

Art Foundations Lesson: Alter-ego Self-portraits

Concept: Identity: The Artist as Creative Individual

Instructional objectives:

AF.1: Students will apply criteria to determine the value and meaning of artworks

AF.8: Students will interpret artwork using visual evidence and contextual information

AF.10: Students will explain how artwork is influenced by past traditions, norms and practices, values and beliefs.

AF.13: Students will document the art-making process through written and visual planning, research, and reflection.

Enduring Understandings:

- Art can be used for various purposes (communication, persuasion, functional design, ritual, and personal expression).
- Artworks can have symbolic and metaphorical meaning.
- Art is influenced by past traditions and art making practices.
- Art making is about exploration, asking questions and problem-solving.
- Art making is about making meaning with ideas from self and others.

Essential Questions:

- Do artworks tell us about the people who made them? About the world in which they are made?
- How have you used symbolic or metaphorical meaning in your artwork?
- How does different subject matter become a tradition? (portraits)
- How does art making help me discover who I am?
- How do I turn my ideas, experiences, and feelings into art?

OBJECTIVES: Students will:		
KNOW:	UNDERSTAND:	DO:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Basic/Universal proportions for drawing a frontal view of the human face.- What is an alter-ego.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- That there is more than one way to draw a face, and that the universal proportions provide guidelines.- How to use observational drawing skills to "individualize" the universal proportions to create a likeness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Sundry activities related to proportions and identity of the alter-ego- Create a self- portrait.

Art-making/Design problem:

- **Create a black and white/ monochromatic self-portrait (may use spot color) that expresses not only a likeness to the artist, but also the alter-ego or inner-self of the artist.**

Learning plan:

PART ONE: Universal Proportions of the Face

DAY ONE:

- **Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: DOODLE-A-DAY: Draw Yourself As**
 - o On the board, the assignment will read:
 - Divide a page in your sketchbook into 8 sections.
 - In one section, draw yourself as one of the following (another way to think of it; “if you were a ____, what would you look like?):
 - An animal, a shape, a cartoon character, a teacher, a piece of pizza, a shoe, a box of cereal, a chair, an app, an artist, a video game character, a math equation, a scribble, a superhero, a book cover, a super villain, a fruit, a plant, a monster, a tree, as abstract art, a board game, a card game, as an emotion.
 - You have ten minutes.
- **Mr. Facey:** An interactive word document featuring a “face” made of basic shapes. Students (or the teacher) can move the features with the pen or on the computer to put the features in the correct proportions.
 - o Who can put the parts of the face where they belong (note: some of the parts are not the right size, you can change that).
 - o The center-lines of the face are already noted.
 - o As informal pre-assessment, see if any students will volunteer to try putting the facial features in the correct locations. Give Ss no hints, and don’t correct them if they are incorrect.
- **“Pre-Assessment”:** Open the Face Fact Sheet document
 - o We’re going to read-up on where the parts of the face are supposed to go. Each table is going to get one article print-out and be assigned one paragraph to read. Come up with two pieces of information about that face part:
 - What they think is the most important fact
 - What they think is the most interesting fact
 - o After you’ve read and written the info, you’ll be adding the facts to the fact sheet on the board, and putting the parts where they belong.
- Take out your sketchbooks and copy down the information from the fact sheet – on the back of a page. On the facing page, we’re going to draw the generic, basic face following these rules. This isn’t supposed to look like anyone. It’s just a pattern – a way to put the face in order so that it looks right. The distances/sizes of things are universal – they apply to pretty much everybody.
- Review **Drawing Process:**
 - o Observation and basic shapes
 - o “Sketchy sketchy, light and loose” -> outside lines; inside lines; “over-lapping shapes”
 - o Shading; texture; cast shadow
- With this process in mind, Ss watch the teacher demonstrate how to draw a basic face: explain how this is done while drawing.
- Repeat the drawing, this time with students following along in their sketchbooks.
- As time allows, have students draw again on their own and/or have students find front-facing portraits in the newspaper and trace the basic proportions over them.
- If extra time, try fixing Mr. Facey again.

DAY 2 - 3

Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: Draw Yourself As

- Same as before, only choose something else from the list.

