

GRADE LEVEL: MIDDLE SCHOOL

BASED ON

Sarah Goodridge (American, 1788-1853), *The Studious Youth* (Master Edward Appleton), ca. 1826-28, 1990.1370

VOCUBULARY

assemblage
color
concept
consistent
icon
portrait concept
sculpture
symbol

OBJECTIVES

- Students will create a mixed-media self-portrait based on the portrait work on Sarah Goodridge.
- Students will create a portrait using correct proportion understand that sculpture can be made by assembling and joining ready-made and discarded materials.
- Students will understand that ready-made and discarded materials can be imaginatively recycled to create sculpture.
- Students will create a self-portrait by assembling and joining found objects.
- Students will explore their identity and share something about who they are with others.

MATERIALS

- boxes: altoid, cigar, cookie tins
- wallpaper or other colorful paper for covering boxes (boxes may also be painted)
- permanent markers
- scissors
- glue (a low-heat glue gun is the best choice)
- assortment of materials for decorating the boxes (colored glue, lace, stickers, fabric swatches, ribbon, etc.)
- assorted found objects (small toys, photographs, cards, etc.) brought in by the students to represent themselves

CONCEPT

Through this activity, students gain skills in analysis and reflection. They also learn how to express themselves through visual means (specifically through assemblage) and how symbols can be used to represent personality traits and experiences.

BACKGROUND

Sarah Goodridge was a prolific artist who overcame her self-taught beginnings to become a highly successful American miniaturist. Growing up in Boston she became influenced by the work of Gilbert Stuart, eventually opening her own studio and having her work included in five national exhibitions between 1827 and 1835. Self-portraits functioned as an advertisement of artists' skills, as a marketing tool, in effect. Influenced by her beautiful and insightful miniature portraits, the students will create their own miniature self-portrait by creating an imaginative self-portrait using the materials and methods of assemblage sculpture. These assemblage boxes will serve as advertisements for the students, conveying both representations of themselves and the importance they see in their own lives.

PROCEDURE

1. Share image of *The Studious Youth* with students. Discuss portrait miniatures (construction and purpose) with them and brainstorm what they may want to include in a self-portrait.
2. Fit your paper to your box, cutting it as needed. Carefully crease the paper at

CLASS EXPERIENCE

the corners and along the edges. When the paper is well fitted to the box, glue it down. (An alternative is painting your box or using a combination of paint and paper.) Think about how you will display your box and what the viewer will be able to see. Cover all the surfaces that will be visible.

3. Decide which materials and objects you will use in your box. Think about choosing colors that blend or contrast and about the placement of your objects. When you are ready, begin gluing the objects inside your box with the low-heat glue gun. If the objects are heavy, you may have to use an alternative method to attach them to your box, such as wires or screws.

ASSESSMENT

Students should be encouraged to talk about their boxes with one another, sharing what the objects and symbols represent and asking questions about their classmates' creations.

Students can also include private symbols in their boxes with meanings are not shared with the class.

The most important part of this project is the process of analyzing who and what you are and how much you're willing to share. Students should feel successful because they have experienced this process of self-discovery and expressed their concept of self through the collection and placement of objects in their character boxes.

NATIONAL STANDARDS: VISUAL ARTS

1. Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks.
2. Students apply subjects, symbols, and ideas in their artworks and use the skills gained to solve problems in daily life.
3. Students analyze, describe, and demonstrate how factors of time and place (such as climate, resources, ideas, and technology) influence visual characteristics that give meaning and value to a work of art.
4. Students describe the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within varied cultures, times and places.
5. Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context.
6. Students compare the materials, technologies, media, and processes of the visual arts with those of other arts disciplines as they are used in creation and types of analysis.