

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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VISUAL ARTS — 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## REFLECTION: DRAWING: COLONIAL PORTRAITS

### **Without judgment, describe what you did. Just the facts:**

I created an interdisciplinary unit on Colonial Portraits to teach how to draw a portrait.

- Students were asked to create a preliminary portrait without instruction, and then introduced to placement and proportions.
- Following step-by-step instructions on a worksheet, they created a second draft. Using self and peer assessment, and then students revised their work.
- They drew the final portrait following the same steps, and colored the faces using oil pastels.
- At this point students performed another peer-assessment to revise light and dark areas, and blending. They finished their portrait and wrote a reflection.

### **What went well?**

Most students gave good feedback, but they preferred to do it verbally. They were able to help their peers in finding mistakes and offer strategies to use in their revision. Most students agreed with what their peers' suggested. The final portrait demonstrated amazing progress from the first draft. By the end of the unit, students were able to work more independently, and ask for feedback from their peers first.

### **What was so-so?**

Even though students used step-by-step instructions, and used the ruler to check for placement and proportions, many still drew the eyes above the middle line of the face, instead of drawing on the line. The shading of the hair presented difficulties in showing light and dark tones. Some students had difficulties understanding placement, and they still drew the eyes very high on the final portrait. It took longer to fill out the forms that anticipated. The use of proper vocabulary in their responses was poor, even though students were provided with a Word Bank, and sentence starters. It took time for some students to feel comfortable with the opinions of their peers.

### **What was the most challenging part of trying this?**

Students are not used to working independently by following rubrics and checklists. Some felt frustrated when they had to rely solely on their peer's feedback, and without the teacher's input. Since many students don't have continuity in art, from kindergarten to 8th grade, they lacked experience in identifying certain mistakes, in the work of others.

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## **What was the impact of this strategy on student learning? (specific examples)**

These formative assessment strategies impacted students' understanding of how to use a checklist, and worksheets to draw proper proportions, and placement of features. The evidence collected, showed how the students' work progressed and demonstrated the new acquired skills, not only in the revisions but also in the final product. At the end, students were more receptive in listening to their peers, and in asking questions.

## **What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience? (share with group)**

- Do more modeling with the assessment worksheets.
- Give student a photograph, and ask them to measure sizes and distances themselves, to help them to place eyes in the middle of the head.
- Turn and talk about each other's hair, to observe hairline and shading.
- Incorporate homework where they can use specific art vocabulary.
- Have more critique discussions to help students identify qualities in student artwork.

## **Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc.):**

Lesson plans, checklists, rubrics, worksheets, and reading materials with questions.