

Art Masterpiece: The Torn Hat, 1820 by Thomas Sully



Keywords: Self-portrait, Texture, Sketch

Grade: Kindergarten

Activity: Self-portrait

Definitions:

Portrait: Any work of art showing a person, several people or an animal. Portraits usually emphasize just the face.

Self-portrait: A portrait the artist makes of himself.

Texture: The way an object looks as though it feels, such as rough or smooth.

Sketch: a simple, quick, rough drawing done without a lot of detail but catching the chief features and a general impression of an object or scene. Drawn LIGHTLY.

Meet the Artist: (5 min)

- Thomas Sully was born in England but lived in America. (1783-1872)
- He was famous for painting portraits. A portrait is a picture or a sculpture of a person.
- One of his most famous paintings is of George Washington crossing the Delaware River.
- He was also known for painting miniatures. A miniature is a tiny painting that can be worn in a locket (necklace) or displayed on a stand.
- Details were very important to Sully. He looked very carefully at the world around him and really studied faces before he painted them.
- Sully tried to make people look honest and loving as well as handsome and beautiful.

Discussion: (10 min)

- How old do you think the boy in the painting is?
- What makes you think he is not a baby?
- What shapes are his face, eyes, nose?
- What color are his eyes, his hair, his clothing?
- Does his clothes look like clothes you wear?

- Why is he wearing a hat?
- What kind of hat is it and what textures do you see?
- Does he look like he is friendly? Why?
- What do you think he is thinking about?
- How long do you think he had to sit still for the artist to paint his portrait?

In-Depth Information on The Torn Hat (info for the volunteer-you may or may not want to discuss this with kindergarten students):

The Torn hat is a portrait. A gently smiling boy looks straight out at you. He is neatly dressed, but his straw hat is rough and worn. The brim of the hat is torn away from the top. A little bit of sunlight peeks through the tear, making a bright spot on the boy's forehead. The rest of the hat's brim casts a shadow across the boy's face. Sunlit areas in the painting contrast sharply with the shadowed areas. The boy's jacket is blue-darker blue in the shadows and lighter blue in the sunlight. The blue is repeated in the band of color around the hat. The deepest shadows on the jacket match the deep shadow under the back of the brim. Notice how Sully uses some of the blue of the jacket to paint the boy's white shirt. The boy is probably a farm boy. We can tell from his clothes and because his hat is made of straw. He was probably a very typical boy from the 1820's. He also looks as if he could be someone who is living now. (Taken from Discover Art)

Project: Self-Portrait

Supplies needed:

8 x 10" white drawing paper or cardstock

black construction paper for mounting

pencils

crayons or oil pastels

black felt tip markers-class set

hand mirrors class set – (IRC has a set if needed)

glue sticks

parent letter

Advanced Preparation: Black mounting paper trimmed --if mounting.

Mini Lesson: (5 min)

Drawing eyes. Pass out the hand mirrors and have the kids look at their eyes. Notice that their eyes are not a round circle – they are actually shaped more like an almond or an oval with two points at either end (demonstrate this on the board). Inside the almond shaped eye is a large circle (the iris) with a small circle in the middle (pupil). Notice that the large circle contains the color. Have the kids practice **sketching** their own eyes on their scratch paper. They should work to have two eyes that are approximately the same size.

Explain that the children will be drawing themselves today. This is called a **self-portrait**.

Process: (30-40 min):

1. First do the Mini-lesson.

2. Ask the students to use the mirrors to look at themselves. Have them study their hair color, eye color. Ask them about the shape of their face. The shape of their lips. Do their lips look like two small mountains?
Ask them where their eyes are located? (half-way between the top of their head and bottom of their chin. Where are their ears located?

Time to Draw:

Have students, with pencil, **sketch** a large oval shape for their head and face. Check every child's paper that they have drawn a large enough oval. (It is a good idea to show them an example of a head drawn too small and one drawn correctly. You can demonstrate this on the white board.)

