

PERSONALITY PORTRAITS

Self-Portrait Tempera Paintings inspired by Shepard Fairey

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(Curriculum Goals:)

The visual arts surround students in more ways than they expect. Using Shepard Fairey's posters and prints as a lens, students will study public art and the mass production of images, and gain a better understanding of contemporary applications of visual art in society.

Illinois Fine Art Goals

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/ils/fine_arts/standards.htm

25.A.3e Analyze how the elements and principles can be organized to convey meaning through a variety of media and technology.

25.B.2 Understand how elements and principles combine within an art form to express ideas.

26.A.5 Analyze and evaluate how the choice of media, tools, technologies and processes support and influence the communication of ideas.

26.B.2d Demonstrate knowledge and skills to create works of visual art using problem solving, observing, designing, sketching and constructing.

27.A.1a Identify the distinctive roles of artists and audiences.

27.A.2b Describe how the arts function in commercial applications (e.g., mass media and product design).

27.A.4b Analyze how the arts are used to inform and persuade through traditional and contemporary art forms.

27.B.4b Understand how the arts change in response to changes in society.

Learning Objectives:

Creative

- Students will understand the planning process of painting, making thumbnail sketches, and color swatches.
- Students will master the flat application of tempera paint as well as cleaning and maintenance procedures for brushes and painting supplies.
- Students will know how to mix secondary colors using primary colors.
- Students will understand the visual effects of complimentary and analogous color combinations in a painting.

Affective

- Students will have a better understanding of contemporary art applications, and the ways in which visual artists can influence society.
- Students will recognize the role of mass production in public art.
- Students will understand ideas about representation, and the ways visual culture affect the way society views individuals and groups of people.

Vocabulary & Concepts:

- *Public Art*
- *Mass Production*
- *Audience*

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- **Tempera Paint:** Type of paint in which pigment is suspended in water. Dries quickly and is best applied in quick, thin layers or one color at a time.
- **Color Palette**
- **Primary Colors:** (Red, Yellow, Blue) In traditional color theory, these are the 3 pigment colors that can not be mixed or formed by any combination of other colors. All other colors are derived from these 3 hues.
- **Secondary Colors:** (Orange, Green, Violet) The colors formed by mixing the primary colors.
- **Complimentary Colors:** Colors that are directly across from each other on the color wheel. Putting these colors near each other in a composition creates striking contrast.
- **Analogous Colors:** Colors that are next to each other on the color wheel. (ex: Yellow, Yellow-Green, Green) Putting these colors next to each other creates harmony, and low contrast.
- **Mood (Color):** The way that color arrangements affect a viewer's emotions. For example: **warm colors** (reds, oranges, yellows) can create a sense of excitement or anger, whereas **cool colors** (blues and purples) can invoke sadness or indifference.

Materials:

Teacher materials

- Teacher example
- Lesson Plan
- Artist Examples/Powerpoint Presentation
- Color Wheel
- List of emotions and personality traits (handouts)
- Lesson Handouts

Student materials

- Large sheet of white drawing paper
- Pencil
- Colored Pencils
- 12x24 sheet of heavyweight construction paper
- (8th grade) Digital Photographs
- Tempera paints (Each table will share a set of primary colors)
- Paintbrushes
- Palette or paper plate
- Cup of water
- Towels or rags
- Smock or old t-shirt (optional)

Motivation:

This lesson will begin with my introducing Shepard Fairey's *Hope* poster that was used during the campaign for President Barack Obama. The students are likely very familiar with this image, as well as examples of its influences on current visual culture (parodies, etc). By introducing a common image from culture and explaining its background as a piece of fine art, students will feel excited that they are familiar with art, and comfortable discussing it.

**This particular group of students has had little experience with contemporary art. I worry they think that "art" means "oil paintings from the 19th century." I hope to open their minds about motivations and productions of artists who are working today.

Dialogue with the students

Questions for the students to explore-

Information to provide concerning artists and/or works of art (research) (dialogue needs to be age appropriate)

Procedure and Estimated Time

Introduction (10 minutes)

Begin Art Appreciation with Shepard Fairey's *Barack Obama (Hope)* (2009)

-*How many of you have seen this image before? What can you tell me about it?*

(It's Obama! It's a poster/sticker, etc) This is a very famous poster that is recognizable around the world. This picture has been made into posters, stickers, t-shirts, mugs and all sorts of things.

-*What are some stylistic features of the image? Colorful? Messy or clean?*

-This is a **screenprinted poster** by the artist Shepard Fairey, entitled "Hope" that was created in 2008.

What do you think the purpose of making this poster was? -

-Fairey is a contemporary American artist who got his start in the skateboard art scene, making the illustrations on the backs of skateboard decks. He became well known as a street artist in major cities. In 2008 he created the Obama "Hope" poster to support the candidate.

