

Title: Drawing the Portrait

Age/Prerequisite: Any age

Elements: Line, Shape, Color

Concept: Rather than being limited to creating stick figure drawings, children who are able to draw realistically are building problem solving abilities, visual awareness, concentration, along with measurement skills.



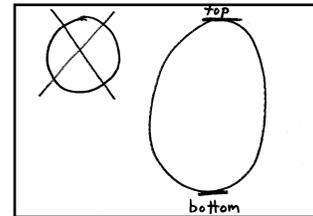
Materials: Pencil, paper, ruler, one piece of colored paper cut into one by twelve inch strips. (For the younger children the ruler can get in the way of the drawing and it is easier to use a paper measuring tool. As the children become more proficient with the ruler this can be done by measuring.) White drawing paper, colored paper, oil pastels, table protector.

Prints: Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa," Mary Cassatt's "The Young Mother." Any portrait by Vincent van Gogh, Frieda Kahlo and Chuck Close.

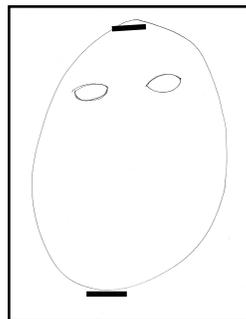
Lesson:

It is good to have a white board or drawing board to demonstrate each part as you explain. Also review the meaning of horizontal and vertical lines.

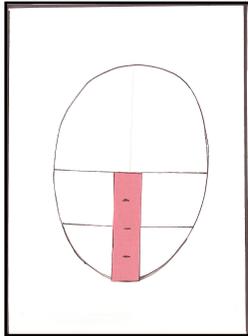
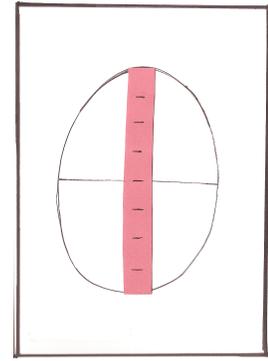
"Today we are going to learn a few basic measurements that can help us in drawing a face, but that does not mean that all faces follow the same measurements. This is just a map to get us close. Most children draw the face as a circle when visually it is more of an oval shape."



Demonstrate "Using a pencil draw an oval leaving about an inch on the top and the bottom of the paper. Where do you think the eyes should go? Most children will draw the eyes on what really is the forehead." Show them by drawing on the white board.

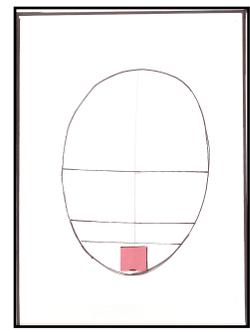
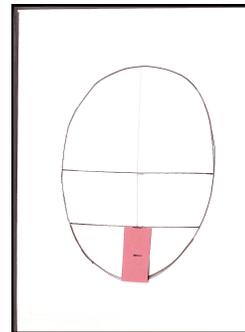


“Measure between the bottom chin line and the top of the head and find the middle line and mark. You can use a ruler or make a paper strip the length of the head from the top of the head to the chin line. Then fold it in half to find the middle mark. This mark is the eye line. Take a ruler or your strip and draw a horizontal line from one side of oval to the other.”

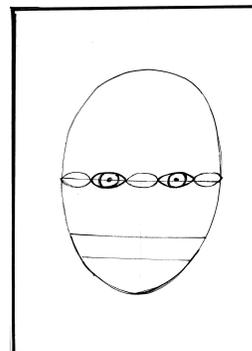
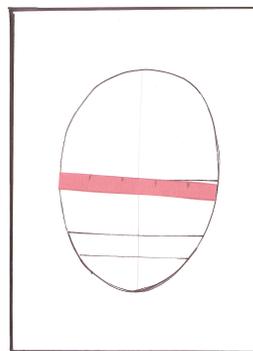


“Observe your face between the eye line and chin. Where is the end of the nose? It is a little less than half way down. Now find the middle distance between the eye line and the chin line. Again, you can use a ruler or fold the paper in half again. Make a mark on the paper and draw the horizontal line. This line is the nose line or where the nose will end.”

