# Photorealistic Portrait of Karin

**An illustrated diary that explores the process of planning a composition, setting up grids, and using crosshatching graduations to draw a fun portrait of a child**

**Resource:** Module 3.1 Introduction to Shading

**Supplies:** paper, 2H, HB, 2B, 4B, 6B, and 8B pencils, pencil sharpener, sandpaper block, vinyl and kneaded erasers

This tutorial has three sections:

- Planning the Drawing
- Outlining Contours and a Value Map
- Using Crosshatching to Add Shading

The most important part of learning to draw is maintaining enthusiasm. Aspiring artists should feel comfortable using whatever tools are available, such as viewfinder frames and grids.

Contrary to popular opinion, grids do not hinder artistic growth. In fact, they serve as tools to make the learning process more pleasurable by helping with such challenges as rendering believable proportions and correct perspective.

Subsequently, when you are pleased with your drawings, you are more likely to be motivated to continue onward with your artistic journey.
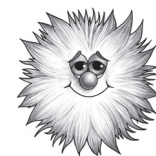
Learning to draw is not a short-term goal, but rather a lifelong journey.
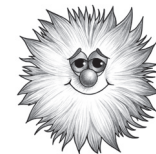
## As an Aside

There are no step-by-step directions in this diary – instead, I simply share my drawing processes, including my motivation for using various artistic tools and techniques.

You can then apply any useful techniques to your own work.

## As an Aside

Feel free to follow along by either drawing the subject featured in this tutorial, or someone special in your own life. If you decide to work from your own printed photo, make sure the facial features are clear and in-focus.

# Planning the Drawing

Before putting pencil to paper, I made modifications to my reference photo of a little girl named Karin (Figure 1).

After playing with this photo for a few minutes, I decided that the composition would be more expressive and aesthetically pleasing if her head appeared to be more tilted.

Figure 1
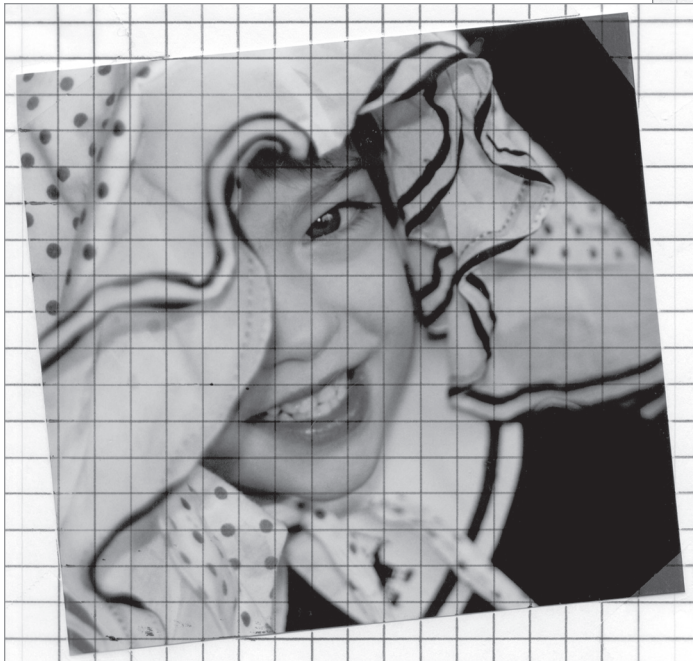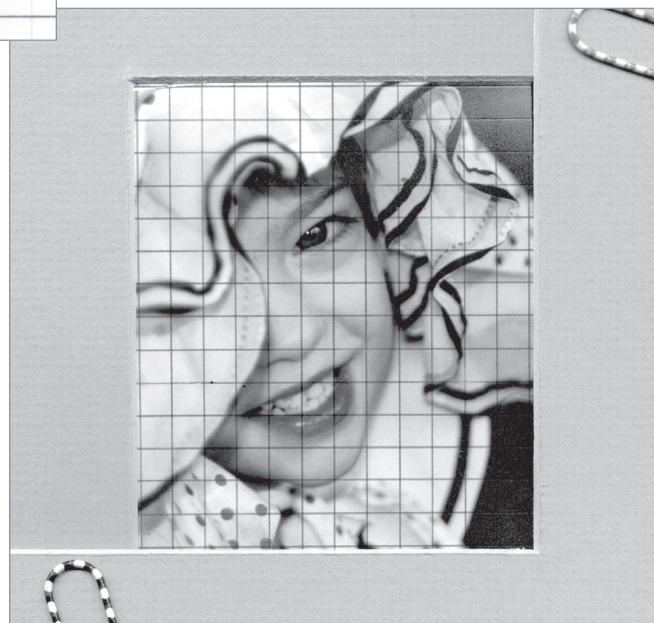


Figure 2



Therefore, the printed photo was taped to a sheet of grid paper at an angle rather than lined up with the horizontal and vertical grid lines.

