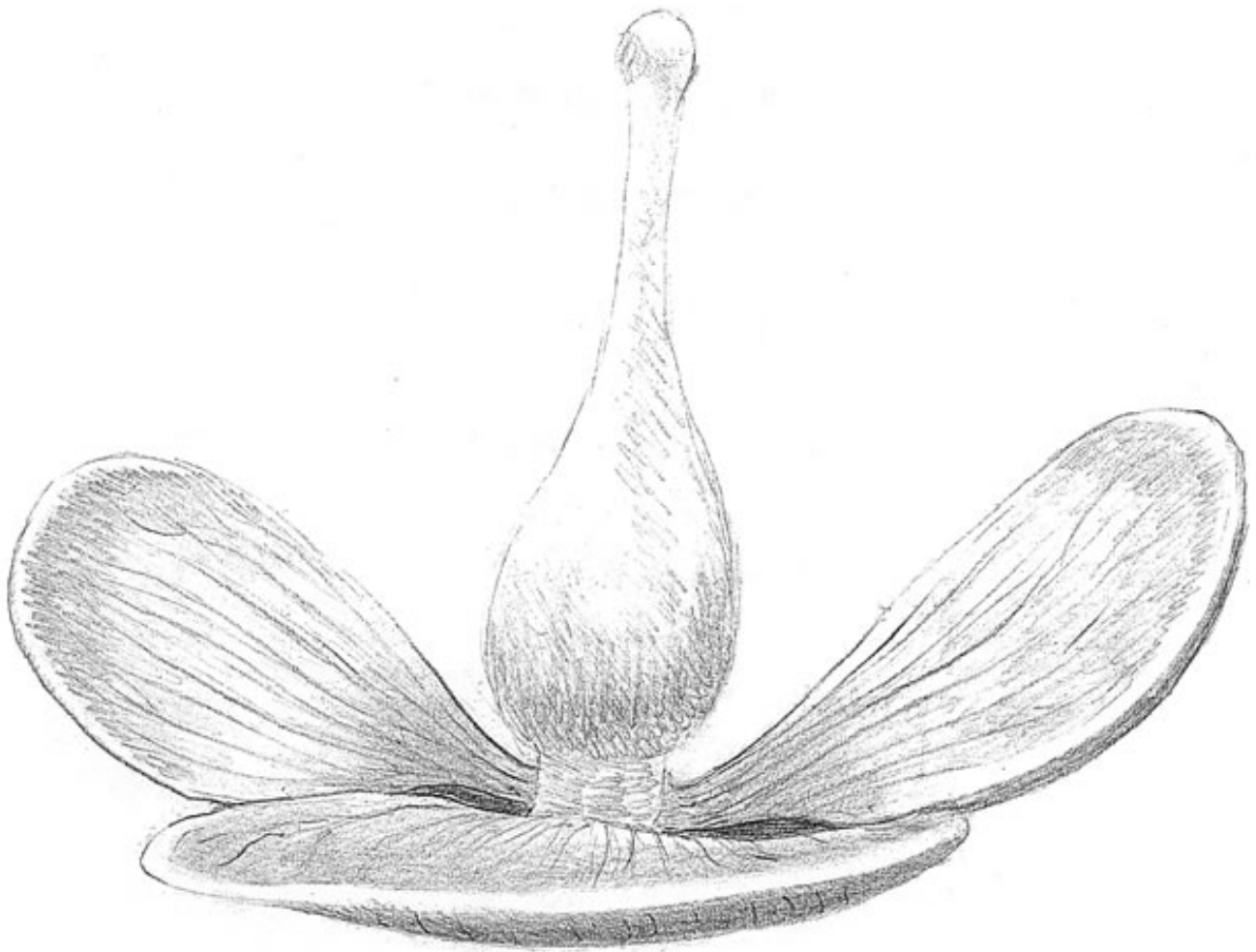


The leaf on the right is seen from above.

