

# Lesson Plan: Drawing a Manga-Style Head



**GRADE LEVEL: 3-4, 5-8**

### OBJECTIVES

- Learn about realistic body proportions
- Apply fundamentals of body proportions to drawing manga style

### MATERIALS

- Pencil (recommended 0.7mm fixed sleeve mechanical pencil)
- Eraser
- Standard White letter-size “copy” paper

### Background

Manga style drawing has its origins in traditional drawing. A solid foundation of human proportions is needed before the more stylized look of manga is applied. Facial features and body gestures in manga are lifted from real life observations and then exaggerated to suit the manga story. The basis on reality and traditional drawing methods make the manga style more convincing.

Students can learn how a more realistic, traditional drawn face and a manga style face are connected. The cartoony look of manga shares its basic face set up with traditional face construction. The difference lies in choice of style and exaggeration.

### Face construction – traditional and manga style

The basic human head set up is the same for traditional and manga drawing. The eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth and ears line up the same way. Hair occupies the top third of the face. The notable differences are the sizes of the actual facial features.

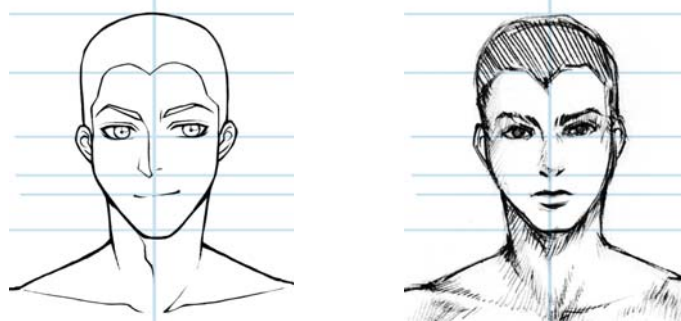
Manga eyes tend to be much larger and more expressive. Noses are much smaller and indicated with a simple line. Mouths are smaller, except when stretched to convey strong feelings. Often, mouths are drawn without lips. In the profile view, the nose and mouth are pulled out further from the face.

The eyes are two to three times the size of realistic eyes. The nose may be placed lower on the face to accommodate the eyes. The mouth is still midway between the nose and chin.

### Face Drawing Exercise

Compare a realistic portrait to a manga one. Have students set up two blank front views of a head. First, cover a traditional drawing technique, drawing the correctly proportioned facial features from life. On the second head, have the students draw a more manga style. Emphasize the how the basic guidelines for faces are the same.

Figure 1: Comparison of proportions between male manga-style head (left) and realistic male human head (right).



## Lesson Plan: Drawing a Manga-Style Head

Figure 2: Comparison of proportions between female manga-style head (left) and realistic female human head (right).



### Head Structure Set-Up

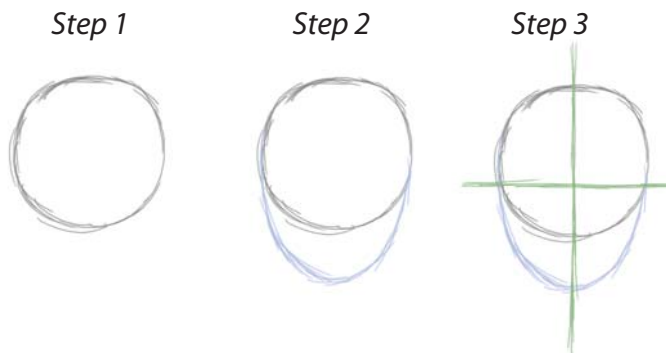
For the head structure set-up, please refer to Figure 3 below.

**Step 1:** Use a loose circle for the head.

**Step 2:** Draw lines from the sides for the chin, like egg-shape for the head.

**Step 3:** Draw one guideline down the middle, horizontally and vertically.

Figure 3: Head Structure Set-Up



### Head Details

For the head details, please refer to Figures 1 and 2.

**Step 4:** The eyes will rest on the horizontal line. The human head is generally five eyes wide. For manga, the eyes are larger, so it will be less than that. The eye brows are one eye above the eyes. For manga, the eye brows are about  $\frac{1}{2}$  the eye size up.

**Step 5:** The hair line starts at the top third of the head.

**Step 6:** The nose will line up on the vertical line and will be located about  $\frac{2}{3}$  down on the realistic face.

**Step 7:** The mouth is in the middle between the nose and the chin. For manga, the nose and

mouth are closer together and lower on the face to accommodate the larger eyes.

**Step 8:** The corners of the mouth line up with the center of the eyes. In manga, the mouth is smaller and is usually between the eyes in size.

**Step 9:** For the realistic head, the ears line up under the eye brows and the bottom of the nose. Manga ears tend to line up the top of eyes and before the bottom of the nose.

This is the basic structure for arranging facial features for portraits. Variations in real life and manga exist, so use the head structure set up as a starting point. Using the horizontal and vertical guide lines keeps the facial features lined up, no matter which view drawn. These help to keep the character drawing consistent.

### Vocabulary Words

**Manga ("mon-gah")** - A cartooning style originating from Japan that typically uses simplified facial features.

**Proportion** - Proper spatial placement and relation.

#### NATIONAL STANDARDS

<http://www.education-world.com/standards>

Grade Level 3-4: NA-VA.K-4.2

Using Knowledge of Structures and Functions

Grade level 5-8: NA - VA. 5-8.2

Using Knowledge of Structures and Functions

Lesson Plan and artwork developed by Manga Start  
<http://www.mangastart.com>

Sponsored by Sakura of America  
<http://www.sakuraofamerica.com>