
The Story of Frida Kahlo



Grade: Kindergarten

Medium: Crayons

Learning Objective:

Students will:

- observe the art of Mexican artist, Frida Kahlo, and learn about her legacy.
- draw her portrait.
- become familiar with elements and principles of design used in this lesson.

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Elements of Art

Line: the flat path of a dot through space used by artists to control the viewer's eye movement; a long narrow mark or stroke made on or in a surface made by a pencil, pen, or brush.

Shape: a two-dimensional (flat) area enclosed by a line.

Space: the area above, below, around and within an artwork.

Principles of Design

Balance: the arrangements of elements that makes individual parts of a composition appear equally important. Major types of balance are symmetrical and asymmetrical. This lesson will focus on symmetrical, in which the image or form is equally weighted on both sides of a center line.

Additional Vocabulary

Details: Smaller things that inform the viewer about the person depicted in the portrait.

Horizontal Lines: lines that run from side to side on the paper.

Portrait: close up picture of a face and neck.

Vertical Lines: lines that run from the top to the bottom of the paper.

Materials & Supplies

- White Cardstock (pre-printed with head outline, provided in attached template)
- White scrap paper for practice
- Pencils & erasers
- Black water-based markers
- Crayons
- Glue sticks
- Painter's tape
- Images of Frida Kahlo showing her colorful clothing
- ***Optional** Silk flowers, paper flowers

Context (History and/or Artists):

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) was German-Mexican, raised in a small Mexican village, disabled with polio as a child. Her father was a prominent photographer and he taught her how to use the camera. He also encouraged her to paint portraits, fruits and animals. At age 18 she was in a bus accident and lived with painful back problems for the rest of her life. She painted constantly: in bed or in a wheelchair. She painted everything she could: self-portraits, her jewelry and dresses, even her pets (a deer, monkey, birds and a dog). She was inspired by Mexican folk culture and her Catholic beliefs. This helped her cope with having to stay immobile for so long.

At age 21, she married Mexican Diego Rivera, a famous muralist that painted everyday Mexican people on the street. The couple's art became very popular in Europe and America. She painted for the rest of her short life, despite all her health issues.

Advanced Preparation

- Tape the paper to the student's desk with painters' tape. This creates a clean white edge and keeps the paper from moving around while the student's work.
- Copy template onto cardstock (1 for each student).
- Find color images of Frida Kahlo and her artwork, showing her bright clothing and all of the colorful details featured in her artwork. Also find a copy of the US postage stamp featuring Kahlo's portrait.

Tips & Tricks

- Have the students use a template (provided) so they begin with the basic correct head shape, they will work free-form drawing other details including Frida's hair, facial features and the neckline of her dress.
- Encourage students to be bold with color and not give up, not obsessing over mistakes or problems. Remind them to just do their best and be strong like Frida!
- Kindergarteners may lose interest after 30 minutes. You can schedule this in 2 sessions if easier: the artist's story and the drawing first, coloring later.

Discussion Points

- Use the vocabulary words whenever you can.

- What made Frida Kahlo different? (She stayed alone in a wheelchair, was uncomfortable most of her life but stayed dedicated to art. She used bright colors and personal objects.)
- What would you do to pass the time and stay challenged if you had to be home and couldn't move your legs? (You would do things to keep your mind and your hands busy.)
- Frida Kahlo is the only Mexican woman whose portrait appears on a US postage stamp.
- People still enjoy Frida Kahlo's work because of the details she used to communicate her feelings. Even though she painted her own experiences, people say she describes their feelings and experiences. Her work expresses feelings of being left out, sadness, pain and joy. Can you see her feelings in her artwork?

Reflection Point (Assessment of Learning Objectives)

Students will:

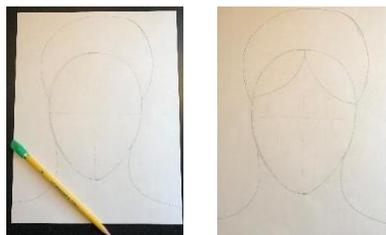
- observe the art of Mexican artist Frida Kahlo and learn about her legacy.
- draw her portrait.
- become familiar with vocabulary used in this lesson.

Instructions for Lesson

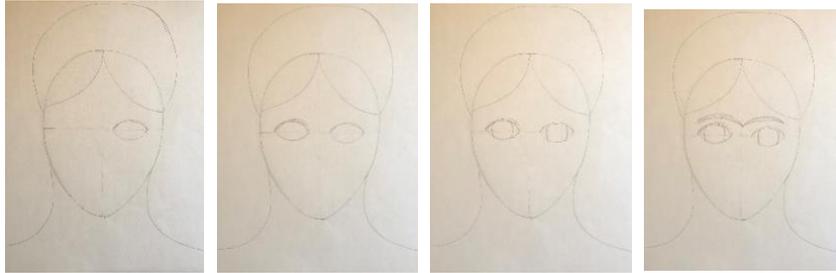
Spend a few minutes looking at Kahlo's self-portrait and briefly describe her life. Point out the location and shapes of facial features within the template shape. Talk about colors and how basic shapes 'balance' by being in the same places on both sides of an imaginary bisecting vertical line.

