

# Arts Assessment For Learning

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VISUAL ARTS — 7<sup>TH</sup> GRADE

## REFLECTION: *FAUVIST* PORTRAIT PAINTING

**Without judgement, describe what you did. just the facts:**

### **Whole Class Blending Visual Rubric Activity**

Students were introduced to the 3 criteria of blending, edge and value on the first day of painting. They worked hard to master these skills over the first few painting sessions. On the third class session students analyzed the blending rubric as an entire class. We modeled how to fill out the group charts and then the students filled the charts out. Students worked together to find the language to describe the rubric levels. We circulated to help students fill out the chart. Each group presented their findings and we rephrased some comments to align more with proper vocabulary and syntax. The students' descriptions were typed into the presentation for future reference in upcoming classes.

### **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 1**

Students created a warm and cool value scale for their painting. On the first day we reviewed a warm/cool value scale visual rubric to the whole class. After students completed the chart they placed their scale onto of the graphic organizer chart and a peer assessed their work. The artists read the peer feedback, agreed or disagreed, had a conversation with their peers and made a plan for revision.

Students were given time to revise their scales based on the feedback.

### **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 2**

After the analysis of the blending rubric students were given a graphic organizer of a generic portrait to be used as a schematic map of a face. They were instructed on how to fill it out and the students wrote about each other's work one criterion at a time. Afterwards the artists read the peer feedback, agreed or disagreed, had a conversation with their peers and made a plan for revision. Students were given time to revise their scales based on the feedback.

## **What went well?**

### **Whole Class Blending Visual Rubric Activity**

Students had an opportunity to work in small groups to analyze the rubric on a deeper level. They had conversation and in some cases debates about the proper way to describe the rubric level. The plus and minus sign under each rubric visual guided students on how to write the rubric level descriptions. Revising the rubric to focus on a

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close up sample of blending helped the student focus more on the criterion and less on the overall appearance of each rubric level sample. Presenting a variety of student portraits that are level 4's in blending helped avoid the misconception that a level 4 artwork must be painting in the same style and pallet as the level 4 visual sample.

## **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 1**

The warm/cool value scale visual rubric is simple and clear and students understood it immediately. The graphic organizer was also clear for students and they found it easy to write comments to their peers around the value scale. The graphic organizer provided students with the opportunity to write feedback right next to the area of focus. This made the feedback direct and accessible to the artist. They didn't have to read writing on a separate sheet of paper and infer what area their peer was talking about, the location of the writing made the content of the feedback clear. Many students made improvements to their work based on their peer's feedback.

## **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 2**

Again, the map-like quality of the graphic organizer makes feedback very clear, especially for ELL students. Using color coded criteria helped students organize their writing and made the feedback clear to their peer. The students seemed to find it encouraging that their peers were making positive comments about their work. Reviewing the compliments first helped some students to be open to the more critical feedback. Many students also debated and defended their work by disagreeing with their peers criticism. One pair had a long conversation about the quality of blending found on the nose of the portrait. The artists adamantly noted that the light created a hard edge on the highlight of her nose and she felt that blending it into a soft edge would incorrectly represent the lighting on her face. She decided to leave her painting as it was. However, many students made slight but necessary improvements to their work based on their peers feedback.

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

### **Whole Class Blending Visual Rubric Activity**

Some students had difficulty describing blending and needed a word bank to broaden their vocabulary on the topic. While the activity was helpful at refining student's understanding of the criterion, their descriptions of each rubric level were specific to the rubric sample and did not always include language that would describe blending in general sense. Basically, their descriptions were great for describing this particular visual blending rubric but without the visuals the description is a bit vague.

## **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 1**

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A great number of students selected the same color pallet as the warm/cool value scale level 4 rubric sample. We need to create a variety of warm/cool level 4 examples to encourage a more diverse pallet range in the student work. Some students revised a particular value level several times but could still not put their colors in the correct order.

## **Graphic Organizer Peer Assessment Activity 2**

Sometimes students read their peer's feedback and set goals for improvement but forget to make the changes in their work. This is partially due to time limitations of the project and also the rigorous nature of the painting assignment. Some students become so engrossed in painting an incomplete area that they fail to address the areas that need improvement.

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

Reminding students to follow the protocol. Although we have used formative assessment many times with this class it is still a challenge to keep students from defending their work before their peer has completed the assessment writing.

## **What was the impact of this strategy on student learning?**

It was amazing to see the artistic process that my students go through in such a clear and documented way. One student in 624 was always voicing her ideas and experiences in front of the camera. It was not my intention to focus on her, but by the end of the project I found that I was able to capture her whole experience. She also became very clear and precise in the way she was able to communicate ideas about her work and the process she used to create her prints. She was also able to clearly explain the printing process, which I often find is difficult for many students even after they have completed their prints.

Although this project focused on self- assessment, I found that my students are always talking about their work with each other, giving each other suggestions, and clarifying the things that they find confusing. The rubrics I have created that are based on the conversations we have had in class really give them a basis for their conversations and clearly outline the criteria for them so that they can have meaningful discussions.

## **What questions were raised for you as you implemented the assessment practice?**

How can we modify these assessment tools and strategies for ELL students? How can we reinforce assessment protocol to be more efficient? How can we ensure that students become personally responsible for meeting their revision goals?

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## **What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience?**

Focusing the rubric on one clear criterion improved student skills in observation and blending. Using the feedback protocol elevated the way they interacted and gave feedback.

After completing these strategies we have learned the importance of showing many Level 4 student samples to the students. We have learned that the graphic organizers help student organize their feedback and make it clear to others. It is also helpful for ELL students because they can circle and write a word or simple sentence in the area being assessed. In our next action plan we would like to develop strategies to help ELL students write more than a word but also help them construct simple coherent sentences. We would also like to develop a tool or routine that would require students to meet their revision goals.

## **How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?**

We are learning how to more effectively teach painting using peer assessment.

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

Student portraits, Blending Rubric on chart paper, graphic organizer writing, videos and before and after photos.