



SELF-PORTRAIT – Seven Grandfather Teachings

Students create a self-portrait. The self-portrait is based on the students' understanding and life experiences with one of the 7 Grandfather teachings.

Required Time

120 Minutes

Grade Level

Grade 3 to Grade 8

Subject

Art Techniques
Language Arts
Visual Arts
First Nations, Metis, Inuit

Vocabulary

contrast
cool colours
emphasis
self-portrait
shape
space
warm colours

Materials

Pencils

Eraser

Drawing Paper 30 cm x 45 cm (12" x 18")

White Paper (from a sketchbook or recycled)

Fine Line Markers

[Shop Crayola Products](#)

Oil Pastels



Oil
Pastels,
16
Count

Steps

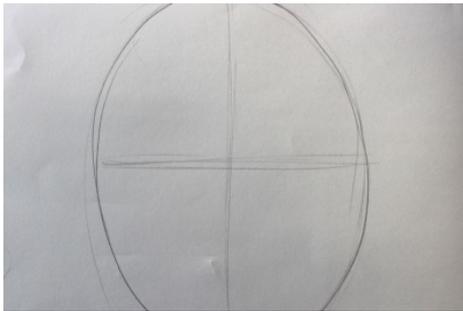
Step One

Make a mind map. Begin with the 7 Grandfather teachings in the centre of your mind map. Brainstorm the Grandfather teachings using words, and drawings of the animals connected to each of the teachings. Reflect on personal life experiences that are connected to and exemplify the Grandfather teachings. Choose one life experience and use words/images to describe it. What did you say? How did you feel? What did you do? Reflect on how your life is connected to the Grandfather teaching you chose. Share your reflections with a partner.



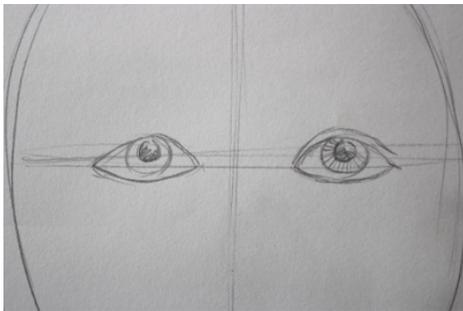
Step Two

Begin your self-portrait by drawing a large oval (close to the size of your head) on drawing paper. Lightly draw a vertical line dividing the oval in half. Then draw a horizontal line dividing the oval into 4 equal quarters.



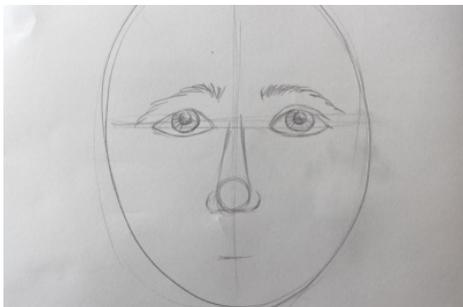
Step Three

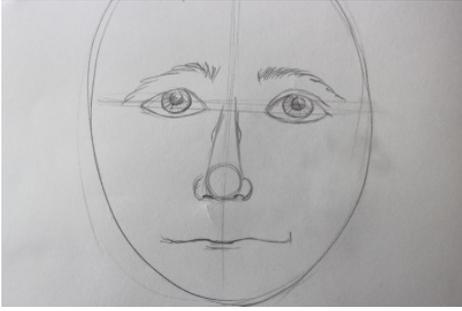
Draw the eyes on the horizontal line. Use the eye as a unit of measurement, imagining the length of 5 eyes fitting across the face. Begin the eye by drawing an almond shape, then a small black pupil inside, and a circular iris surrounding the pupil inside the eye. The line forming the top of the eye is echoed by another line which creates an eyelid. Leave a space that is the length of an eye, and draw the second eye. The eyebrows form a frame around the eye and echo the line of the eyelid above the eyes.



Step Four

Lightly draw a small horizontal line halfway between the eyes and the chin. This line crosses the vertical line marking the location for the nose. Draw a second horizontal line about halfway between the nose and the chin, marking the location for the mouth. Create the nose by drawing a triangle shape with a ball at the end. The nostrils are made by drawing 2 brackets, one on each side of the nose. Keep your pencil lines light.





Step Five

Draw the mouth on the horizontal line between the nose and the chin. Begin the mouth by drawing the line where the lips meet. This line is shaped like a bow. Next draw 2 small circles below the line, and 3 small circles above the line. Lightly outline the outer edges of the circles forming the top and bottom lips. Refer to step 6 for an example.



Step Six

The top of the ear begins at the same height as the eyebrow. The bottom of the ear ends along the same horizontal line that touches the bottom of the nose. The neck is drawn from the ears down.



Step Seven

Draw the shape of your hair around your face. Darken the lines around your face clarifying your cheek bones and chin.



Step Eight

Choose warm colours from your selection of oil pastels. Use the lighter colours to draw the nose, cheekbones, chin, lips, and other areas of the face that stand out. Use darker colours to draw the areas of the face that recede. Make sure the colours create a contrast (light and dark) when drawing facial features that need to stand out (eyes).



Step Nine

Continue to add warm colours to the face, using a variety of colours. Choose colours that match your eyes to draw the iris. Leave a small slice in each eye (within the pupil and the iris) to give the illusion of light in your eyes. Draw your hair using colours that match your hair. Lighter colours can be used to highlight your hair and make your face look 3-dimensional.



Step Ten

Choose a variety of cool colours to draw the background of your self portrait. Bring some of your cool colours into your face, integrating your self portrait with your background.



