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## Art Masterpiece: *Young Hare*, by Albrecht Dürer

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**Keywords:** Texture – real and implied, Renaissance

**Grade(s):** Kinder and 1<sup>st</sup>

**Activity:** Applying texture to animal drawing



### Meet the Artist:

- Albrecht Dürer (pronounced: AHL-brekt DOO-ruhr) was born in Nuremberg, Germany on May 21, 1471.
- He was 1 of 18 children born to the goldsmith Albrecht Durer the Elder, a very fine craftsman and scholar.
- His father carefully trained him in the craft of making jewelry, but Albrecht decided at an early age to pursue a career as a painter.
- His earliest known oil painting, completed in 1490, was a portrait of his father.
- When he was only 13 years old, he drew a self-portrait in which his genius and skill for detail are already evident.



- After traveling to Italy to study, in 1494, Albrecht's work became greatly influenced by the growth of the Renaissance spirit. (The word renaissance comes from the French word, which means rebirth.)
- His love for knowledge was as intense as his love for painting. A lifelong student, Dürer was well educated in Math, Geometry, Latin and Literature.
- He died in 1528.

### **About the Artwork:**

The rabbit in *Young Hare* is rendered with almost photographic accuracy and was particularly challenging because the hare's fur lay in different directions and the animal was mottled with lighter and darker patches all over. Despite the technical challenges presented in rendering the appearance of light with a multi-colored, multi-textured subject, Dürer not only managed to create a detailed, almost scientific, study of the animal but also infuses the picture with a warm golden light that hits the hare from the left, highlighting the ears and the run of hair along the body, giving a spark of life to the eye, and casting a strange shadow to the right.

### **Possible Questions:**

1. What colors has the artist used in this painting?
2. If you could touch the hare, how would it feel? Why do you think so?

Explain that Dürer was able to imply texture by the careful way he painted his hare. This is called implied texture since, if you were to touch the actual painting, the rabbit wouldn't feel soft and furry. It would feel like paint on canvas. Most two-dimensional artwork, like paintings and drawings, have

implied texture. (Real texture would mean that the animal actually would feel soft and furry.)

3. Does this picture show the hare in its environment? (No, the artist has not painted anything but the hare)
4. Why do you think he painted this picture with a plain background? (Define background if necessary)
5. How has the artist made this hare look real? (By using many short lines to create its fur; by including many details; by showing the hare sitting close to us)
6. Where might you see a hare like this?
7. What else do you notice in the painting besides the hare? (Numbers and "AD" - the artist's initials)
8. What do you think 1502 means? (The year the work was painted)
9. How has the artist signed his painting? How is this different from the way other artists sign their paintings?

**Activity:** Applying texture to animal drawing

**Materials Needed:**

- White construction paper, 9" X 12", - OR – white cardstock paper, with animal drawing pre-printed on it\*, one per student
- Elmer's glue or Tacky glue, one per student
- Cotton balls, one bag per classroom
- Toothpicks, one box per classroom
- Bag of yellow feathers\*, one per classroom\*
- Watercolors\*, markers, or crayons (optional), one set per student.

\*Animal drawings are at the end of this lesson. Construction paper/cardstock paper can be loaded into the Rizzo copy machines and the animals can be copied onto the paper. *Ask the front office staff or admin assistant for help with this.*

\*Feathers can be purchased online at [www.enasco.com](http://www.enasco.com) or [www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com).

Local stores and other online retailers may carry yellow feathers as well.

\*If you use watercolors, don't forget brushes and cups for water, as well as paper towels.

**Process:**

1. Pass out the copied templates of a sheep or a porcupine. Allow the children to pick which one they would like.
2. Have students write their names on their papers.
3. Explain that they are going to add real texture to these drawings by gluing either cotton balls (sheep) or toothpicks (porcupine) or feathers (duck.) Real texture is just that – it is something that can be felt by touch so they will be able to feel the soft fluffy sheep “wool” or the hard, prickly spines of the porcupine.
4. Pass out glue bottles.
5. Have students who want to do the duck all sit at the same table, students who want to do the sheep all sit together, etc. This makes it easier to share the cotton balls, feathers, etc.
6. If students finish early, encourage them to add a landscape background. (Remind them that Durer didn’t do this with his hare so it’s okay if they don’t have time.) They can paint or color the background.



