



artsNOW

Integrated learning solutions

SELF PORTRAITS TELL A STORY

Grade Band: 6-8

Content Focus: Visual Arts & ELA



LEARNING DESCRIPTION

In this lesson, students will explore the use of color in conveying mood and emotion. Students will create a self-portrait inspired by the work of Vincent Van Gogh, using color to express their own emotions and experiences. Additionally, students will write a personal narrative based on the experience that inspired their self-portrait, further connecting the visual representation with their own stories.

LEARNING TARGETS

Essential Questions	"I Can" Statements
How do visual artists use color to create mood?	I can create a self-portrait that communicates mood through color.
How can visual art inspire writing?	I can use my self-portrait as inspiration for a personal narrative.
	I can create a mood in writing.



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GEORGIA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Grade 6 ELAGSE6W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well structured event sequences. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events.</p> <p>Grade 7 ELAGSE7W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well structured event sequences. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p> <p>Grade 8 ELAGSE8W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well structured event sequences. d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</p>	<p>Grade 6 VA6.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art. VA6.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art. VA6.CR.4 Incorporate formal and informal components to create works of art. VA6.RE.3 Engage in the process of art criticism to make meaning and increase visual literacy.</p> <p>Grade 7 VA7.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art. VA7.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art. VA7.CR.4 Incorporate formal and informal components to create works of art. VA7.RE.3 Engage in the process of art criticism to make meaning and increase visual literacy.</p> <p>Grade 8 VA8.CR.1 Visualize and generate ideas for creating works of art. VA8.CR.2 Choose from a range of materials and/or methods of traditional and contemporary artistic practices to plan and create works of art. VA8.CR.4 Incorporate formal and informal components to create works of art. VA8.RE.3 Engage in the process of art criticism to make meaning and increase visual literacy.</p>

SOUTH CAROLINA STANDARDS

Curriculum Standards	Arts Standards
<p>Standard 3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, well-chosen details, and well structured event sequences. 3.1 Gather ideas from texts, multimedia, and personal experience to write narratives that:</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>



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<p>a. develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well- structured event sequences;</p> <p>g. use imagery, precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey experiences and events and develop characters</p>	<p>Anchor Standard 5: I can interpret (read) and evaluate the meaning of an artwork.</p> <p>Anchor Standard 7: I can relate visual arts ideas to other arts disciplines, content areas, and careers.</p>
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KEY VOCABULARY

Content Vocabulary	Arts Vocabulary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Personal narrative</u> - A story about one's own individual experiences ● <u>Mood</u> - The feeling that an author wants to convey through his/her writing ● <u>Descriptive details</u> - Details that create vivid and sensory-rich images in the reader's mind ● <u>Imagery</u> - The use of descriptive language that appeals to the senses and creates vivid pictures in the reader's mind ● <u>Sensory language</u> - Descriptive language that engages the five senses: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Self-portrait</u> - An artist's rendering of themselves in a visual form ● <u>Color</u> - One of the seven elements of art; it is how light is seen as reflected or absorbed off of a surface. Visual artists use color to create a mood in their artwork.

MATERIALS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mixed media white paper ● Pencils ● Crayons or oil pastels
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INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

Opening/Activating Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Engage students in the "Step Inside" artful thinking routine using Vincent Van Gogh's Self-portrait as a painter, 1887. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In this routine, students will engage with three questions:



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1. What can the person or thing perceive?
 2. What might the person or thing know about or believe?
 3. What might the person or thing care about?
 - Have students discuss these questions in small groups or with a partner.
 - Facilitate a class discussion around students' responses.
- Share with students that the artist, Vincent Van Gogh, painted many self-portraits. Explain that a self-portrait is an artist's rendering of themselves in visual form.

Work Session

ANALYZING ART

- In small groups, have students read [Tate Museum: Who Is Vincent Van Gogh?](#) to learn about Van Gogh's life.
- Explain that Van Gogh used color to create mood in his artwork.
 - Project a [Color Wheel](#) on the board. In groups, ask students to identify several mood/feeling words that they associate with each color.
- Display one of Van Gogh's self-portraits on the board.
 - Ask students what colors Van Gogh used and how the colors create a mood.
- Give each group a different self-portrait by Van Gogh. Ask students to analyze the colors and mood of the painting as well as how they think Van Gogh viewed himself based on the colors he used.
- Display each of the paintings. Facilitate a class-wide discussion about the similarities and differences in the paintings.
 - Ask students how the colors change from painting to painting and how that change impacts the mood of the artwork.
 - Ask students why they think most of Van Gogh's self-portraits portray his face from an angle instead of straight.
 - Next, look at the style—ask students to explain how they think Van Gogh made the brush strokes. Ask students whether they think the painting looks finished or unfinished.

CREATING SELF-PORTRAITS

- Explain to students that they will be creating their own self-portrait depicting themselves at the time of a specific personal experience (for example, the first time they scored a touchdown, when they moved to a new home).
 - Students should use color to create a mood that represents how they felt at the time of the experience.
- Have students brainstorm a list of personal experiences that they can clearly recall. Students should select experiences from which they can generate enough content for a personal narrative.
 - Students should select one experience from their list as the inspiration for their self-portraits.
 - Next, students should identify the feeling or mood of their experience. Students will use colors in their self-portraits that communicate the mood.
- Instruct students to draw a large oval on their white paper using pencil. Project a [facial proportions](#) diagram to help students as they draw in their facial features on their self-portraits.
- Next, remind students of Van Gogh's style of painting with short, dashed brushstrokes. Demonstrate how to create short dashed lines with an oil pastel to create a similar effect.
- Allow students time to create their self-portraits using color to create mood.



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PERSONAL NARRATIVE WRITING

- Explain to students that they will be using their self-portraits as a basis for personal narrative writing.
- Students will write a personal narrative about the experience they used to inspire their self-portrait.
 - In addition to grade-level specific expectations for narrative writing, students should focus on using descriptive details, imagery and sensory language to create mood in their writing that is consistent with the mood in their self-portraits.
 - Students should engage in peer-editing before producing their final narrative.
- Students should give both their narratives and self-portraits a relevant title.

Closing/Reflection

- Students should conduct a gallery walk of self-portraits.
- After students have had the opportunity to observe each other's work, facilitate a discussion around how each student as an artist used color to create mood in their self-portrait and how that mood connected to the personal experience in their narratives.

ASSESSMENTS

Formative

Teachers will assess student learning by observing students' responses in whole-class and small group discussion and students' responses to brainstorming sessions.

Summative

CHECKLIST

- Students can create a self-portrait that communicates mood through color.
- Students can write a personal narrative based on the experience that inspired their self-portrait.
- Students can create a mood in writing using descriptive details, imagery, and sensory language.

DIFFERENTIATION

Acceleration: Students should conduct independent or collaborative research on Van Gogh's life and how his personal experiences influenced his art. Students should pay special attention to the years his self portraits were painted and what occurred in his life at the time.

Remediation:

- Allow students to use a [graphic organizer](#) to brainstorm three ideas that they could include in their self-portrait.
- Provide a graphic organizer to assist students in organizing their personal narratives.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



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- [Harvard University Project Zero Artful Thinking Routines: Step Inside](#)
- [Facial proportions](#)
- [Color Wheel](#)
- [Tate Museum: Who Is Vincent Van Gogh?](#)

**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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