

# Art Trunk *Southern/Modern*

The first comprehensive survey of paintings and works on paper created in the American South from 1913 to 1955, *Southern/Modern* features more than one hundred works drawn from public and private collections across the country. The exhibition focuses on artists such as Carroll Cloar, Aaron Douglas, Caroline Durieux, Will Henry Stevens, Alma Thomas, and others who worked in states below the Mason-Dixon line and as far west as those bordering the Mississippi River. It also includes artists from outside the South, such as Josef Albers and Elaine de Kooning, who were instructors at North Carolina's experimental Black Mountain College, as well as Thomas Hart Benton, Elizabeth Catlett, Jacob Lawrence, and others whose works reflect on Southern experiences from a distance.

Throughout the exhibition, thematic groupings weave together the region's rich cultures, telling stories of agriculture and industry, class division and racial injustice, natural beauty, and stylistic innovation. Full of vibrant, emotionally charged works, *Southern/Modern* treats a subject long neglected by art historians and museums outside the region. It shows how in the South as elsewhere, modern artists linked social and aesthetic progress, hoping to change the way people saw their world.

*Southern/Modern* is organized by The Mint Museum in collaboration with the Georgia Museum of Art. Lead support is generously provided by the Henry Luce Foundation. Additional funding comes from the Terra Foundation for American Art and the Wyeth Foundation for American Art. *Southern/Modern* was also made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Alfred and Betsy Brand Fund at The Mint Museum.



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# Art Trunk Southern/Modern



Edward Faiers. *Child's World*, 1953. Woodcut. Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Memphis, TN. Gift of the Edward Faiers Print Fund, Burton Callicott, Chairman. 89.31.6

## All ages Collagraph Print

For more than three decades, Edward "Ted" Faiers was a beloved professor at the Memphis College of Art, and he frequently exhibited his colorful abstractions in the city from the mid-1950s onward. Before assuming his post at the college, he worked for four years as an instructor at an artist colony in Allison Wells, Mississippi.

In the late 1940s, Faiers transitioned from a more **representational** style to a more **abstract** style like that in *Child's World*. In works from the 1950s, Faiers simplified his forms and colors, flattening out the space of the picture.

## Questions

- What do you think is happening in this print?
- How do the colors and shapes make you feel?

**Representational art:** art that realistically depicts the physical appearance of object or subject

**Abstract art:** art that does not attempt to represent external reality, but seeks to achieve its effect using shapes, forms, colors, and textures

# Art Trunk Southern/Modern

All ages

Collagraph Print

## Objective

Collagraphy is a process in which materials are attached to a hard surface that is then inked and used to print images. Participants will craft a collagraph block and use it to create a print.

## Materials

Cardboard

Chipboard sheets

Clear acrylic sheets

Pre-cut chipboard shapes

Scissors

Pencil

Glue

Printing ink

Brayer

Baren

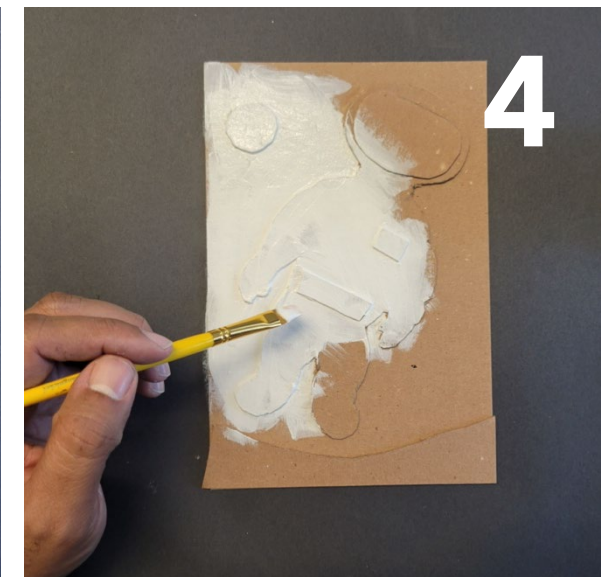
Printing paper

White acrylic paint

## Steps

### Making a collagraph

1. Look at the colors and abstract imagery of *Child's World*. Think about a simple design composed of a variety of shapes. Sketch the design on a sheet of chipboard.
2. Cut out individual shapes or use pre-cut shapes and arrange them however you would like.
3. Once arranged, glue your shapes to the cardboard surface.
4. Paint the surface with white acrylic paint and let the collagraph dry for at least an hour.

