

Year 11/12 VAP

“The Self”



Name:

The Self Syllabus

In this unit, you will explore and respond to ideas about self — who you are, your culture, and your identity. You will make artworks that express these ideas in creative and engaging ways.

You will learn how to show identity in two different ways:

- Figurative – showing a clear likeness of yourself (like a portrait).
- Non-figurative – using symbols, colours, or patterns to represent ideas about yourself.

You'll also study how other artists and makers (artisans) explore ideas of self in their art. By investigating their styles, techniques, and messages, you'll discover new ways to use visual language (elements and principles of design), media, and skills in your own artmaking.

You will plan, experiment, and create your own artwork that represents yourself in some way. This could be realistic, symbolic, or imaginative. It could show your culture, hobbies, or even a “future self” or superhero version of you.

The Self Syllabus

Your work may be presented in different contexts, such as:

- School displays (assemblies, exhibitions, awards nights)
- Competitions (with rules and guidelines)
- Online spaces (virtual portfolios, social media, gaming avatars, or blogs)

The purpose of your artwork might be to:

- Celebrate or educate others about your identity or culture
- Show what you look like (real or imagined)
- Show off your artistic skills for a portfolio or future opportunities

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Use a range of media, technologies, and art skills.
2. Plan figurative and/or non-figurative artworks that represent self.
3. Communicate ideas that represent self.
4. Evaluate artworks (your own and others') that represent self.

The Self Syllabus

Let's Consolidate what you are being asked to do this Unit:

Right There (answers directly in the text):

1. What are the two types of visual language used to represent self in this unit?

2. List two contexts where students might present their artworks.

3. What are the four objectives of the unit?

Think and Search (answers come from across the text):

4. How is figurative representation different from non-figurative representation?

5. What are some purposes for making an artwork about self?

6. What steps do students take when planning their artwork?

The Self Syllabus

*Let's Consolidate what you are being asked to do this
Unit:*

Author and You (linking the text with own thinking):

7. Why might an artist choose to represent themselves symbolically instead of realistically?

8. How could feedback from peers or teachers help you improve your self-representation artwork?

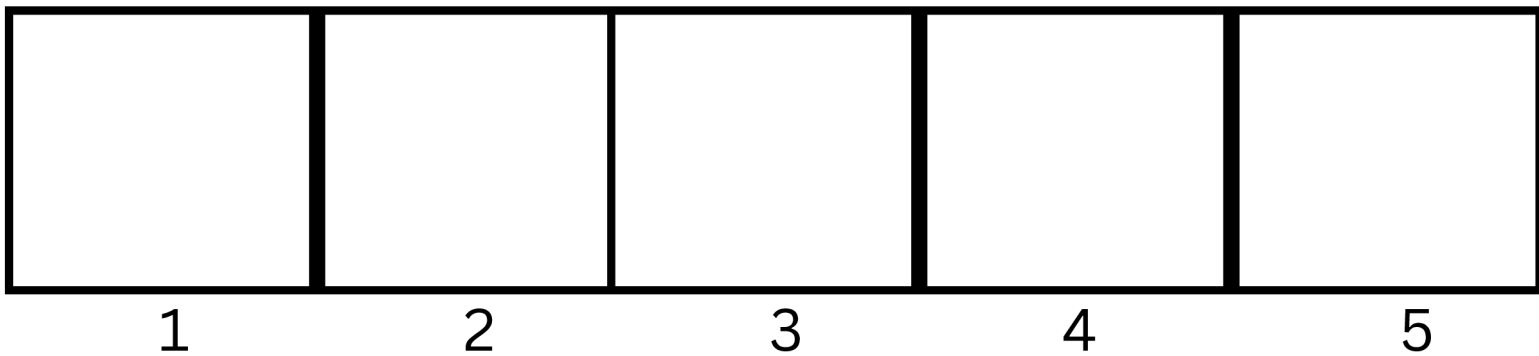
On My Own (answers come from personal ideas, not in the text):

9. If you were to make an artwork about your identity, what would you include to represent yourself?

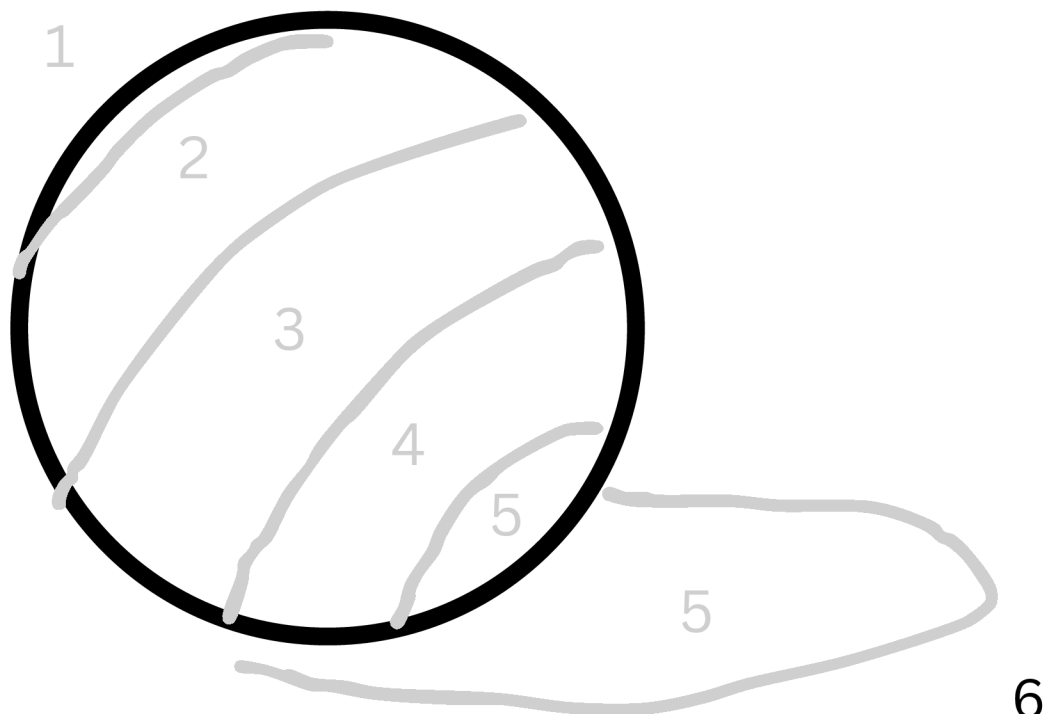
10. Which context would you prefer to show your work in (school exhibition, competition, or online) and why?