The horizontal and vertical grid lines were rendered on the photo with a fine-tip ballpoint pen by using the lines of the graph paper as guidelines (Figure 2).

Figure 3



Both the graph paper and the grid squares that are outlined on the photo have .25 in (.64 cm) squares.

A small viewfinder frame was then placed on the photo and continuously adjusted until an ideal composition was found (Figure 3).

I used the inner edges of the viewfinder frame as guides when outlining the perimeter of the photo's chosen composition with a fine-tip ballpoint pen.

This outline then served as a guide to apply masking tape along the outer edges of the composition. I used the same pen to mark letters and numbers on the tape to identify each vertical and horizontal row (Figure 4).

The photo itself ended up being 4 in (10.16 cm) wide. I decided to make my drawing 8 in (20.32 cm) wide – twice the width of the photo.

I outlined a drawing space 8 in (20.32 cm) wide on my drawing paper and then rendered the grid with .5 in (1.27 cm) squares. No pressure was applied to my HB pencil; its weight alone created the very faint lines. Figure 5 was scanned darker than the actual grid rendered on the drawing paper.

Letters and numbers that corresponded to those on the photo were added to the grid. I can now identify each square as I work, and hopefully avoid drawing the wrong image in a grid square.

**Tip!**

Keep a few viewfinder frames of various sizes handy to help you choose a composition when you work from a printed image.



Figure 4



Figure 5

# Outlining Contours and a Value Map

When I work with a grid, I prefer to begin drawing in the upper left and then work downward toward the right. (This is simply a personal preference based on my right-handedness.)