“Now, we are going to make the mouth line. The distance between the nose line and the chin line, maybe slightly closer to the nose line is the mouth line. Fold the paper one last time and make a mark and again draw a horizontal line”

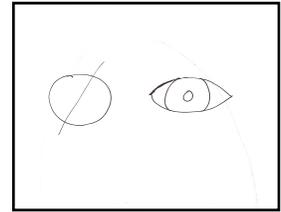


“The placement of the eyes on the face can also be measured roughly. First, the eyes are about one eye distance apart from each other. They are also visually about one eye distance from the side of the face. This makes about five eyes across the width of the face. Divide the eye line into fifths. Again you can measure this distance with a ruler or using a measurement strip of paper, you can make guesses and eventually find a size that works.” You can lightly draw in the five eyes to see the measurement. The children do not need to do this.

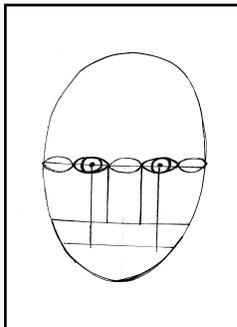
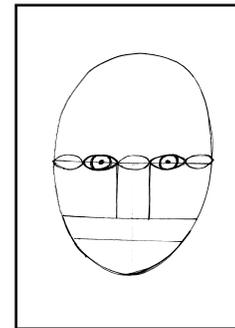


Then talk about the shape of the eye.

“The outer eye is not a circle, it is an almond shape. The iris is the colored part of the eye and it is a circular shape. Make sure that the iris touches the top and bottom of the eye. The next part of the eye is the pupil, this is the part that lets the light into the eye. It is also a circular shape. Notice the size of your neighbors pupil and now draw an eye in on your portrait. Use the five eye guidelines to draw in the eyes.”

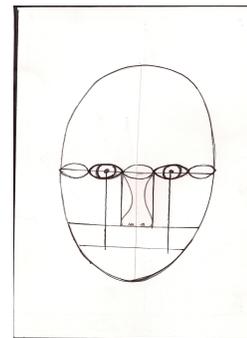


“Now, let’s look at the nose. Drop a straight line down from the inside corners of your eyes to the nose line. (You can show the children by using a ruler and putting it next to the corner of your eye and it will line up with the edge of your nostril). This is the edge of your nostrils.”



“Let’s also establish the outside edges of the mouth. If you drop a line straight down from the center of the pupils of your eyes (It is almost like you are cutting your eye in half) to the mouth, what do you come to? The outside corners of your mouth.”

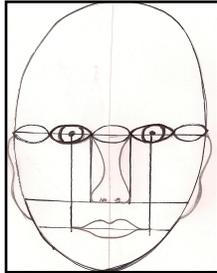
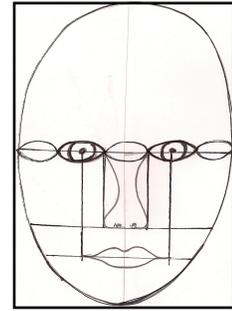
“Noses are wider than you think. Using your fingers start at your eyebrow line and slide down your nose and feel the way it starts out thin and gets thicker at the end of the nostril. Now draw in the nose using the guide lines. You don’t want to bring attention to the nostril so slightly suggest the nostril as a shape but not a circle! The nostrils are never perfect circles and drawing them that way will only bring attention to them.”



Next we will work on the mouth.