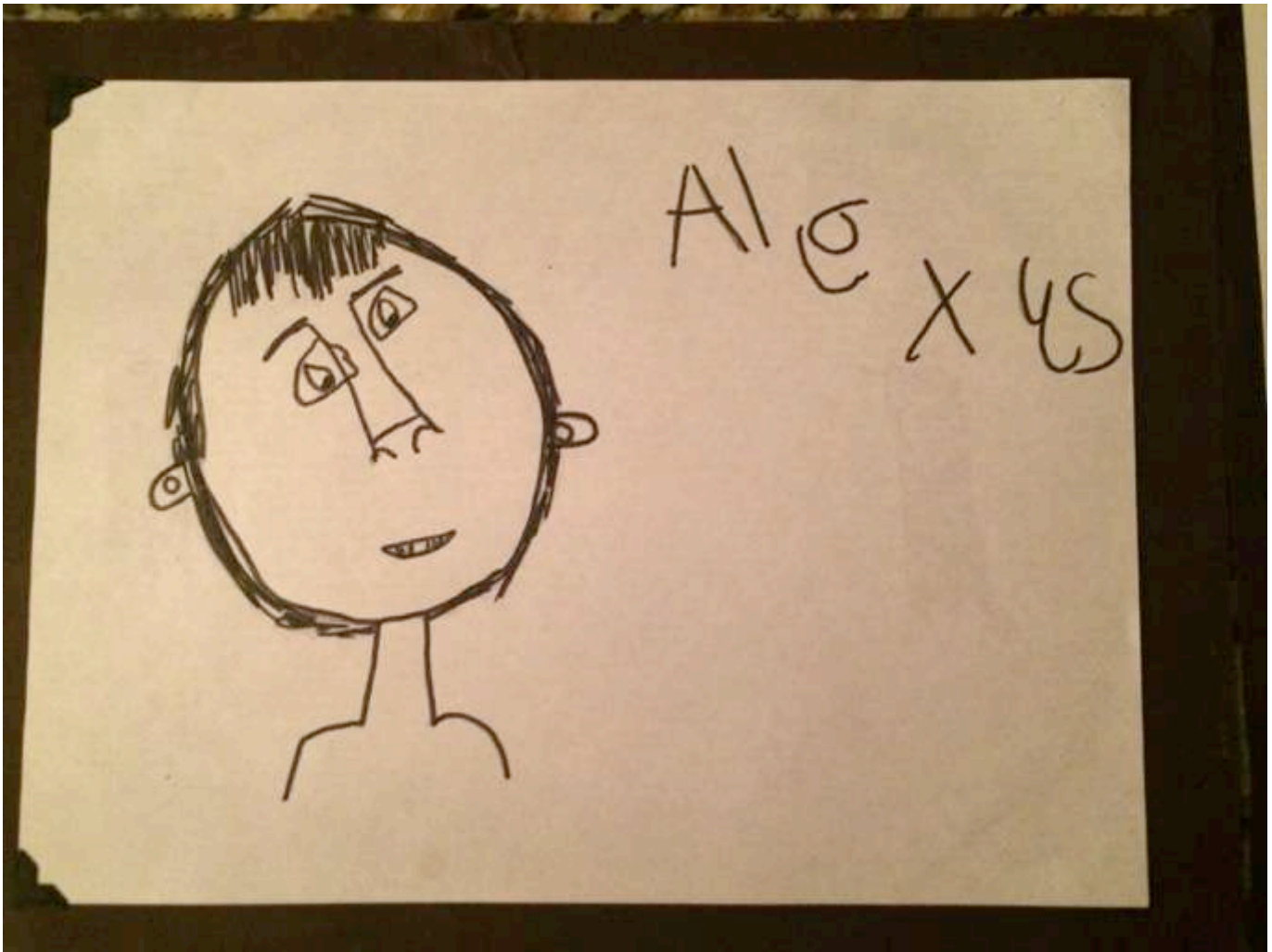
Some students may not be aware of facial proportion. This is not unusual for children at this age. Suggestion: After they draw their oval head shape have students draw their hair next. This will help them place the eyes and other features in the correct location.

3. Next, add main facial features.
4. They should add lines to make the neck and shoulders. Keep this simple. No arms etc.
5. Encourage them to draw any little details that they may see. Like our artist, Sully, details are very important! The details show how each person is different and special. Sully would study his subjects looking for unique features. Freckles, birth marks, dimples, the shape of their eyebrow, etc.
6. Students can then add other details such as hair bows, earrings, necklaces, eyeglasses, baseball hats, etc.
7. Once the students have rendered their self-portrait in pencil have them trace the lines with black markers.
8. They can erase any pencil marks that remain.
9. With the oil pastels they can add a pop of color. They may choose to completely color their portrait in or simply add a single burst of color such as a hair bow or eye color. Show samples.
10. Glue parent letter to the back of the mounting paper.
11. Mount their completed portrait onto black paper.

Clean up:

Please ensure that oil pastels are placed back in their original containers and the pen lids are securely fastened.

Please share the following samples with your students.





Chandler Unified School District Art Masterpiece

Parent Letter

Brief info about the artist: Thomas Sully (1783 – 1872) was an American portrait painter, who was born in Britain but lived most of his life in Philadelphia. He painted in the style of Thomas Lawrence, and his subjects included Thomas Jefferson, John Quincy Adams along with many other famous people.

Brief info about the project: Students were introduced to self-portraits and were asked to study the details of the face that make us each unique. Practice was done on drawing eyes and how to place them correctly on the drawn face. Each student drew their own self-portrait.

Picture of artwork



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