How to Draw
Curly Hair

Cindy Wider
Author of: *Draw and Paint in Your Pyjamas!*

P16 INTERMEDIATE: PEOPLE

Medium: Charcoal and white conté

In this lesson you will be taught how to draw curly hair and the step-by-step process presented can be altered to suit any hair style. Before you begin this lesson, you need to study J08-How to draw with charcoal where you will learn four popular techniques for drawing with charcoal. You might also consider enrolling into unit four portraiture in your pyjamas where you will learn another two hairstyles; long hair and short male hair as well as 8 charcoal techniques among many other wonderful things.

This lesson is divided into the following eleven sections:

➢ Art materials list

➢ General information on drawing hair

➢ Step one: create a template for the head shape

➢ Step two: draw your head and neck

➢ Step three: begin to draw the curly hair

➢ Step four: begin shading the dark tones

➢ Step five: blend the dark tones and add some curly hairs

➢ Step six: erase some areas for the highlights

➢ Step seven: erase some fine hairs

➢ Step eight: add some individual clumps of dark hairs

➢ Step nine: add some fine highlighted hairs for the finishing touch

This project is recommended for artists age 14 and up, as well as students of home schooling, academic, and recreational fine-art educators.

11 PAGES – 13 ILLUSTRATIONS

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TIP! If you need help with how to use charcoal, please complete lesson J08-How to draw with charcoal by Cindy Wider before beginning this lesson.

ART MATERIALS LIST

In addition to a computer with internet connection, printer, digital camera and scanner, you need the following art supplies:

- HB Charcoal Pencil (for fine lines)
- White charcoal pencil
- Several Willow charcoal sticks preferably 6mm and 9mm in diameter
- Automatic or click eraser or normal plastic eraser and craft knife to cut into a thin slither or chisel shape
- Putty Eraser (or kneaded eraser)
- Ruler
- Piece of thin cardboard 10cm x 20cm (for drawing a template of a head shape.) The cover of a cereal box will do
- Pencil Sharpener to sharpen the charcoal pencils (optional extra; you could consider buying a special charcoal or pastel pencil sharpener.)
- Medium to coarse sandpaper 80 grit (to prepare your willow charcoal)
- Special Paper for drawing on; Canson Mi-Teintes Drawing Paper – light grey; suggest Flannel Gray (colour 122)
- Soft, clean water colour brush (I recommend the 3/4" size) or a new and clean make-up brush for gently removing eraser particles
- Can of fixative is optional to spray your charcoal drawing afterwards
- Non-greasy baking paper to place under your hand while you work and protect the image from smudging. This is optional but recommended.
- Glassine sheets (special paper purchased from an art supply store which prevent your work from smudging.) This is optional.

GENERAL INFORMATION ON DRAWING HAIR

One of the most important things to consider when drawing realistic hair is to concentrate on depicting the overall structure. Imagine the hair as a solid object and look with your eyes squinted to help you see the outline of the overall mass and then the major light and dark masses within that outline. Seek out which direction the light source is coming from and constantly be aware of that throughout the entire drawing.

If you concentrate on drawing the overall shape of the major masses of light and dark it will help your drawings of hair appear more realistic rather than attempting to draw individual hairs. It is the contrast of the occasional strands of hair drawn against the broader areas of light and shadow that create the overall impression of realistic hair.

STEP ONE: CREATE A TEMPLATE FOR THE HEAD SHAPE

Before you begin drawing the curly hair, you will need to draw a basic egg shape for the head. An easy way to draw the egg shape is to make a cardboard template.

In this first step you are shown how to accurately draw an egg-shape for the face using a template as a guide (see Fig. 1.) You can use this same template over and over again. A green-coloured piece of cardboard was used here to create the template. You can use the cardboard from a cereal box or even a sheet of paper is fine. You only need to draw a half of the head then use this to flip over and copy the other half exactly.