Drawing Tutorial

1. Shade in all boxes using a pencil.
 - a. Box 5 should be your darkest
 - b. Box 1 should remain blank

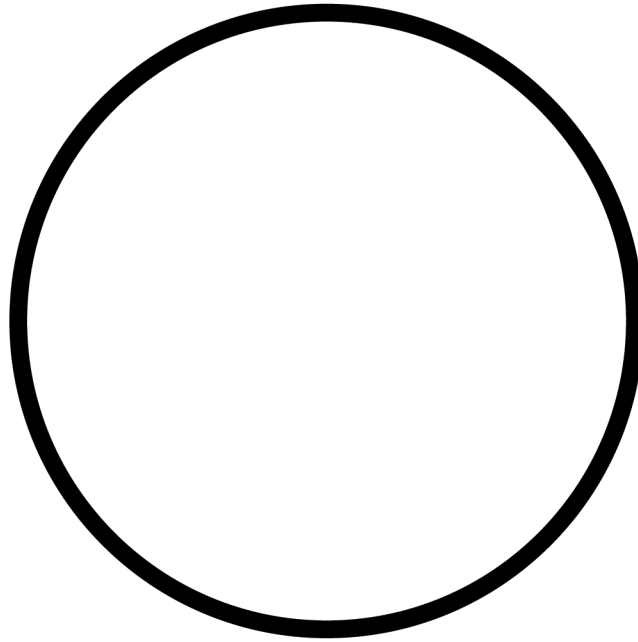


2. Shade the orb using a pencil.
 - a. Refer to your above toning scale and tone each section carefully



Drawing Tutorial

3. Now try shading it yourself.
 - a. Don't forget the shadow!

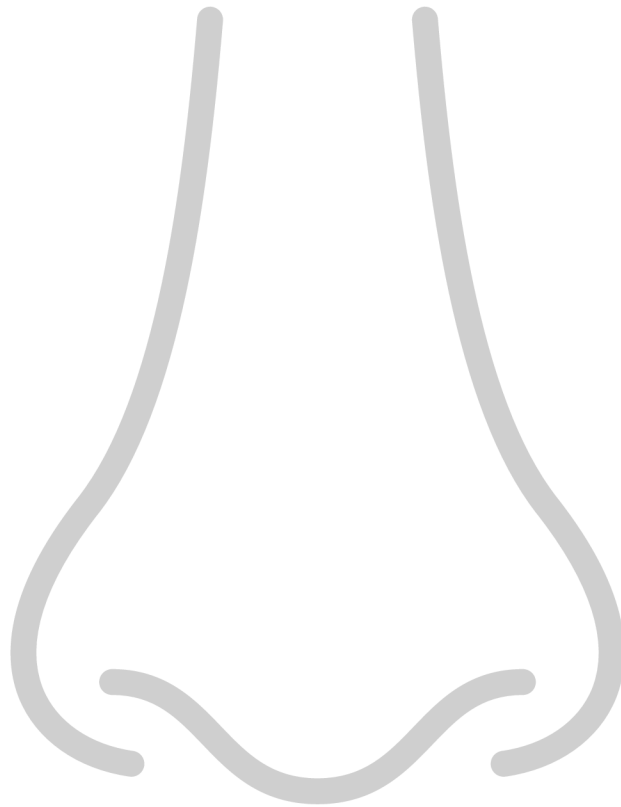


4. Tone the Eye



Drawing Tutorial

5. Tone the nose.

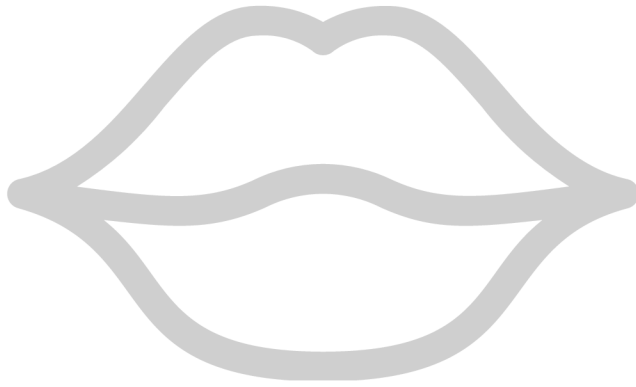


6. Tone the Ear.

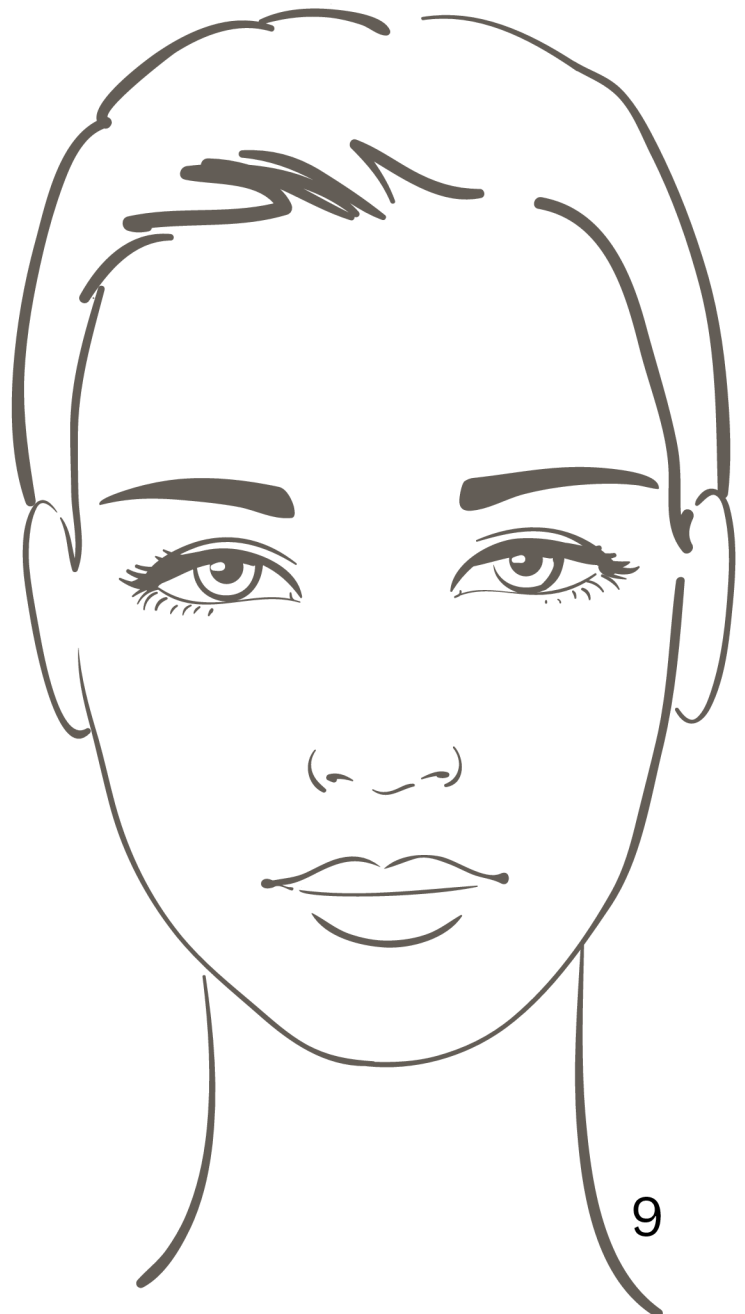


Drawing Tutorial

7. Tone the lips.



8. Tone the whole face.



Why do artists create self-portraits?

Is it because they want to be famous?

Do they want to show off their technical expertise as artists?

Do they want their audience to know more about their intentions as an artist?

Do they want to make a social comment in their work?

Why do you think artists create self-portraits?



Personal Context

Self-portraits are a fantastic example of how artists use a personal context.

A personal context examines how an artist's individual experiences, beliefs, and emotions affect their work.

Find and write the definitions of the following terms:

Human Experience:

Beliefs:

Emotions:

How do artists use a personal context to create a self-portrait?



Personal Context – Guiding Questions

How does an artist's work show the influence of their life and experiences?

Artist: Frida Kahlo

Artwork: Self-Portrait with Thorn Necklace and Hummingbird (1940)



Frida Kahlo's self-portrait shows how her life influenced her art. The thorn necklace represents the physical and emotional pain she experienced after her accident, while the animals and background reflect her Mexican culture. By painting herself with these symbolic objects, Kahlo expresses her feelings and identity through her artwork.

Personal Context – Guiding Questions

Artist: Yasumasa Morimura

Artwork: Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo



Context:

Yasumasa Morimura is a contemporary Japanese artist known for recreating famous artworks and photographs by placing himself into the image. He uses costumes, makeup, props, and digital editing to transform into well-known figures from art history, film, and popular culture. Morimura does this to explore ideas about identity, gender, race, and how history is usually told from a Western point of view. By inserting himself into these iconic images, he questions who is allowed to be represented and how people from different cultures are seen. His work blends humour, performance, and social commentary, while reflecting his experiences as a Japanese artist responding to global imagery dominated by the West.

How does an artist's work show the influence of their life and experiences?

BANKSY QUOTE SELFIE

A3



STEP 1: CHOOSE A SLOGAN

Consumerism & Capitalism

- "Buy Less, Live More"
- "Sale Ends Today"
- "You Are Not Your Stuff"
- "Money Talks, Truth Walks"
- "Adverts Lie"

Peace & Anti-War

- "Make Art, Not War"
- "Silence is Compliance"
- "Bombs Can't Buy Peace"
- "Paint Over Violence"
- "Hope is a Weapon"

Identity & Society

- "Normal Is a Trap"
- "Be Who You Needed"
- "Different is Beautiful"
- "You Are Not a Label"
- "This Is Not a Selfie"

Environment & Climate

- "There Is No Planet B"
- "Nature Doesn't Need Us"
- "The Earth Is Not a Dump"
- "Breathe While You Can"
- "Extinct Means Forever"

Freedom, Authority & Surveillance

- "Big Brother is Watching"
- "Question Everything"
- "Freedom Can't Be Caged"
- "Obey Less"
- "Rebel With a Cause"

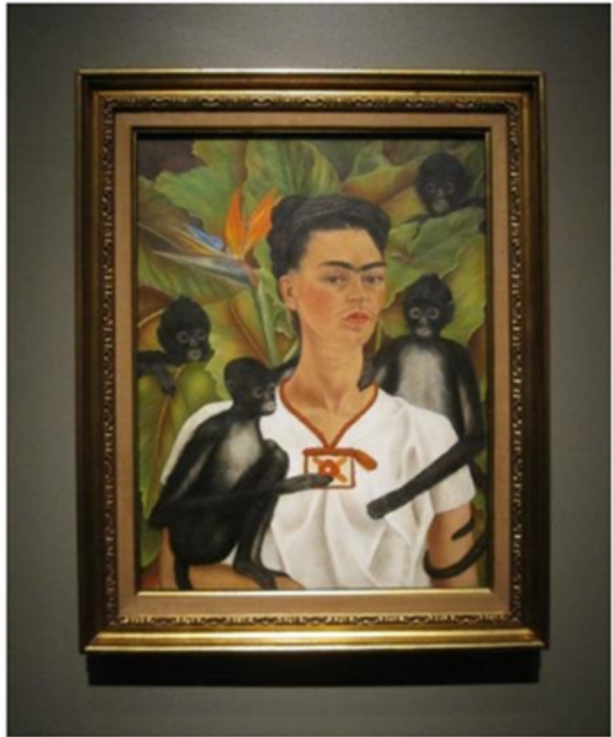


Artists **challenging** traditions

The features of the portrait genre have been challenged over time, as artists from different contexts represent themselves and others in different ways.