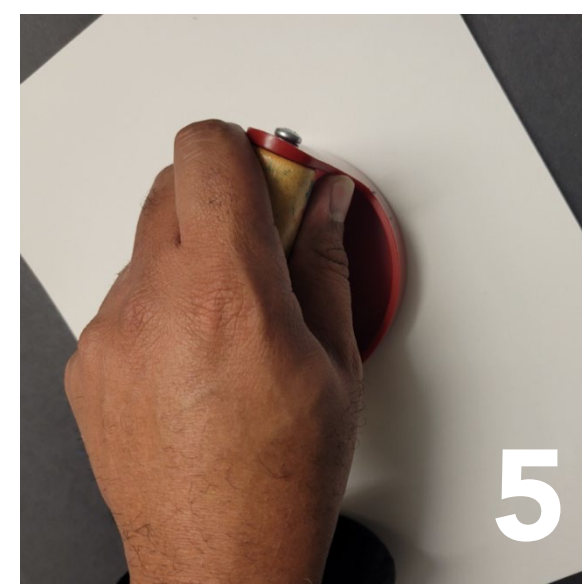
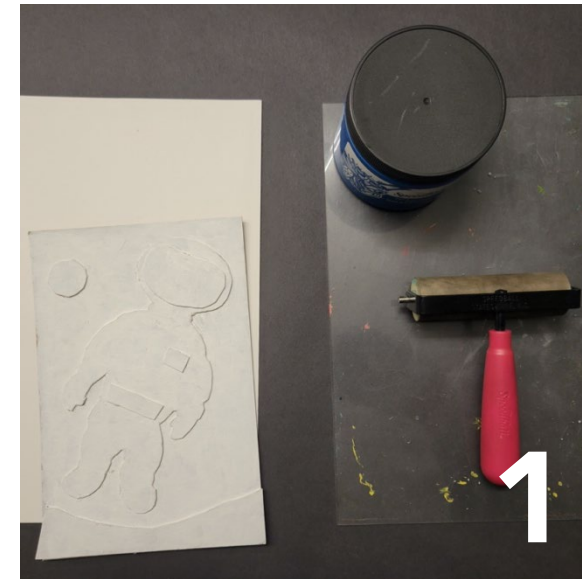


# Art Trunk *Southern/Modern*

## Steps

### Printing the collagraph

1. Gather acrylic plastic sheets, brayers, printing paper, and printing ink.
2. Apply selected printing ink color near the top of the clear acrylic sheet.
3. Use a brayer to roll ink onto the acrylic sheet. The roller should roll evenly. If it slides, you have applied too much ink.
4. Roll the inked brayer over the collagraph.
5. Apply paper to the inked collagraph surface. Use the baren to press the paper against the inked surface.
6. Carefully pull the paper from the surface to reveal the finished print.



# Art Trunk Southern/Modern



Will Henry Stevens. *Untitled*, 1944. Pastel on paper; 16 x 16 in. The Mint Museum, Charlotte, NC. Gift of the Janet Stevens McDowell Trust, 2006.12.5

**All ages**

## **Abstract Nature Drawing**

Will Henry Stevens was one of the few American artists working outside of New York to explore abstraction in the early twentieth century, and he was a true pioneer of modernism in the South.

Stevens taught at Newcomb College in New Orleans from 1921 to 1948, but often spent his summers in the North Carolina and Tennessee mountains. As seen here, the landscape of the Appalachian Mountains was often the starting point for Stevens's work, as he drew inspiration from the endless variety of natural forms and vibrant colors he found there.

## **Questions**

- What does this drawing remind you of? What feelings does it evoke?
- What representations of nature do you see in this drawing?

# Art Trunk *Southern/Modern*

All ages

Abstract Nature Drawing

## Objective

Participants will make abstract nature drawings using pastels and stencils.