1. **Use your ruler with a HB charcoal pencil to draw a vertical line down your page measuring 17cm long and make a small dash at the half-way mark.**

2. **Rule a horizontal line out from the half-way mark (making sure it is at a right angle to the vertical line) measuring 6cm long.**

3. **Sketch in the half egg-shape similar to the one you see here (see Fig. 1.) Note that this shape shown in Fig. 1 is not drawn to size.**

4. **Cut the half egg-shape out.**

1. Draw a vertical line measuring 17cm long. Make a mark at half-way.

2. Draw a horizontal line at the halfway mark measuring 6cm wide – at a right angle to the vertical line.
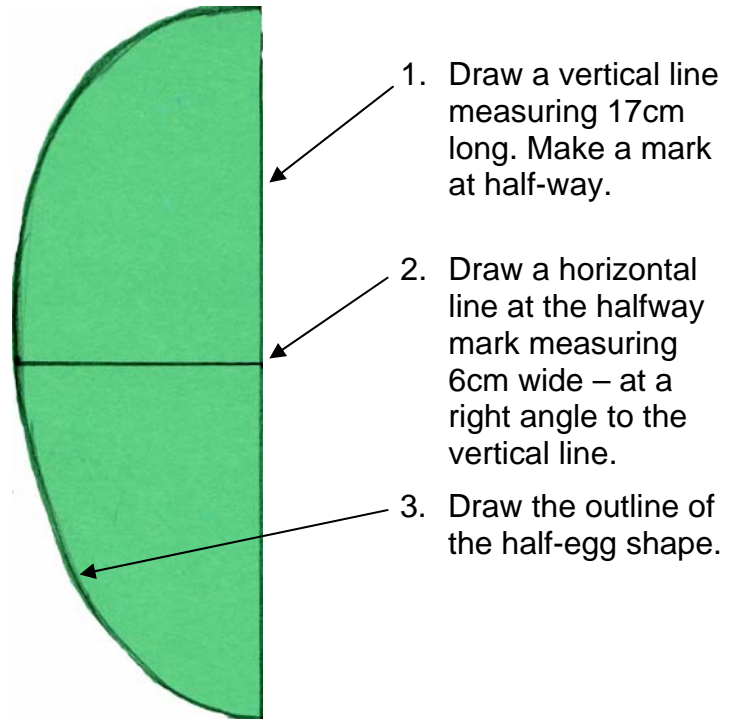
3. Draw the outline of the half-egg shape.

Fig. 1. Example of a template for half of the head

STEP TWO: DRAW YOUR HEAD AND NECK

Before you begin to draw your head (using your half egg-shape template) and the neck shape, make sure you are using the *smooth* side of your Mi-Teintes paper to draw on.

Allow plenty of room to draw some of the hair around the outside of the head shape as well.

1. **Use your cardboard template to draw half of the head shape. Draw around the template with your *willow charcoal stick* prepared carefully for drawing fine lines as described in lesson J08- How to draw with charcoal. Trace one half first (no need to draw the centre vertical line onto your paper) then flip it over to draw the other half.**

2. **Draw in some curved lines to indicate the neck. Approximate the length and width of the neck (see Fig. 2 for an idea of the neck shape.)**

TIP! When you are drawing around the template on your Mi Teintes paper, resist the temptation to draw all of your early markings with your charcoal pencil as it is difficult to erase. Use your willow charcoal as it is much easier to erase than your charcoal pencil.