The leaf on the left is seen closer to eye level.

Not only does it appear shorter, from top to bottom, there is also overlapping, most pronounced around the stem.

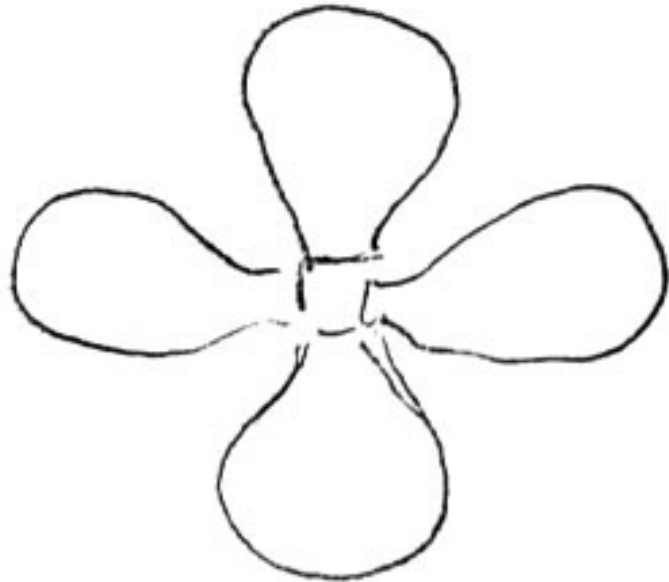
The stem overlaps itself and the leaf overlaps the stem because of the point of view.



The full picture of the flower model.

The shape of petals of a flower will be entirely different when seen from above than when seen frontally.

*Schematic
drawing of a
four petalled
flower*

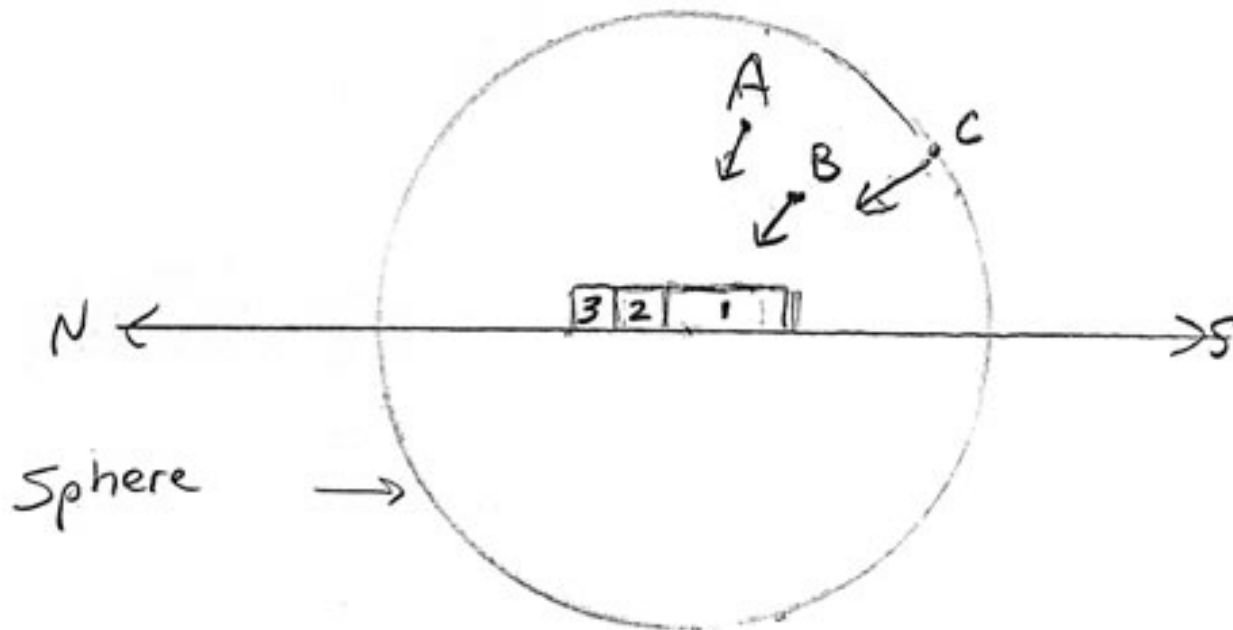


We recognize the symbol of a petal, which captures the essential shape. This shape is entirely different, and many times unrecognizable, when seen foreshortened.



