Lesson 6

CREATING THE PORTRAIT

Lesson 6: Creating the Portrait

GRADE LEVEL: HIGH SCHOOL

MULTIPLE SESSIONS 90 MINUTES PER SESSION,
(ADAPTABLE BASED ON PROJECT NEEDS)

OBJECTIVE:
Students will create their portraits using their chosen materials and techniques, incorporating feedback and focusing on technique, layering, and fine details.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

- Students' finalized portrait plans (sketches, reference photos, and materials lists)
- Art materials based on students' chosen medium (e.g., pencils, charcoal, paints, brushes, canvases, fixative sprays, erasers, etc.)
- Work surfaces (easels, tables, boards)
- Mirrors (optional, for live self-references)
- Peer and self-assessment checklists
- Aprons or protective gear (for painting)

WARM UP:
REVIEWING THE PLAN (10 MINUTES)

Goal: Ensure students are clear on their process before beginning.

Instructions:
- Ask students to briefly review their final sketch and materials list.
- Discuss individual goals for the session, such as:
  - "What will you focus on today? Proportions, underpainting, or starting details?"
- Set expectations for work ethic, time management, and peer collaboration:
  - "Stay focused, work at your own pace, and ask for help when needed."

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STARTING THE PORTRAIT – BLOCKING IN (30 MINUTES)

Goal: Begin the portrait with a solid foundation.

Instructions:
- Step 1: Layout the Base
  - Students begin by sketching the outline or blocking in shapes on their canvas or paper.
  - For painters: Start with a light underpainting or initial washes.
  - For drawers: Start with light pencil or charcoal lines for proportions.
- Encourage students to focus on:
  - Proportions (using grids or measurement techniques, if needed).
  - Placement of major features.
  - General light and dark values (no fine details yet).

ACTIVITY 2:

PEER FEEDBACK AND REFINEMENT (15 MINUTES)
Goal: Incorporate feedback to improve the initial layout and foundation.

Instructions:
- Pair students for quick peer feedback:
  - Students discuss their portraits so far and offer one constructive suggestion, such as:
  - "Your proportions look strong, but consider softening the lines here."
  - "The background is nice—could you deepen the shadows on the face?"
- Students take 5 minutes to refine their work based on feedback.

Instructor Role:
- Circulate to observe progress, answer questions, and offer tips for starting effectively.

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ACTIVITY 3:
TECHNIQUE, LAYERING, AND ADDING DETAIL (35 MINUTES)
Goal: Focus on building the portrait with attention to texture, light, and detail.

Instructions:
- Step 1: Layering and Building Up
  - Painters: Add layers of paint, working from general tones to more refined areas. Focus on blending colors and creating dimension.
  - Drawers: Use shading techniques (hatching, cross-hatching, blending) to develop values and depth.
- Step 2: Adding Detail
  - Once basic layers are established, students refine facial features, textures (like hair, clothing, or skin), and highlights/shadows.
  - Remind students to work slowly in critical areas like the eyes, nose, and mouth to capture likeness and expression.
  - Encourage students to step back periodically to check proportions, composition, and overall balance.

Instructor Role:
- Provide individualized feedback:
  - "Try softening these shadows for smoother transitions."
  - "Your brushwork adds great texture here; keep layering!"

CLOSING REFLECTION AND CLEAN-UP (10 MINUTES)
Goal: Reflect on progress and prepare for the next session.

Instructions:
- Ask students to step back and evaluate their work using these questions:
  - "What progress did I make today?"
  - "What do I need to focus on for the next class?"
- Have students clean up materials and organize their workspace for the next session.

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MODIFICATIONS FOR STUDENT NEEDS

FOR STUDENTS NEEDING SUPPORT:
- Provide step-by-step demonstrations of techniques (e.g., layering paint, shading with pencils).
- Offer tools like grids, proportional guides, or reference photos with clear contrast.
- Allow students to work at their own pace and focus on smaller sections of the portrait.

FOR ADVANCED LEARNERS:
- Encourage experimentation with mixed media (e.g., combining charcoal and pastels or acrylic and collage).
- Challenge them to refine expressive elements, like mood, light, or texture, in their portraits.

ENRICHMENT ADD-ONS:

LIVE DEMONSTRATION:
- Instructor or guest artist demonstrates layering, texture, or advanced techniques for inspiration.

TIME-LAPSE DOCUMENTATION:
- Students photograph or record their progress throughout the session to track development.

MOOD AND ATMOSPHERE CHALLENGE:
- Students focus on creating an emotional tone through color choice, light, and shading.