STEP THREE: BEGIN TO DRAW THE CURLY HAIR

The curly hairstyle will be drawn onto the basic head template image that you have just drawn in the previous step. Continue to use your thin willow charcoal stick prepared with a long chisel point tip for this step.
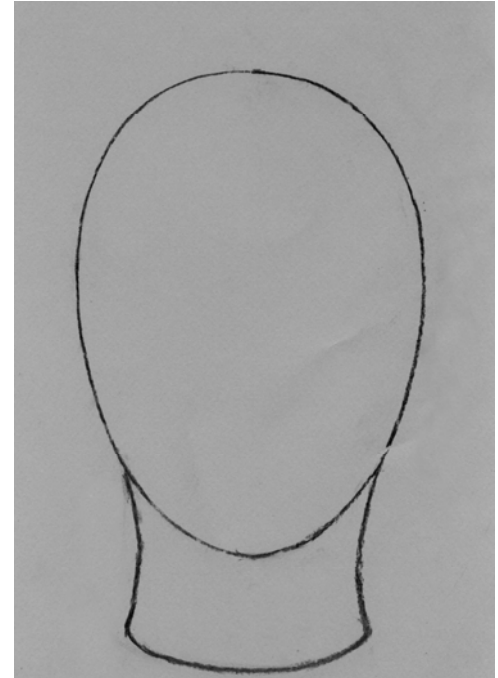
Fig. 2

Fig. 3a

Use the photograph as your main reference source (see Fig. 3a) and the final drawing (see Fig. 3b) along with the other drawings as a guide for the step-by-step process.

Refer to these drawings as often as needed. Make sure that you draw on the smooth side of a sheet of grey Mi-Teintes paper.

Fig. 3b

In this step, we will begin drawing the basic outline of the hair which ends just before the final tips of the hair end. The fine wispy tips of the curls will be extended out beyond this basic guide later. Some of the hair will be drawn on the inside of the head shape and some will be drawn on the outside of it (see Fig. 5 and Fig. 6.)

1. **Mark in where the eye-line would be (half-way down the head.)**

2. **Approximate how far up from this centre mark the bottom of the fringe area ends and sketch in a line (see Fig. 4.)**

3. **Use your artist's eye to sketch in the placement of the major hair mass, using simple angles. Approximate by using the drawing as a guide (see Fig. 4) and squint as you look at the darkest mass in the photograph as a reference (see Fig. 3a.)**

4. **This part is very important and should be drawn as accurately as possible. The hairline plays a predominant role in helping to determine the likeness of a person. Do your best to maintain this angular shape throughout the entire drawing. Only soften the edges a little later when you add the curls.**
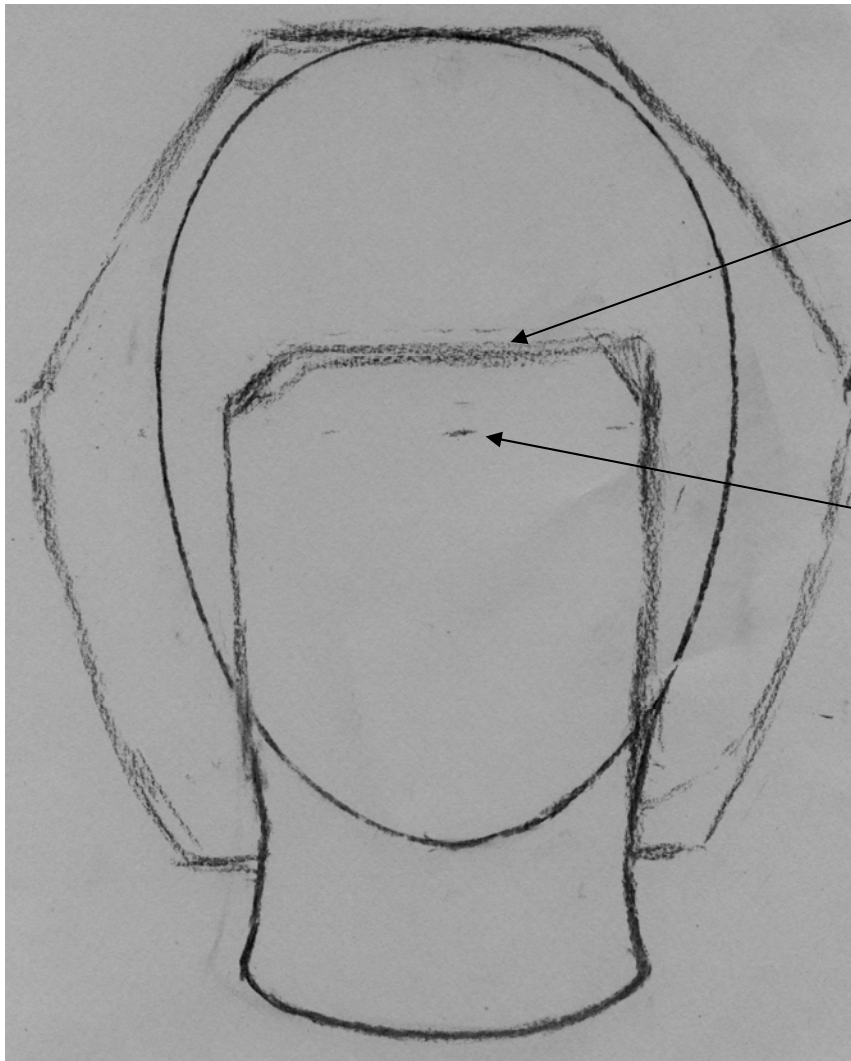
This line indicates the bottom of the fringe area (edge of the hair tips that fall across the forehead.)

This mark indicates the Eye level line ie: half-way down the full length of the head.

Fig. 4

STEP FOUR: BEGIN SHADING THE DARK TONES

Before you begin this initial step of the shading process, squint while looking at the photograph to see the darkest masses within the outline of the hair (see Fig. 3a.) Notice the overall mass is larger on the right side (looking at the image) as the light source is coming from the left and lighting up the left side more.

1. **Shade the dark shapes within the outlines that you have just drawn using a piece of a medium willow charcoal stick prepared with a chisel point. Use the large chisel shape mostly and occasionally the tip. Work in circular, scribbling motions. Press harder in areas that you see are darker and softer in others. Use your whole shoulder and elbow in the process, work confidently and expressively. Leave plenty of the page un-touched for later use (see Fig. 5.)**
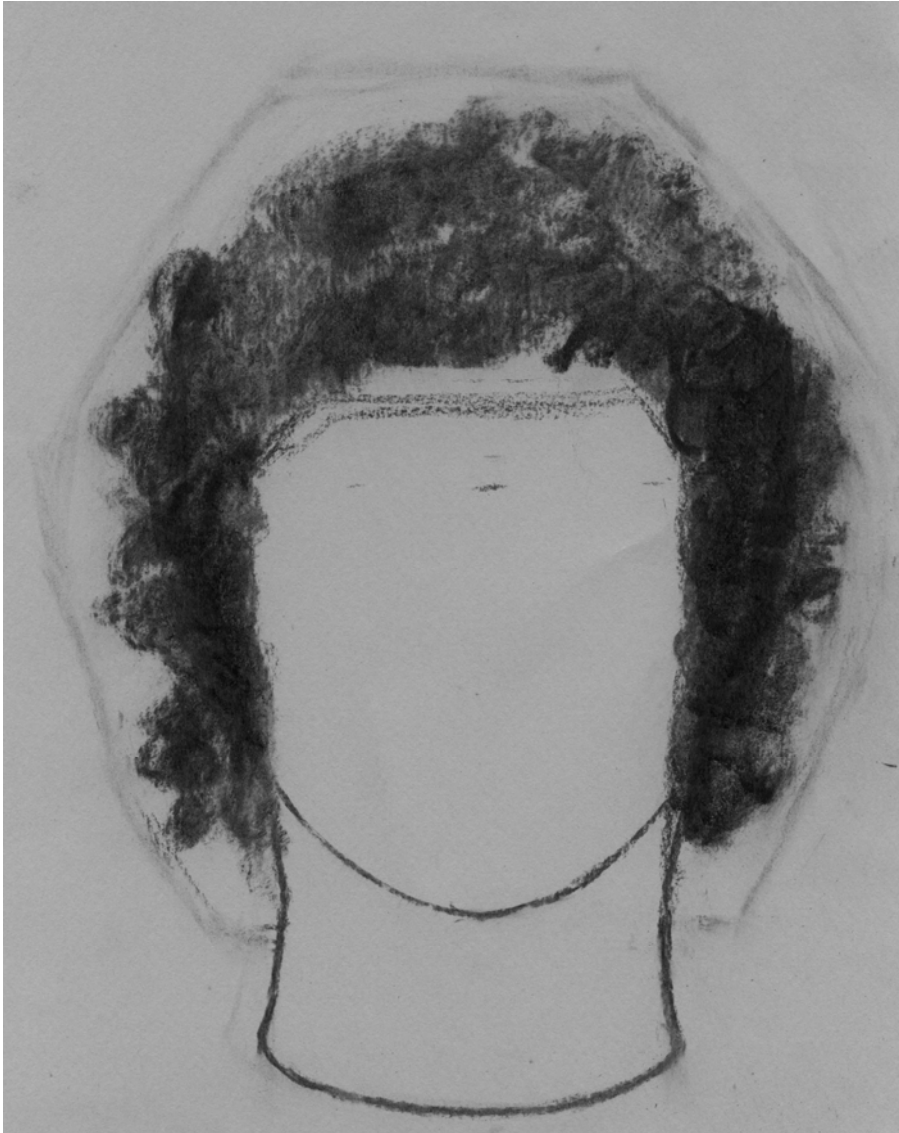
Fig. 5

