

Split Self-Portrait

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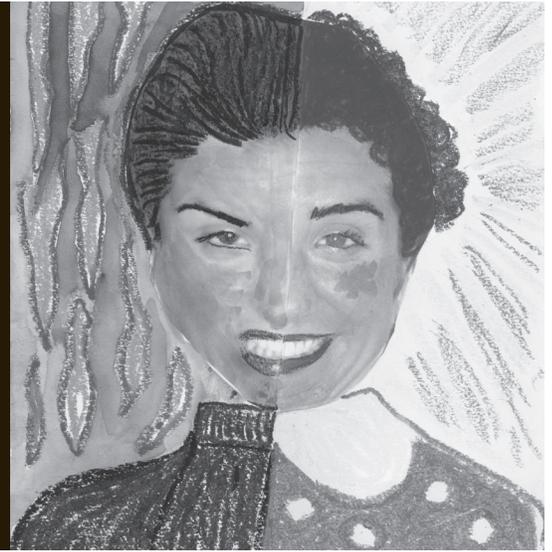
Literature Inspiration

Title: *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

Author: Robert Louis Stevenson, 1886

Grade Level

Middle School (grades 6–8)



General Description

A complex tale whose popularity has captured the imagination worldwide for more than a century, Robert Louis Stevenson's novel, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, presents the story of a man battling with the internal struggle between good and evil and the two opposing forces of his own human nature. Throughout time, artists have used the visual arts as way to express the underlying emotions that exist within themselves or within their subjects. Portraiture, in particular, gives an artist the opportunity to internally reflect and reveal, through the expressive use of color, mark making, and composition, the inner and outer aspects of a person.

In this lesson, students will have the opportunity to express themselves in and through color and line, as they create split self-portrait works reflecting two conflicting moods within them. Students will reflect on the tension caused by the character's opposing internal forces in the novel, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as well as view examples of artwork created a group of early 20th-century artists known as the Fauves, who translated their feelings into color, to create their own emotionally charged mixed media works.

Objectives

Students will. . .

- read and discuss the novel, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson.
- create a self-portrait expressing two contrasting emotions using mixed media.
- learn about the psychological effects of color and how to use color and line to convey emotion in a work of art.

Project Time: Allow approximately two hours from start to completion of this project.

This project is best completed in the form of two, one hour sessions—spaced at least one day apart.

Adaptation Suggestions

(for grades K–5 and grades 9–12)

This lesson can be adapted to suit the needs of elementary students through the use of more age-appropriate literature (e.g. *My Many Colored Days* by Dr. Seuss). This lesson can be adapted to suit high school students through the use of more sophisticated materials, for example, photo manipulation using a computer and by supplementing the lesson with more in depth explorations into art historical connections.

Vocabulary (Visual Art Vocabulary: **cool colors, warm colors, vertical lines, horizontal lines, diagonal lines, angled lines, composition, Fauves, mixed media, mood, portrait, and self-portrait.** English Language Arts Vocabulary: **malefactor, mottled, tincture, and undemonstrative**) *Please see appendix for vocabulary definitions.*

California State Standards: *Please see appendix.*



Materials

- 8 ½" x 11" black and white photographs of students (3–4 different expressions; copy paper)
- 9" x 12" watercolor paper (one sheet per student)
- Pencils (one for every student)
- Glue sticks (to be shared)
- Scissors (to be shared)
- Watercolor paints (one set for every two students)
- Watercolor brushes (small and medium size; one set for every student)
- Water containers (paper cups, plastic cups, aluminum cans, etc; one for every two students)
- Paper towels (one roll)
- Salt (one container)
- Rubbing alcohol (one container)
- Blow dryer (optional)
- Oil pastels (to be shared)

Preparation

- Obtain access to a digital camera, computer, and printer.
- Collect images of work by Fauve artists, an early 20th-century art movement in France (artists included, Henri Matisse, Maurice de Vlaminck, and Andre Derain). (*Please see the **Resources** section at the end of this lesson for web and literary resources that include images of art work by the Fauves.*)
- Collect a variety of music to be used in the line exercise.
- Have a color wheel on hand for the lesson.
- Create an example of the project before the lesson. Even if you choose not to share the work with students, it will help you to have a better understanding of the lesson.

