



SELF-PORTRAIT LESSON PLAN

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GOALS

Thrive Collective provides project-based learning that teaches both art and life skills. To the extent possible, every lesson plan provides three clear goals. First, what art skill, subject area, or big idea is being taught (the art “learning”)? Second, what will the students produce by the end of the class (the “project”)? Third, how does that art skill translate into an everyday life skill (the life “learning”)?

1. This class will teach students the importance of story-telling and attention to details in order to make a drawing more interesting and profound.
2. By the end of the class, students will complete a self-portrait, filled with as many elements of oneself as possible. The ending presentation will have students guess whose self-portrait belongs to whom.
3. Students will be introduced to how the art skill relates to life outside the classroom by gaining knowledge of many cultural and historic backgrounds and learning the importance of attention to details and a deeper sense of self-awareness and self-reflection.

MATERIALS

Blank paper, color markers, crayons, and/or color pencils.

EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to finish a self-portrait which can tell us as much about one person as possible. The paper should be filled with elements that include, but limited to:

1. The representation of one person (face, full body, profile)
2. Their cultural background, life stories, family, etc.
3. Their favorite food, things, activities, etc.
4. Their fears, hopes, dreams, etc.
5. Color patterns, color splashes, and more



WHAT TO SHOW

The teacher can take about 7 min to show a slideshow, consisting of art pieces by artists such as Frida Khalo, Paul Klee, Arcimboldo (Italian painter who paints faces made of vegetables), etc.

WHAT TO TELL

A great way to introduce the lesson plan is to demonstrate drawing yourself while telling personal stories about you and the item or part you are drawing until you have filled the page. This will help the kids understand how to interpret their own stories into visual arts and help build rapport amongst your class.



CLASS OUTLINE (Roughly 50 Minutes)

PROJECT: SELF-PORTRAIT WITH STORIES

OBJECTIVE

The main purpose of this project is to get the students to review themselves and ask what makes them unique? How would they like to present themselves to the world? Additionally, they will gain art and life skills such as:

- Drawing from life and observation.
- Drawing as a way of seeing, sharing, and remembering.
- Self-reflection, observance, openness, and respect.

STEP 1 (20-25 Minutes)

DEMO (5-10 Minutes)

Start by telling the students about yourself and at the same time drawing out your face, full body, profile, your favorite pose, etc., in the center of the paper.

While drawing the face, ask the students to observe your facial features. Ask them many questions to have them observe details they normally would not notice, such as:

- How long is my hair?
- What is the shape of my eyebrow?
- What color is my eyeliner?

Ask the students to use their hands and feel the contours of their own face. What shape do they notice? Have them feel the curves in their ears and touch their eyebrows. Get them to notice as many details about their face as possible.

Beyond facial features, ask them about items you may be wearing such as jewelry and give them a story behind it and why you wear it. If it's from a particular country, ask them if they know about that country and what it's famous for. Use those items as a chance to tell more about you or about the world.

Next, ask them about what mood you might be portraying. Have them associate that emotion with a color. If they are unable to do so, explain why certain colors symbolize certain emotions.

CLASS WORK (15 Minutes)

Have the students start drawing their self-portraits. First let the students work in the center of the paper on their own appearances. Let them decide if they want to do just a face, the whole body, or a profile. Allow them to decide what hairstyle, outfit, or accessories to go with it.

Note: Encourage the students NOT to just draw a circle for mouth or face but to observe themselves and talk out loud about the shapes of their faces, mouths, eyes, eyebrows, and hair.



GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS

Students' center piece should be done at the end of 15 minutes.

STEP 2 (25-30 minutes)

DEMO (5-10 Minutes)

Now that the center piece is done, in the surrounding areas, draw elements of your home country. Using China as an example, elements you can include could be soup dumplings, noodles, chopsticks, the great wall, temples etc. At the same time, you could ask them: "Do you know what country this is? Can you guess where I'm from?"

Tell them some of your favorite things to do while you draw them out. Ask about their own favorite activities like sports, games, foods, etc. Draw images about where you've traveled to with images of suitcases, airplanes, etc. Use those as an opportunity to ask where they've been and where they would like to travel to.

Keep drawing and asking questions until the paper is full. At the end, do a review of the portrait with the students, letting them summarize your life based on what they see and remember from the drawing.

CLASS WORK (15 Minutes)

Have the students start filling in their self-portraits. Keep reminding them of some key questions.

Note: Encourage the students to draw as many elements as possible to fill the paper. If they are not good at drawing, have them write things out in colorful lettering instead, such as "I love my cat," "I like my sister," etc.

GROUP CHECK-IN / PRESENTATIONS (10 Minutes)

After about 15-20 minutes, the students' portraits should be done. Have the students show their drawings one by one, as the artist hides behind their drawings.

Ask the other students to talk about what they saw and what they can learn about the artist from this drawing and see if they can guess who the artist is.