STEP FIVE: BLEND THE DARK TONES AND ADD SOME CURLY HAIRS

In this step you will first of all blend the dark tones with your paper stump then place some squiggly and curly lines on top of those areas using your thin willow charcoal stick and your HB charcoal pencil.

1. **Using your paper stump and a circular motion do your best to retain the overall darker mass of the hair. At this stage you are still continuing to refine the general 'masses' of tone rather than drawing the individual hairs.**

Fig. 6a
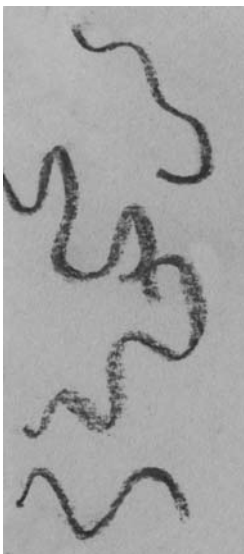
2. **There are some specific wavy, curly-shaped lines that you will need to use for this type of curly hair as well as some generally large loose squiggly curves. See the individual curls in the photograph (Fig. 3a) as well as the insert here (see Figs. 6a and 6b) then practice these on spare paper first using the tip of your thin willow charcoal stick prepared with a chisel point. It will wear down quickly needing continual preparation.**

3. **Once you have blended in the first layer of charcoal, scribble on many squiggly, wavy and curly-shaped curves over the top of the blended mass. Place on one layer using the point of your willow charcoal stick first, then your HB pencil after that (see Figs. 6a and 6b)** *Leave gaps* **in the squiggly strokes to retain the texture.**
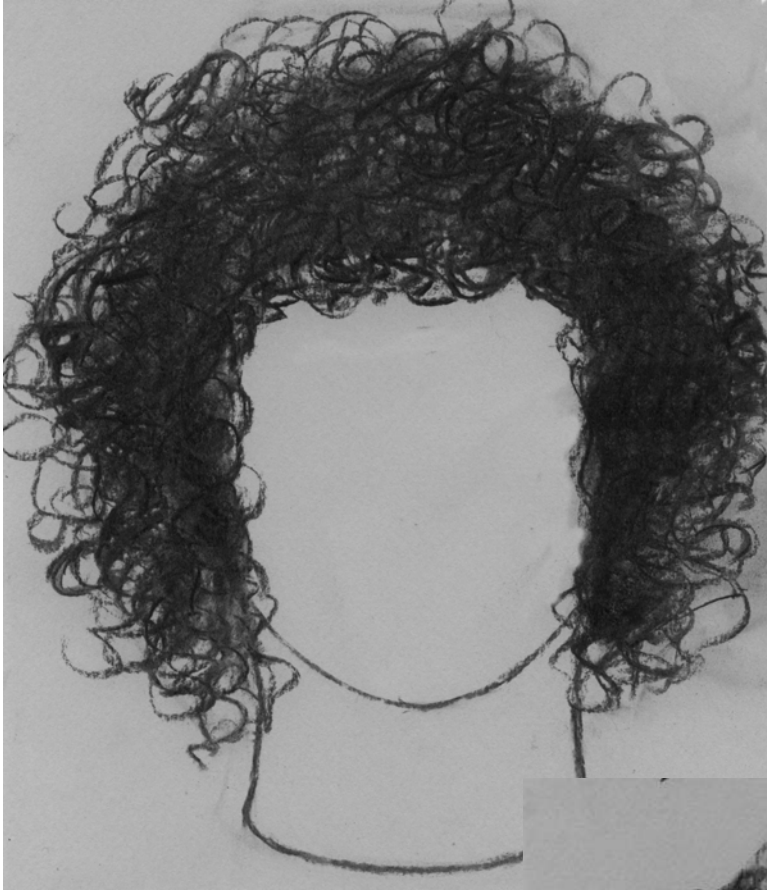
Fig. 6b

