

Monochromatic Self Portraits



Teacher Preparation:

For practice exploration:

Option 1 - Take photographs of staff members who are willing to participate. Make a class CD of staff members - or store photographs in folder on net work that students can access.

Option 2 - Select people through time that have made a difference (Heroes). Choose people that are part of the social studies course of study. Select only photographs/portraits that are in public domain (in general before 1923). Store on CD or network folder. If using this option, also have student write down reasons why this person is important (get in a brief character lesson). Briefly discuss copyright/public domain.

Lesson summary:

This is a skills lesson on painting - mixing values - and an introduction to Photoshop/Photoshop Elements. Students learn how to posterize an image. Then use that image for a monochromatic self portrait painting with contrasting color background. [See suggestions below for more ideas.](#)

Resources:

Pop art - Andy Warhol - Expressionists portraits

Objectives:

- Integrate technology - learn some Photoshop basics

Materials:

Digital camera - student photos
Optional - CD of staff photos or

- Develop portrait to show mood/feelings through color
- Develop skills in painting
- Create values (scale of five values) - exhibit contrast.
- Learn how other artists have used technology of their time (use of photographic images)

heroes
 Photoshop (or other photo editing software)
 Printer
 Illustration board or poster board
 Seral transfer paper (or graphite)
 tempera paints - mixing trays - brushes

To the student:

This assignment will allow you to explore:

1. **Mixing colors**
2. **Values**
3. **Using PhotoShop and/or PhotoShop Elements**
4. **Contrast**

The first thing you will need is a photograph of yourself. *(I have done Polaroid images then scanned them. I have also done digital and downloaded them into a common folder for the students to pick up from the network)* If the image will need to be scanned and since there is only one scanner, you must wait your turn. While waiting, you will get familiarized with the program. Instructions follow:

1. Log onto a computer
2. Go to **PhotoShop Elements**
3. Click on **New File**
4. Set Image Size to 8.5 x 11
5. Click on **Layer**
 - a. Click on **New (You should always work with a blank background layer. Consider this to be your “table” and not to be drawn on!)**
6. Open CD (or class folder)
7. Select photograph/portrait you wish to alter from those presented - Open image
 - a. Right click on the image
 - b. Choose copy
 - c. Close window and return to Photoshop Elements
8. **Ctrl V to paste your image onto the top layer.**
9. Click on **IMAGE**
 - a. Choose **RESIZE**
 - b. Drag corners to fit your **CANVAS (do not change proportion of image. Crop canvas if needed)**
10. Click on **IMAGE** again
 - a. Choose **MODE**
 - b. Choose **GRAYSCALE**
11. Click on **IMAGE** again
 - a. Choose **ADJUSTMENTS**

- b. Choose **POSTERIZE**
 - c. Experiment with numbers. Attempt to get 5 values including black and white.
 - d. Save image to file (to your own folder) - label with your name-name of photo
12. Print to Lab Printer (optional for practice portrait - teacher may assess these from student folders)
 13. **When you have your own photo, repeat these steps to create your posterized self portrait.**
 14. Students who finish early - may explore selected features of Photoshop/Photoshop elements and manipulate their own photograph (save as new name) or practice photograph (don't save).

PART II

Now that you have your posterized portrait, you will begin to prepare to paint.

1. As always, make a 1" border on your illustrator board.
2. Slide transfer paper (Seral paper) between the face and the illustration board. (You can make your own transfer paper using graphite on tracing paper)
3. Trace each value shape firmly with pencil. Include those of the background.

BE CERTAIN THAT YOU KEEP THE IMAGE FOR REFERENCE!

You are ready to begin to paint your portrait:

1. You will begin by painting the white areas and the black areas (black areas will be most interesting with a touch of your color added)
2. When those areas are completed, you may pick a single color to create the middle values.
3. Work from lightest areas to darkest areas.
4. Be certain that you leave no gaps between the areas of paint (no illustration board peeking through).

After you have finished your face, you will need to paint the background:

Make your background contrast with your portrait. It can contrast in one of the following ways:

- Complementary (opposite each other on the color wheel)
- Warm vs. cool
- Color vs. grayscale

Using color you choose, create values, but **do not include pure white or pure black black.**

Follow-up Lesson:

Look at the work of Andy Warhol and discuss how photography was used. Look at other Pop artists and see how they used available technology. Look at Expressionists portraits and discuss color for emotion. Compare student experience to the historical examples. Learn a little about the life and influences of the artists presented.