FACE PARTS:

- **Quiz:** t/f on the facts from the class before.
- **Mr. Facey:** rearrange the facial features prior to class, and see if students can correct his face, either by volunteering to come to the board, or by directing the teacher to move different parts.
- **Sketchbook Activity:** Students will collect images of each facial feature [eye, nose, mouth, hair, ear]
 - o These will be glued into your sketchbook – to one side of the page, so you can draw it twice beside it
- Students watch/Teacher demonstrates how to draw each part:
 - Review **Drawing Process:**
 - Observation and basic shapes
 - “Sketchy sketchy, light and loose” -> outside lines; inside lines; “over-lapping shapes”
 - Shading; texture; cast shadow
 - o Students follow along the second time.
 - o Students will draw the final time for **HW.**

DAY 4

Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: Draw Yourself As

- Same as before, only choose something else from the list. Reduce time to 7 minutes.
- **Mr. Facey:** rearrange the facial features prior to class, and see if students can correct his face, either by volunteering to come to the board, or by directing the teacher to move different parts: have students who are finished with their doodle early participate in this.

Combining Basic face proportions with Details of each part.

- Review basic proportions and how we drew each part separately with details. Today, we’re going to combine these two into one, completely drawn face. This face is still going to be very basic – not looking like anyone. **However**, you may want to add features that are similar to your own so we can practice drawing those: eventually, we’ll be drawing ourselves. Still, it’s really not going to look like anyone.
- Have students review drawing the basic face proportions by instructing the teacher in drawing at the projector.
- Then have students repeat this in their sketchbooks.
- Finally, have Ss draw the basic proportions again, on a full page in the sketchbook. Then instruct them in drawing the facial features into the face
 - o Take suggestions from students as to what kind of facial features to draw (“Big eyes, thin, long nose, plump lips, bushy eyebrows, long dreads” etc), and demonstrate how to start filling in each of these features. Have students create their own list of features to draw; they may want to use the magazine photos they used previously or a mirror or photograph to observe their own features.
 - Note: if using photos, avoid drawing children – they follow different proportions from adults.
 - o Re-demonstrate shading each of the features, together to create a whole face. The teacher should draw a little at a time, then circulate through the room to help or observe students, returning to the projector to fill in details a little at a time.
- Have students finish adding details to complete their face as **Homework.**

PART TWO: The Alter-Ego

DAY 5:

Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: Draw Yourself As

- Same as before only choose something else from the list.

So why are we drawing faces? We're going to be making 'alter-ego self-portraits' – this is going to be a portrait that shows you and/or your alter-ego. Today, we're going to talk about what an alter-ego is and answer some questions to figure out what yours is.

- **PowerPoint explanation of “alter-ego” and “avatar”.**
 - o Look at other artists' and celebrities' well-known alter-egos.
 - Beyonce Knowles/ Sasha Fierce; Rappers; Nicki Minaj; Lady Gaga... Visual artists from around the internet who have portrayed their alter egos (these are largely informal, unprofessional works)
 - o In their sketchbooks, Ss should write definitions for Alter-ego and Avatar. Also, write five examples of alter-egos or avatars, and five reasons why people have alter-egos or avatars.
- **Students brainstorm:**
 - o Who is your “other self” (alter-ego?)
 - o What would be your avatar?
 - o What “self” do you most want to portray?
 - o How do you think of yourself and how can you show this?
 - Do you represent yourself as/with animal(s)? Or as hobbies/objects related to hobbies? Do you imagine yourself as different from how you are (idealistically? More muscular, more beautiful, thinner, with different hair, different skills and talents, a different wardrobe, a different personality?)
 - Who do you want to be? OR Who do you wish you weren't? Is there a side of yourself that you want to improve? Is there a side of yourself that you're afraid of?
 - o How can you show this?
 - Facial expressions/ body language (since it's only a bust portrait, this would be confined to say, posture or the presence of hands)
 - Symbols:
 - Animals, objects
 - As part of yourself, or with yourself
 - Colors that are meaningful or evoke an emotion
- Students will answer several questions (see above) to help them explore their alter-ego and how they might represent it in a portrait.
- Then, divide a sketchbook page into 4: **Make 4 small sketches** of yourself as... different alter-egos, avatars, personalities, etc. These do not have to be finished: all 4 should be started (basic proportions sketched in) by the end of class. Write words that describe these parts of yourself in the background of each sketch. **HW:** work on all four sketches. Pick your favorite one to “finish” in your sketchbook (apply shading and details).