STEP SIX: ERASE SOME AREAS FOR THE HIGHLIGHTS

Use the side edge of your gum eraser and occasionally your putty eraser to remove general areas of the charcoal ready to create some highlights. Please do not remove all the charcoal from these areas, you are removing the loose charcoal and revealing parts of the page. Make sure that there are still some curly hairs just visible underneath.

Fig. 7

Stroke and pull your gum eraser to create the general shapes, curls and waves of the major highlight sections that you see in the photograph (see Fig. 3a.) and the drawing here (see Fig. 7.)

STEP SEVEN: ERASE SOME FINE HAIRS

Use your click eraser with a sharp tip. You need to cut the tip of the click eraser quite often to achieve the thin lines for hair. Continue to refer to the photograph (see Fig. 3a) and the image here (see Fig. 8) to draw in some curly wavy marks with the corner of the tip on your click eraser.
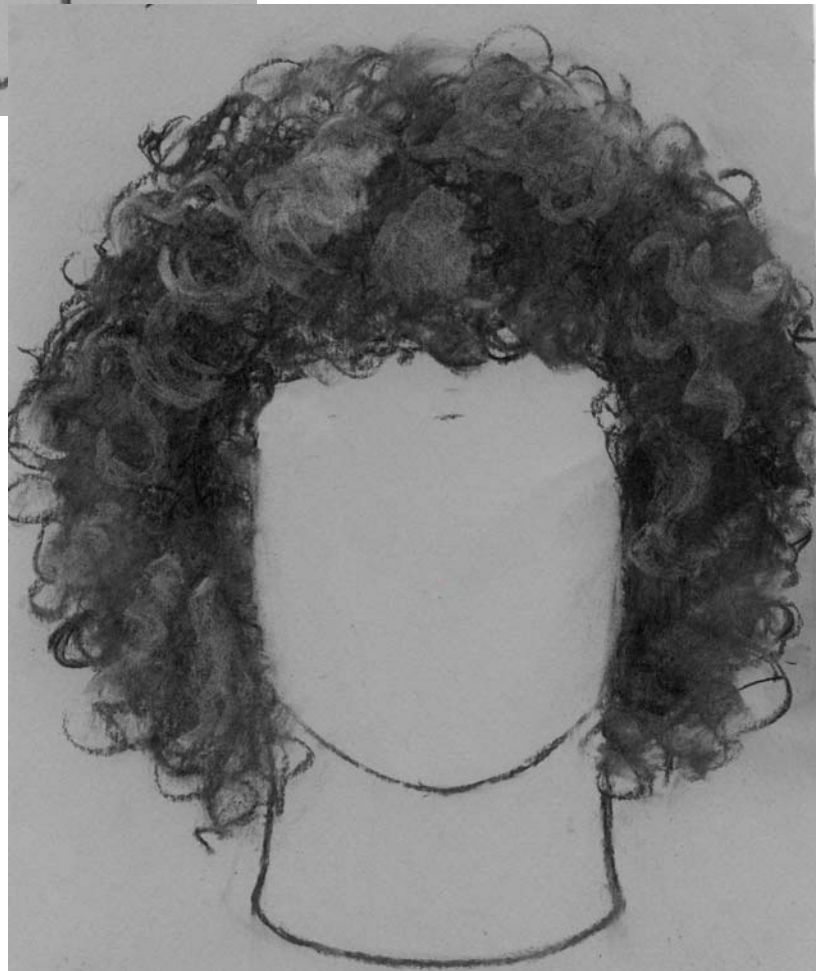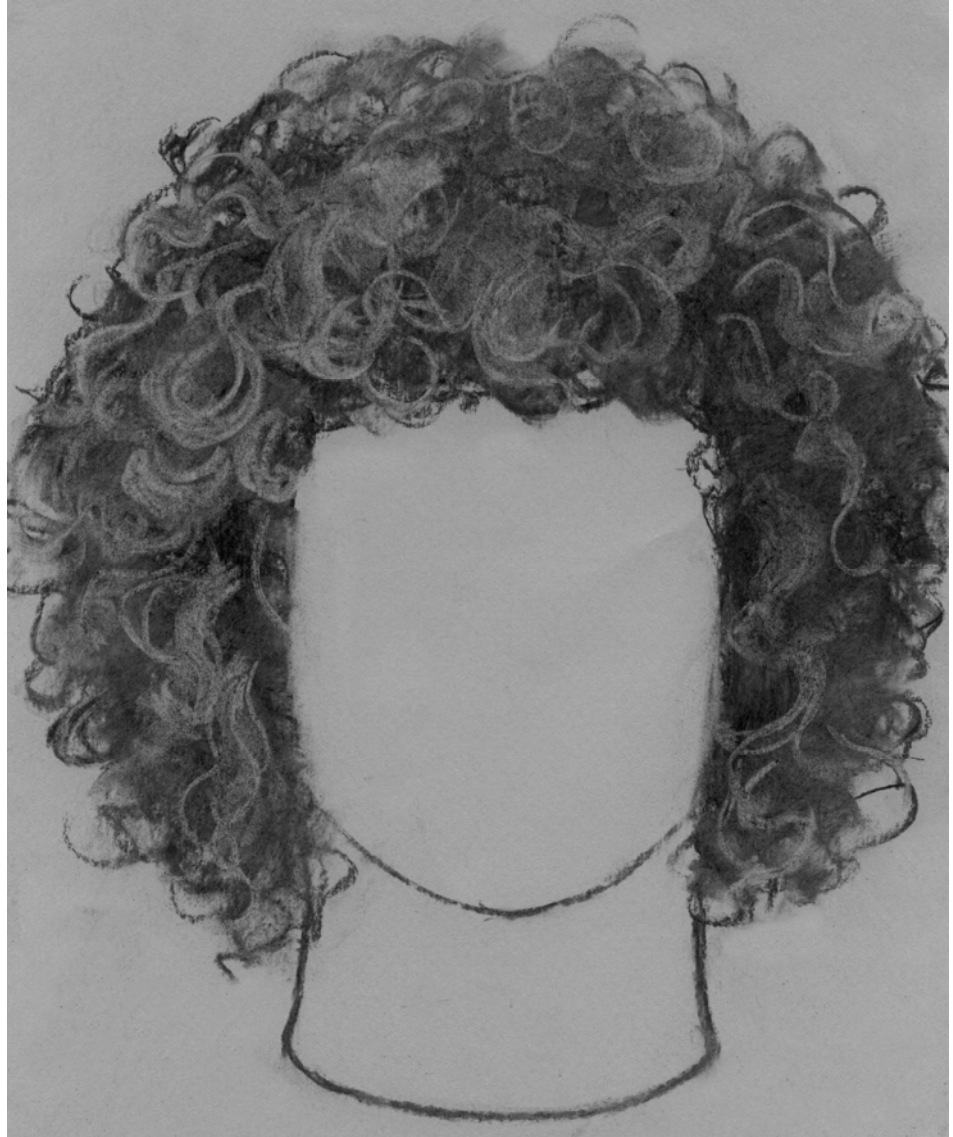
Fig. 8