## Materials

Drawing paper

Pastels

Nature stencils (optional)

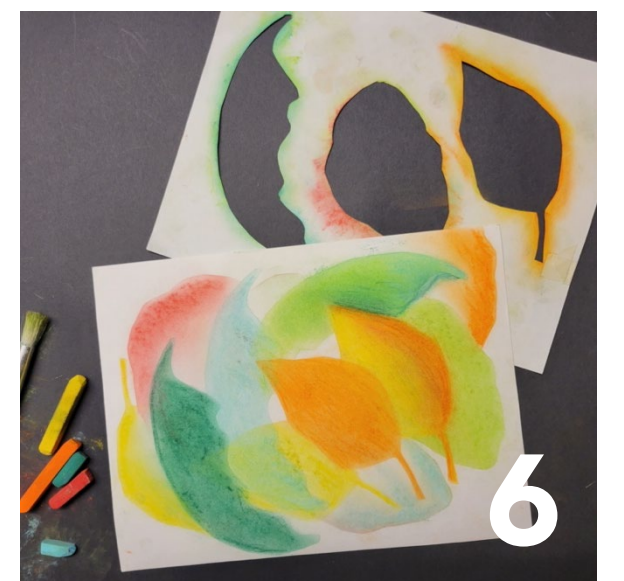
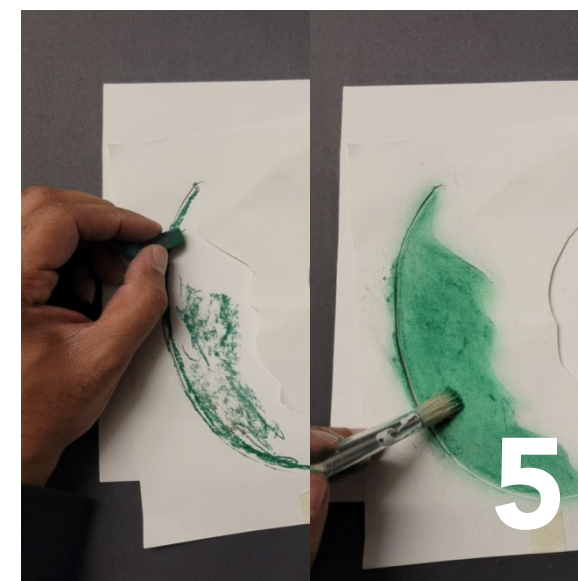
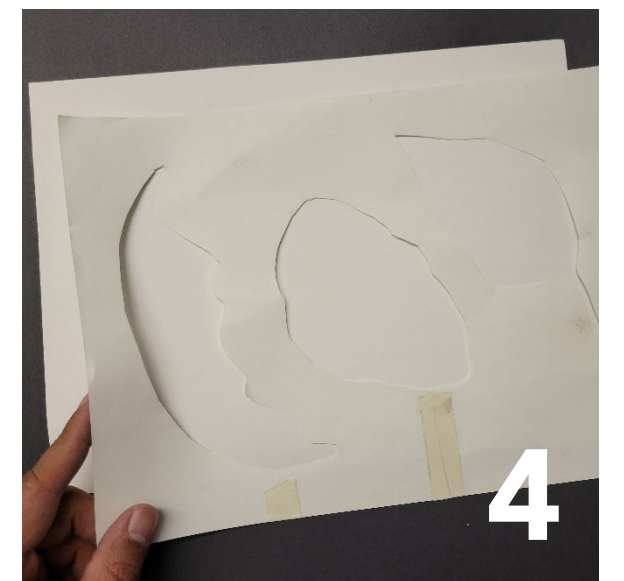
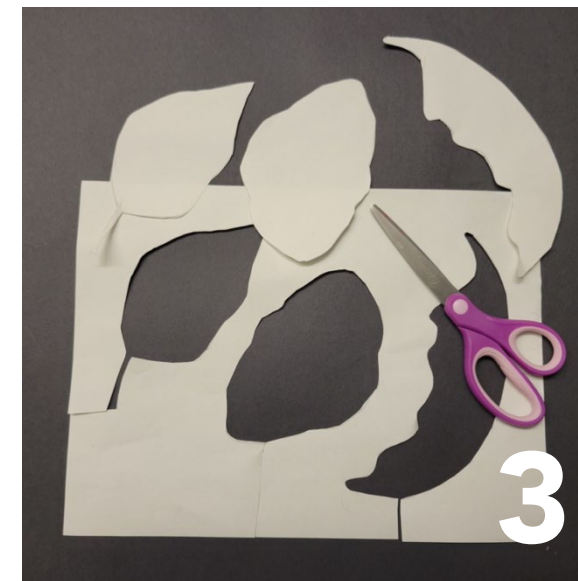
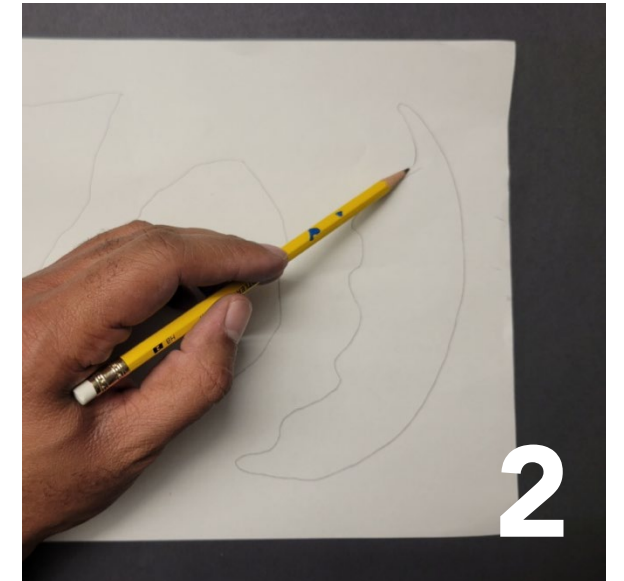
Pencil