Foreshortened view of one petal.

VIEWPOINT: THINKING ABOUT THE TRANSLATION FROM 3D TO 2D

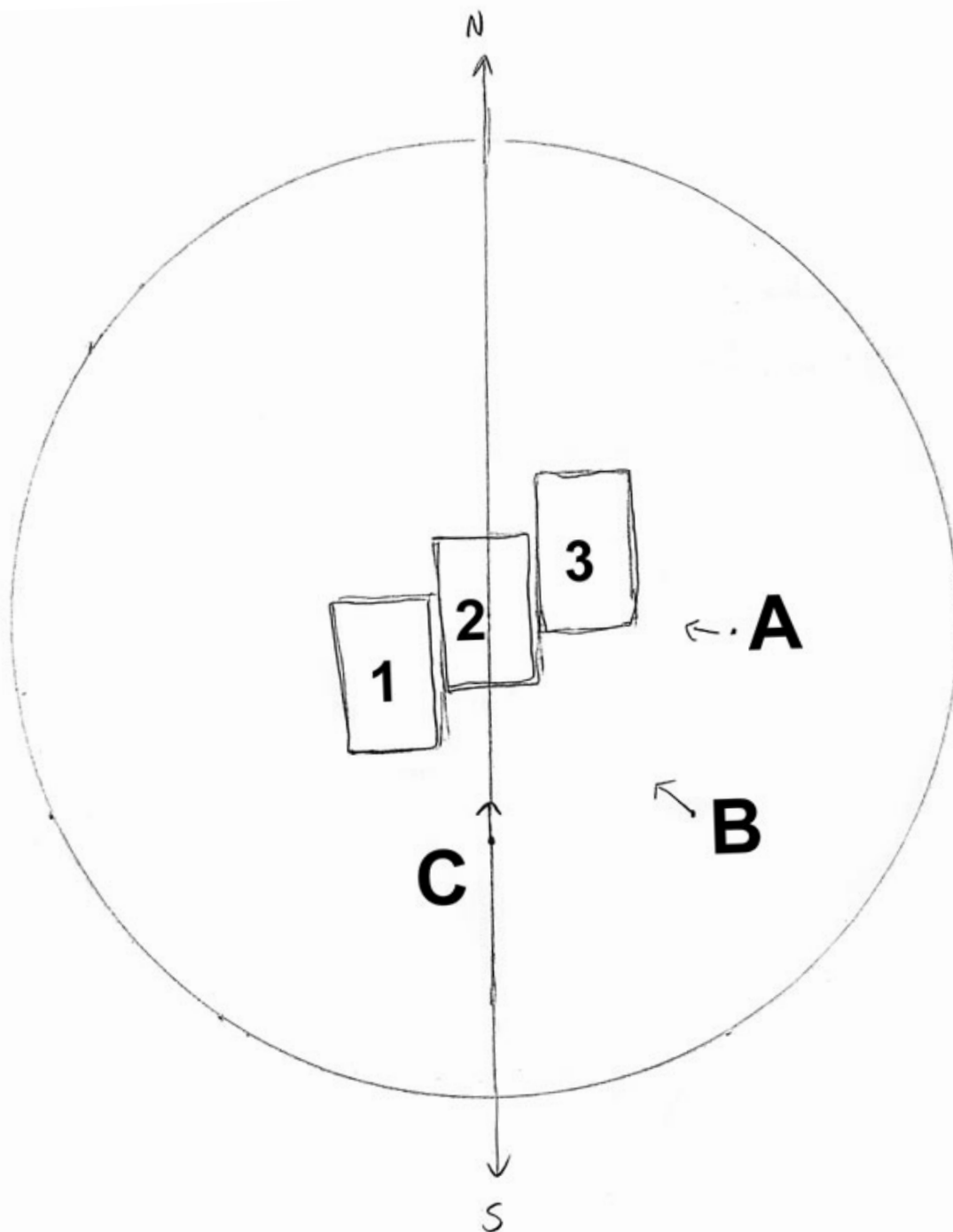


Side view of three boxes.

Included here is a schematic representation of three facial tissue boxes set on a table, each one slightly offset from the next.

There are three points, A, B, and C which represent three viewpoints. I chose to use compass directions to define orientation.

The next drawing represents the aerial view.



