



## Portraits and Self-Portraits

### Year 2

#### Lesson Sequencing

This unit starts by looking at the difference between portraits and a self-portraits by considering three renowned paintings: Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, Holbein's *Portrait of Edward VI as a Child* and Kahlo's *Self-Portrait with Bonito*. In lesson 2 the children go on to consider a self-portrait by *Van Gogh* and Kehinde Wiley's *Portrait of Barak Obama*, considering how each painter uses skin-tones to show light and shade on the subject's face. In lessons 3 and 4 they go on to study self-portraits by Rembrandt and Gentileschi using these works to consider how a portrait can show much more than what a person looks like: an artist can choose to represent a person's personality, emotions, interests and status. Whilst considering all these works, over the course of four lessons, the children paint their own self-portrait, learning about the proportions of the face, and how to recreate skin-tones. They consider how they can choose to represent themselves, by choosing what to put in the background of their portrait. They finish by evaluating what they think of the self-portrait they have created.

In lesson 5 the children go onto consider how artists can paint portraits in different styles, studying self-portraits by Picasso and some of his cubist portraits, thinking carefully about what makes these portraits look strange. In lesson 6 they study the contemporary artist Yiadom-Boakye's and how she makes paintings of people, which she creates from her imagination (and doesn't call portraits). The children use their own imaginations to create cubist-style portraits in lessons 5 and 6.

**Key concepts** covered in this unit are portraits as a category, how portraits can communicate more than just physical appearance, creating skin tones using paint to show light and shade, different styles and cubism.

#### Key skills

Drawing skills using pencil and oil pastels covered in this unit include:

- Holding the pencil in a firm but relaxed grip.
- Drawing light, fluid lines.
- Carefully observing and drawing the outside of shapes.
- Filling the page with a drawing.
- Experimenting using both the end and side of the oil pastel.
- Layering marks using oil pastels in a variety of bright colours.

Painting skills using acrylic paint covered in this unit include:

- Holding a brush like a pencil to give good control.
- Controlling the amount of water/paint that is loaded onto the brush.
- Pulling the brush smoothly.
- Washing the brush before loading it with a new colour.
- Mixing colours thoroughly in a mixing palette.
- Mixing skin tones, adding colours gradually to create a dark shade, mid-tone and lighter tint.
- Adding skin tones/hair tones in patches/layers.
- Choosing an appropriately sized brush: a small brush for small details, a larger brush for larger details.
- Using brushstrokes to show the texture of the hair.

**Key processes** covered in this unit are analysing other artists' work, using observation and the imagination to create the children's own work, and evaluating their own work.

**Key disciplinary concepts** covered in this unit include how artists can use portraits for different purposes indicating more than just appearance. The unit also explores how artists can work in different styles, using cubism to depart from the idea that a portrait has to depict reality. By studying Picasso's changing self-portraits, the unit considers how an artist's style can change and develop. The unit also explores the different processes artists can use to create their work, whether by observation or, as in the case of Yiadom-Boakye from the imagination.

### Outcomes

Children carry two separate tasks in this unit, one over the course of four lessons (lessons 1-4) and one over the course of two lessons (lessons 5 and 6). Both of these tasks, painting a self-portrait and drawing a cubist portrait using oil pastels, can be described as 'divergent' (using specified techniques but with unspecified endpoints).