

Activity: Three-Dimensional Portraits

Students will examine the sculpture of Kate Barnard and create a portrait bust of a partner. Students will then discuss the sculpting techniques used to communicate likeness and expression in a three-dimensional bust portrait.

Grades: May be adapted for: Upper Elementary (3-5), Middle School (6-8), High School (9-12)

Subjects: Visual Arts

Time Required: 3–5-part lesson

Three class periods

PASS Objectives Addressed

Grade 4- The Arts

Standard 1: Language of Visual Art - The student will identify visual art terms (e.g., architecture, contour, medium, mixed media, perspective, symbol).

1. Know how works of art are made with respect to the materials, media, techniques, and sources of ideas.
2. Describe and use the principles of design: rhythm, balance, contrast, movement, variety, center of interest (emphasis), and repetition in works of art.
3. Describe and use the elements of art: line, color, form, shape, texture, value (light and dark), and space in works of art.
4. Discuss observations of visual and expressive features seen in the environment (such as colors, textures, shapes).

Standard 2: Visual Art History and Culture - The student will recognize the development of visual art from an historical and cultural perspective.

3. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of several fields of art such as painting, sculpture, drawing, computer graphics, printmaking, architecture, and fiber arts.

Standard 3: Visual Art Expression - The student will observe, select, and utilize a variety of ideas and subject matter in creating original works of art.

1. Make original works of art using a variety of materials (media), and techniques (skills), and sources for ideas.
2. Use observation, memory and imagination in making original works of art.
3. Apply knowledge of a basic art vocabulary through experiences in making original works of art.

High School- The Arts

Standard 1: Language of Visual Art - The student will identify visual art terms (e.g., content, engraving, foreshortening, mosaic, perspective)

1. Identify and apply knowledge of the principles of design: rhythm, balance (symmetrical, asymmetrical, radial) contrast, movement, variety, center of interest (emphasis), and repetition in personal artwork, and the artwork of others.
2. Identify and apply the elements of art: line, color, form, shape, texture, value (light and dark), and space in works of art. Discriminate between types of shape (geometric and organic), colors (primary, secondary, complementary, intermediates, neutrals, tints, tones, shades, and

values), lines (characteristics, quality), textures (tactile and visual), and space (background, middleground, foreground, placement, one-, two-, and three-point perspective, overlap, negative, positive, size, color) in personal artwork, and the art work of others.

Standard 3: Visual Art Expression - The student will observe, select, and utilize a variety of ideas and subject matter in creating original works of art.

1. Create original two- and three-dimensional works of art from observation, memory and imagination using a variety of art media

3. Develop and apply skills and techniques using a variety of art media, and processes in making two- and three-dimensional works of art:

Sculpture or media: paper, papier-mâché, clay, plaster, cardboard, wood, Architecture found objects, beads, sand, wire

processes: carving, constructing, and assembling

4. Demonstrate safe and proper use, care, and storage of media, materials, and equipment.

Standard 4: Visual Art Appreciation - The student will appreciate visual art as a vehicle of human expression.

2. Demonstrate respect for their work and the work of others.

Lesson Objectives

Students will be able to:

- discuss and analyze the subject and compositional elements of a three-dimensional portrait bust;
- use multiple techniques for creating a portrait bust with their hands and simple tools;
- create a three-dimensional portrait that communicates the characteristics of a friend, through the position of the head, facial expression, and movement;
- articulate in writing the processes undertaken to create a portrait bust.

Materials

- Image of *Kate Barnard* by Sandra Van Zandt
- *The People's Art: A tour of the Capitol Collection* DVD
- Air-drying modeling clay, such as Crayola® Model Magic®
- Pencils
- Sculpting tools or simple tools such as toothpicks, straws, or objects that will create texture when pressed into clay

Vocabulary

Bust – in art, the upper part of the human figure, especially a portrait sculpture showing only the head and shoulders of the subject

Composition – the overall placement and organization of elements in a work of art

Model – a person or thing that serves as a subject for an artist, sculptor, writer, etc

Portrait – a likeness of a person, especially of the face, as a painting, drawing, photograph, or sculpture