Aerial view of three boxes.

In the first drawing we are looking at a side view of the same three boxes, showing the heights of the three viewpoints, A, B and C.

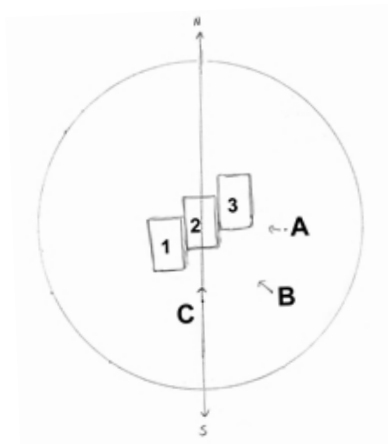
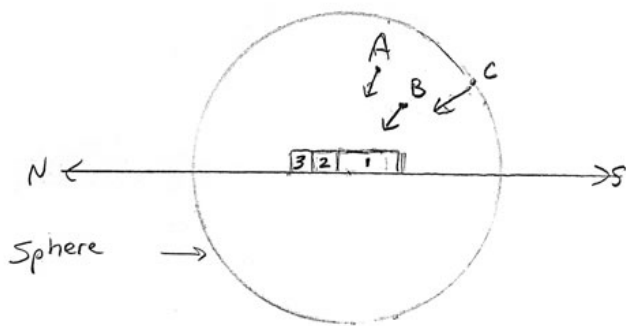
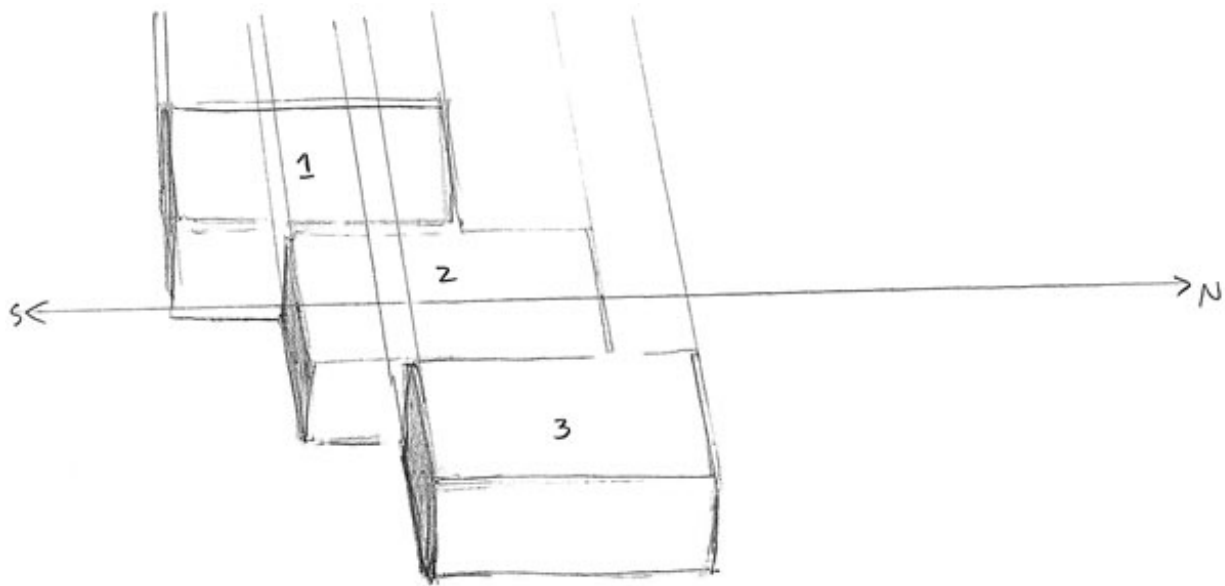
Each view allows you to show different information. The aerial view shows horizontal direction, but not vertical. The side view shows vertical, but not the horizontal relationships.

