

Degas

Pastel Portraits

Discover edgar degas's pastel drawings and paintings of dancers. Pose for each other and create pastel portraits of your friends and family.

Edgar Degas was born on July 19, 1834, in Paris, France.

Wherever Degas went he sketched the people he saw.

Degas liked to draw figures in motion . Where did he sketch the people in this work?

In a few quick lines Degas tried to catch on paper the motion that interested him. Later, in his studio, he would take the time to develop his sketches with more color and detail.



The image is based on a pastel drawing called *The Star* by the French artist Edgar Degas. The original, made 109 years ago, is in the collection of The Art Institute of Chicago

Which dancer is the main subject of this work?

Look closely at the drawing to find thin outlines that help to make her body stand out from the background. What part of the figure are not outlined?

You will need

Materials:

drawing paper

pastels

(Please take only one box for each table.)

cotton-tipped swabs

paper towels

(Please choose only one sheet of colored drawing paper. If you decide to do more drawings, use newsprint paper.)



Before you begin, take one sheet of newsprint to experiment with.

Begin your drawing with light, thin lines. *Pastel will not erase.* If you draw lightly, it will be easier for you to change your drawing as you work

Try to draw a thin line by using the pointed edge of the pastel.

Try to draw a thick line by using the side of the pastel.

Try to draw a thin layer of one color and cover it with a thin layer of another color. Blend the two colors with your finger or a paper towel to create a new color.

Experiment with a cotton-tipped swab to help you blend and soften a line of pastel.

Take turns posing for each other. Ask your model to hold a pose for a few short minutes. Try to draw the outlines of the pose quickly. You can add more colors and details later.