Session One

Motivation

Begin with a discussion on the way in which some artists use color to express emotion.

Color Discussion

In the early 20th century, color was used as a subject not to represent a realistic object. Artists began to focus on color as a direct expression of their feelings, as an emotional force. This group of artists was called the Fauves (translated as “wild beasts,” in French) and it included Henri Matisse, Maurice de Vlaminck, and André Derain.

Present to students an image of Matisse’s, *Harmony in Red (Red Room)*, 1908-1909. Discuss the artist’s use of color this painting, in particular, his predominant use of the color red and the psychological effects that it has on the viewer. Explain to students that red is an example of a warm color (as is yellow and orange). To some, warm colors are associated with warm feelings or feelings of heat (e.g. happiness, excitement, danger, and passion).

Present to students an image of Pablo Picasso’s, *The Tragedy*, 1903. Discuss the artist’s use of color in this painting, in particular, the predominant use of the color blue and the psychological effects that it has on the viewer. Explain to students that blue is an example of a cool color (as is green and purple). To some, cool colors are associated with peaceful feelings or feelings of cold (e.g. sadness, loneliness, or calm).

We often refer to color to describe our feelings (e.g. “I’m feeling blue”) Ask students to come up with other expressions that use color to describe emotion.

Project

1. Direct students in a line exercise activity to explore the use of the elements line and color to express emotion and mood.

Line Exercise

Pass out a sheet of paper and a set of oil pastels to each student. Choose a variety of different music styles (jazz, classical, techno, African drums, etc.) and play each for the group. As each style of music is being played, students should move their pastels across their paper as if they’re dancing to the music.

Remind students that the elements of line and color should express their own emotion and feeling of the piece of music they are hearing (incorporate **cool colors** and **warm colors** as well as a variety of lines, including **vertical lines**, **horizontal lines**, **diagonal lines**, **parallel lines**, and **angled lines**). Play each piece of music for approximately one minute and encourage students to use an entire sheet of paper for each music selection.

When finished, have students compare papers and discuss with each other and with the class the feelings expressed in the marks that they made and colors they have chosen.



2. Demonstrate a variety of watercolor techniques that students will then try on their own.

Experiment with Watercolor Techniques

Demonstrate the following watercolor techniques to students before you begin taking photographs. This way, students can experiment with these techniques while waiting for their turn in the photography session.

Combining other materials:

experiment with the effects made by combining materials such as rubbing alcohol and salt on top of the watercolor paint.

For directions on how to combine rubbing alcohol with watercolor paints, visit:
<http://piseco.homeschooljournal.net/2008/08/20/watercolor-wash-with-rubbing-alcohol/>

For directions on how to combine salt with watercolor paints, visit:
<http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolorpainting/salt.htm>

Resist: process in which a wax material (such as white crayon or candle wax) is drawn onto the paper and covered with paint. The areas which contain the wax will resist the watercolor paint and remain white.

For directions on how to create the resist technique, visit:
<http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolorpainting/waxresist.htm>

Washes: A watercolor wash is a basic technique to establish tone and atmosphere in your painting. In a wash, the artist covers the paper with a thin or watery coating of paints. Washes are useful for filling in the background before you start painting your subject.

For directions on how to create the watercolor wash technique, visit:
<http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolorpainting/gradedwash.htm>

Wet on Wet: to work with a wet brush on dry paper. Blend colors and note how they bleed when they hit other wet spots and stay put when they are applied to dry paper.

For directions on how to create the wet-on-wet technique, visit:
<http://www.watercolorpainting.com/watercolorpainting/wetinwet.htm>

3. Explore various facial expressions and record them using photography.

Expressing Ourselves in Photographs

Begin by showing students several different photographs, each expressing a different emotion. Ask students to identify the emotion displayed in each picture. Discuss, as a class, which facial features portray the most emotion (i.e. the eyes, eyebrows, and mouth).

