 The animal in me

Unit overview

Students represent themselves through drawing and monoprinting. They investigate how shape, texture and line can be used to express ideas about themselves. The students make artworks that include the qualities of animals in representations of themselves. They consider how artists construct portrait paintings and prints.

Subject matter

People, other living things.

Forms

Drawing, printmaking.

Duration

2 to 4 weeks

Resources

Enter Art

* [Portrait in mirror (self-portrait), Margaret Olley](http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/454.2001/), image no.13

Beyond the frame

* Self Portrait, Keiran Hall, image no.13
* [Self-Portrait as Owl Man, Bede Tungutalum](http://www.printsandprintmaking.gov.au/artists/1516/), image no.31

Other

* photographs of Australian animals or birds
* art paper
* charcoal
* white oil pastel or crayon
* photocopies of patterns found in magazines
* Styrofoam meat or food trays
* biro
* black water-based paper printing ink
* roller

Outcomes and indicators

| Outcome | Indicators |
| --- | --- |
| Making | VAS1.1: Makes artworks in a particular way about experiences of real and imaginary things.   * Investigates the qualities of animals and uses imagination to make self-portraits.   VAS1.2: Uses the forms to make artworks according to various requirements.   * Experiments with the properties of different drawing media. * Uses block printmaking techniques |
| Appreciating | VAS1.3: Realises what artist do, who they are and what they make.   * Talks about some of the symbols and techniques that artists use.   VAS1.4: Begins to interpret the meaning of artworks acknowledging the roles of artist and audience.   * Talks about self-portraits as a reflection of an artist |

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Learning experience 1

Appreciating artworks

1. Discuss self-portraits.
2. Look at self-portraits by Margaret Olley and Kieran Hall.

* What part of themselves does each artist show in their self-portrait?
* What objects do they include and what do they tell us about each artist?
* What part of their lives does each artist tell us about in their portraits?

Note: Explain that Australian artists made these three artworks.

1. Look at a different type of portrait, Self-Portrait as Owl Man by Bede Tungutalum.
2. Discuss how an Aboriginal (Tiwi) artist has represented himself as a bird.

* What bird has Bede Tungutalum chosen?
* What things, lines or patterns in the image remind you of an owl?
* Why do you think Bede Tungutalum has represented himself as a bird?

Note: Explain that the Tiwi are the indigenous people of Bathurst and Melville Islands, which lie north of Darwin. This lino print represents an aspect of the Tiwi Creation story. Explain that artists may make artworks about their beliefs.

1. Discuss the different lines and patterns in the portrait and the background.

Learning experience 2

Making self-portrait

1. The class brainstorms a list of Australian animals or birds which could be associated with personal qualities, e.g. strong, fast, clever or beautiful.
2. Choose an animal or bird to identify with.
3. Make a charcoal drawing of yourself combining the features of your chosen bird or animal with your self-portrait. Focus on the patterns and features such as feathers, scales or fur.

Note: Students should wear protective clothing when using charcoal. Seal the drawing with fixative or hairspray. Do this outside under supervision.

1. Develop detail by working back into the charcoal drawing with white crayon.

Note: Creating a large area of black and then adding detail in a white medium is a useful device that can assist in creating a variety of tonal qualities and textures. It is an alternative to habitually drawing with black on a white surface.

Extension

1. Create textures by gluing torn or cut pieces of a black and white patterned paper to the background around the portrait.
2. Use the patterns or textures in a way that implies features of the animal or bird such as small even shapes for scales or long thin shapes for hair.

Note: Demonstrate ways of translating surface qualities onto pieces of paper.

Appreciating: reflecting

1. Display and review artworks.
2. Identify the animals in each artwork.
3. Talk about reasons for selecting the animal or bird.
4. Describe the patterns and textures used in relation to the bird or animal

Learning experience 3

Making block prints of self-portraits

1. Make a self-portrait drawing using pen or pencil. Concentrate on using lines rather than tonal areas.
2. Transfer (copy) the drawing as a linear image onto a Styrofoam meat or food tray using a biro.
3. Draw (incise) patterns and textures on or around the portrait.
4. Cut the curved edges from the Styrofoam tray.
5. Use the tray as a printing block.

Note: Trial printing techniques before the lesson.

1. Printing process:
2. Spread the ink onto a sheet of Perspex or other sealed surface, then roll the ink onto the incised surface of the tray.
3. Place a sheet of art paper onto the inked tray surface then, using a clean roller, roll over the back of the sheet of paper to ensure that the image is transferred.
4. Carefully peel off the print and hang to dry.

Note: Ink the printing plates and assist students in transferring the image to paper. The teacher would use the inked roller and the student could use the clean roller.

Appreciating: reflecting

1. Display the prints next to the printing plates (Styrofoam tray).
2. Talk about the differences between the print and the printing plate.

Note: Discuss the print and the printing plate being positive and negative images (black on white versus white on black). Explain that the print is also a mirror image of the printing block.

1. Display the animal/self-portrait images with the printed self-portraits as well as examples of other artists’ portraits.
2. Discuss the different media and processes used in making the artworks.

Note: A combination of artists’ works, student drawings, prints, paintings and photographs can demonstrate visually the different forms that portraits can take.