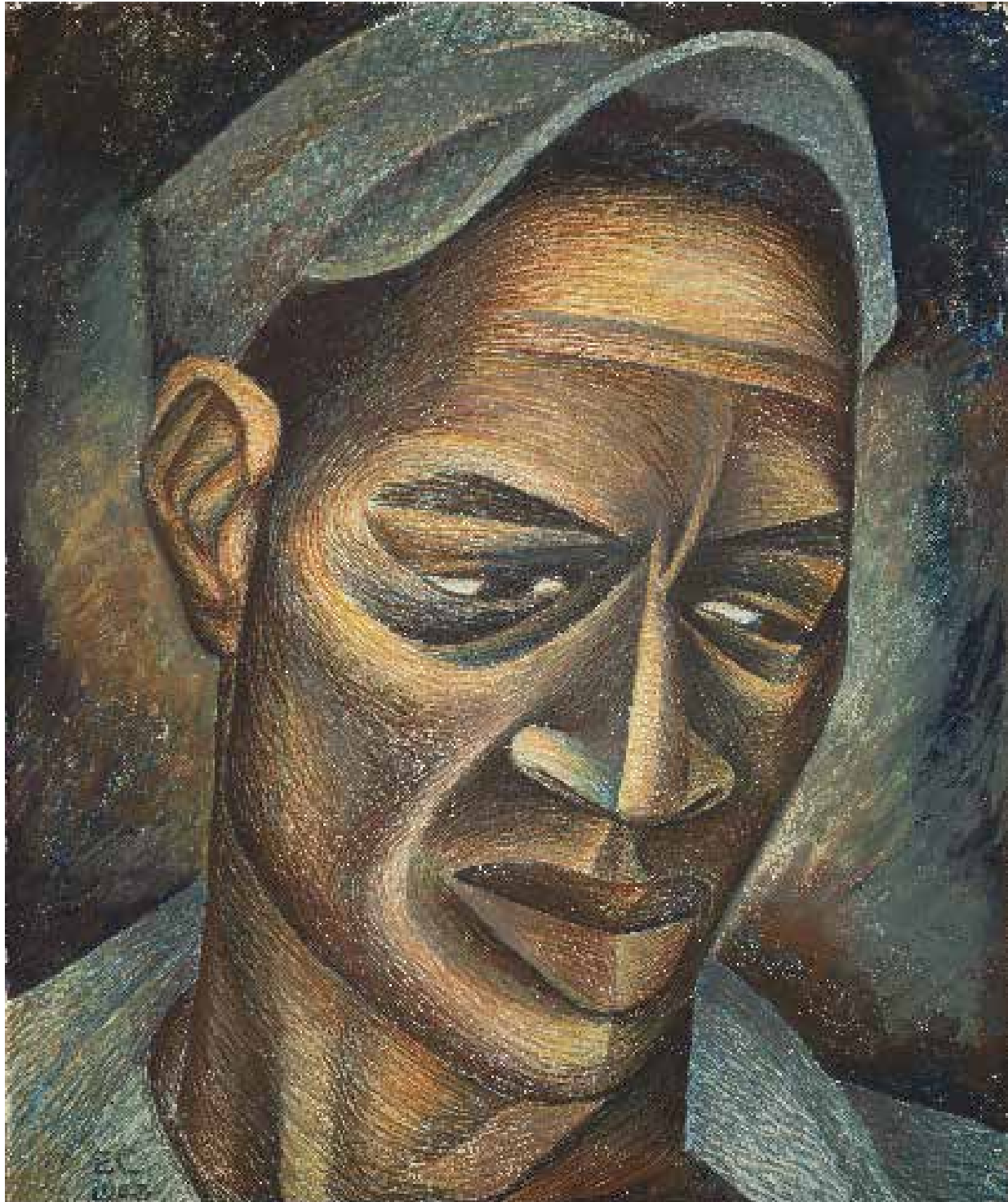
Pastel paper

Scissors

## Steps

1. Look closely at Will Henry Stevens's *Untitled*, observing the shapes and colors.
2. Use a pencil and drawing paper to sketch two to three simple shapes inspired by objects you would find in nature.
3. Cut the shapes out with scissors to make your stencils. Participants may also use precut nature stencils.
4. Think about how you will arrange your stencils to make your drawing.
5. Select a stencil and place it on your pastel paper. Hold the stencil in place and apply pastel along the edge of the stencil's opening, then use a paintbrush to spread the color inside the stencil.
6. Repeat with other stencils and reuse them as often as you want. Overlap the shapes and arrange them to create your pastel drawing.





Elizabeth Catlett. *War Worker*, 1943. Tempera on paper mounted on Masonite; 11 x 9 1/4 in. The Johnson Collection, L2023.43.3

## 3rd Grade–Adult Activity

The subject of Elizabeth Catlett's *War Worker* communicates a feeling of quiet dignity thanks to the solid, angular style in which the artist has rendered him. His downward gaze seems to carry sadness and the thoughtfulness of an old man. Catlett made it in 1943 when she accompanied her husband Charles White to Hampton University, located in the Tidewater region of Virginia, where he worked on a mural commission. The area is home to a large naval base, and artist John Biggers, who was also at Hampton at the time, recalled the difficult conditions that African American workers and servicemen faced:

Service was such a terrible experience. There was gambling all night, the Seabees were unloading live ammunition all night long. Live ammunition! . . . We were right across the street from the US Naval Recreation Center and we couldn't go there. Segregation, you know. They would be out swimming, dancing. It was very frustrating and terribly demoralizing. But it was part of that very terrible time of segregation.

### Questions

- Look closely at *War Worker* and describe the colors, lines, and shapes used by the artist.
- How did the artist depict the sadness and quiet dignity of the subject of this portrait?