Figures 6 to 14 are also shown darker than the actual drawing.
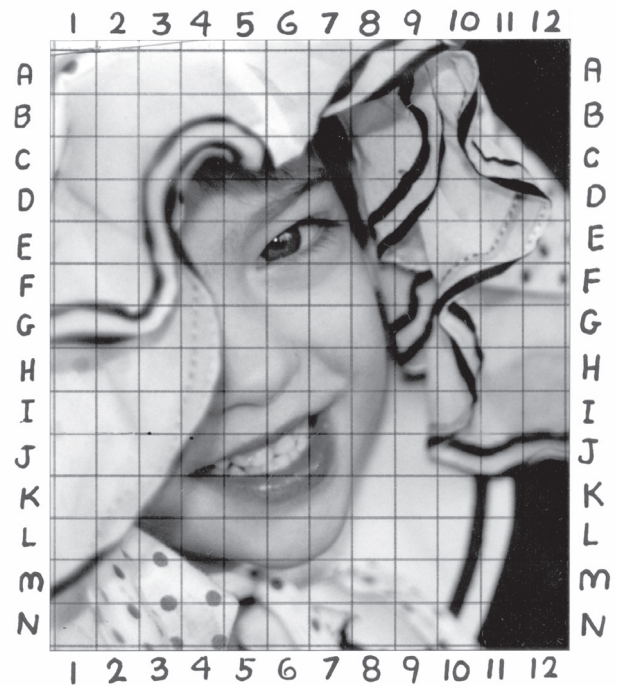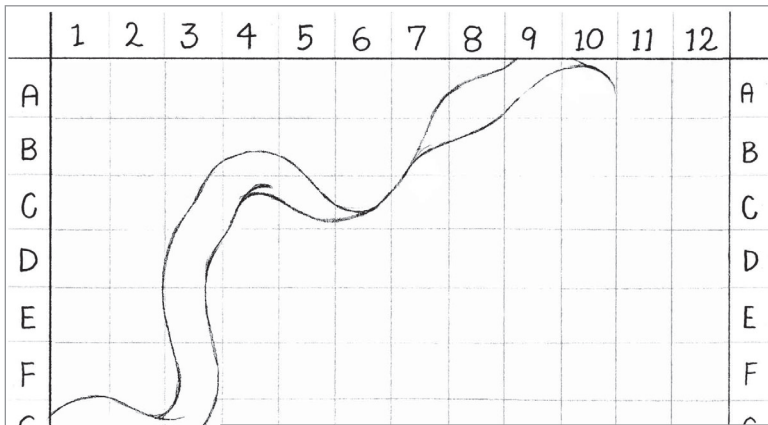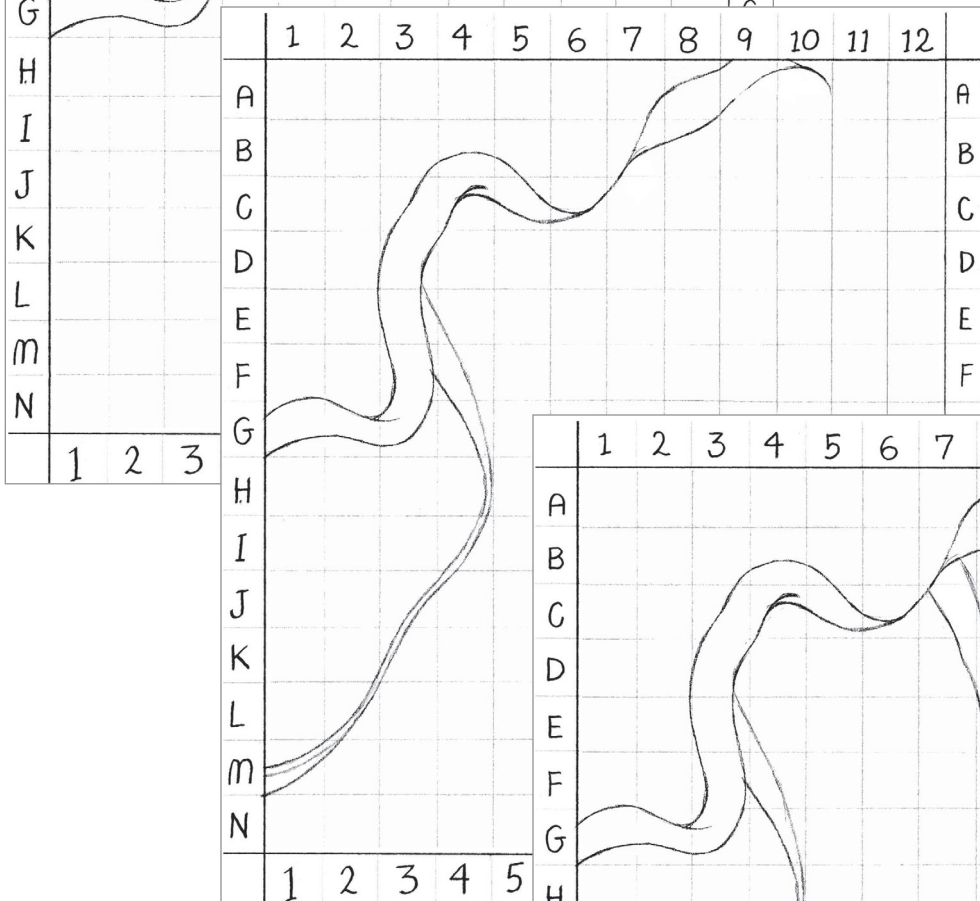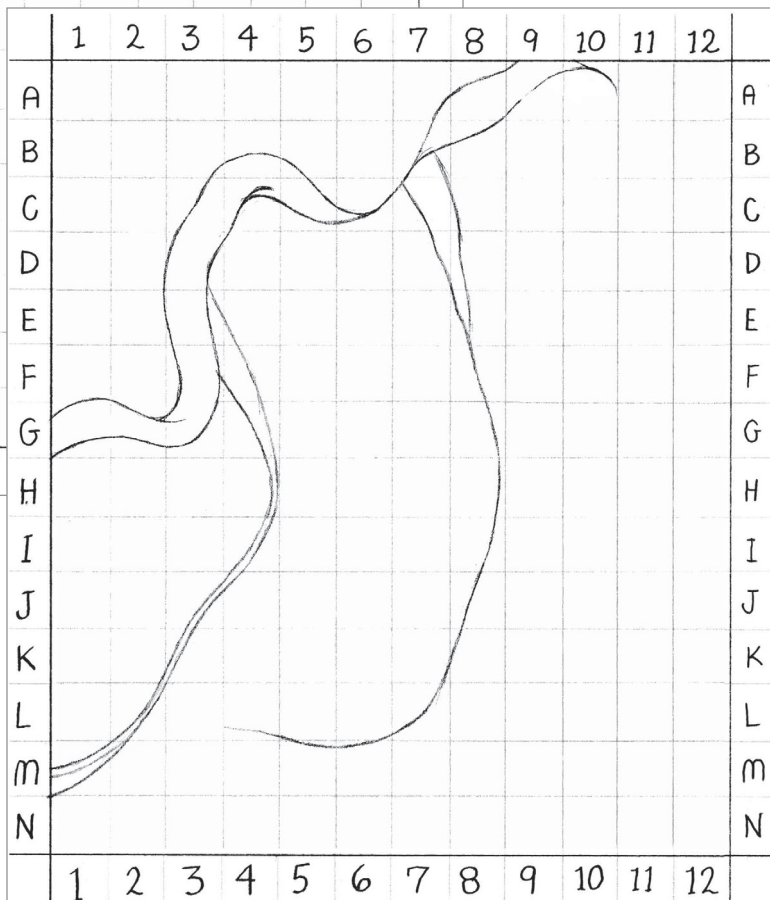
Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 8

**Tip!**

Keep a pencil sharpener and sandpaper block handy so you can keep your pencil points sharp.