Examples:



**Parent Note:**

Albrecht Dürer (1471 – 1528) was a German painter, printmaker, mathematician, and theorist from Nuremberg. His high-quality woodcuts established his reputation and influence across Europe when he was still in his twenties, and he has been conventionally regarded as the greatest artist of the Northern Renaissance.

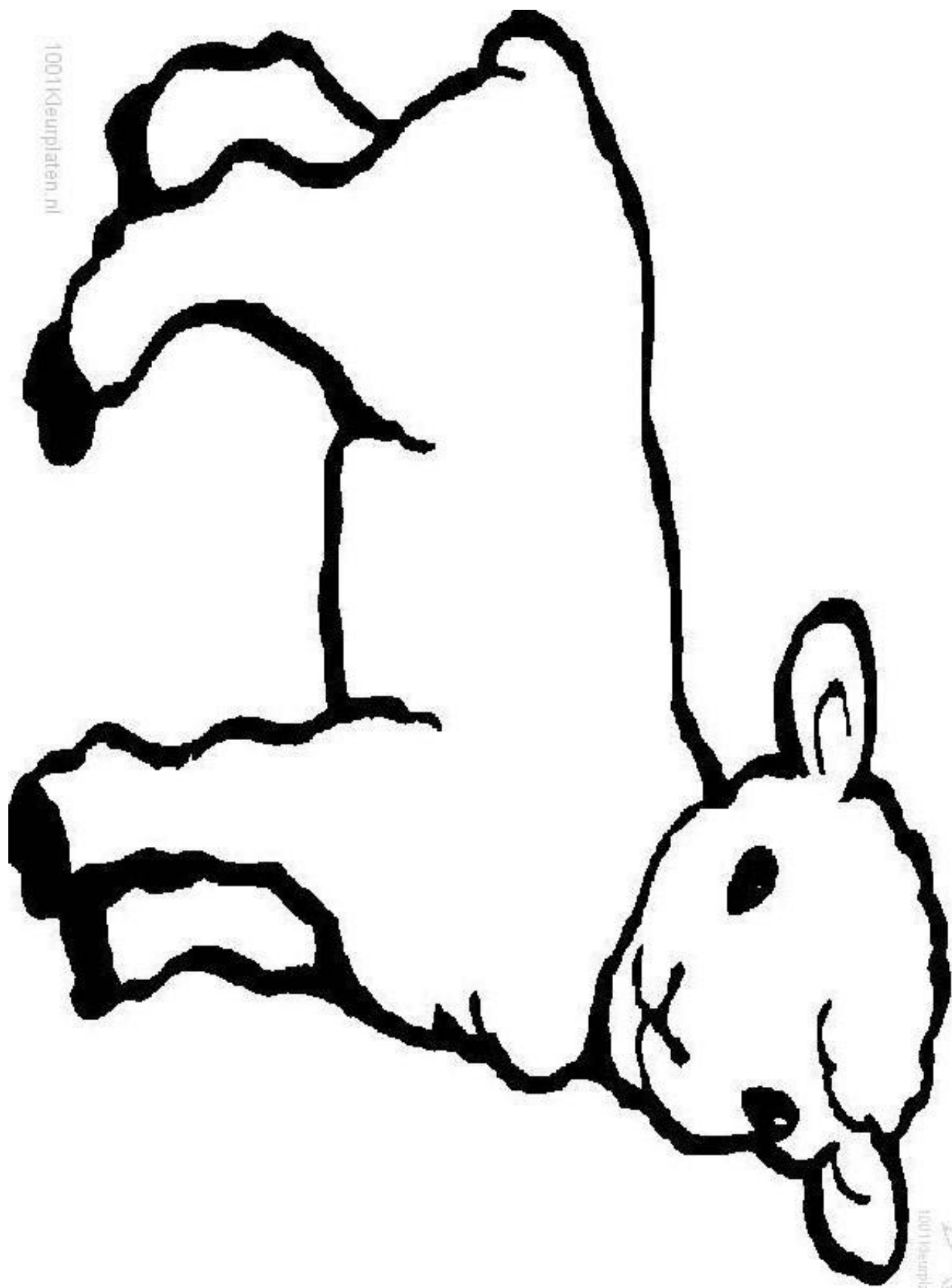
In Art Masterpiece today, your child learned about real and implied texture by adding texture to an animal drawing of their choice.



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