# Art Trunk Southern/Modern

3rd Grade–Adult  
Expressive Portrait Activity

## Objective

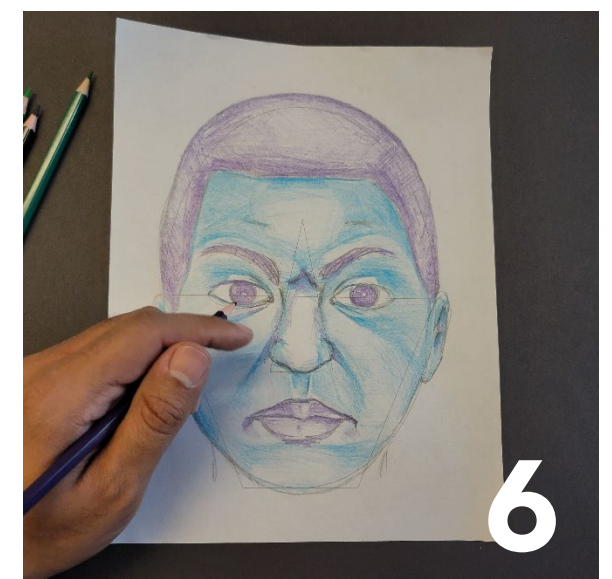
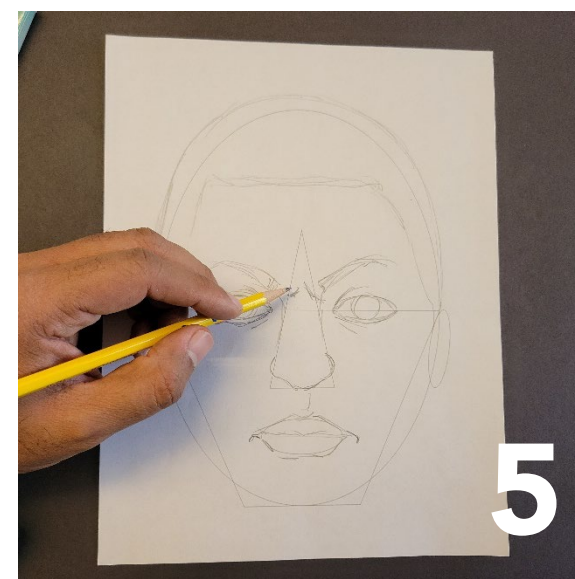