I used an HB pencil to draw in one square at a time, while constantly referring to the photo to make sure that I was working in the correct squares.

Before I drew each section of a contour line, I examined the relationships between the four sides of its grid square and the various lines, shapes, and/or spaces of the subject inside it.
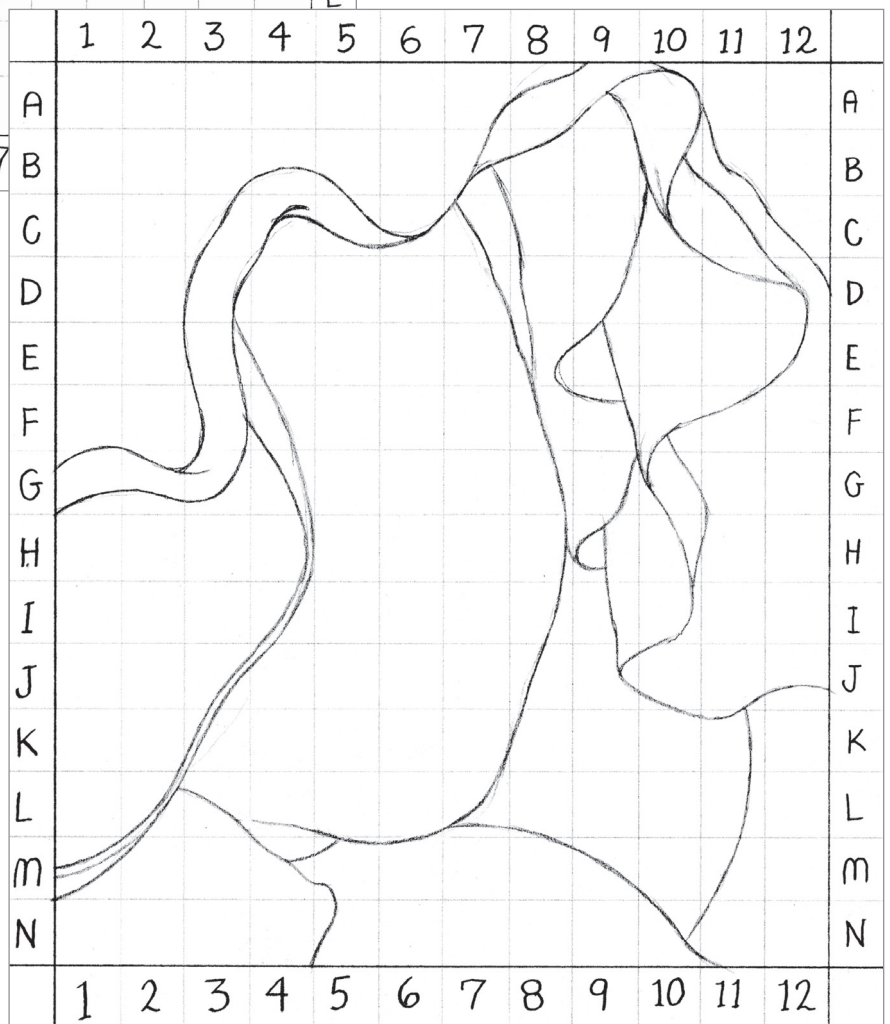
Figure 9
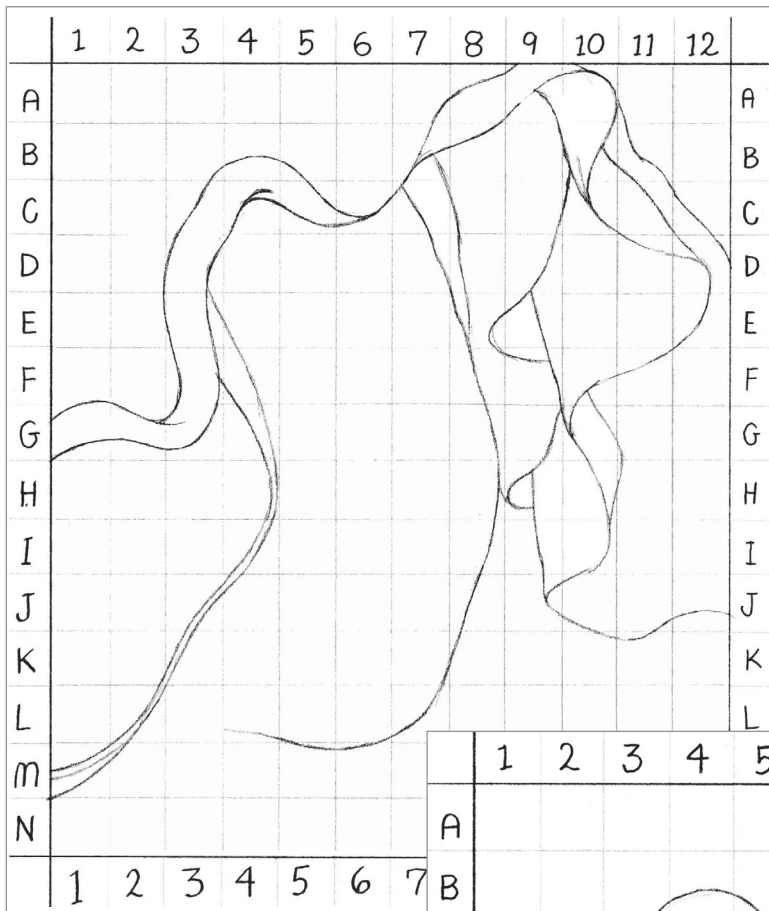