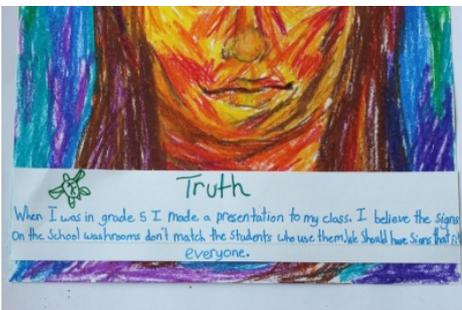
Step Eleven

Add an animal image to your background that is connected to the Grandfather teaching you chose. Make sure the colour you use to draw the animal shapes contrast with the background colours.



Step Twelve

Cut a strip of drawing paper that is the same width as your self-portrait. Write about your life experience connected to the Grandfather teaching you chose. Use markers that are similar colours to the oil pastels to write with.



Step Thirteen

Make sure your writing clearly reflects your life experience, and connects to the Grandfather teaching you chose in a meaningful way. Add drawings connected to the Grandfather teaching, and glue the strip of paper to the bottom of your self portrait.



Step Fourteen

Stand back from your artwork and decide whether you need to add more colour. Remember, warm colours will come forward, and cooler colours will recede into the background. Does your self-portrait reflect who you are? Add more detail to connect your artwork to yourself.

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

1. Draw the human face;
2. Make connections to one of the 7 Grandfather teachings from their personal life experiences;
3. Communicate one of the 7 Grandfather teachings through writing and drawing;
4. Demonstrate an understanding of space using warm and cool colours;
5. Create a self-portrait through drawing, contrasting colours, and emphasizing one of the 7 Grandfather teachings.

Extensions

1. Have students create a second self-portrait using a different Grandfather teaching and a variety of paints.
2. Have students share their self-portraits and life stories with an audience.
3. Have students work in small groups to create role plays of the life stories shared by the students, exemplifying the 7 Grandfather teachings.

Prepare

1. Prior to this lesson download images from the internet, or find images in books or magazines of animals connected to the 7 Grandfather teachings. For example,
Bear
Eagle
Beaver
Buffalo
Turtle
2. Download images from the internet, or find images in books or magazines of Arthur Shilling's portraits. *The Ojibway Dream*, by Arthur Shilling, 1999, is a beautiful book containing portrait paintings created by the artist.
Shilling Video
Shilling in Studio
Young Woman
3. Download the following pdf and read about the *Seven Sacred Teachings, Niizhwaaswi gagiikwewin*, by David Bouchard & Dr. Joseph Martin, paintings by Kristy Cameron,
Seven Sacred Teachings
This pdf will give you background knowledge about the 7 Grandfather teachings from the perspective of the writers. The paintings and writings about the 'Seven Sacred Teachings' can be shared with the students. Make sure students understand who wrote the teachings and where they are from. First Nations Peoples from different communities will have different understandings and perspectives on the 7 Grandfather teachings.
4. Download, *The Seven Grandfather Teachings*, by Rabbit and Bear Paws,
Seven Grandfather Teachings
The Seven Grandfather Teachings, by Rabbit and Bear Paws can be shared and reflected on daily (one teaching each day) with the students

Introduction

1. Introduce students to the artist, **Arthur Shilling**, from Rama First Nation. Have students look at a variety of Arthur Shilling's paintings, focusing on his self-portraits. Explore his use of colour, especially paintings where he has used warm colours on faces and cooler colours in the background.
2. Review the 7 Grandfather teachings and the meaning of each human quality.
3. Have a class discussion about how the 7 Grandfather teachings are connected to life experiences. Ask students to share an example from their own life in which they have made connections to one of the Grandfather teachings.

Activities

The Challenge

1. Choose one of the 7 Grandfather teachings that connects to a personal life experience. Write about the life experience exemplifying the Grandfather teaching.
2. Draw a self-portrait. Beginning with the steps involved in drawing the human face.
3. Draw with oil pastels using warm colours on your face, and cooler colours in the background. Bring out your facial features using contrasting colours.
4. Using the element of line draw the image of an animal connected to the Grandfather teaching your self-portrait exemplifies.
5. Combine the drawing of your face with the writing of your life experience to create a mixed media artwork.

The Process

1. After discussing life connections to the Grandfather teachings, have students begin their mind maps. Ask students to brainstorm the 7 Grandfather teachings connecting one or more teachings to an experience they have had in their lives.

2. Discuss the meaning of self-portrait. Explain to the students that they will be creating a self-portrait (a drawing of their face).
3. Guide students through the steps outlined in this lesson.
4. Observe students as they work.
5. Provide individual assistance and encouragement.
6. When students have completed their drawings, ask them to reflect on their mind maps and write about a life experience connected to one of the 7 Grandfather teachings.
7. Ask students to glue their writing to their self-portraits.

Sharing

1. Once all the artworks are complete ask students to bring their artworks into a large circle. Invite each student to share his/her self portrait.
2. During the circle discussion include references to warm and cool colours, contrast, emphasis, and space.
3. Share life stories connected to the 7 Grandfather teachings.

Assessment

1. Observe students as they work – exploring, experimenting, adding detail, thoughtful focus.
2. Listen to and observe students as they discuss the artworks – attentive listening, insightful contributions.
3. Use a checklist to track progress. (Download – PORTRAIT_tracking.pdf)
4. Have students reflect on their own artworks in their sketchbooks. (Download – PORTRAIT_self-assessment)
Ask students:
 - What worked well in you artwork? Why
 - What would you change or do differently next time?
 - What does the Grandfather teaching you chose mean to you?