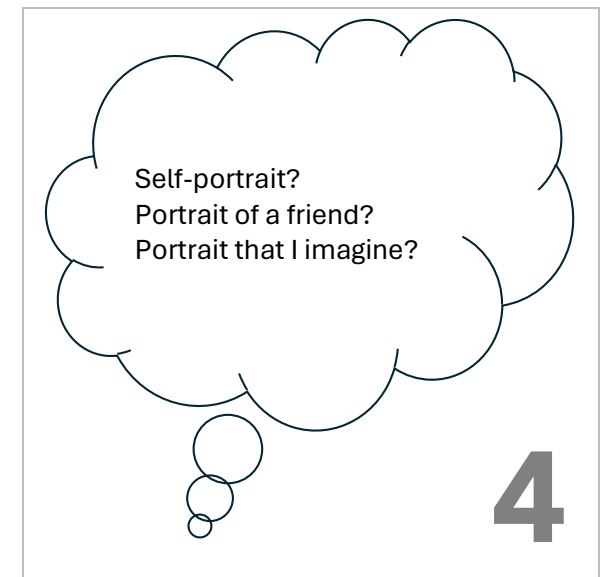
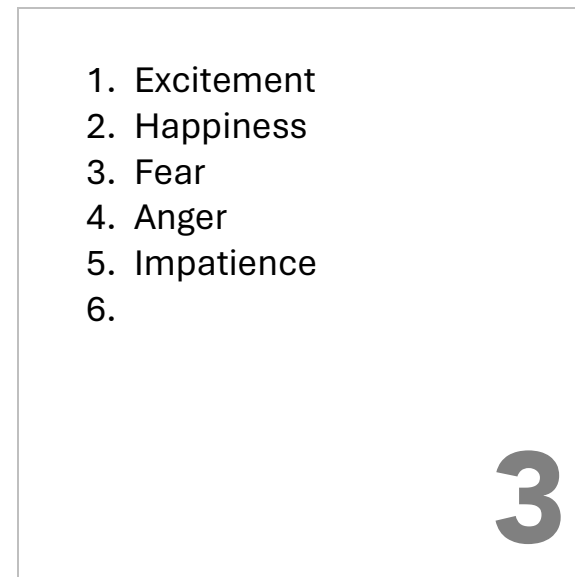
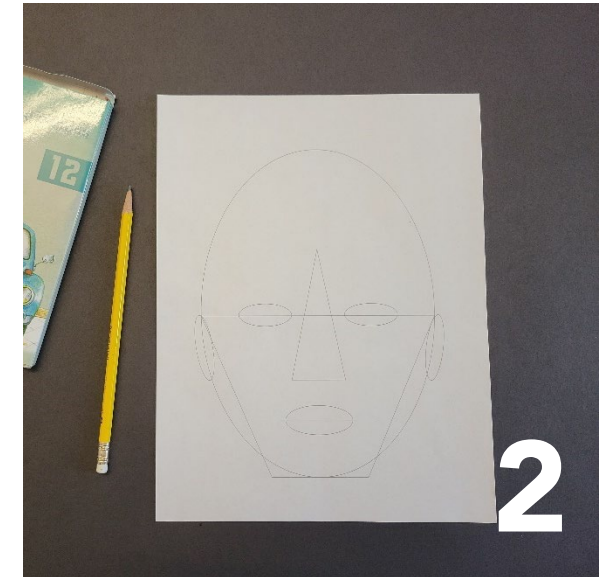
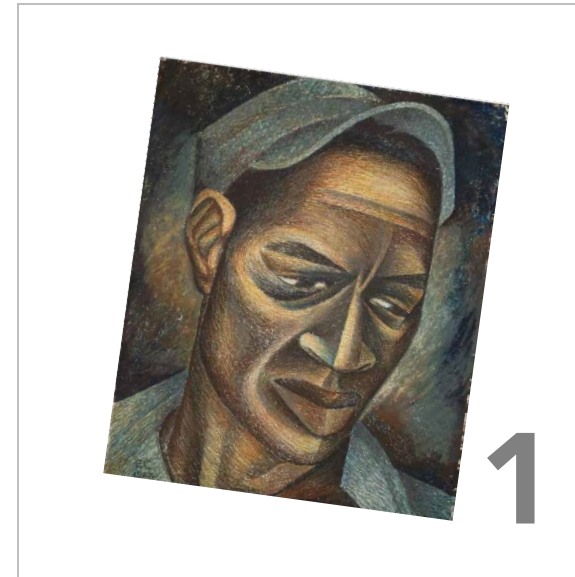
Participants will create expressive portraits.