Demonstrate each step for your students and have them follow along. The students will be able to decorate Frida's flower crown, add adornments and color her. Students at this developmental level will draw large shapes more easily. Encourage details and color choices.

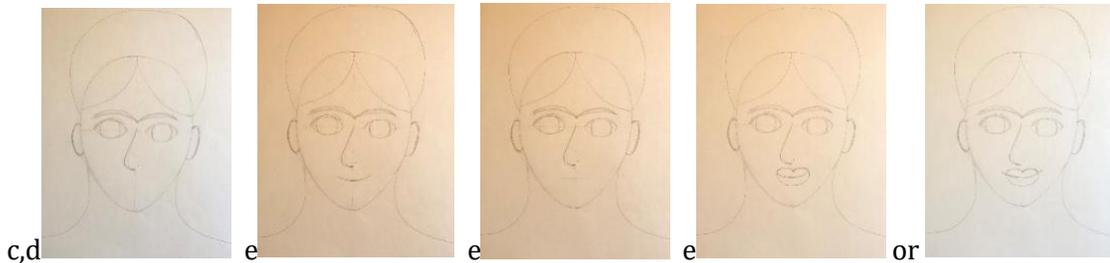
1. Demonstrate drawing eyes, a nose and a mouth. Draw a mouth and eyebrows showing different expressions: happy, sad, naughty, scared, or angry. Let students practice on their scrap paper with various expressions. Share your demonstrations and label the emotions you are trying to get with various shapes.
 - a. A simple horizontal line
 - b. A line curved up
 - c. A slightly curved line with an M on top and a laying down C underneath.
 - d. Eyebrows can be horizontal, diagonal, curved or a mixture.
2. Using the template and a pencil, demonstrate drawing a crescent atop Frida's head for a flower crown.



3. Draw the front hair lines from the center of the top of her head to the sides of her head almost to the horizontal line.



4. Facial features: again, whatever they attempt is fine. Don't worry if it's not perfect.
 - a. Eyes – draw a football shape centered on the horizontal line and centered between the vertical line and the side of her face. Add curved lines inside the football (usually only a part of our pupil shows, when we see our whole pupil, we look scared or surprised so we only draw part of the circle). Repeat on the other side.
 - b. Eyebrows – Frida had distinct eyebrows. Draw her eyebrows like a wide V, or a flying bird centered on the vertical line above her eyes.



- c. Nose – a simple swooped line or an upside down 7 will work for her nose. Draw this from the horizontal line to halfway to her chin in the center of her face.
- d. Ears – start at the horizontal line and continue to the end of the nose on either side of the head. Use a simple C to draw these.
- e. Mouth – our mouth is halfway between the end of our nose and our chin centered on the vertical line. Students can pick which of their practice mouths they want to use.
5. Using the light lines provided have students add clothing to Frida's shoulders, disappearing off the page. Students can add patterns or other decoration to her clothing.



6. Lastly, draw her flower crown and signature adornments: flowers, leaves, birds, a necklace, and a pair of earrings.
 - a. Flowers can be drawn using circles and ovals for leaves
7. Go over pencil with a black marker.



8. Color with crayons.

References and Attributions

Lesson written by Amaranta Sandys. Books available at the library: *Frida* by Jonah Winter; *Viva Frida*, by Yuyi Morales; *Who was Frida?* by Sarah Fabiny.

Notes for Educators

21st Century Thinking Skills

Observing, making connections, visualizing, sequencing, comparing/contrasting, finding evidence, problem solving, determining point of view, decision making, evaluating.

WA State Learning Standards

VA:Cr1.2.K a. Engage collaboratively in creative art-making in response to an artistic problem.

VA:Cr2.2.K a. Identify safe and non-toxic art materials, tools, and equipment.

VA:Cr2.3.K a. Create art that represents natural and constructed environments.

VA:Cr3.1.K a. Explain the process of making art while creating. This happens if you use vocabulary.

VA:Re7.1.K a. Identify uses of art within one's personal environment.

VA:Re7.2.K a. Describe what an image represents.

VA:Re8.1.K a. Interpret art by identifying subject matter and describing relevant details.

VA:Cn11.1.K a. Identify a purpose of an artwork. This happens when you explain the content of the portrait.

Arts Integration Opportunities

Music: Incorporate Mexican music during the lesson.

Dress up play: Colorful clothing, fabrics, flower crowns.

Movement: bring in a wheelchair for students to engage with in a meaningful way.