Frida Kahlo
Self Portrait with monkeys,
1938

abowlofchicpeas, Frida Kahlo, Self-Portrait with monkeys. Frida & Diego: Passion, Politics & Painting @ the AGO.
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/abowlofchicpeas/8381474658>
CC BY-NC-ND 2.0
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/2.0/>



Yasumasa Morimura
An Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo (Hand Shaped Earring)
2001

Yasumasa Morimura, *An Inner Dialogue with Frida Kahlo (Hand Shaped Earring)*, 2001. © Yasumasa Morimura. Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York.

Responding to an Artwork

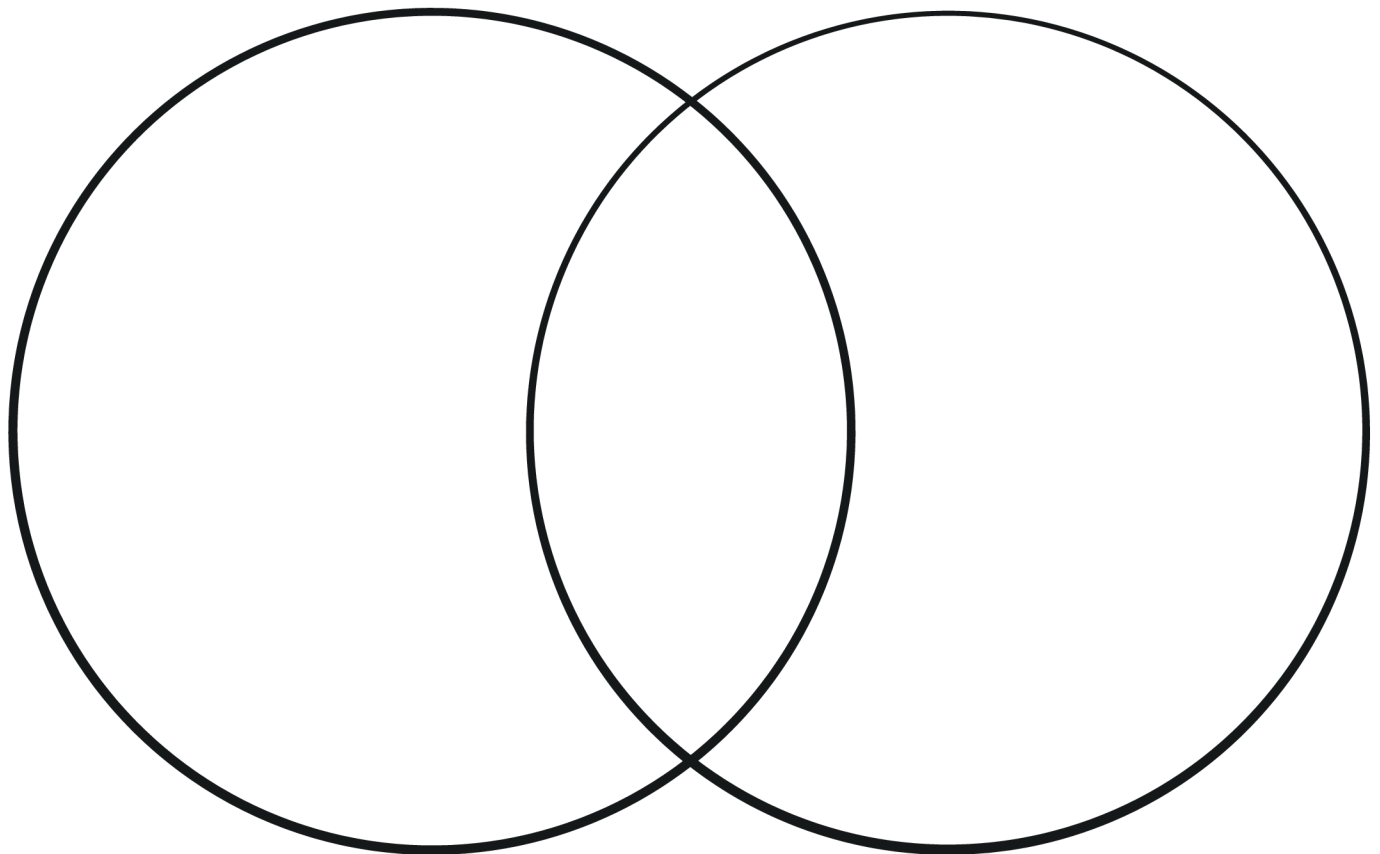
Complete the Venn Diagram of the artworks below, Identifying what makes them similar and different:



Morimura.
Male Japanese Artist



Frida Kahlo.
Female Mexican Artist



Part 1: Understanding Self-Portraiture

1. Define: What is a self-portrait?

2. Purpose: Why do you think artists choose to create self-portraits? List three possible reasons.

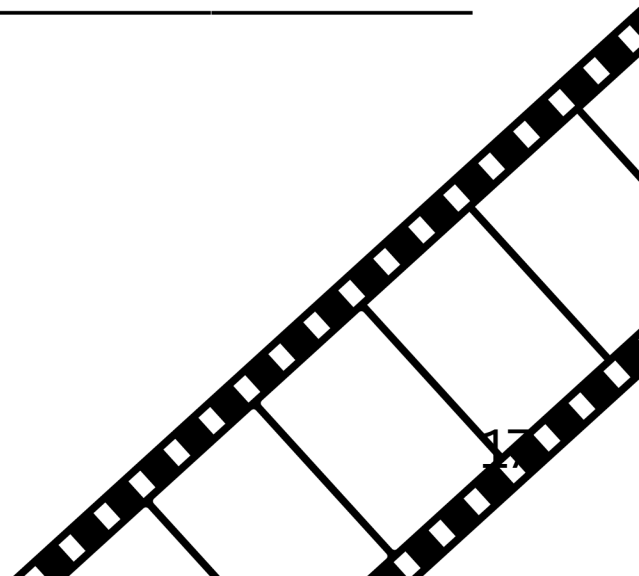
- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

3. Historical Insight: Name one historical artist known for their self-portraits :

3b. Describe what their self-portraits revealed about them.

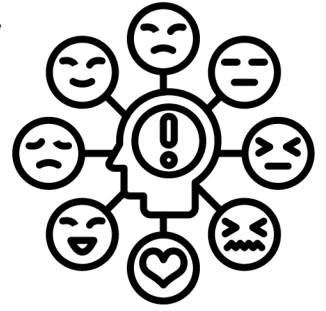
4. Contemporary Insight: Name one modern artist who uses self-portraiture.

4b. How do they use it to express identity?





Part 2: Elements of Identity in Art



1. What are some visual elements (e.g., colour, expression, props, clothing) that artists use to show identity in a self-portrait?