## Materials

Portrait template  
Drawing paper  
Pencil  
Colored pencils

## Steps

1. Look at War Worker by Elizabeth Catlett. Note the use of lines, colors, and shapes in the portrait.
2. Study the portrait template provided. It will outline eyes, nose, lips, and other features to guide the drawing process. If you would prefer to draw a portrait without the template, you may do so on the blank drawing paper.
3. Consider what ideas and emotions you would like to express through your portrait.
4. Decide whether you want to draw a self-portrait, create a portrait with a partner by taking turns drawing each other, or draw from a face you imagine.
5. Use a pencil to lightly draw facial features on the portrait template provided. Remember to draw an expression that suggests what you want to communicate.
6. Use colored pencils to add color to the facial features. You do not have to use actual skin tones. You may use expressive color to convey the emotion of the portrait.





# Art Trunk *Southern/Modern*

## Resources

### Books

*Story Painter: The Life of Jacob Lawrence* by John Duggleby (author)

*Ablaze with Color: A Story of Painter Alma Thomas* by Jeanne Walker Harvey (author) and Loveis Wise (illustrator)

*Come Look with Me: Exploring Landscape Art with Children* by Gladys S. Blizzard (author)

*The Little House* by Virginia Lee Burton (author and illustrator)

*The Hundred-Year Barn* by Patricia MacLachlan (author) and Kenard Pak (illustrator)

*Where Are You From?* by Yamile Saied Méndez (author) and Jaime Kim (illustrator)

*North, South, East, West,* by Margaret Wise Brown (author) and Greg Pizzoli (illustrator)

*Li'l Sis and Uncle Willie,* by Gwen Everett (author) and William H. Johnson (illustrator, artist)

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