This is something to consider when journaling.

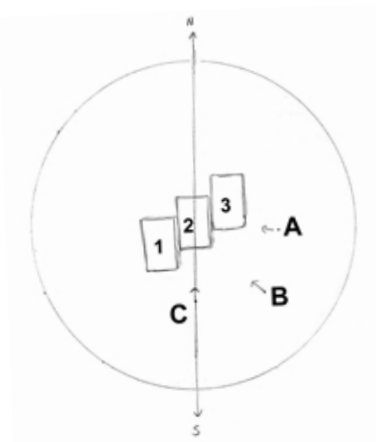
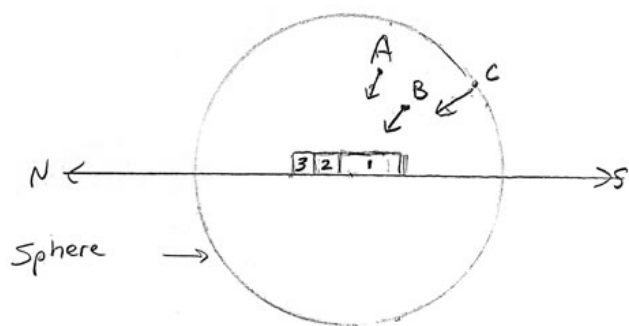
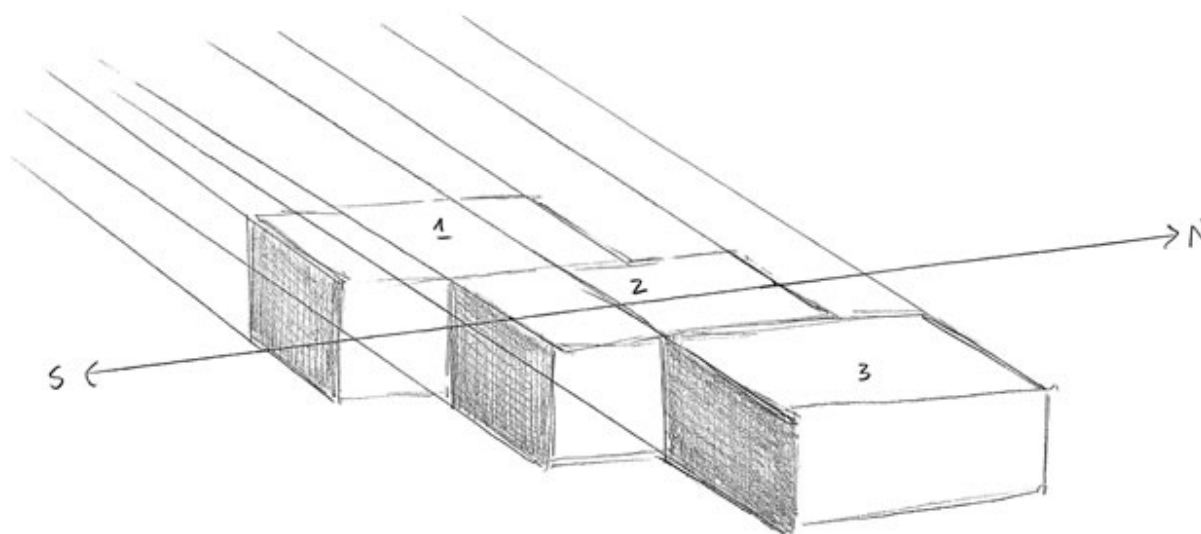
Be sure to evaluate which view best serves your purposes, before recording what you see.