## Tip!

For more information on using a grid, refer to *2.2.R12 Gridding to Sketch Proportions* and *2.2.R13 Setting Up to Draw with a Grid*.

## Tip!

Rotate your paper as you draw so you are always using your natural hand motions.
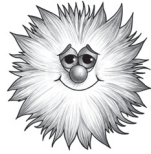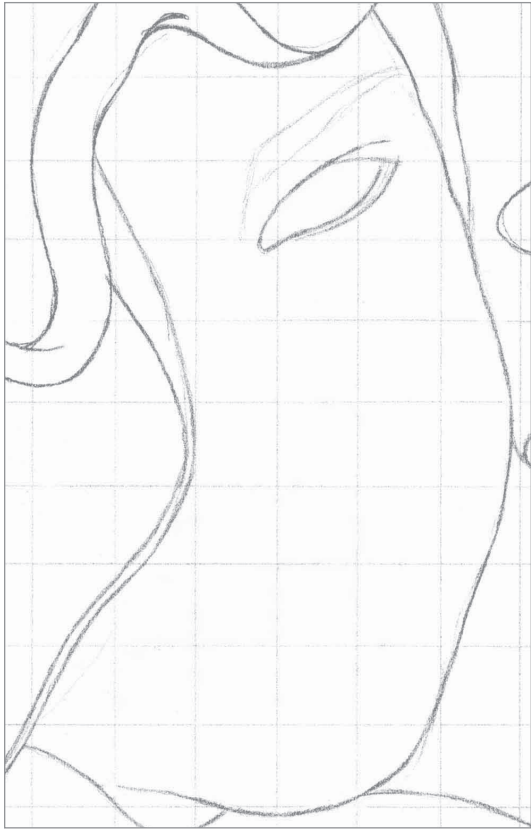
Figure 10



## Tip!

Remember: it's easier to avoid making mistakes when working with a grid than it is to fix them.

As you draw, constantly double-check the proportions of your sketch.

Compare the lengths, angles, and curves of the various lines in your drawing to each illustration.

Figure 11



**As an Aside**

In the actual sketch, the lines are very faint. The sketch lines in these illustrations have been darkened in Photoshop so you can see them clearly.

**Tip!**

Whenever you draw eyes, keep the initial sketch lines very light so they can be erased later. No part of an eye should be drawn with dark lines.

The shape of the eyebrow is sketched lighter than the eye and nose. The individual hairs of the eyebrow will be added later with hatching lines.
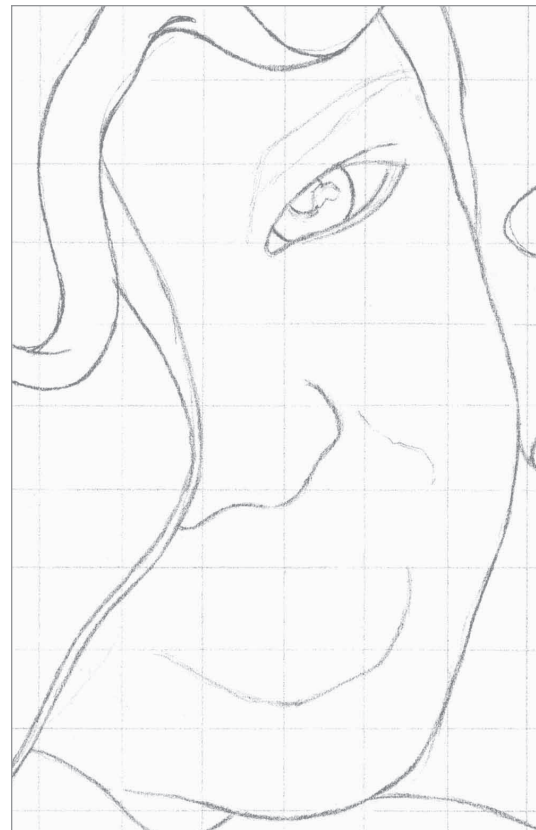
Figure 12



Figure 13

Figure 14



**Tip!**

As you add shading to your drawing, keep in mind that the light source originates from the upper right and slightly to the front. Therefore, the overall shading is slightly darker on the left and lower-left sections of her face and clothing.