STEP EIGHT: ADD SOME INDIVIDUAL CLUMPS OF DARK HAIRS

In this step you need to refine the individual clumps of hair by hatching some fine curves into the dark areas using your sharpened HB charcoal pencil. Retain the highlight areas carefully (see Fig. 9a.) Do your best to refine the shapes of the individual clumps by outlining the shape of the curl then add hatching on either ends of each clump and in the areas that fade from the light. Take careful note of the placement of the major clumps (see Fig. 3a and Fig. 9b.) You have to squint to see these and look for a while at the photograph. Concentrate until your creative brain kicks in to help you do this.

Fig. 9a. examples of clumps of curls with hatching

Fig. 9b.

STEP NINE: ADD SOME FINE HIGHLIGHTED HAIRS FOR THE FINISHING TOUCH

1. In this final step you need to further refine the individual clumps of hair by hatching some fine curves and waves using your *white charcoal* pencil.

   Look constantly at the photograph (see Fig. 3a.) and then at the drawing here for ideas (see Fig. 10.)

2. Once you have finalized this step, your curly hair is complete!

Fig. 10

Drawspace.com is proud to introduce

Cindy Wider

Art educator, art curricula designer, award-winning gallery-represented artist, and author of Paint in Your Pyjamas.

Cindy Wider currently resides in Noosa on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland, Australia with her husband Stuart, and daughters Isha and Sumaya.

Art philosophy

I believe that almost everyone has the natural gifts needed for learning to draw and paint, and that art has the ability to heal and help us to reach our full human potential. Art is the missing language that can bridge the gap in communication when words are not enough. It is my life purpose to share my love of art, through inspiring and motivating others to realize their natural gifts for drawing and painting.

My passion for helping others to learn to draw and paint comes from the joy and excitement I experience through the process of creating art and my desire to share that feeling! I stumbled upon my natural gifts for art at the age of 23years and wished I had known about it sooner.

Professional accomplishments

After ten years of serious art study Cindy went on to become one of her community's leading artists with her artworks gracing the walls of many of the major hotels, corporate boardrooms and private homes as well as selling overseas. She began tutoring at the local Technical and Further Education College in 1988 and then went on to establish the largest on-going private art tuition school in Port Lincoln, then several years later in Noosa Queensland.

For many years Cindy worked as a part time freelance illustrator for the internationally renowned rubber stamp company, 'Annaleey crafts.' In 2005, along with her husband Stuart she was commissioned by the Microsoft Corporation to produce an original artwork for their Sydney headquarters, and limited edition prints for the annual corporate gift to their business associates.

You can view Cindy's paintings at: http://www.thecoopergallery.com.au/wider/wider.htm
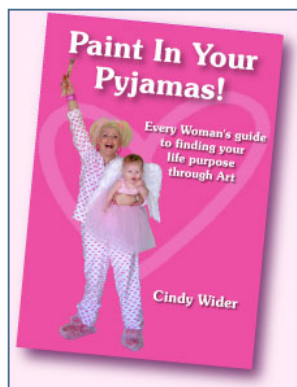
Paint in Your Pyjamas

Have you been asking yourself, "Who am I and what do I really want out of life?" Perhaps you've been selflessly dedicating all your energy to your children or partner to help them fulfill their dreams and goals. Maybe you're working hard just to earn a living.

But now you feel the time has come to do something for yourself. If so, this book is just for you...

You can buy Cindy's book, 'Paint in Your Pyjamas – every Woman's guide to finding your life purpose through art' at:

http://www.drawspace.com/bookshop