Lesson Plan Starter: Self-Portrait Value Drawing

Plan ID: 4685

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Dryden Elementary - IL, United States
for grade level » **Elementary (3-5)**
duration » **4 sessions (about 40 minutes per session)**
media type » **Drawing**
subject integration » **n/a**

Students learn to create a self-portrait in a 3/4 pose a shade the portrait using a range of values.

Sample Artwork:

Materials (what you need)

18"x24" white paper
mirrors (dollar store locker mirrors work great)
pencil
sharpie
access to a printer
Ebony pencil
blending stump
kneaded eraser
scrap paper or sketchbook

Procedure (what you need)

1. Students were guided through a step-by-step lesson on mapping out a face in a 3/4 pose where they were taught to measure for the size and placement of each feature and encouraged to look closely in the mirror.
2. I demonstrated how to interpret a face as a contour line drawing by drawing over my photo on my interactive whiteboard. See example here: http://twitpic.com/h79ky/full
3. After they complete their contour line drawings of their self-portraits in a 3/4 pose students trace their lines in sharpie and erase their pencil. They looked like this:
http://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?exhibit=315708
I take a digital image of them and color correct until there is nothing but black and white (no grays) in the image. Then I send them to the printer for 8 1/2" x 11" copies. I save the large portraits for their paintings:
http://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?exhibit=335027 and use the print outs for the value drawings.
4. Next all students use ebony pencils to practice a value scale. Print yours here: http://twitpic.com/3u61yt/full
I demo shading on my digital value scale with my wacom tablet on the computer (projected to my interactive board). I use ARTRAGE software or Photoshop Elements with a digital pencil tool. The Wacom tablet is pressure sensitive and gives a very good digital representation of shading.
5. Once we have all completed a value scale that shows a range of values students are ready to begin working on a practice sphere in their sketchbooks. We draw a circle, divide it into spaces from north pole to south pole, and add dark to lightest values from left to right while practicing pencil pressure and pencil direction. See video example:
http://web.me.com/fuglefun/E-Learning/DocCam.html
6. Now students are ready to work on their value drawing portraits. We start by doing this together. We decide what value number would be go for a particular area, I discuss what direction the pencil strokes should be in this area and we try to shade until it matches our value scale in that space. Then we find a new space on our portraits and shade it to the appropriate value. During this time we are discussing shadows making shades and highlights making tints. We also discuss pencil pressure, direction, and blending. We use the kneaded eraser to add back highlights and the blending stump to softy transition. See video clip of me using the wacom tablet with artrage to simulate value drawing: http://www.twitvid.com/PPTNO

Assessment

Students create a value scale to find a range of values.

Discussion Questions

What can you do to make your contour line drawing look 3-D?
When do you use highlights verse shadows?
How can pencil direction impact the final look of your artwork?

Resources

Show students the artwork of MC Escher as examples for value drawings.
Use this Fugleflick video to introduce Value Drawing: http://vimeo.com/23505062
Use digital images of students and transparencies (or tracing paper) to practice contour line drawings.
Use a value scale (http://twitpic.com/3u61yt/full) to practice and give a common language to your work, for example "Let's shade the left cheek in a value #5 and use a value #2 for the bridge of the nose." Watch a video of me using artrage & my wacom tablet to shade along with my students: http://www.twitvid.com/PPTNO

Follow-up Activities

Use the original contour line drawings to make portrait paintings:
http://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?exhibit=335027
Then use the portrait paintings to make Newsweek Magazine covers as a graphic design lesson:
http://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?exhibit=124297

Content Keywords

3/4 pose, blending, highlights, portrait, self-portrait, shade, shades, Shading, shadow, shadows, Sphere, tablet, tints, value, value drawing, wacom

Curriculum Standards

1-A (PK - 4) Students know the differences between materials, techniques, and processes
1-B (PK - 4) Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses
2-C (PK - 4) Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas