

What My Name Says About Me

Sharpie®

Abstract self-portraits of
letters, words and pictures

Grade: 1-2

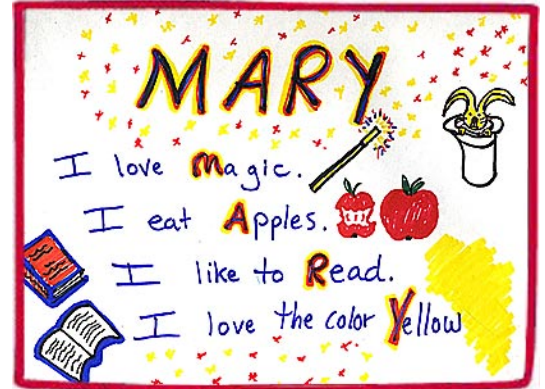
Time Needed: 2 classes

Summary

Students will create artworks that combine their signatures with descriptive words and illustrations. Using Sharpie® markers, students will write their names artistically and then choose words that have personal meaning and which start with the letters that spell their names. Students will then create a composition of letters, words, phrases and/or pictures to present a vivid, abstract self-portrait.

Student Background

Students should be very comfortable with the alphabet and able to list words orally that start with the letters which spell their names. Beginning writers could dictate to an adult and then arrange and illustrate the words on their own. Advanced students may want to write their full names for more complex self-portraits.



Objectives

- Students will review portraits and self-portraits.
- Students will explore the differences between realistic and abstract art.
- Students will practice their writing skills using Sharpie® markers.
- Students will then create a composition of letters, words, phrases and/or pictures to present an abstract self-portrait.

Vocabulary

portrait, self-portrait, realistic, abstract

Materials

- scratch paper
- drawing paper 11"x18"
- Sharpie® Markers
- *optional*: crayons or colored pencils

Visuals

- gather dictionaries and alphabet books for brainstorming
- collect examples of portraits both realistic and abstract
(interesting comparisons: Cezanne's *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard* and Picasso's *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard*; Marsden Hartley's *One Portrait of One Woman* and Picasso's *Gertrude Stein*)
- print, if desired, student and teacher examples (provided)

Discussion

portrait

What is a portrait? Introduce or review the idea that artists create "portraits" about people. Discuss why an artist would want to make a portrait.

realistic

Sometimes portraits are realistic. An artist tries to make the portrait look just like the real person. Discuss why they would want to do this. Show examples of realistic portraits.

abstract

Some artists make portraits that don't look realistic. When art doesn't look real, we say it is "abstract." An abstract portrait can still tell people about that person. Show an example of an abstract portrait and discuss what it communicates about the person. Why did the artist choose to make it abstract?

self-portrait

A "self-portrait" is a portrait that an artist makes of himself or herself. Explain that students will be making a portrait of themselves—a self-portrait—that is abstract. They won't be drawing a picture of how they look. They will be writing words and drawing things that tell about them.

Studio Experience

BRAINSTORM WORDS

On a piece of scratch paper, have students sign their name. Ask students to think about all the letters that spell their name. Have them brainstorm things that they like that start with each of the letters of their name—one word or phrase for each letter. Encourage them to choose words that really say something about themselves. Depending on the individual student's abilities, they can do this in their head, write words down on scratch paper, or have help writing them down. Provide alphabet books and dictionaries for inspiration.

A 1st grade example:

George with the words and/or pictures of: soccer **g**oalie, an **e**lephant, the color **o**range, a **r**ocket, a **g**ame, an **e**agle

An advanced 2nd grader example:

Jane Doe

I like to **j**ump.

I am **a**mazing.

I am **n**imble.

I love to **e**at.

I am afraid of the **d**ark.

I play in an **o**rchestra.

I am **e**ight.

WRITE YOUR NAME

Have each student write their name with a Sharpie® marker in large letters on a big piece of drawing paper. Let them be creative in how they write their names and encourage them to use colors of their choice. Remind them to emphasize each letter in their name.

ADD YOUR WORDS

Next, students should add the chosen word and phrase that matches each letter in their name. Allow them to create a composition of their choice. Encourage them to add visual emphasis to the letters that have these words or phrases.

DECORATE AND EMBELLISH

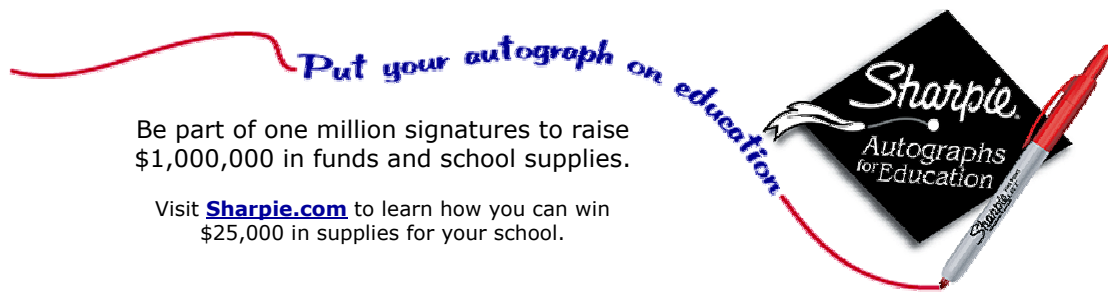
With Sharpie® markers, crayons or colored pencils, encourage students to illustrate and decorate their self-portraits. Allow them embellish as they like.