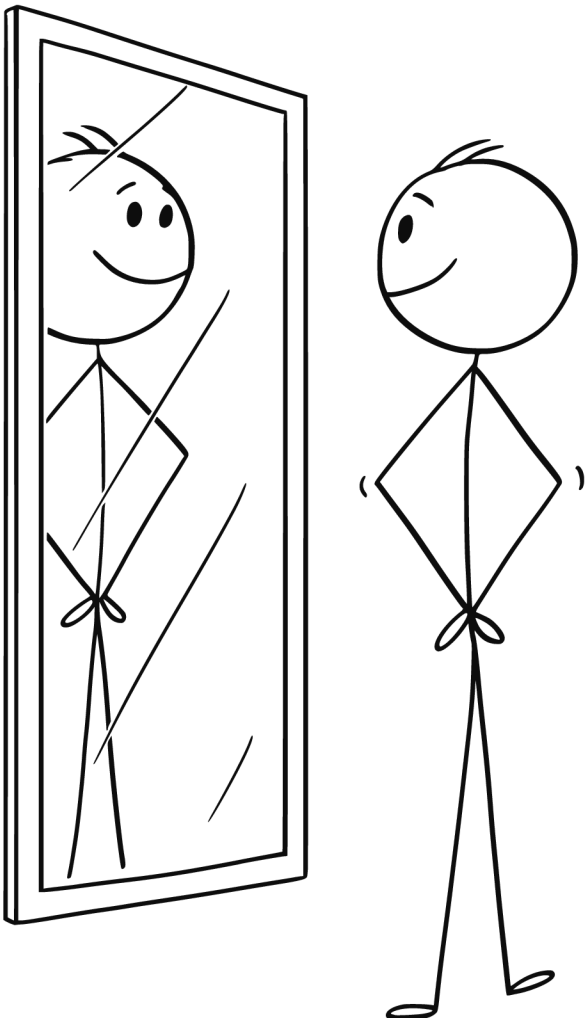
2. Think about how emotion can be shown in a self-portrait. Write a sentence explaining how an artist might do this.



Part 3: Personal Reflection

1. If you created a self-portrait, what three things would you include to represent who you are?

2. Describe a mood or message you might want your self-portrait to communicate.



Identifying the “Self”

Write 9-words to describe yourself

--

Ask your classmates to tell you 9-words that describe you

--

Using collage techniques, add these words onto your portrait on the next page



Teacher Model:



Glue your Portrait below and cover in your 9-words

Ai Portrait

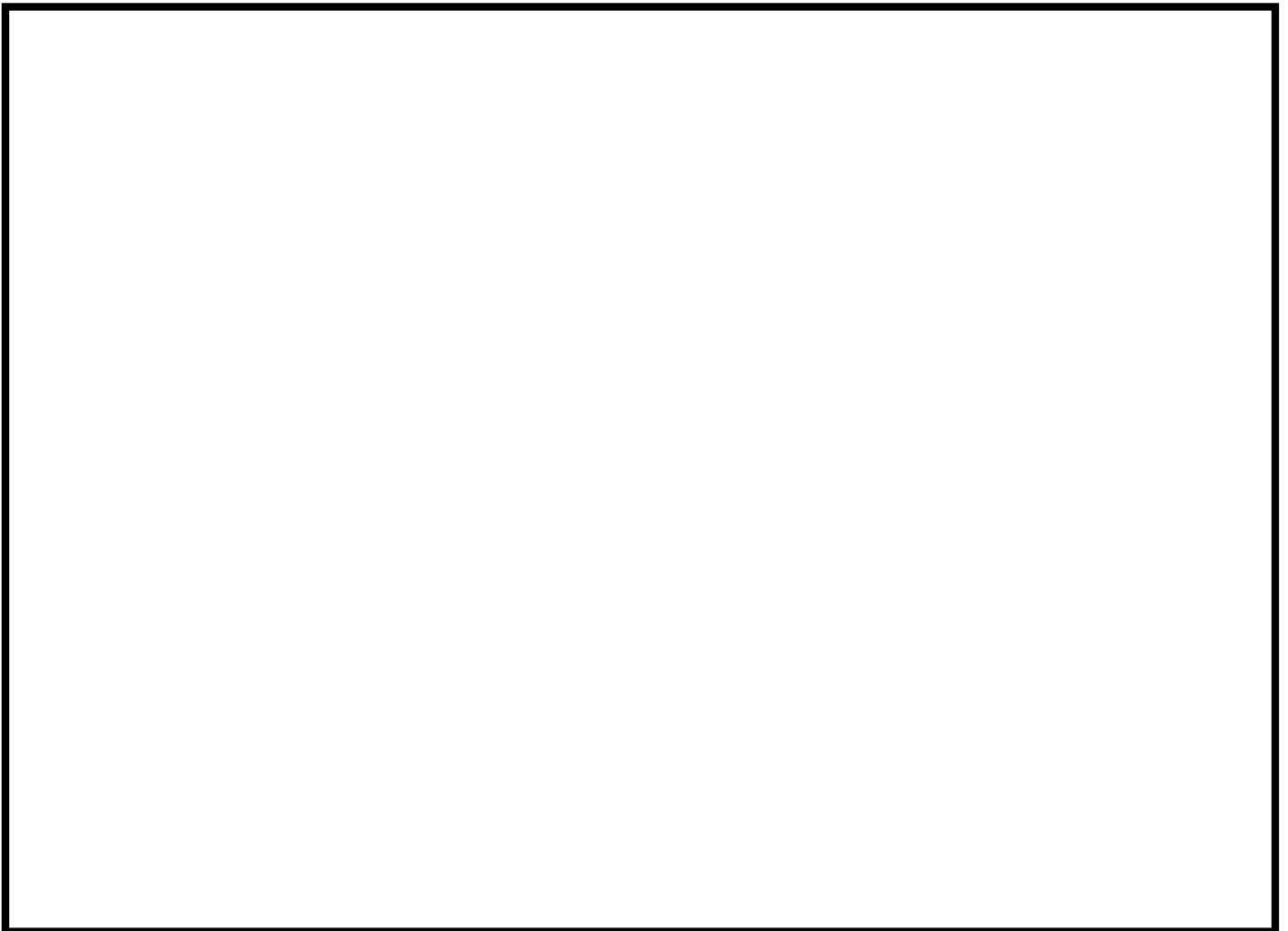
Open Canva or ChatGPT (You will need to hotspot)

1. Write this prompt and then add descriptions of yourself.

Create a self-portrait painting of.....

(examples: long blonde hair, green eyes, short hair, freckled complexion)

Keep adding prompts and glue in what is generated below:



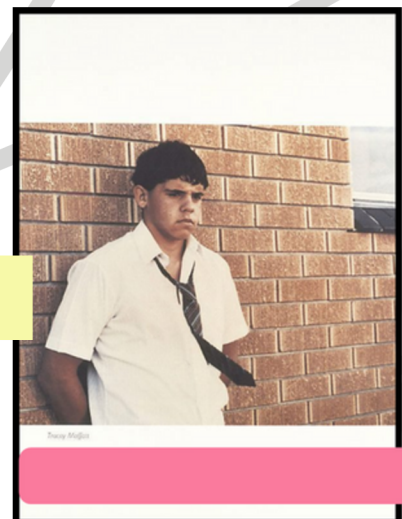
Reflection: Did your first Ai Portrait come out as you expected? _____

Tracey Moffatt

Born 1960 in Brisbane Australia.

Tracey Moffatt is highly regarded for her experimentation in film, photography and video.

Her work focuses on her childhood memories surrounding race, gender, sexuality and identity



Complete the Tracey Moffatt activity on the previous page following the PowerPoint.

What negative things have been said to you?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Choose one of the statements you've written and create an artwork appropriating Tracey Moffatt.

What name would you give the artwork to show the audience that you choose to stand against this statement?

Glue the completed artwork on the next page.

Tracey Moffatt Artwork



*“Drawing gives you
nowhere to hide, but
everywhere to run.”*

— Nic Plowman

Nic Plowman

Nic Plowman is an Australian artist known for his powerful and emotional drawings. His work often explores themes of time, memory, and personal experience. While he focuses on drawing, he also creates paintings, prints, and sculptures. His style blends traditional techniques with more experimental approaches.

Nic was born with a serious heart condition called Tricuspid Atresia. He grew up in a big, close-knit family led by strong women — his mum, little brother, two aunties, and four older cousins. His family came together to support each other after facing tough times like divorce and loss.

Many of Nic’s artworks are inspired by his real-life experiences. He has had two open-heart surgeries, survived a six-meter fall, and battled cancer. These challenges have shaped his artistic voice, allowing him to connect with themes like fear, strength, and vulnerability. For Nic, making art is both a way to express pain and a way to heal from it.

He has had 17 solo exhibitions and shown his work in over 60 group exhibitions. Nic has also been a finalist in major art prizes, including the Dobell Drawing Prize, the Kedumba Drawing Award, the Doug Moran Portrait Prize, and the Brett Whiteley Travelling Art Scholarship. In 2023, one of his works was added to the Kedumba Collection of Australian Drawing.

Nic has completed artist residencies in Australia and overseas, and his art is part of many public and private collections around the world.

