



SELF-PORTRAIT PAINTING
Grade Band: 4-5
Content Focus: Visual Arts & ELA



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

Invite art history into your classroom! Derive inspiration from classical portrait paintings such as, Diego Velazquez's "[La Infanta Margarita](#)" and Raphael's "[Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione](#)", as you explore self-portraiture with your students. Students' artwork will culminate in an informational writing piece/artist statement where students describe their artistic process and how they see themselves.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How do I see myself?	I can create a self-portrait that correctly estimates the placement of facial features using informal measurement methods.
How can I use informal measurement methods to create a self-portrait?	I can describe my personality characteristics using adjectives.
How can visual art help me understand myself?	



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	I can write an informational essay/artist statement to explain my artwork.
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GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 4: ELAGSE4W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic clearly and group related information in paragraphs and sections; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. c. Link ideas within categories of information using words and phrases. (e.g., another, for example, also, because). d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.</p> <p>ELAGSE4L1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. d. Order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns (e.g., a small red bag rather than a red small bag).</p> <p>Grade 5: ELAGSE5W2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a. Introduce a topic clearly, provide a general observation and focus, and group related information logically; include formatting (e.g., headings), illustrations, and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. Develop the topic with facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic. c. Link ideas within and across categories of information using words, phrases, and clauses (e.g., in contrast, especially). d. Use precise language</p>	<p>Grade 4: VA4.CR.1 Engage in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas by using subject matter and symbols to communicate meaning. VA4.CR.2 Create works of art based on selected themes. VA4.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art. VA4.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.</p> <p>Grade 5: VA5.CR.1 Engage in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas by using subject matter and symbols to communicate meaning. VA5.CR.2 Create works of art based on selected themes. VA5.CR.3 Understand and apply media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art. VA5.CN.2 Integrate information from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of works of art.</p>



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and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. Provide a concluding statement or section related to the information or explanation presented.

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 4: ELA.4.C.2.1 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and provide information. When writing: a. introduce a topic clearly; b. develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, and/or quotes related to the topic; c. group related information into paragraphs and/or sections using transitional words and phrases to link ideas; d. use precise language and vocabulary to inform or explain about the topic; e. use and explain information from a provided source(s); and f. provide a concluding statement or section.</p> <p>ELA.4.C.4.1 Write grammatically correct single and multi-paragraph compositions using a variety of sentence types and phrasing. When writing: e. order adjectives within sentences according to conventional patterns</p> <p>Grade 5: ELA.5.C.2.1 Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. When writing: a. introduce a topic and develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, and/or quotes related to the topic; b. group related information into paragraphs and/or sections using transitional words and phrases to link ideas and develop structure; c. use precise language and vocabulary to explain the topic; d. use and explain information from a provided source(s); and e. provide a concluding statement or section.</p>	<p>Anchor Standard 1: I can use the elements and principles of art to create artwork.</p> <p>Anchor Standard 2: I can use different materials, techniques, and processes to make art.</p> <p>Anchor Standard 7: I can relate visual arts ideas to other arts disciplines, content areas, and careers.</p>

KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Adjectives</u> - Words that describe, modify, or provide more information about nouns or pronouns ● <u>Informative writing</u> - Writing with the intent to inform the reader about a topic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Portrait</u> - A visual depiction of a person—often posed ● <u>Self-portrait</u> - A portrait of oneself done by oneself ● <u>Shape</u> - The outline of a specific form or figure ● <u>Size</u> - The spatial dimensions, proportions, magnitude, or bulk of anything ● <u>Proportion</u> - The size of one object compared to another |
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MATERIALS

- Pencils and erasers
- Watercolors
- Paint brushes and water cups
- Crayons, oil pastels, or permanent black markers
- 9x12 sheets of mixed media paper
- *Optional technology extension: Charged iPad with Kisdoodle or drawing app downloaded*

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Opening/Activating Strategy

- Project a portrait by one of the [Renaissance masters](#), such as Diego Velazquez's "[La Infanta Margarita](#)" or Raphael's "[Portrait of Baldassare Castiglione](#)".
- Engage students in the Artful Thinking Routine: See, Think, Wonder.
 - First, students will identify what they see in the image. Emphasize that they should make objective observations about the image (i.e. physical features, colors, textures, etc.).
 - Next, ask students to identify what they think about the image. Emphasize that students should be creating inferences using visual evidence from the image.
 - Finally, ask students what they wonder about the image.
- Facilitate a class-wide discussion around students' observations, inferences, and questions.
- Explain to students this artwork is an example of a portrait. Portraits are visual depictions of people—often posed. When an artist makes a portrait of themselves, it is called a self-portrait.
- Explain that before the Renaissance, artists didn't depict people realistically. Renaissance artists used measurement and proportion in painting portraits to make them look realistic.