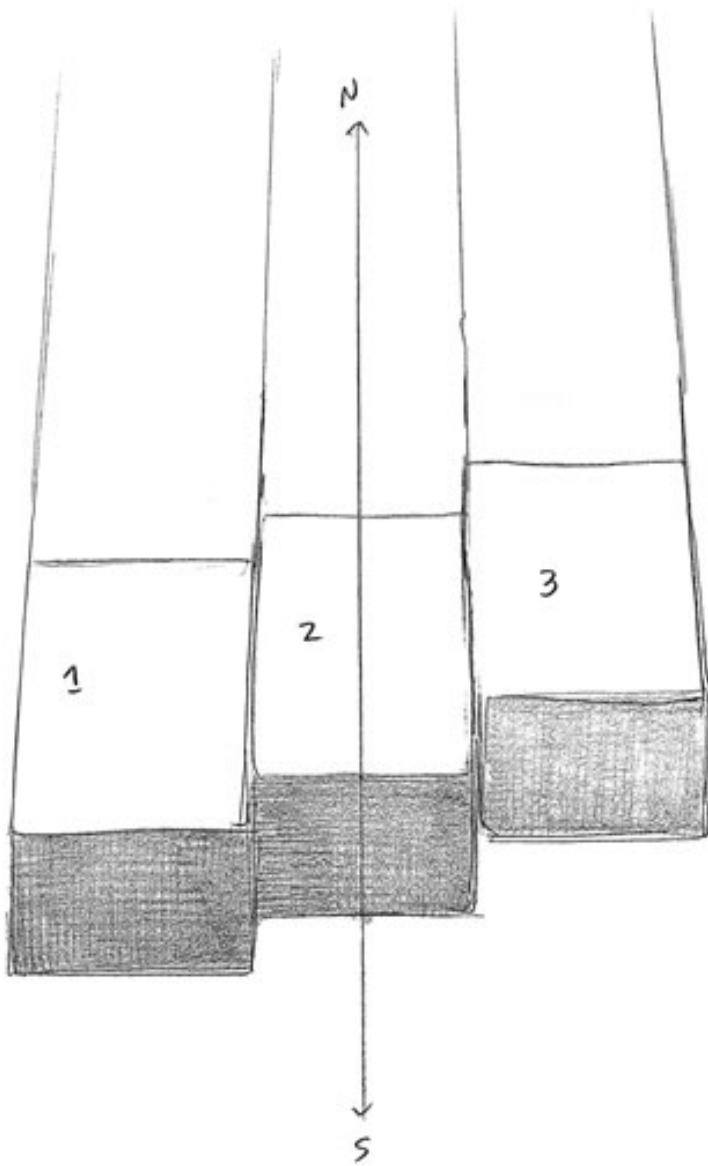
The next three illustrations will be drawn from each of these viewpoints.