As well as being an artist, Nic is a passionate educator. He teaches workshops around Australia and internationally. He leads the life-drawing program at The Art Room in Melbourne and has worked with major organisations like the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), Queensland Art Teachers Association (QATA), and Visual Arts and Design Educators Association NSW (VADEA). He is also the Head of Education at Zart, where he creates learning experiences for both teachers and students.

Nic was born in Brisbane and now lives and works in Melbourne. He is represented by the James Makin Gallery.

Nic Plowman QAR

Right There (The answer is in the text - look for it directly)



1. Where was Nic Plowman born? _____
2. What type of heart condition was Nic Plowman born with?

3. How many solo exhibitions has Nic Plowman had?

Think and Search (The answer is in the text, but you need to put information together)

1. Which awards and recognitions has Nic Plowman received for his drawing practice? List at least three:



2. How has Nic Plowman's life experience influenced the subject matter of his artwork? _____

Author and Me (The answer isn't directly in the text - use your understanding of the text and your own ideas and opinion.)

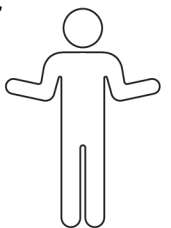
1. Why do you think Nic Plowman says, "Drawing gives you nowhere to hide, but everywhere to run?"



1. How might his upbringing in a matriarchal family (female) have shaped his values as an artist and educator?

On My Own (The answer is not in the text - based on your own experience or opinion.)

1. Do you think art can be both a symptom and a remedy as Nic suggests? Why do you think this?



2. What qualities do you think make a great art teacher based on what you've learned about Nic Plowman? _____

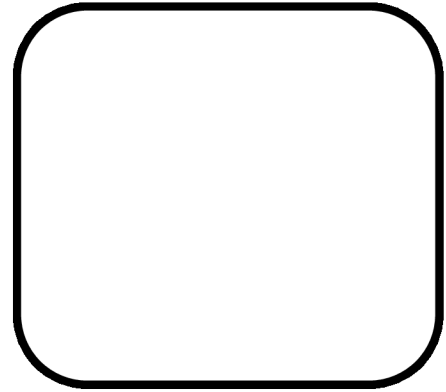
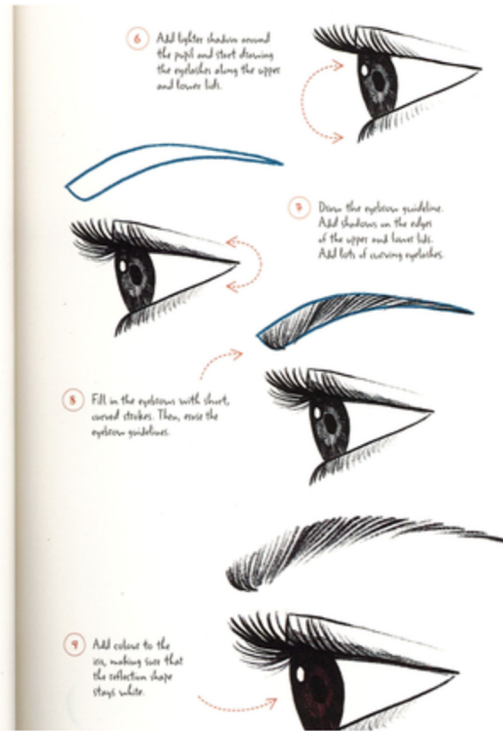
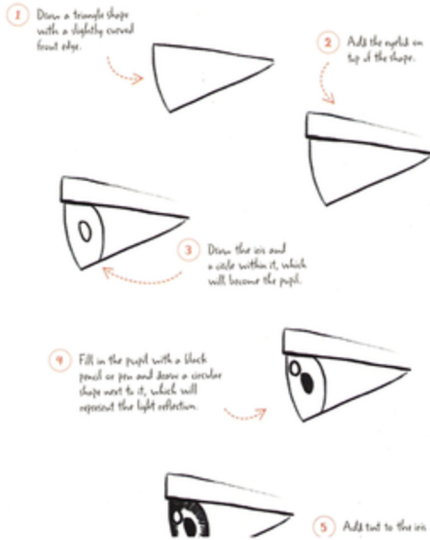


Mixed-Media Hand Print Prac

Drawing exercises

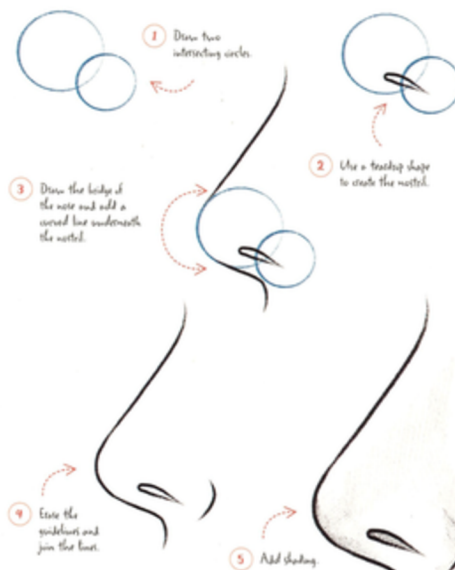
Side view Female eye

The eye has a very different shape from the side, but once you know the differences you'll be able to draw it easily.



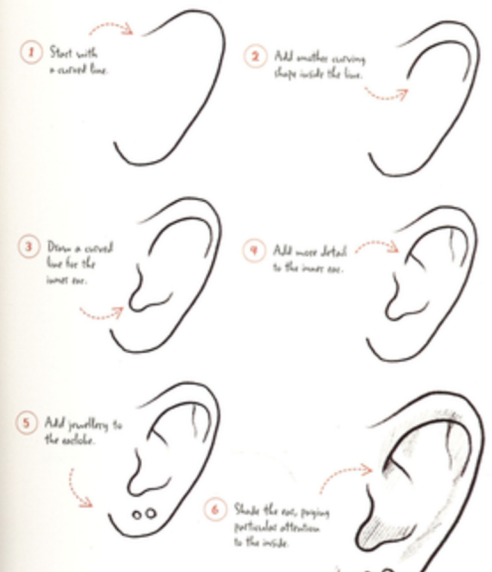
Side view Female nose

A simple nose profile can be created in just five steps. Using circles as a guide will help keep the proportions looking natural.



Side view Female ear

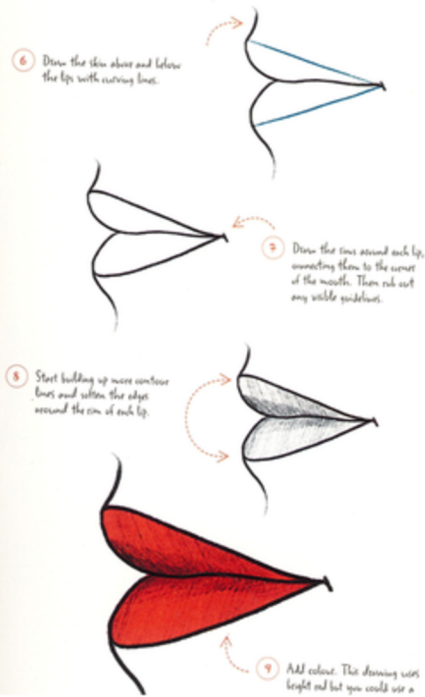
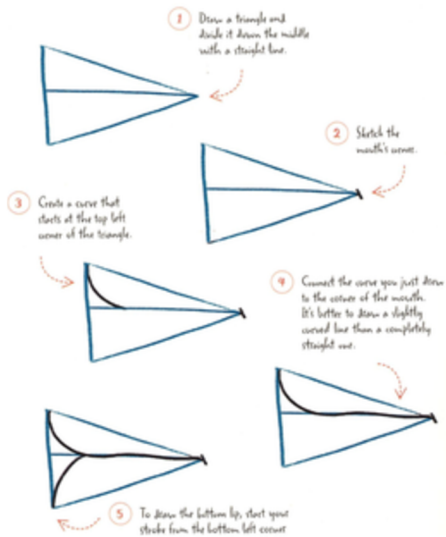
Ears can be daunting, but just a few simple curves can create a realistic shape.



