



Earthtones are browns, greys and ochres. They are considered **achromatic**, or without colour. They are also part of the **neutral** tone palette that includes black and white. In this exercise we will make a painting using two browns and black. In this first image we are focusing on **value** and using water effectively to control the lightness and darkness of colour. Water is the primary ingredient in watercolour and controls the movement, consistency, transparency, and saturation of the colour.



Water activates the paint, and a wet brush pulls colour from the dry pan. A **saturated colour** is created when lot of colour is pulled into a little water. Saturated colours are rich, and full of colour. Add more water to thin the paint and make a puddle on the palette. Transfer that puddle to a large area on the paper to create a wash. A **wash** might be a full strength, or it might be mostly water with very little colour.



White paint is not commonly used in watercolour. Adding water will dilute the saturated colour and lighten the value. More water means less pigment so the whiteness of the paper will show. It is light reflecting off the white of the paper that will make the colour appear lighter. To add details to the owls a white gel pen will be used to add marks and interesting details in the final piece.

VALUE & SHADE

Lesson 1

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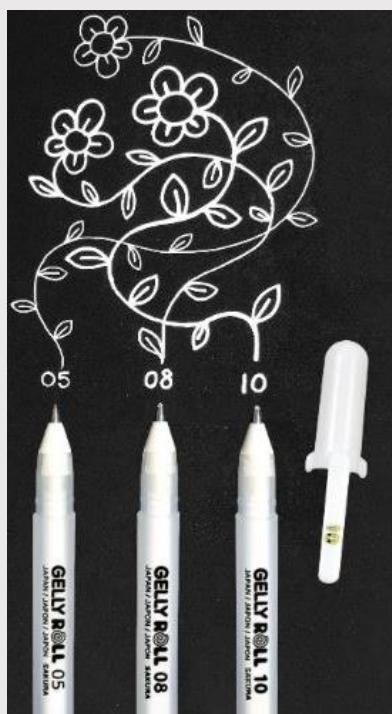
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Sakura Micron Pens are waterproof felt pens great for sketching. Sakura White Gels pens are useful for adding white details, lines, and designs on top of watercolour.



Colour is made transparent by adding water. **Transparent** means we can see through it; not just to the white of the paper but also to any colour or paint marks underneath the wash. Putting one colour on top of another colour is called layering. If the layer is transparent it is called a glaze.



Water is also effective for **lifting** colour off the paper. Touch water to dry paint on the page to reactivate it. Gently blot with some paper towel to lift the colour to lighten it. A wet brush can also be used to rewet and move colour. This technique may soften lines and create new shapes and bring back the light. It is very important not to scrub at the surface or it may become damaged. Over-worked paper will look mottled and uneven. A light touch is all that's needed. Let the area fully dry before going back into it again. Colours that do not lift easily are called **staining colours**, whereas colours that lift easily with water are called **non-staining**. It means they do not stain the paper.

Dark, wet colours will dry much lighter in tone. This change is called a **colour shift**. You may wish to paint darker and bolder because the colour shift makes colours dry less intense and lighter.

Water is also key to controlling how the paint moves. Crisp edges are made on dry paper. **Wet into wet** creates soft, blurry edges that bleed together. Accidental colour mixing can happen along wet edges and may or may not be desired for the work. It is still best to let the paint and paper dry before trying to correct too quickly. Wait to see how it looks first. Subsequent layers of paint may easily correct these blurry edges.

This reference chart was created in the video.

