



## Still Life with Fruit by Severin Roesen

Severin Roesen was a prominent American painter known for depicting still lifes that have elaborate arrangements of fruits and flowers. Still lifes have a rich history in art, featuring all kinds of objects such as fruit, flowers, bowls, baskets, and glassware. This painting, *Still Life with Fruit* (circa 1860), portrays a grand arrangement of various fruits, a bird's nest, and a finely painted glass of water, and conveys a sense of wealth and abundance. Follow along in this lesson as we show you how to create your own still lifes.

For Ages 2–6:  
Let's Play!

### Step 1:

Let's play a game called Guess That Fruit! Ask your grown-up if you have any fruits (or vegetables) in your home such as bananas, oranges, apples—you name it! If you do, ask your grown-up to help you arrange your fruits: you can place your fruits in a row, a circle, or any way you like.

### Step 2:

Sitting in front of the table, close your eyes or ask your grown-up to place a blindfold over your eyes. No peeking under your mask!

### Step 3:

Feel around the table for the fruits, pick one up, and describe to your adult what this fruit feels like. Is it bumpy, smooth, round?



For Ages 2–6:  
Let's Play! (cont.)

**Step 4:**

Then, guess the name of the fruit! If you're correct, you get a point. Ask your grown-up to keep track of the points, or just enjoy the process without tracking points!

**Step 5:**

After you've finished your turn, let someone else have a turn. This game can be played with your friends and your family. Have fun!



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Let's Play:  
Bonus!

Create your own mystery box! Decorate a cardboard box any way you wish. Have your grown-up cut a hole in it so you can play this game again but with the contents of the box hidden!

## For Ages 7+: Let's Create

### Step 1:

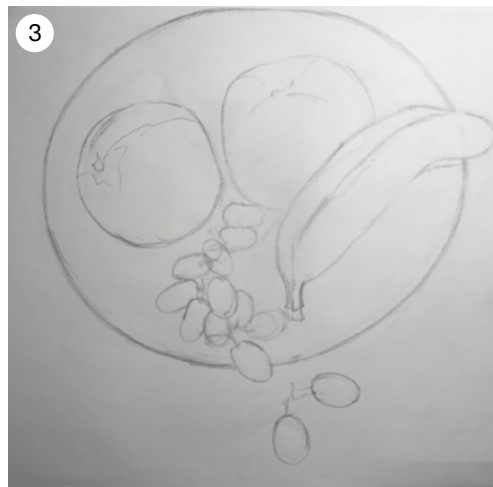
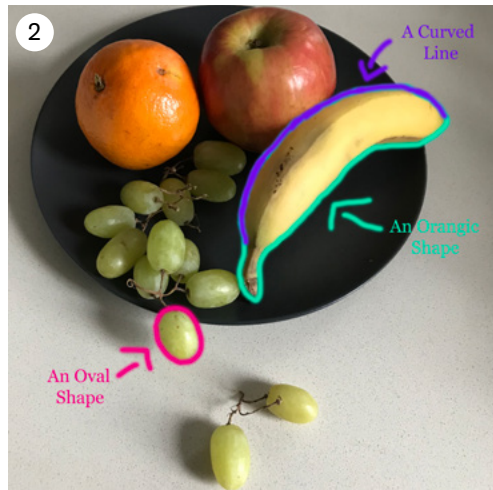
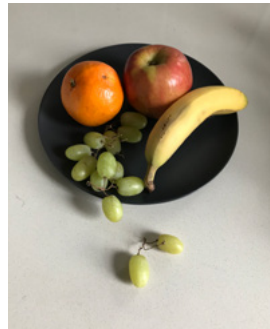
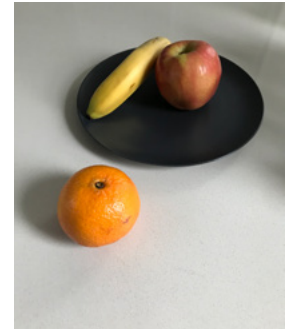
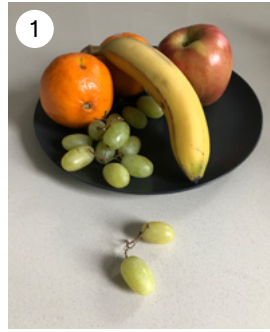
What kinds of fruit do you and your family like to enjoy when you're all together? After you've selected your fruits, arrange them. Explore different ways of placing your fruits.

### Step 2:

Now that you've arranged your still life, begin to observe the types of shapes they create. What kind of shapes do you notice? Do you see circles or ovals? You might also notice that some of the shapes you see don't resemble any shapes you know. These shapes are called organic shapes, which are free-form and often curvy.

### Step 3:

Now take a sheet of paper and a pencil and begin carefully drawing the shapes you see. Let your eye wander across the lines of these shapes. Some of the lines that create the shape of your fruits might be round or bumpy.



For Ages 7+:  
Let's Create (cont.)

**Step 4:**

Using some crayons, color in your drawing. As you look at your still life, you'll notice some darker areas and lighter areas because there's a light source. Using a crayon, lightly shade the lighter areas of your still life, and for the darker areas, apply more pressure to your crayon to create a darker shade.

**Step 5:**

What kind of shapes did you notice in your drawing? Were they organic? Did the light hit the right side or the left side of your still life? We can't wait to see what you made!



From top: Severin Roesen (American, born Germany, circa 1815–after 1872). *Still Life with Fruit*, circa 1860. Oil on canvas. Brooklyn Museum; Dick S. Ramsay Fund, 67.9. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum); For ages 2–6: (Photos: Family of Lawson, Brooklyn Museum); For ages 7+: (Photos: Amberrose Venus-Gordon, Brooklyn Museum)