Drawing exercises

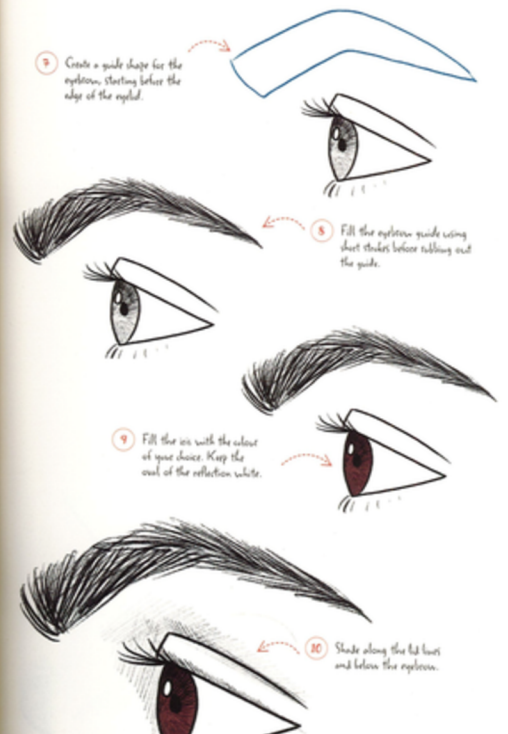
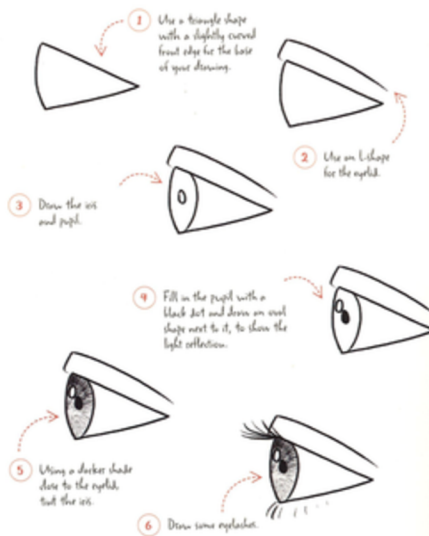
Side view Female mouth

The side view of lips can be created by starting with a simple triangle. Give the lips a natural feel with smooth but not completely straight lines.



Side view Male eye

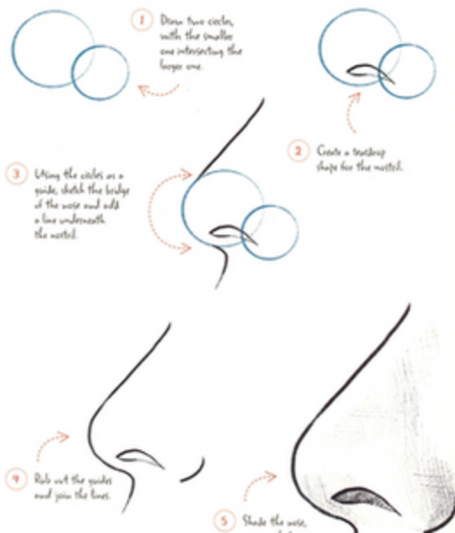
The male eye from the side is similar to the female version except it has a heavier lid, fewer lashes and a thicker eyebrow above it.



Drawing exercises

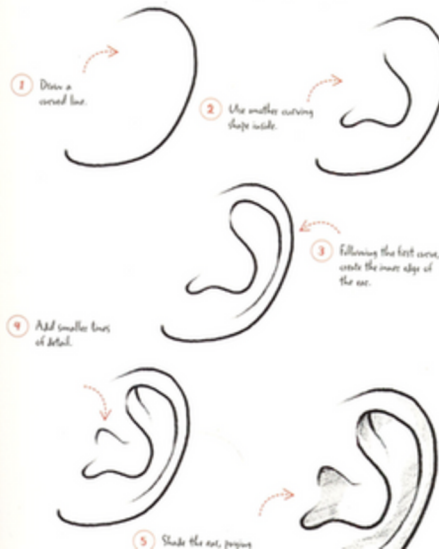
Side view Male nose

Follow these five simple steps to transform two circles into a natural male nose.



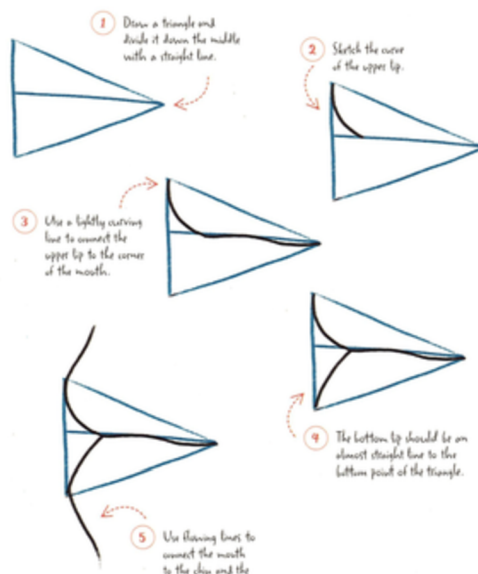
Side view Male ear

Ears don't need to be daunting – follow these five simple steps to create a realistic shape for your drawing.

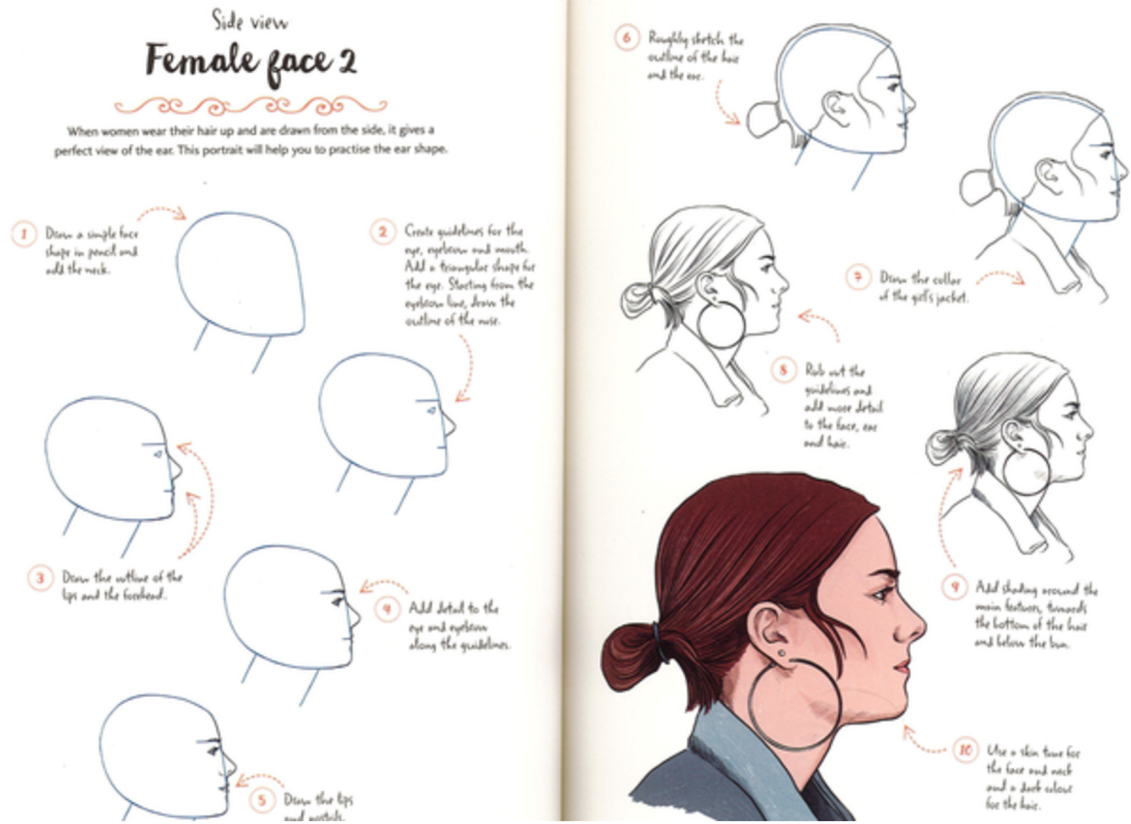


Side view Male mouth

Use a simple triangle as the base shape for creating a side view of the lips. These steps and results will be very similar to a side view of female lips.



