

**GRADE LEVEL:**

9-12

**OVERVIEW:**

The primary focus of this lesson is the expression of the face. In order to achieve a successful self portrait students will need to understand the proportions of the face as well as how to render each feature realistically. Students will begin by completing several pre-assessments before starting a large expressive self portrait. Through the lesson they will begin to understand the various reasons why artists choose to create self portraits. They will also learn the structure of the face through several exercises and how proportions play a role in a portrait looking realistic. The use of Conté à Paris charcoal, sketching crayons and pencils will be used and through additive and subtractive techniques, students will slowly gain a better knowledge for different drawing materials and portraiture.

**ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

- Why do artists create self portraits?
- How do artists create self portraits?
- How do portraits tell a story?
- How do proportions and colour affect a portrait?
- How can view, size and placement be used in the composition?

**ENDURING UNDERSTANDINGS**

- Proportions affect the facial structure.
- Tonal gradation adds depth and is created through blending light to dark.
- Value creates depth.
- Contour lines give an object form.
- Mapping assists in pre-planning.
- Composition creates interest.
- An interesting composition is achieved through view, size and placement.
- Lighting creates mood and emotion.
- Art is a personal exploration and can relay the feelings of the artist.

**THE PROJECT**

Begin with a pre-assessment. Have students create a self portrait from observation using different grades of Conté à Paris Compressed Charcoal to apply a range of values. This will help you as the teacher assess your students' strengths and weaknesses. While working, pull students one by one and photograph each of their facial expressions (Tip: Use direct lighting to make photos convey more emotion. Encourage exaggerated facial expressions). At this time, have a conversation with the student about their strengths and areas that need improvement. Have the students complete several studies focusing on areas that require improvement. For example, if the eyes need improvement, have the student create several studies of eyes. After he/she becomes more comfortable, have the student create studies with the eyes and a nose. Next, have the student create studies adding the mouth, forehead and so on until he/she is able to implement the eyes into a successful realistic self portrait.



Print out photographs of the students' facial expressions in black and white. Have the students create 3 thumbnail sketches of different compositions where the view, size and placement are different. Make it a requirement for students to crop their face in an interesting manner, so that part of their face goes off the picture plane.

(CONTINUED)

**SUPPLY LIST**

- Various grades of: Conté à Paris
  - Compressed Charcoal
  - Black and White Sketching Crayons
  - Black Stone Pencils
- Optional:
  - Conté à Paris
  - Colour Crayons
  - Pastel Pencils
- Sketching Paper
- 18 x 24 inch sheet of Drawing Paper

### THE PROJECT (CONTINUED)

Students choose their most successful thumbnail sketch to enlarge to an 18 x 24 inch drawing. Have the students use Compressed Charcoal to lightly create contour and mapping lines to enlarge their chosen composition. Once they have completed mapping their portrait, they can begin shading medium values with the black Conté à Paris Sketching Crayons. Encourage them to use crayons on their side to cover large areas.



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After the mid-tone values are complete, students can add darker values with softer grades of Compressed Charcoal such as 3B and 4B. The black Sketching Crayons used on their corners will add detail to the drawing. The Black Stone pencils, also referred to as Pierre Noire may be used to add the darkest detail lines, such as in the eyes, hair and ears.

To add a dramatic feel, white Sketching Crayons can be used for the brightest highlights.

**Optional:** When students have finished their portraits, have them choose colours based on their expressions to enhance the background. Using Conté à Paris Colour Crayons and Pastel Pencils, students can apply solid colours or create patterns. This allows students to be creative and to add a personal touch to their piece. It is also a good time to introduce how colours can convey moods and meaning.

Ask students write 5-7 sentences on their expressive self portrait. Ask the following questions to help students write their statement.

- Why is your portrait successful?
- How did you use shading to create the illusion of a 3D form?
- What emotion does your portrait depict?
- Why did you choose to show that emotion?
- What improvements would you make to your portrait if any at all?

### GLOSSARY

- Self portrait
- Proportions
- Facial features
- Contrast
- Value
- Tonal gradation
- Contour lines
- Shape
- Additive
- Subtractive

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LESSON PLAN CREATED BY JESS LEO

#### NATIONAL STANDARDS:

- 1a. Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
- 2b. Using knowledge of structures and functions
- 3a. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
- 4c. Understanding the visual arts in relation to history