

Frida Kahlo Portrait

Grade: 3rd

Medium: Oil Pastels

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.

Author: Amaranta Sandys



Elements of Art

Color: the visible range of reflected light. The 3 **primary** colors are red, blue and yellow. They can be mixed to make the 3 **secondary** colors of green, orange and violet.

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; a thin mark made by a pencil, pen, or brush.

Shape: a two-dimensional (flat) area enclosed by a line: geometric shapes are based on mathematical principles, such as a square/cube, circle/sphere, triangle/cone, or pyramid. organic shapes are irregular, often curving or rounded, and more informal than geometric shapes.

Space: the area within an artwork; the illusion of depth creates 3-d space on a 2-d surface by means of rendering shapes' sizes to overlap and using linear perspective.

Principles of Design

Balance: A way of combining elements to add a feeling of equilibrium to a work of art. Major types are symmetrical and asymmetrical. This lesson will focus on symmetrical, in which elements are repeated on both sides of an imaginary vertical line bisecting the space in a 'mirror' image.

Pattern: elements repeated in a regular arrangement. In this lesson lines, shapes and color are repeated.

Additional Vocabulary

Blending colors is a term used often in art, particularly in painting and drawing. It is the technique of gently intermingling two or more **colors** or values to create a gradual transition or new color, or to soften lines.

Contour lines are used to define edges. They create boundaries around or inside an object.

Materials & Supplies

- Black Cardstock or construction paper
- Rulers
- Pencils & erasers
- Oil Pastels
- White colored pencils

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 and let her paint portraits, fruits and animals. At age 18 she was in a bus accident and lived with back problems for the rest of her life. She painted constantly: in bed or in a wheelchair. She painted everything she could reach: 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

- If there is time to read a book to the class, these are recommended: "Frida" by Jonah Winter, "Viva Frida" by Yuyi Morales, "Who was Frida?" by Sarah Fabiny.
- It's optional to "frame" the page with white pastel for students, or they can do it during class, if time. A frame makes it feel more like a painting. Simply line the ruler along the paper's edge and draw, turning the paper as you go.
- Print images of Frida Kahlo portraits as a reference for their drawing.

Tips & Tricks

- This is a 'guided' drawing, in which students follow your example, step by step, beginning with the overall shape, and then the symmetrical placement of details.

Discussion Points

- What makes Frida Kahlo's art unique?
- 75 years ago, women weren't able to paint and travel alone easily. What do you think about that?
- Fun fact: Frida Kahlo is the only Mexican featured on a US postage stamp.
- What would you do to pass the time and stay challenged if you had to stay home and couldn't move?

Reflection Point (Assessment of Learning Objectives)

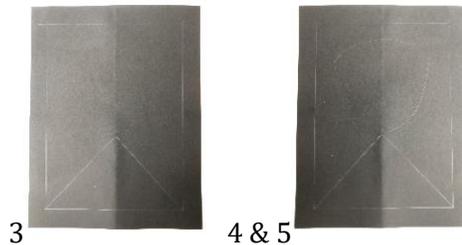
Students will:

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

Instructions for Lesson

This lesson starts as a “guided” drawing. First, you demonstrate a step, next, have your students do it, then demonstrate the next step.

1. Have students lightly fold their black paper hotdog-style.
2. Using a ruler, lightly draw a white colored pencil line border about 1” away from the edge of the paper (students will later fill this with a pattern).
3. Lightly draw a triangle that fills the bottom 1/3 of the page. You can measure about 3” up the dividing line, make evenly placed dots near the lower corners, and connect with a line.



4. Draw a large U, filling the middle 1/3 of the page.
5. Draw an arch to the top to create her head, leave some space above head for hair and flowers.



6. Begin drawing her face:
 - a. $\frac{1}{2}$ way up the face (between chin and top of head) draw two curved lines the same length for eyes (either closed or open).



a, b, c

- b. a vertical line for nose or upside down 7 for the nose (or they can do their own line for nose).
- c. lips can be a single line then add an open C on bottom and an M on the top.
- d. Draw C's for ears and add earrings.
- e. Add Frida's eye brows above her eyes and connect them above the nose.
- f. Draw diagonal lines on her head for the hair wrap and add curled hair on top.



- g. Draw a big flower in the center and two small ones on the side.
 - h. For her dress they can do any patterns of lines, vertical, zig zag, curve lines to decorate it.
 - i. Add a necklace or other ornament.
7. Draw repetitive half circles, triangles or squares to decorate the edge of the frame.
 8. Once they have drawn each part lightly with a pencil, then have them erase the point of the triangle that will flow into her neck.



9. Start coloring using the point of the pastels for richer color. Color the hair, lips and dress, leaving some spaces without color to give some visual balance. Avoid black oil pastel, it smears too much.

References and Attributions

Lesson written by Amaranta Sandys.

Books: "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:Cr2.1.3) a. Create personally satisfying artwork, using a variety of artistic processes and materials.

(VA:Cr2.2.3) a. Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.

(VA:Cr3.1.3) a. Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance emerging meaning.

(VA:Pr6.1.3) a. Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art.

(VA:Re7.1.3) a. Speculate about processes an artist uses to create a work of art. This happens when seeing the connection between an artist's life experiences and the art they make.

(VA:Re7.2.3) a. Determine messages communicated by an image.

(VA:Re8.1.3) a. Interpret art by analyzing use of media to create subject matter, characteristics of form, and mood.

(VA:Re9.1.3) a. Evaluate an artwork based on given criteria. This happens when looking for evidence of following directions.

(VA:Cn10.1.3) a. Develop a work of art based on observations of surroundings.

(VA:Cn11.1.3) a. Recognize that responses to art change depending on knowledge of the time and place in which it was made.

Arts Integration Opportunities

Writing: creative writing about one of Kahlo's paintings; procedural writing about the steps followed to make the portrait; biography of Kahlo's life.