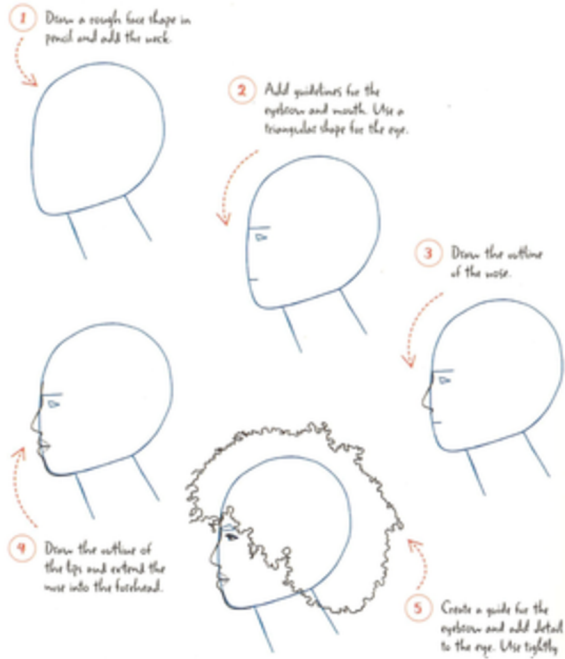
Drawing exercises



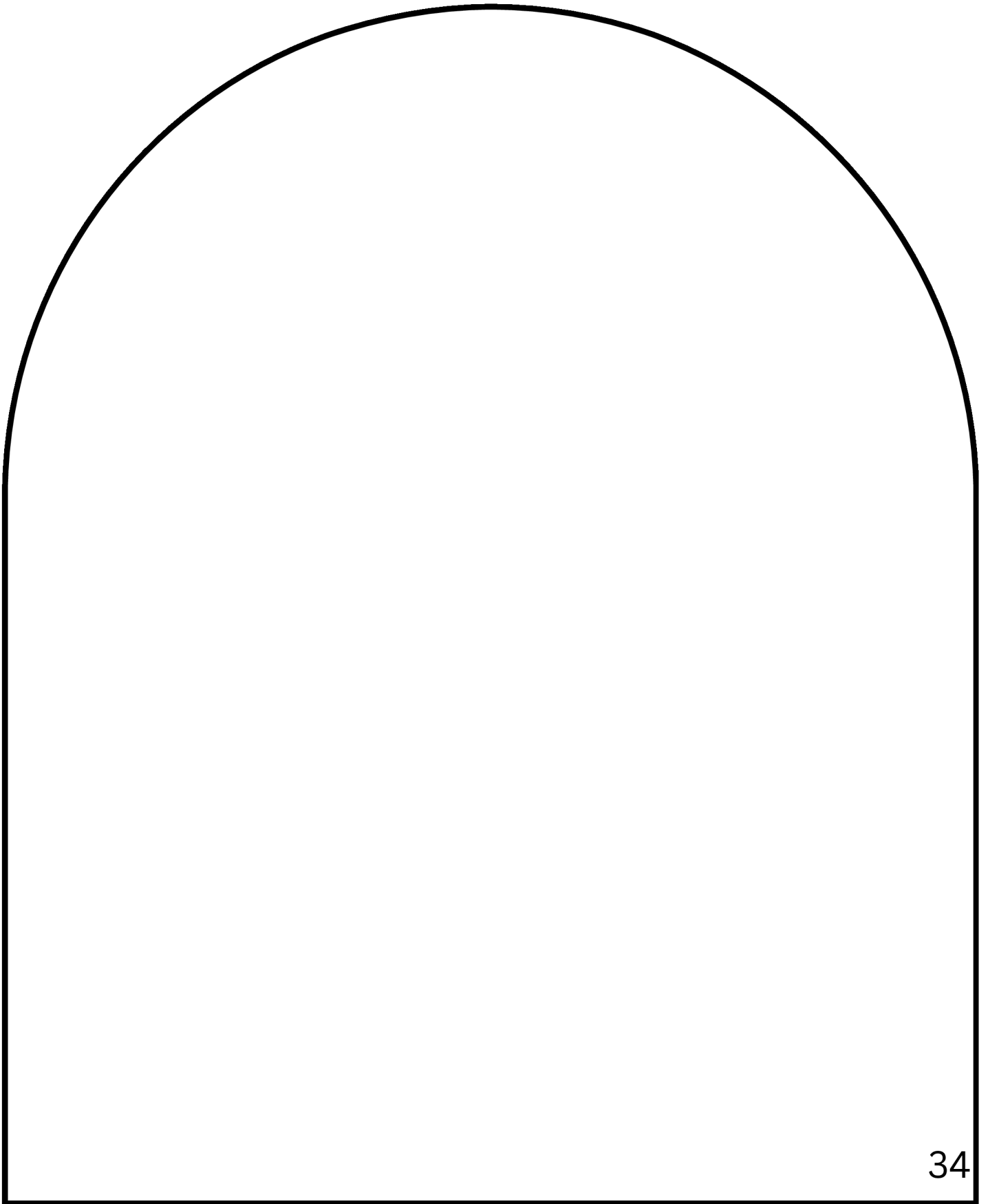
Drawing exercises

Side view Male face 1

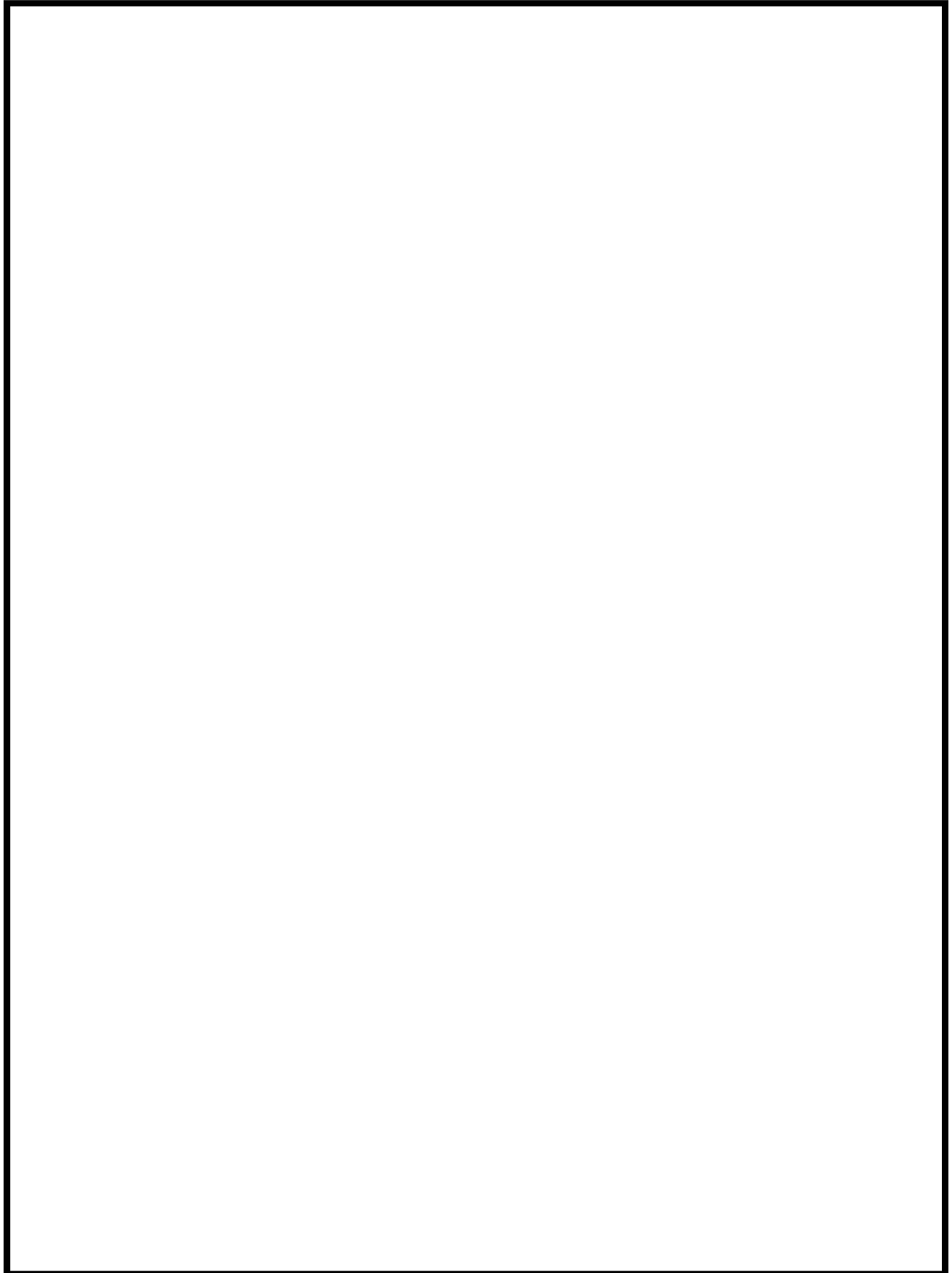
Now you've learnt how to draw the different male facial features from a side view, try putting them together. Have fun drawing the Afro!