Work Session



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- Tell students that they will be making their own self-portraits, focusing on the use of proportion and spatial relationships, like the Renaissance masters.
- Pass out pencils and mixed media paper.
- Have students lightly draw a large oval or egg shape onto their paper.
- Tell students that the eyes are located about halfway down the face. Have them draw a light horizontal line about halfway down the oval.
- Next, have students begin drawing the eyes with a circle and two bird-beaks attached to make an eye shape. Then draw in eyebrows with curved lines.
- Have the students use their fingers to measure the width of one eye. This is the distance from the eyes to the bottom of the nose.
- Tell students that the center of the nose is a “U” shape surrounded by two nostrils on either side. You can describe these shapes as a forward and backward “C” shape.
- Next, tell students to draw two very light vertical lines from the center of each eye all the way down to the bottom of their face. These lines represent how wide their mouths should be. Have students draw in their mouths.
- Use your “measuring fingers” once again to demonstrate that the ears are located between the top of the eyebrows and bottom of the nose.
- Have students lightly sketch in their hair, neck and shoulders last.
- Have students go over the lines of their face with permanent black markers, crayons, or oil pastels.
- Tell students to set their portraits aside. They will come back to them later.
- Lead a discussion around what characteristics are. Differentiate between physical characteristics, like hair or eye color, and personality characteristics.
 - Ask students to share examples of personality characteristics. This can be done as a whole group, or have students work in small groups to create lists and share them with the class.
 - Next, ask students what type of words these are. Are they nouns? Verbs? Adjectives? Students should make the connection that characteristics of a person are words to describe them and therefore are adjectives.
 - Next, have students generate a list of adjectives to describe their personality. Remind them that personality characteristics are things that cannot be seen on the outside. Encourage students to generate a list of five to seven adjectives to describe themselves.
 - Project the sentence starter “I am _____.” on the board. Tell students that they should be able to insert their adjective into the sentence starter without adding any additional words. If they have to add “a” or “the”, the part of speech is a noun and not an adjective.
 - Provide time for students to share their adjectives with the class, in small groups, or with a partner. Check to make sure that students’ words are written as adjectives and not nouns before moving on.
- Tell students that they will write their adjectives in the negative space of their self-portrait. The negative space is the “empty space”, or space around the subject of the artwork. Encourage them to write big and fill the space.
 - Students should write their adjectives with the same material (permanent black marker, crayon, or oil pastel) that they used to go over the lines of their self portrait.
- Finally, students will add color and detail to their self portraits using watercolor. The crayon or oil pastel will “resist” the watercolor. If using a permanent black marker, the marker won’t smear when the watercolor is applied.

- Students should finish their masterpieces by writing an informative essay/artist statement. Their essay should define what a self-portrait is and how their self-portraits are influenced by Renaissance artists (using spatial relationships to create realism). Students should then describe the physical traits in self-portraits using adjectives. Finally, students should describe how they see themselves using all of the adjectives describing their personality that they used in the negative space in their self-portraits. Students' writing should meet grade-level standards criteria including an introduction and conclusion.
- Students should engage in the peer review process if time permits.

Optional technology extension: Demonstrate how to use Kisdoodle or another drawing app on iPad. Lead a discussion of the pros and cons of using a drawing app versus hand drawing methods and the differences in proportion. Using the camera on the iPad, take individual portrait photos of each student and print it. Have students compare photos to original sketches and app-generated drawings. How does each differ from the other?

Closing/Reflection

- Have students celebrate their self-portraits by conducting a gallery walk, in which students walk around the room and take a closer look at all the artwork.
- Facilitate a discussion around how we see ourselves and appreciating what each person brings to the class community.

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

Teachers will assess students' understanding of the content throughout the lesson by observing students' participation and contributions to the activator, ability to use informal measurement methods to create their self-portraits, discussion of personality characteristics and adjectives, and conferencing with students during the writing process.

Summative

CHECKLIST

- Students can create a self-portrait that correctly estimates the placement of facial features using informal measurement methods.
- Students can describe their personality characteristics using adjectives.
- Students can write an informational essay/artist statement that defines a self-portrait, explains how Renaissance artists influenced their self-portraits, and uses adjectives to describe both their physical traits and personalities.

DIFFERENTIATION

Acceleration:

- Have students engage in the same art and writing process about a character from a text being studied in class.
- Have students use a ruler to study the spatial relationships in Renaissance portraits by having students place tracing paper over a printed copy of a portrait and tracing the major lines with pencil. Then, students will use a ruler to measure the spatial relationships



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between facial features. For an extra challenge, students can then apply these spatial relationships to create their own self-portraits rather than following the guided lesson.

Remediation:

- As a class, create a word bank of adjectives for students to choose from when describing themselves.
- Provide a printed oval outline on cardstock paper for students rather than having them draw their own.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Renaissance art](#)

**This integrated lesson provides differentiated ideas and activities for educators that are aligned to a sampling of standards. Standards referenced at the time of publishing may differ based on each state's adoption of new standards.*

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