With everything in place, I referred to the photo again to map out where to draw the light and dark values (Figure 15).

Figure 15
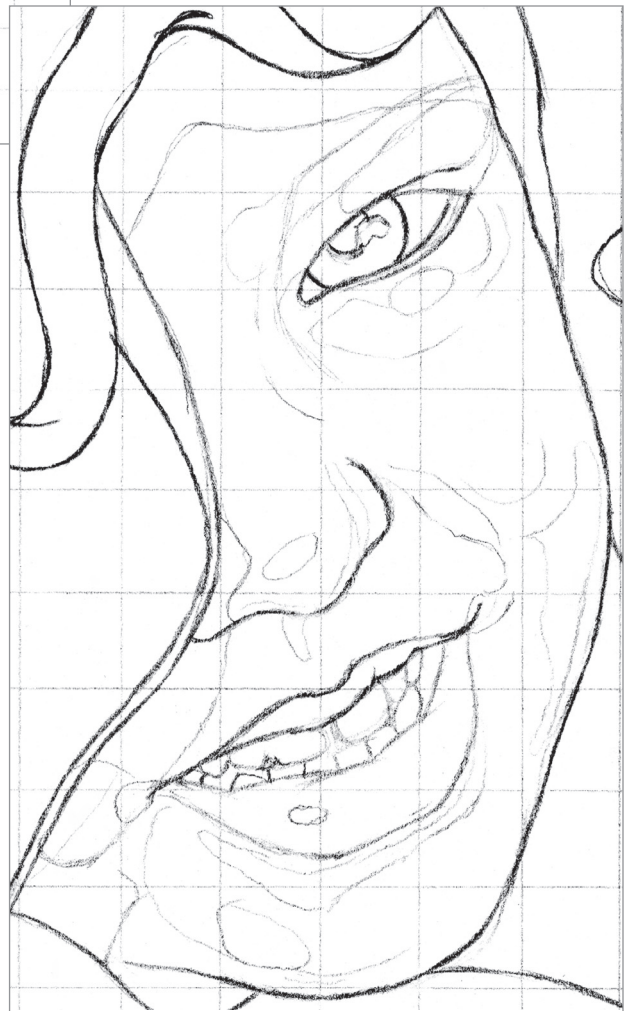


This scan is also much darker than the actual sketch!

To prepare for shading, the grid lines were erased in the facial area and a kneaded eraser was used to gently pat the mapping lines until they were barely visible.

# Using Crosshatching to Add Shading

Time to get started on the really fun stuff – adding values! To keep her face looking soft, I used 2H and HB pencils to shade the light and middle values. The crosshatching graduates smoothly to create the various light values identified by the shading map (Figure 16).