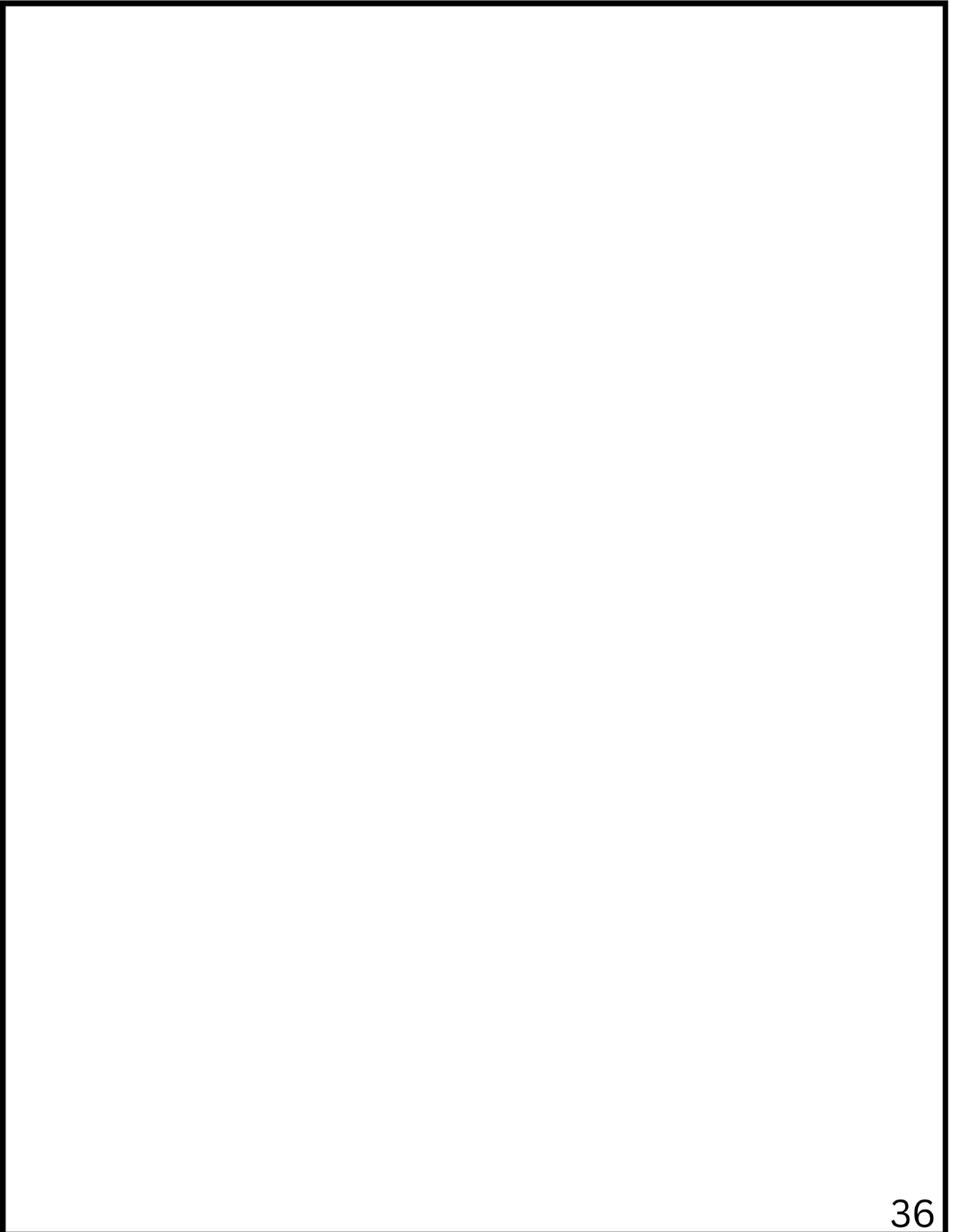
Clay Room Design



Clay Room Design



Non-Figurative Collage



Artist Statement

600-words minimum

Introduction:

What did we learn about this term?

What were the class activities we made?



Key Artist 1

Who was artist 1 this term?

Write a short artist bio about them.



Key Artist 2

Who was artist 2 this term?

Write a short artist bio about them



Which artwork from your folio was your
strongest?

Explain how you made this artwork.

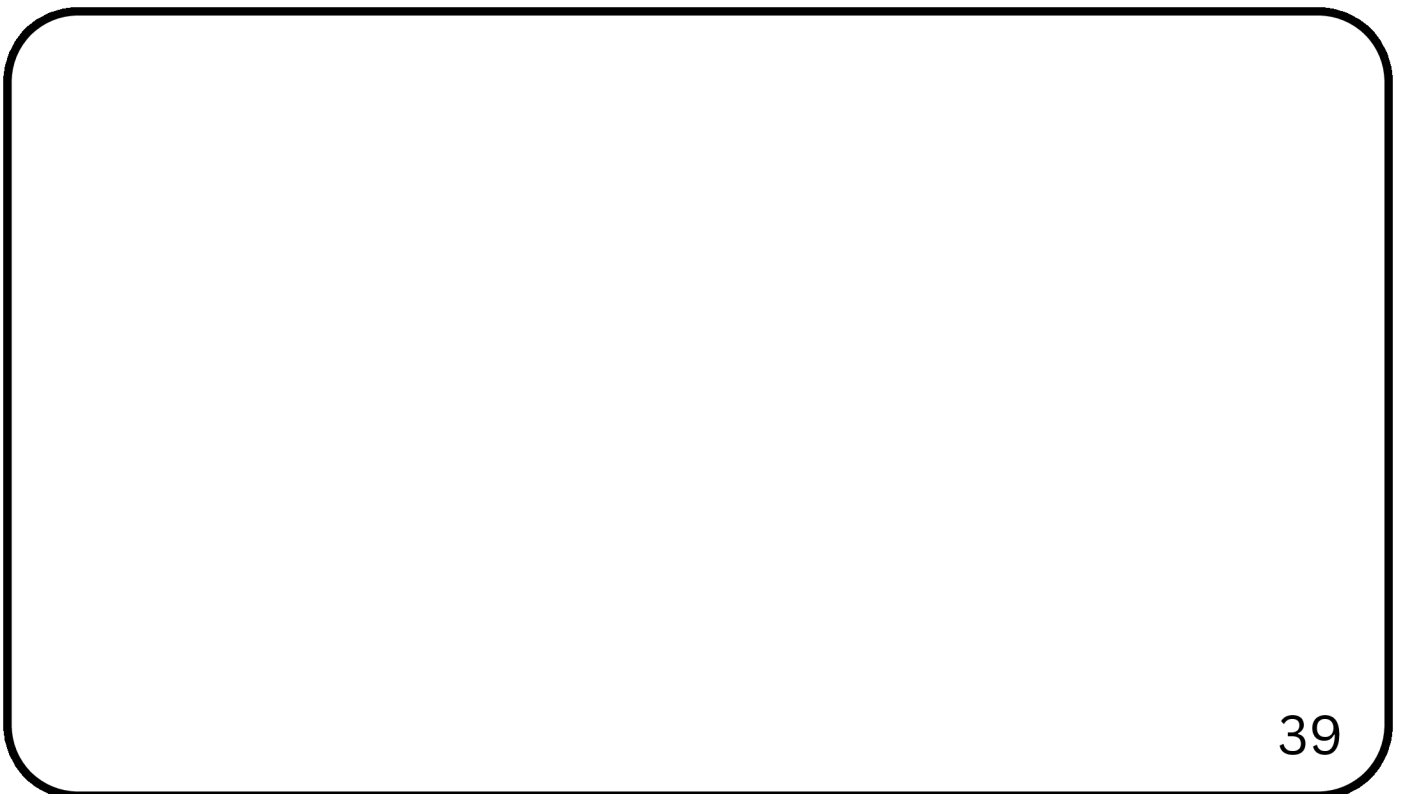
Explain why this is your strongest artwork



Which artwork from your folio was your weakest?
Explain how you made this artwork.
Explain why this is your weakest artwork



Focus: What techniques that we worked on this term are you going to use in your final resolved artwork?



A1 Checklist

**You completed folio should be
composed of the following
prototypes:**



- ☐ Banksy Portrait
- ☐ Ai Portrait
- ☐ Contour Artwork turned Ai
- ☐ 9 Words Collage
- ☐ Drawing Tutorials
- ☐ Tracey Moffatt Artwork
- ☐ Nic Plowman inspired artwork
- ☐ OHT Portrait
- ☐ Clay Room
- ☐ Non-Figurative Collage
- ☐ Mixed Media Hand Print
- ☐ Artist Statement

