



Self Portrait by Ron (5th grader)

Draw A Self Portrait

Many artists depict themselves in one or more self portraits during their careers. These portraits do more than simply show us what the artists look like. They often reveal the artists' personalities, interests, and life styles. In this activity, you will be drawing your own self portrait and in the process reveal something about yourself.

Materials: a pencil, a large sheet of paper, and a mirror.

Getting Started: To begin, take a close look at your face in the mirror. Look for unique details such as the shape of your nose, the shape of your eyes, and the shapes made by your hair. Notice that your eyes are midway between the top of your head and the bottom of your chin. Next, look at the contours of your face. Take your finger and follow along the edges of your face. If you press slightly, you'll feel the bone structure that makes your face unique.

The Activity: To start your drawing, it is a good idea to work outwards from the center of your face. Start with your nose. Work slowly, keeping your eye focused on the contours of your face in the mirror. Look down at your

paper as little as possible. Rather than only drawing yourself, include something in your picture that will tell others about who you are, what you like to do, or where you live. When you've finished, pin your drawing up and stand back from it. Are you satisfied with the result? If so, sign and date your drawing at the bottom. If not, try another one. You'll get better with practice.



Self Portrait by Sheri (5th grader)

Want To Do More? Study self portraits by artists like Frida Kahlo, Rembrandt van Rijn, and Vincent van Gogh. What can you tell about these artists by looking at their portraits? How does their choice of medium affect the results?

Do a self portrait in another medium like charcoal, chalk, or tempera paint. Only, this time, work abstractly. Exaggerate your features. Use line and/or color to express something about your personality. When you've finished, pin both of your self portraits up and stand back from them. Which one do you feel expresses your personality better? Why? Ask others what they think of your portraits.