Figure 16
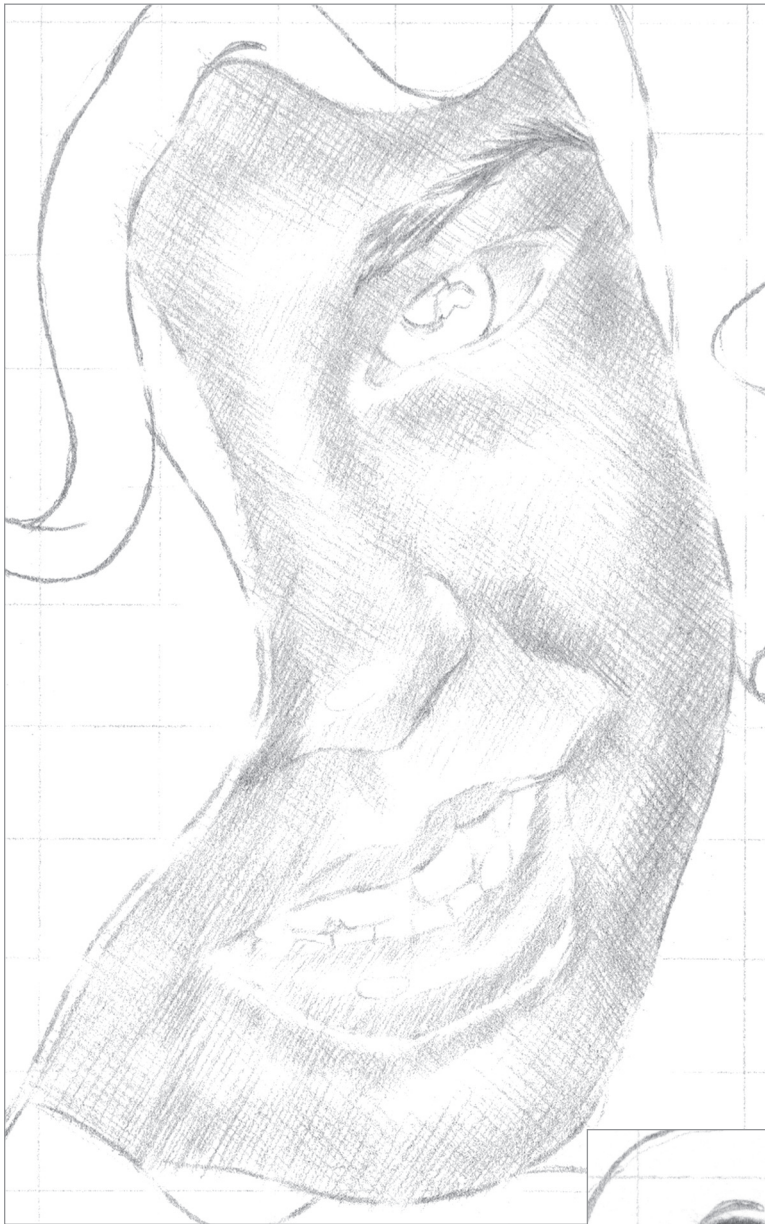


HB and 2B pencils worked well to add slightly darker medium values to the shadow areas.

This preliminary shading identified the basic facial forms. The next step is to add more detailed shading to her individual features and the facial sections surrounding her features.
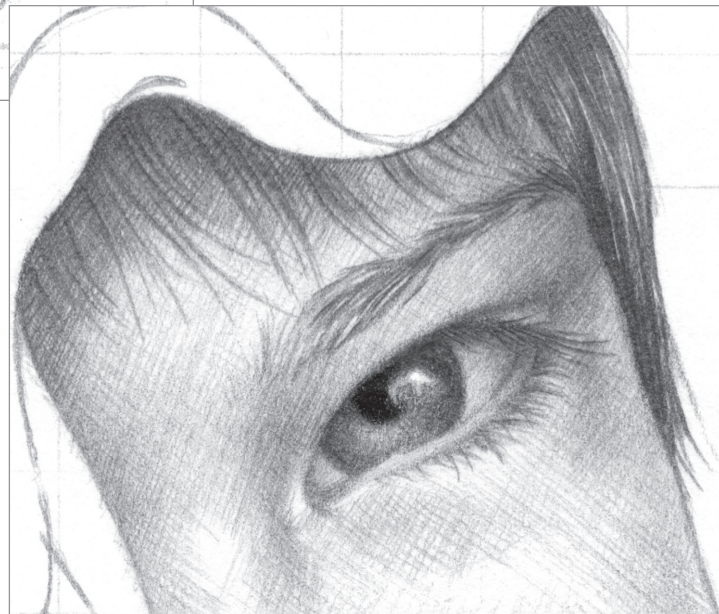
**Tip!**

To create different values, vary the density of the individual shading lines and the pressure used in holding different grades of pencils.

Her hair and eyebrow are shaded with hatching lines that curve in many different directions.
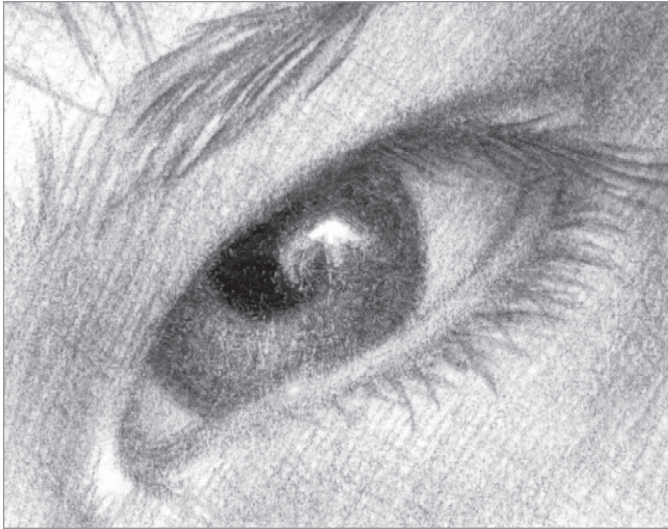
Figure 17



Refer to Figure 17 and also peek ahead to Figure 22.

**Tip!**

To discover how realistic eyelashes are rendered, refer to *6.1.A6 Draw Realistic Eyelashes* and *6.1.A7 Draw a Realistic Eye*.

Figure 18



Darker shading accentuates some sections of her upper face, especially around her eyes.

The iris and white of the eye are darker under the upper eyelid and on the right. (Figure 18). The darkest shading with an 8B is in the pupil. The eyelashes are rendered with curved hatching lines of various thicknesses and lengths.