Texture – the surface quality of materials, either actual (tactile) or implied (visual); one of the elements of art

Three-Dimensional – having height, width, and depth (3-D)

Lesson Steps

1. Watch the part of the DVD about Kate Barnard. Show students an image of Kate Barnard by Sandra Van Zandt and discuss who she was (see 'Overview of the Artwork').
2. Ignite a group discussion to observe and analyze the sculpture. Use the following talking points:
 - a. Look closely at the sculpture and see her clothing, posture, and facial expression. What does it communicate about her?
 - b. Knowing the qualities about her character, how did the artist capture them in the sculpture? What do you know about her from looking at the sculpture?
 - c. What does her hair, accessories, and objects in the sculpture say about her?
 - d. Notice lines, shadows, and highlights in the sculpture. How do these elements help move your eyes to areas of focus?
 - e. Identify areas of deep shadows. How do these elements help create texture in the sculpture?
 - f. Discuss the difference between this sculpture and busts, which display only the head and shoulders of a person. You may look at the busts in the Hall of Governors to help compare.
 - g. How did the artist communicate Kate's characteristics in the bust of the portrait? How could more about Kate have been communicated in the head and shoulders had the sculpture been just the bust?
3. Discuss portraits. Portraits can be three-dimensional like this sculpture, or two-dimensional such as Jim Thorpe, Robert S. Kerr, Sequoyah, and Will Rogers.
 - a. Ask the students what they think makes a good portrait. What would you need to know about a person to create a portrait that communicates who the person is and what they are like? (Discuss likeness, specific characteristics, facial expressions, etc.)
4. Assign or allow the students to choose partners with whom to exchange portraits. The portraits will be three-dimensional busts.
 - a. Allow the students to discuss the best way to represent their partners. What characteristics about the partner will be important to include? Address the following:
 - i. How will the model's body language, position of the head, facial expression, and dress tell us something about them?
 - ii. How will these details be formed and where will they be placed to lead the viewers' eyes to focal points of the bust?
 - iii. Have the students consider where their busts will stop – at the neck, or just below the shoulders? What kind of base will the bust have? Explore the Hall of Governors again to gather ideas.
5. Before students set to work on their sculptures, give them one half hour to play with air-drying sculpting clay. Ask them to pinch, pull, poke, and ball the material to understand its possibilities. Explain to students that, in sculpting a face or a head, the sculptor shapes a character and a personality from a mass of clay. As each feature is pulled from, poked into, or added to the clay, the personality of the head becomes further defined. Have students experiment with pulling and pushing the material to create different dynamic expressions for their portrait busts. Ask students to consider exaggerating the emotions in the clay by manipulating the tilt of the eyebrows, the opening of the eyes, and tightness of the jaw and lips.

6. Students will then set to work to create three-dimensional portrait busts of their partners. Have students begin by balling the clay. Next have them squeeze a neck and pull shoulders from the ball. Next, have them pull out all of the features that protrude, or come out from the face, such as brows, nose, cheeks, chin, and lips. Finally, students should poke and push in all the features that recede into the face, such as nostrils, mouth, eye sockets, and ears. Have students think about how these details: the lines, shadows, and highlights they create direct the viewer around the work.
7. Have students experiment with adding more features, such as ears, eyebrows, and hair. Students can also use pencils to define details and change the facial expression.
8. Once students have finished their sculptures, have them write a description of the process they undertook to develop their portrait bust. Ask them to answer the following questions in their essays:
 - a. What characteristics or features of your partner did you consider when planning to make his or her portrait?
 - b. Describe some of the techniques you used to sculpt your partner's features.
 - c. Were there any features that proved to be particularly difficult? Why?
9. Discuss the students' finished projects using the following questions in a class critique:
 - a. What were the challenges and successes of working in 3-D?
 - b. What were the challenges and successes of working in clay?
 - c. How successful were the students in conveying something about their partners in the sculptures?
 - d. How do the students' finished sculpture projects differ from what they conceived in their minds initially?

Assessment

Students may be assessed on their finished three-dimensional portrait bust which should include the position of the head, facial expression, and focal points. Written assignments outlining their process may also include all criteria listed in lesson instructions.