“Mouths are wider than you think. Start out drawing the top lip. First notice that the top lip has a slight dip in the middle. When you are drawing the mouth, start with the top lip at the corner and first follow the line a bit before drawing in the full part of the lip with a

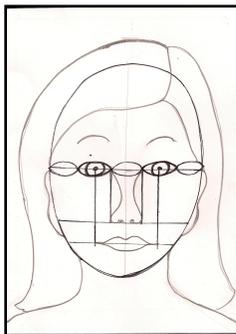
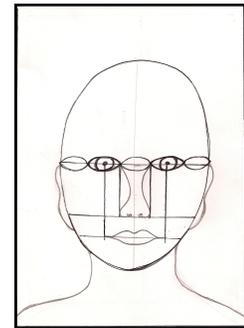
dip in the middle, continue drawing to the second corner. The bottom lip does not have the dip; it is often fuller.”



If you put your ruler on your face along the eye line, you can show the children where the ear starts. It often starts at the eye line.

“Now, children, notice on my face how the ear starts right at the eye line and the bottom lines up close to the mouth line. Ears are longer than you think. But we don’t want to feature the ears, we want to suggest them so you don’t want a lot of details.”

“Feel on your own face and neck. How wide is your neck compared to the width of your jaws just in front of your ears? You’ll see that your neck is almost as wide as your face. Many children tend to draw a pencil neck that couldn’t possibly hold the head up. Draw in your neck. Can your neck hold up your head?”



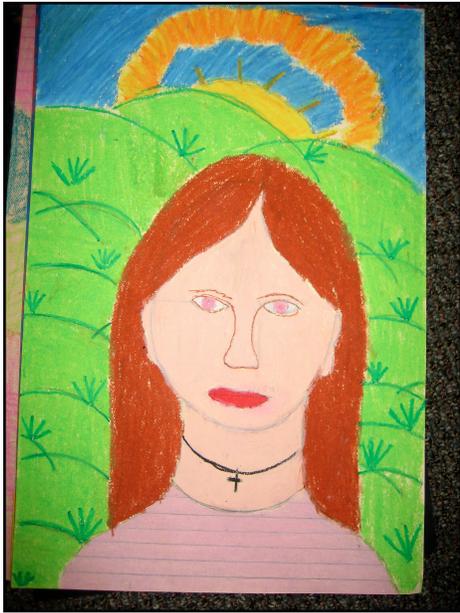
“Now fill in you eyebrows and make sure they are not too high on the fore head. Use your own face to feel this distance. The final touch is the hair. Two things to remember: the hair goes up higher than the top head line and there is no space between the hair and the neck.”

“Now, this is your map to use to help draw a portrait. You can use your face or a friend’s to help with details.”

Give the children a colored piece of paper and see if they can draw a face using what they have learned. Before they color it in you can check to see if they are on the right track. Use the oil pastels to color their drawing, this can help cover up any mistake lines.

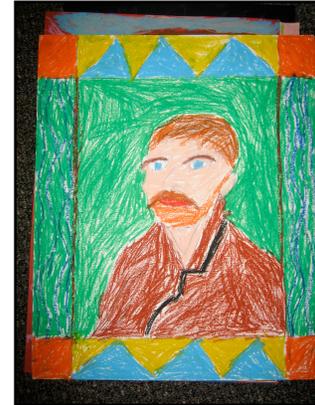
Evaluation

Hang all the finished projects up and discuss what worked well and what measurements might be a bit off.



Extension

*You can repeat this lesson adding new challenges each time. You can have the children look at famous portraits and try copying them or choose a hero and have them draw themselves as that hero.



*You can have them use different mediums each time: paint, collage, soft pastels etc.

*You can teach art movements; Impressionism, Cubism, Pointillism etc, and try a portrait in a particular style.

*Try a new size, add more than one person, add an animal etc.

*Look at the artist Giuseppe Arcimboldo and try first a drawing in his style and then try a face in clay. Use the techniques described in the lesson "Clay Tiles."

*Faces Show Feelings- Show pictures of faces that show strong emotion and have children identify the expression: anger, surprise, sadness or happiness. See if you can identify what gave you clues about each picture. Let students pair off and play a game, print the word happy, puzzled, frightened, sad, angry on a board. One student in each pair will express one of the emotions, The other will guess the emotion after looking closely at their partner. Now choose an emotion that you want to convey and try drawing it Have the children make a chart to show facial expressions .