Viewpoint A

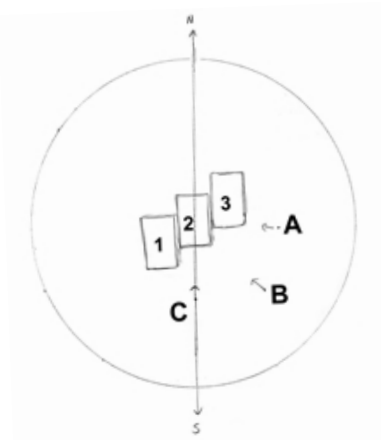
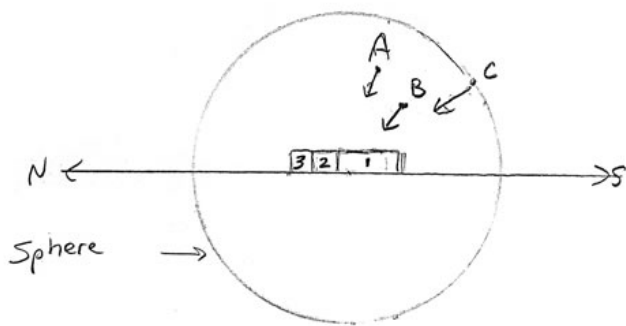


Viewpoint B





Viewpoint C



How does Viewpoint C differ from the rest?

Only two sides are in view.

What is the same in each of the drawings regarding the placement on the page of the three boxes?

The farther the box, the higher on the page it climbs.

Is there a vanishing point for the parallel sides of the boxes that are receding from you?

Yes, but because your view is so close, it is hard to detect, and can just be estimated. Receding parallel lines will converge slightly, but almost imperceptibly, in this case. You do not need to use vanishing points or formal perspective to draw this configuration.

What drawing technique was used to help the viewer register the three dimensionality of the boxes?

Shading one side of the boxes helps us to see these as three dimensional rectangular prisms.

EXERCISE: VIEWPOINT WITH EXTRA SHADING

Try setting up three boxes of like size and do this same exercise.

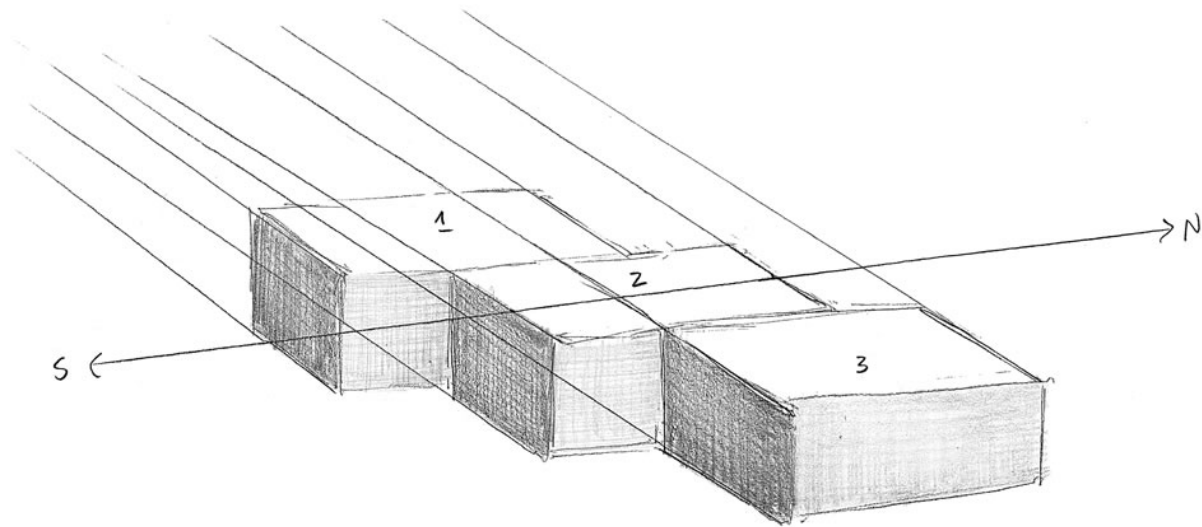
You may find that shading two sides of the boxes, when they are in view, makes their three dimensionality even more convincing.

Leave the top highlighted.

The two sides should be different values.

Shade all sides facing one direction the same value.

This illustrates the points above.



After you have done your drawings compare them with the ones provided.