As a class, brainstorm a list of emotions on the board for the students to refer to when taking their photographs. Ask students to choose at least three different emotions and to exaggerate their expressions. Recommend that they choose expressions that contrast with each other (e.g. happy and sad) and are easily identifiable.

Using a digital camera, have the students take several photographs of each other in their various expressions. Be sure to have students not move their heads between the photographs—only their facial expression should change. There should probably be lots of laughter during this activity!

Download the photographs onto the computer and format the pictures within a 9" x 12" size frame. Be sure to change the color to grayscale and adjust the contrast and brightness as needed. If possible, have the students complete this step. Otherwise, make time to complete it yourself before the next session.



Examples of expressive photographs



Session Two**Splitting the Portraits**

1. Have the students carefully cut out both the head and neck from each of their photographs.
2. With all of the copies of their expressions in front of them, have the students mix and match the different faces (pairing up the two halves) to create a portrait that includes two contrasting emotions.
3. Draw a line lightly down the center of one face. Cut the image in half along that line you've just drawn.
4. Match the half image with the other full image you've chosen. Use the half image as a guide for cutting the second image in half as well.
5. Paste the two halves onto the 9" x 12" watercolor paper using a glue stick. (Be sure to hold onto the other halves as backup materials).
6. Complete the portrait by drawing with oil pastels and painting with watercolor paints over it with expressive lines and colors—as practiced in the first session. Have students also consider their composition (arrangement) and the ways in which line and color can enhance the mood of their split self-portraits.
7. Place in a safe area to dry.
8. If time permits, invite students to share their work with the class.

Teaching Tips

- When working with the watercolor paints, keep in mind that the printer paper from the photograph will absorb the paint differently than the watercolor paper in the background.
- In mixed media projects, anything goes! Experiment with different materials and open it up to students to choose what materials they would like to combine.
- If teaching this lesson to more than one group of students, think about displaying unique student examples from the first group for student from later groups.

Extension Activities

- Create a print based on your split self-portrait. Make a photocopy of the final image and transfer it to a Styrofoam printing plate.
- Create a three-dimensional interpretation of your split self-portrait, using sculptural materials such as Styrofoam head bases covered with paint, wire, glue, magazines, fabric, and found objects.
- Incorporate text from the novel into the final image—cut and paste it or experiment with adding it while working at the computer.
- Create a story from the split self-portrait.

Resources**About the author,****Robert Louis Stevenson:**

<http://people.brandeis.edu/~teuber/stevensonbio.html>

<http://www.kirjasto.sci.fi/rlsteven.htm>

About the novel, *The Strange***Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde:**

<http://www.bibliomania.com/0/0/46/86/frameset.html>

http://www.bookrags.com/Strange_Case_of_Dr_Jekyll_and_Mr_Hyde

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Resources from the San Diego County Library***Exploring color* (1985) by Nita Leland**

752 LEL [All ages]

This is a highly competent study of color, especially for the beginner. Leland explores the history, science, and theory of artistic uses of color before diving into comprehensive exercises and projects.

***Fauvism* (1991)**

by Sarah Whitfield

759.0643 WHI [Adult]

An historical look into the work of 19th century colorists known as the Fauves.

Exploring watercolor:***creative exercises and techniques for watercolor and mixed media***

(2007)

by Elizabeth Groves

751.422 GRO [All ages]

An exploration of the many methods of working with watercolor and mixed media.

Examples of related-work currently on view in at SDMA

Henri Matisse, *Bouuuuet*, oil on canvas, 1916

Mary Stevenson Cassatt, *Simone in a Blue Bonnet*, oil on canvas, 1903

Ancestor Portrait, *Ninth Rank Imperial Official*, watercolor on paper, 19th century, China

Diego Rivera, *The Hands of Dr. Moore*, oil on canvas, 20th century

