Call and Response

Four beginnings, four answers

Based on: The ABCs of Form 01 – The Line · 03 – Fill and Tone

In front of a blank sheet, the question comes quickly: What should I start with? You don't need to know yet where your picture will lead. But every beginning calls something into the picture – and the picture answers. A dark area might invite something quite different from a single dot.

In this exercise you try out four very different beginnings and answer each of them only once. On every sheet you do the same:

MARK – PAUSE – ANSWER

You can answer, for example, with:

lines · blots · small shapes · areas · light or dark · …

You will need: four sheets of A4 paper and a pencil, chalk or charcoal.

Time: up to 15 minutes.

1 **Begin with an area.**

On the first sheet, fill a quarter of the sheet along the left edge densely and darkly. Then pause.

How would you like to answer it?

Make a single answer – and stop.

2 **Begin with lines.**

On the second sheet, draw three wavy lines from left to right that don't touch. Then pause.

How would you like to answer them?

Make a single answer – and stop.

3 **Begin with a dot.**

On the third sheet, put a single dot anywhere you like. Then pause.

How would you like to answer it?

Make a single answer – and stop.

4 **Begin with a division.**

On the fourth sheet, draw a strong line right across the sheet, from edge to edge. Then pause.

How would you like to answer it?

Make a single answer – and stop.

© 2026 ekke-scholz.de

5 **Compare your beginnings.**

Lay the four sheets side by side – not on top of each other to leaf through. That way you can compare them better.

- *Which beginning invited an answer straight away – and with which did you have to search?*
- *Which left you many possibilities, which already fixed a lot?*
- *How different have your four answers turned out?*

> **If you get stuck …** Take the beginning that came most easily and add a second mark. How does the sheet answer? More questions that help: Picture Conversation 12.

Why this exercise

A beginning doesn't have to be an idea for a picture. But it is the first event on the sheet – and every event waits for an answer. A dark area at the edge leaves a different situation from a single dot, three wavy lines a different one from a line that divides the sheet. Every beginning opens up possibilities – and sometimes resistance, too.

You don't need to know where your picture will lead when you begin. All you need is something you can answer.

> *Finally, a question for yourself:*
> ***What kind of beginning do you need to become curious about the next step?***

Your picture conversation

Talking about pictures is something you can learn. Write down your answers in your own words – just for you, no one has to read them. Over time you'll find words for what you see.

Picture Conversations is a series of 13 exercises – you'll find the worksheets at ekke-scholz.de/en/picture-conversations.
New exercises and thoughts from the studio: **ekke-scholz.de/en/newsletter**

© 2026 ekke-scholz.de