

Explorations
Visual and Performing arts
Grade 6-7



Jessika Stone
Class 5



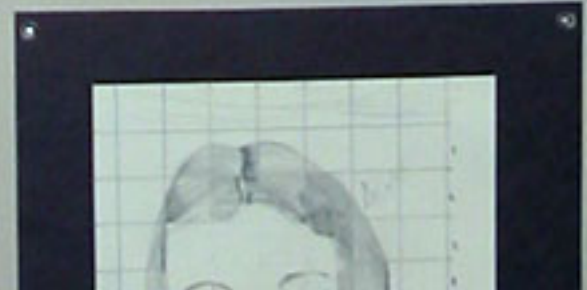
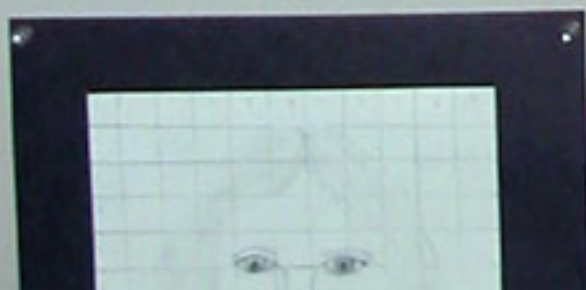
Ben McLeod
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CHUCK CLOSE PORTRAIT DRAWING

Using artist Chuck Close as inspiration, children will learn how to draw portraits using the grid system.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

Many of my students enjoy drawing, but many of them say, “**I can’t draw!**” Discovering ways to instill in them and give confidence that they can draw is a difficult task. This past fall we discussed various American artists; **Chuck Close** was one of them. Students were curious about his way of painting and his disability. When many of them learned that he paints with a paintbrush strapped to his hand and is wheelchair bound, they thought that if he could paint like that, they could try to draw. By showing them examples of his work and presenting them with the grid system, they seemed more comfortable... focusing on one inch at a time. I also gave them a viewfinder so they could just see that 1-inch section and not be overwhelmed by the thought of the whole portrait.

The most difficult part then was ruler skills. Many students were having difficulty with the exact grid dimensions on their photocopied portrait picture and their drawing paper. I found them to be losing patience and getting frustrated, so making a grid on drawing paper myself 1 inch by 1 inch squares on a 8 ½” X 11” sheet and putting in the photocopier with transparencies to have them be the same, simplified things tremendously.

All the students had to do was to tape the grid transparency to the portrait photocopy. They found this to be helpful and less frustrating. This then gave them the confidence they needed to look at the portrait and assess the shapes and values more closely.

Drawing the human figure is one of the most difficult things and my students always are intimidated by it, these modifications relived some of that tension and gave them the confidence that they need to believe in themselves that they can do it. It also got them quickly into the drawing part of the assignment. Many times there are just too many preparation steps in a project and students lose interest and then are not motivated to complete the assignment. It is our job as teachers to keep students motivated and these simple project modifications are an example of that.

The [Dr. Franklin Perkins School](#), located in Lancaster, Massachusetts, is a special needs school that services students with cognitive limitation, emotional and psychiatric disabilities and behavioral challenges.

LENGTH OF PROJECT:

3-4 periods (1 period = 45 min)

INTRODUCTION:

Prior Knowledge/Experience:

- Students are familiar with materials.
- Students are familiar with drawing activities and producing artwork.
- Students are familiar with following multi-step directions.

VOCABULARY:

- Chuck Close
- Shapes, Geometric Shapes, Freeform Shapes Organic Shapes
- Value, Shading, Tones
- Grid system
- Portraits

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Learn about the American Artist Chuck Close.
- Produce portrait drawing containing shape and value.
- Recall information and vocabulary terms.
- Make decisions about their art process and compositions.
- Work with shape, and a variety of value.
- Be able to work properly and safely with art materials.

- Compare and contrast different artwork and give an opinion about their artwork.
- Evaluate and participate in a critique of own and peers artwork.

National (USA) Standards for Visual Arts Education: 1.a, 1.b, 1.d, 2.a, 2.b, 2.c, 5.a, 6.b

Massachusetts Visual Arts Curriculum Frameworks 5-8th grade: 1.7, 1.8, 2.7, 2.8, 2.10, 3.4, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8, 5.5, 9.3, 10.2

WHAT YOU NEED:

- 8½" X 11" Paper
- Pencils
- Pencils (4H, 2H, HB, 2B, 3B, 4B, 5B, 6B)-for shading
- Rulers
- Erasers
- Clear Transparencies with 1" X 1" Grid copied on it
- Masking tape or scotch tape
- Class Art Folders/Portfolios

Optional Materials: Drawing boards, Sketchbooks

RESOURCES:

- Greenberg, Jan, & Sandra Jordan. [Chuck Close Up Close](#). DK Publishing, INC. New York, 1998.
- Video: Chuck Close Up Close-A Portrait in Progress. 1998.
- Value Chart
- Henley, David R. Exceptional Children, Exceptional Art, Davis Publications, Worcester, MA, 1992.

WHAT YOU DO:

DEVELOPMENT

Procedures/Activities:

- Introduce and review selected Elements/Principles of Design: Color, Shape, Value, Form, and Space.

- Discuss artist and relation to American painting and the time period; make comparisons to the past and present.
- Discuss artwork and have students pick out different shapes, colors, etc. Discuss and ask students questions and what they see. It is important for them to use their imagination and to discover different shapes, colors, etc. They need to be reassured that they have excellent ideas and to use them and that there is more than one solution to the art problem. Give them confidence that they can do it they often want to give up at the start and not even give an attempt.
- Chuck Close-Drawing portraits in the grid system. Using value and different pencils. The directions for the grid will be the most crucial.

Modifications:

- Seating plan in effect in all classes to assist students focus and minimize classroom behaviors.
- Select students sit in range of a support staff to assist them.
- Students receive up to 3 pieces of paper max within a 45 min period.
- Wider Dixon pencils for drawing if needed.
- Other materials locked up for safety purposes.
- Students may take a couple minute break to rest or relax to release tension or frustration during the period if necessary. Some students doodle in sketchbook for a couple of minutes.
- Students are allowed to refocus within the art room if possible or in the hall sitting quietly.

CLOSURE

Summary:

- Instruct student to clean up and return their materials to the proper places.
- Have students put names on their artwork and place in class folder/portfolio.

Transfer/Extensions:

- Complete a triptych of portraits in pencil, colored pencil and in tempera or acrylic paint.

ASSESSMENT

Attendance, Behavior, Effort, Verbal Discussion, Rubric or Checklist, Finished Project, Critique or Class Review or Discussion.

Students learned:

- About American artists: Chuck Close and his artwork.
- To remember and to recall vocabulary terms and processes.
- To produce and create artwork inspired by American Artists and themes.
- To work properly and safely with art materials.
- To follow directions.
- To make their own decisions about their art process and compositions.
- To positively participate in a critique and receive feedback from others.
- To experiment with value scale and variety of shapes.
- To compare and contrast between, artists, examples, and own artwork.
- To evaluate own and peers artwork.

Recommended Resources:

[Close Call Part One](#)

<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/columns/june97/close1.html>

[Part Two](#)

<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/columns/june97/close2.html>

[Part Three](#)

<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/columns/june97/close3.html>

[Part Four](#)

<http://www.washington.edu/alumni/columns/june97/close4.html>