ArtStream

Written Instructional Guide

“Nature Collage with Organic Materials ”

For 3rd - 5th Grade Students

With Teaching Artist Alex Ever

Lesson 3: “Breaking Patterns: Organic Collage”

Introduction

- We'll be exploring collage as we make self portraits.
- Collage = taking a variety of pieces and assembling them in a way that creates something whole
- Self-portrait = when an artist choosing to represent themself in their art making

Materials

- Paper or a clean surface
- Natural materials (harvested from a yard, neighborhood, or nearby park)

Step 1: Organize your materials

- Begin by organizing your materials. Match similar shapes, sizes, and colors.
- Organizing your materials is an important part of the process of creating work.
- As you organize your materials, identify some of the shapes, colors, and details you notice.
- Model by sorting materials on the table (leaves, acorns, blades of grass, shells, etc.)

Step 2: Setting up your workspace

- Once piles have been made, move them to the edge of the “workspace”. The workspace can be a blank piece of paper or a clean, flat surface.

Step 3: Visualization Exercise

- Close your eyes and slowly breathe in through your nose with the count of 1-2-3-4-5 and then breathe out through your mouth slowly with the count of 1-2-3-4-5.
- Take a moment to feel how your body feels as you fill it with air. Take a moment to notice this.
- While still breathing, think about a part of your body that you like. It can be the color of your eyes, how you make great funny faces, etc.

Step 4: Creating the head

- After reflecting on some of our positive qualities, we want to create a collage that focuses on sharing these positive and unique qualities.
- First, we will create the head. Maybe you outline the oval with sticks or stones or maybe you overlap leaves to create the shape.
- You can break or rip up different pieces of organic material to give you more options with your collage.

Step 5: Adding hair

- Find organic materials that will help convey the texture and shape of your hair.
- Take time to place these pieces and build upon it.
- Feel free to layer different materials to help create the texture you like.

Step 6: Add a face

- Now we want to add our face. Is there a specific expression you would like to represent?
- Add whatever pieces you would like for the eyes. Are they closed? Open?
- Add eyebrows to help convey emotions
- Now add a mouth. What shapes can you make with your organic pieces to help convey the facial expression? Is the mouth closed or open?

Step 7: Adding your details

- Take time to add extra pieces to your collage. Do you wear jewelry or a favorite hat?
- Feel free to include ears or a neck.
- Can you create these details with smaller shapes or patterns?

Step 8: Finishing the self-portrait collage

- Allow yourself to come to a pause wherever you are on your self-portrait
- You can keep working on and building out your self-portrait or you can clean up your supplies.
- Our work is not permanent so we will take it apart and use the pieces for next time.
- You can take a picture with a phone to remember the piece!

Step 9: Reorganize your materials

- Take time to take apart your work!
- Just like how organizing your pieces beforehand was important- you want to take apart your mandla and organize your materials into piles.
- Place your materials in piles or line them up in a similar way you did when you first started this project.
- Take time to notice a detail about each piece you touch and rearrange.

Closing reflection

- Take a moment to place your hands in your lap, straighten your back, and close your eyes. Imagine the portrait you just made. Take a moment to identify a choice that you made when creating your self-portrait that you feel especially proud of. What was one of the things that you appreciate about yourself? Take a moment to appreciate the good work you just did. Take a deep breath together.

Thank you!

- I hope you had a good time reflecting on the positive qualities about yourself! You deserve that time.
- Continue creating portraits with your organic materials. You can create one of yourself again, maybe from the side. Or you could do a collage portrait of someone in your life.