Group Critique

Upon completion, have students present their artworks and talk about what their picture tells about themselves. Encourage them to share what they enjoyed and what they found challenging about making an abstract self-portrait.

A Variation

A good get-to-know-you activity is to have them make a portrait of a classmate. This way they begin to learn to spell or recognize new names and get to "interview" a classmate about what they like.

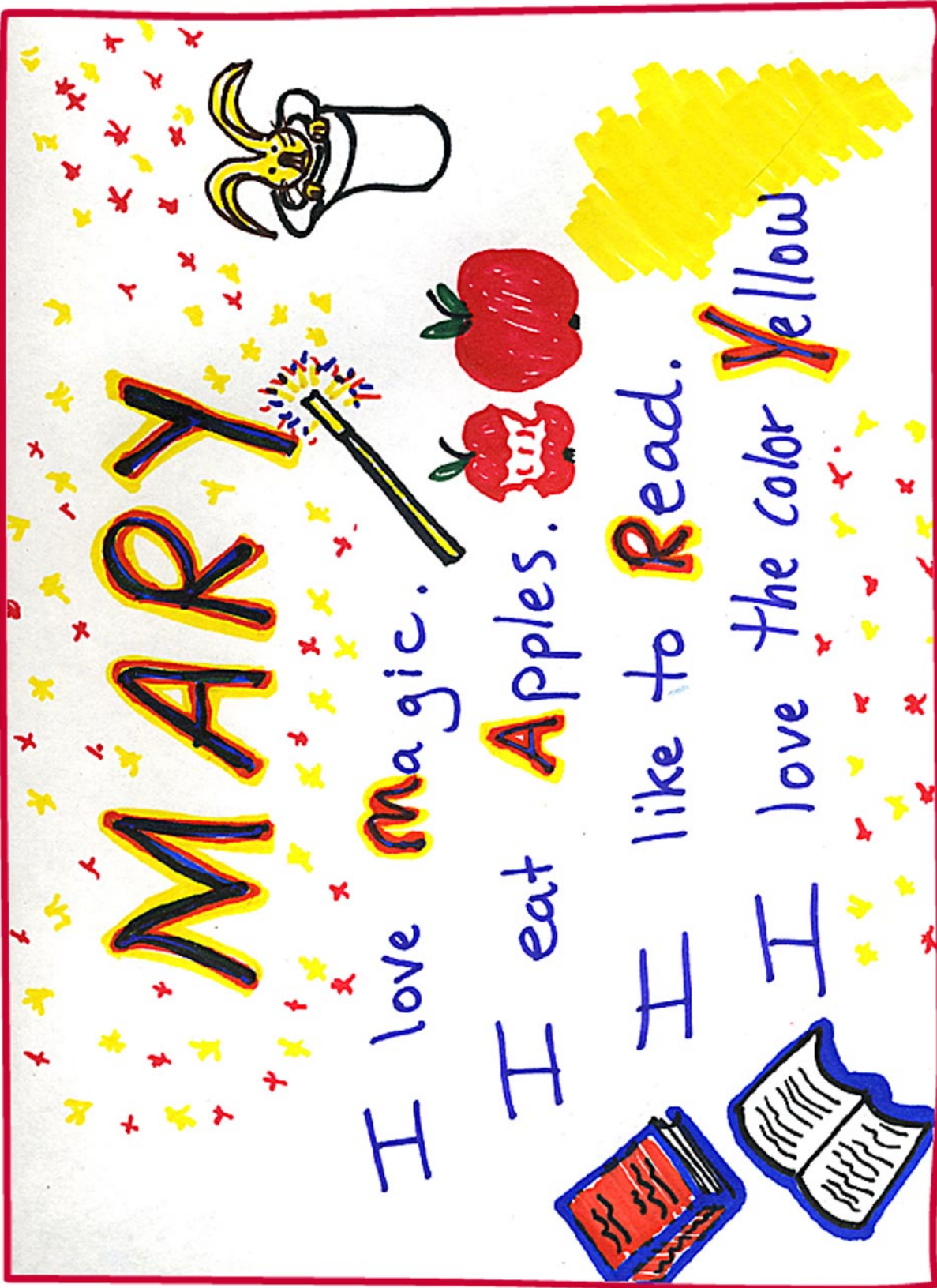


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Examples

TEACHER EXAMPLE



STUDENT EXAMPLE