-*What are some ways this image shows the candidate in a positive way? Color? Framing? Body Language? Text?*

(The angle of view is from beneath the face so we are looking up at the figure. This puts him in a position of power. The gaze is upward and outward. He looks hopeful and strong. His mouth is closed in a calm and collected way. The color scheme is patriotic: the blue is calm. The word "Hope" makes you think this will be a strong candidate for the future.)

- He distributed 300,000 stickers and 500,000 posters without being officially affiliated with the presidential campaign. (He made them on his own because he personally supported the cause. No one hired him to make these campaign posters.)

-*Why was this mass distribution important with regard to the purpose of the image?*

His goal was to get many people to vote for the candidate. By getting as many people as possible to see this poster, he hope to influence their vote.

-When Obama won the election, he wrote a letter to Fairey, thanking him for his contributions: saying "Your images have a profound effect on people, whether seen in a gallery or on a stop sign. I am privileged to be a part of your artwork and proud to have your support."

-*Did Fairey succeed in his artistic goal? What are some other types of art that are mass produced or displayed in public?*

(Graffiti, murals, advertisements, etc)

Demonstration and Studio Time (25-35 minutes)

Today we are going to make painted posters of a character that we create in the style of Shepard Fairey. Using framing, body language, color and text, you will convey either an emotion or a personality trait of the character.

Day 1

7th grade

1. Read list of personality traits. Decide on 3-5 words you can use to describe your character.
2. Create 3-5 thumbnail sketches of your character on white drawing paper with pencil, focusing on expression, framing and body language. Add details or symbols to your character to represent the personality trait.

8th grade

1. Read list of personality traits. Decide on 3-5 words you can use to describe yourself. Remember: use words that describe your **identity**, or things that you would use to describe yourself.
2. Choose a word you think you can capture in a facial expression and framing.
3. Without looking in a mirror or using a photograph, attempt to draw a self-portrait that can represent the word. Remember, this is just practice so that we can see how much we improve over the course of the week. Try your best, but don't get discouraged if it does not look perfect.
4. While you are working, I will be calling up each table at a time and taking a digital photograph of each student. Make the face you would like in your painting. I will take 2 photos of each student and dispense them in class tomorrow.
5. If you finish the drawing early, attempt to create different typefaces or block-letter styles for the word you chose.

Day 2

7th Grade

1. Once you have decided on your character, you will decide on a color scheme. You will be using a **limited palette of complimentary or analogous colors**. You can use 2-5 colors in your painting. Color your thumbnails using colored pencil.
2. After you have completed your plans, transfer your image onto a large sheet of construction paper. Draw the character and the words lightly using pencil.

8th Grade

1. After I dispense your photographs and choose the facial expression for your painting, you will decide on a color scheme. You will be using a **limited palette of complimentary or analogous colors**. You can use 2-5 colors in your painting. Experiment with these color combinations using colored pencil on the preliminary drawing you have completed yesterday.
2. After you have completed your plans, transfer your image onto a large sheet of construction paper. Draw the portrait lightly using pencil.

Day 3

8th Grade

3. When you are ready to begin your painting, mix your color palette first by adding primary colors into jars. Mix enough of each color to complete your painting, so that you will not have to mix the color again.
4. Apply the paint carefully, in thin, flat layers beginning with the largest areas first. Paint all of the parts of the same color at a time before cleaning your brush and moving to the next color.
5. Add detail at the end after each layer is dry.
6. When you have finished your painting, place it on the drying rack in the back of the classroom and work on your assessment rubric.

Clean-up- (minutes)

1. Place paintings on drying rack.
2. Place sketches and drawings in drawers.
3. Clean brushes in sink and put them back in their containers.
4. Clean palettes and close lids of paint tightly.
5. Bring paint containers to the shelves around the classroom. Keep them organized by table on top of a sheet of paper labeled with the names of each table member.

Closure

When the students have completed the paintings, they will be hung around the classroom for a group discussion and written critique.

Students are asked to choose one of their classmate's paintings and answer the following questions on the backs of their assessment sheets:

- How did color, pose and framing were used to describe the emotion or trait that they chose?
- What extra details did this artist use to make their work exceptional?
- What could they have done better?

The group of paintings will then be displayed in the hallway or school lunchroom to fully illustrate the ideas of public art.

Assessment

Students will fill out a self-assessment rubric. (Attached at end of lesson plan)

Modifications/accommodations

- Students who finish early will create more characters on their planning sheets and color them using a different palette.
- Students with special needs should be able to complete this project with the rest of the class.

Resources

- Fairey artist statement regarding Obama poster: <http://obeygiant.com/headlines/obama>
- Color theory notes: <http://colortheory.liquisoft.com/>
- Powerpoint presentation