2B pencils are used to add additional dark values to the facial sections around the nose, lips, and the opening of the mouth (Figure 19).
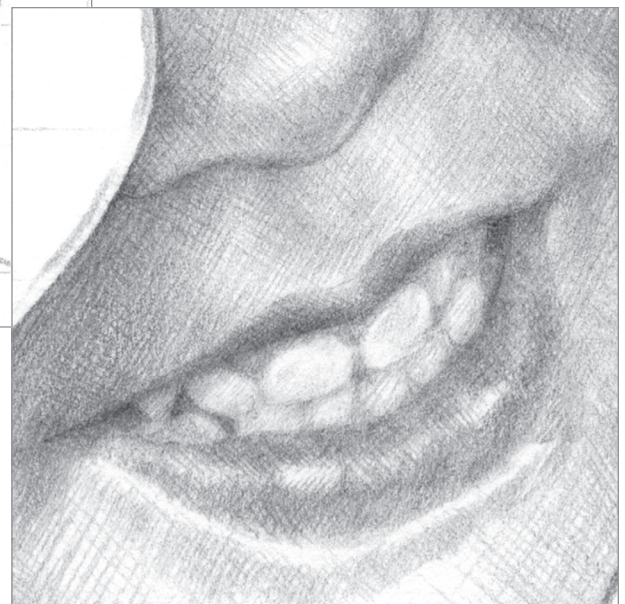
Figure 19
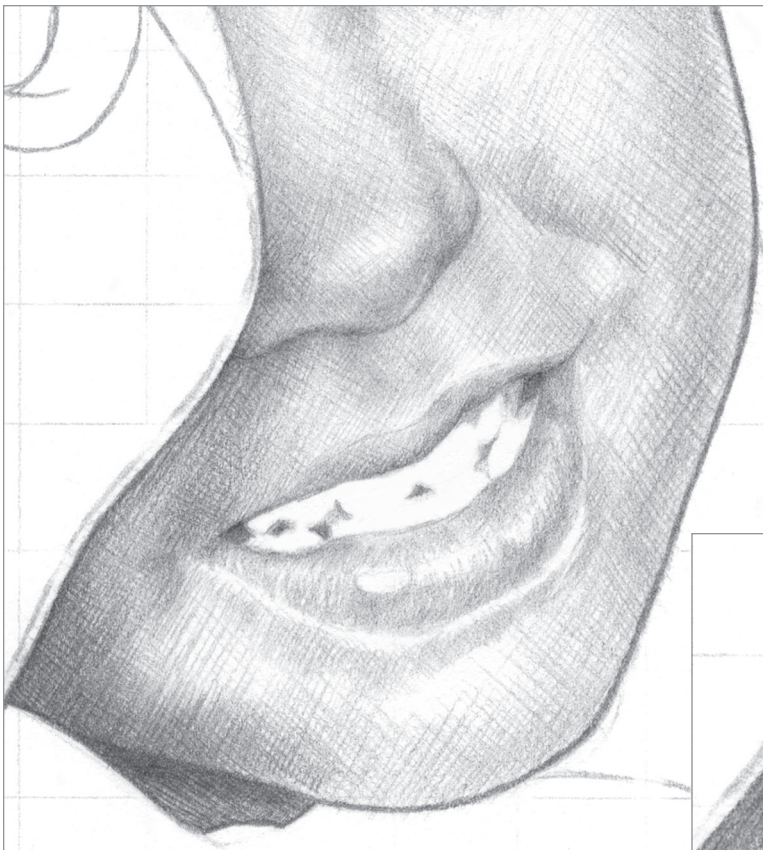


The light shading around her mouth serves to accentuate the forms of her lower face.

To add more contrast, the shading of the neck was darkened.

The outlines around the lips and teeth are erased and light shading is added to the teeth to make the mouth more realistic (Figure 20).

Figure 20



As the entire face is the focal point of this drawing, all the shading graduations need to be smoothly rendered and detailed.

The pupils of her eyes are the only part of the drawing shaded with an 8B.

Before I started shading the clothing I took several breaks, returning after each one and making tiny adjustments to sections of the face that didn't look quite right.

At this point, I check my drawing carefully to make sure all of the grid lines are erased from the clothing.

I began shading the clothing with light values that captured the major forms of the fabric (Figure 21). Light shading was also added to the background.

Figure 21

Darker shading was then added to the shadow areas of her clothing, hat, and the background sections on the right (Figure 22).

To further accentuate Karin's face, a 4B pencil is used for the dark sections of her clothing rather than a 6B or 8B.

Figure 22

After shading some polka dots and the shiny texture of the ribbons on her clothing (Figure 23), the drawing is complete!

Figure 23