PART THREE: Combining the Two

DAY 5:

Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: Draw Yourself As

- Same as before only choose something else from the list.
- **Mr. Facey:** rearrange the facial features prior to class, and see if students can correct his face, either by volunteering to come to the board, or by directing the teacher to move different parts: have students who are finished with their doodle early participate in this.

Review previous work on universal proportions and alter-egos. Today we're going to be working to combine the two into one composition: one work of art.

- **Powerpoint Presentation** featuring different portrait artists that create symbolic, expressive portraits, some of them even show alter-egos:
- **In their sketchbooks,** Ss should write down the names of the artists, putting a star by the artists they like, and write what kind of art they make. Ss will also be writing down the project requirements.
 - Cindy Sherman
 - Photographs herself as different female clichés.
 - Frida Kahlo
 - Painted expressive self-portraits, including alter-egos.
 - Mirumiyam
 - Creates digital illustrative portraits surrounded by objects like flowers and birds: these surrounding objects could be taken as meaningful or somehow describing the individual(s) depicted.
 - Android Jones
 - Digital artist whose portraits also include expressive or symbolic surroundings or morphing.
- There are several ways we might **show** our alter-egos – based on all the works we've seen.
 - Double portrait
 - Split portrait
 - Symbolic portrait
 - Morphed portrait
 - Portrait of the artist as...
 - Something in between one or all of these...
- We want to incorporate the universal proportions of the face, have our faces somewhat recognizable as ourselves, and show our other self.
- Which of these artists most inspires you?
- Which of these styles of portraits do you think would work best with how you want to portray your alter ego?
- **Thumbnail sketches** of portrait ideas: try out two or three and pick the one you like/feel will work best with the alter ego you want to portray (from the previous face sketches – the four in the sketch book).
- **Project requirements:** what the finished product needs to have:
 - A face that **shows use of the universal proportions** plus individualization (should be reasonably realistic, but may have some stylization).
 - Portrait should fall into one of the categories we discussed, showing the alter-ego
 - Portrait should be Monochromatic:
 - Black and White
OR
 - Shades and tints of ONE color
AND

- May include ONE spot color.
 - Face should take up one third or more of the composition.
 - Background of the composition should be
 - In color (at least two)
 - Patterned – similar to fabric – reminiscent of Kehinde Wiley’s portraits.
 - Expressive of or related to the artist’s personality or alter-ego.
- Some of the artists we’ve looked at (Android Jones and Marumiyan in particular) tend to fill in their backgrounds. We, in our work, want to minimize this effect because one of your requirements is to use a background similar to the portrait artist: Kehinde Wiley. We’re going to have patterned backgrounds that are reminiscent of fabric: this can also have some symbolic meaning to yourself and alter-ego.

DAY 6:

- **Warm- Up/Daily Sketchbook Activity: Draw Yourself As**
- **Mr. Facey:** rearrange the facial features prior to class, and see if students can correct his face, either by volunteering to come to the board, or by directing the teacher to move different parts: have students who are finished with their doodle early participate in this.

Greet class; have them get their work out and re-introduce **The Background**. In a Powerpoint presentation, introduce a number of Kehinde Wiley’s portraits, along with questions for students to consider and requirements for their project to pursue. The background should be:

- In color (at least two) (using colored pencil)
 - Patterned – similar to fabric – reminiscent of Kehinde Wiley’s portraits.
 - Expressive of or related to the artist’s personality or alter-ego.
- (From his artist statement – www.kehindewiley.com) Los Angeles native and New York based visual artist, **Kehinde Wiley** has firmly situated himself within art history’s **portrait painting** tradition. As a contemporary descendent of a long line of portraitists, including Reynolds, Gainsborough, Titian, Ingres, among others, **Wiley, engages the signs and visual rhetoric of the heroic, powerful, majestic and the sublime in his representation of urban, black and brown men found throughout the world.**
 - Basically, Wiley reproduces classic portraits – replacing the subjects of the paintings with young black men he meets on the street. He often replaces the **backgrounds** of these images with **tapestry-like patterns**. *NOTE: he also uses the title of the original painting he’s reproducing...*
 - What are some things you notice about these backgrounds?
 - How do they relate to the people depicted in the portrait?
 - You may have noticed that the patterns in the background often overlap the people in the portrait.
 - What can you do to relate the pattern to the image you’re trying to portray?
 - What can you depict in that pattern – what **objects, shapes and colors** can you use – to add meaning to your portrait?

- Not all of Wiley's portraits have fabric-like patterns in the background. Making a simplified, patterned background will help you focus on putting more detailed effort into your portrait. If you wanted to turn this background landscape into a fabric pattern, **what objects, shapes and colors might you use?** How would you simplify the objects (into outlines or solid shapes) to repeat them in a pattern?

Students should get to work on their portraits. **Have them design a fabric-like design for their background as HW.**

DAY 7 – 8: Working and Finishing

Review requirements and materials, help students work to complete their final drawings. Transition to next lesson/project.

Resources/materials:

- PowerPoint presentations on Proportions, Alter-ego, Portraits, and Kehinde Wiley
- Doodle-a-Day options list (ppt)
- Mr.Facey document.
- Pencils, erasers, colored pencils
- 12 x 14" drawing paper for final drawings
- Student sketchbooks
- Mirrors (optional)

Vocabulary:

- Portrait/ Self-portrait
- Alter-ego
- Avatar
- Identity
- Proportion
- Value (drawing/shading)
- Modeling (shading)

Assessment:

Assessment evidence: (established goals must be assessed)

- Sketchbook notes and planning sketches
- Final drawing

Key Criteria for final drawing:

- A face that shows use of the universal proportions plus individualization.
- Portrait should fall into one of the categories we discussed, showing the alter-ego
- Portrait should be Monochromatic:
 - Black and White
OR
 - Shades and tints of ONE color

AND

- May include ONE spot color.
- Face should take up one third or more of the composition.
- Background of the composition should be
 - In color (at least two)
 - Patterned – similar to fabric – reminiscent of Kehinde Wiley’s portraits.
 - Expressive of or related to the artist’s personality or alter-ego.
- 12x14: Using Pencil and Colored Pencil on drawing paper.

Pre-assessment: (what students understand prior to lesson)

- **Drawing Process:**
 - Observation
 - “Sketchy sketchy, light and loose” -> outside lines; inside lines; “over-lapping shapes”
 - Shading; texture; cast shadow
- Shading techniques: hatching; value scales.

Ongoing-assessment: (What students are learning) (formal or informal):

- Students will KNOW:
 - Basic/Universal proportions for drawing a frontal view of the human face.
 - What is an alter-ego.
- Students will UNDERSTAND:
 - That there is more than one way to draw a face, and that the universal proportions provide guidelines.
 - How to use observational drawing skills to “individualize” the universal proportions to create a likeness.
- Students will DO:
 - Sundry activities related to proportions and identity of the alter-ego
 - Doodle-a-Day
 - Mr. Facey
 - Face fact sheet and other notes on ppt presentations in sketchbook
 - Sketching activities
 - Create a self- portrait.
 - That shows alter-ego
 - Uses basic proportions of the face.

Final Assessment:

- Develop Rubric based on Classroom expectations and Key Criteria to assess Final Drawing.
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Modifications:

Depending on the classroom environment, **Day 1’s** activities may prove too boring. Here are some alternatives:

- Modify the article to suit the class’ level and interest.
- Have Ss read the article and learn about how to draw each part of the face in proportion (using basic shapes). Then have Ss instruct the teacher on where the part should go (on the board/projector). This creates a visual fact sheet.

- Or, after students, in their groups, read and learn about each feature's proportions and how to draw them, have the groups come to the front, to the board/projector, and teach the rest of the class (with the teacher's assistance) how to place and draw each feature.
- If Ss are hesitant to draw in front of the class, they could use the Mr. Facey document to show the correct proportions to the class.