



Lesson 7: Self Portrait – Oil Pastel Adding Color and Value

Grades: 6-12

Overview

Students will add color, highlights and shadows to their expressive self-portraits.

Materials and Tools

- Self-portrait from previous session
- Oil pastels
- Mirror
- A light source—either a flashlight or a window with natural light

Objectives

Students will understand that:

- Artists can exaggerate colors, highlights, and shadows to make their self-portraits look more expressive.

Students will be able to:

- Add realistic and/or expressive color to their self-portrait.
- Add highlights and shadows to their self-portrait.

Activities

Introduce the following vocabulary:

Value: how light or dark a color appears

Highlight: an area that is lighter than surrounding areas

Shadow: an area that is darker than surrounding areas

Close Looking

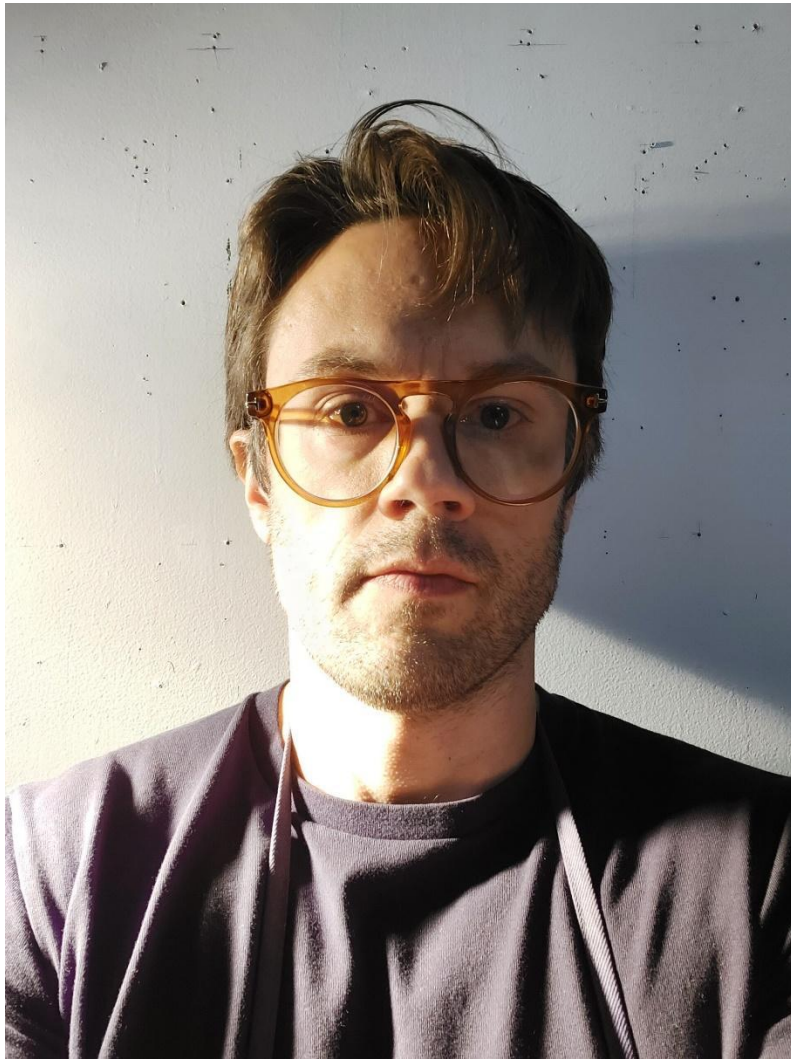


Malvin Gray Johnson, *Self Portrait*, 1934

Questions for Discussion:

- *How do you think this person is feeling?*
- *What colors do you notice?*
- *Where do you see highlights or shadows?*
- *Do you notice colors, highlights, or shadows in this portrait that look exaggerated? Where do you notice these?*

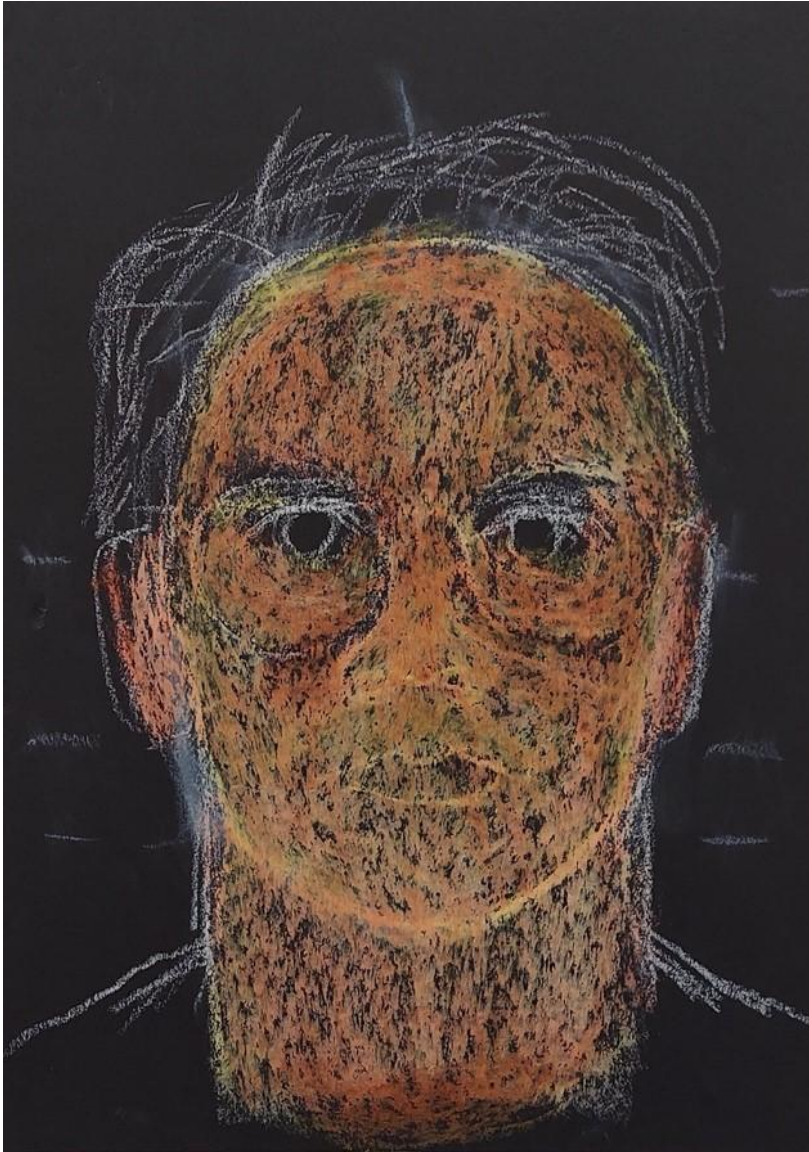
Exaggerated Colors, Highlights, and Shadows



Exaggerating colors, highlights and shadows can make a self-portrait appear more dramatic and interesting.

Turn off the classroom lights and demonstrate creating exaggerated highlights and shadows with either natural light or a flashlight. Point out how a shadow usually appears opposite a highlight.

Skin Color



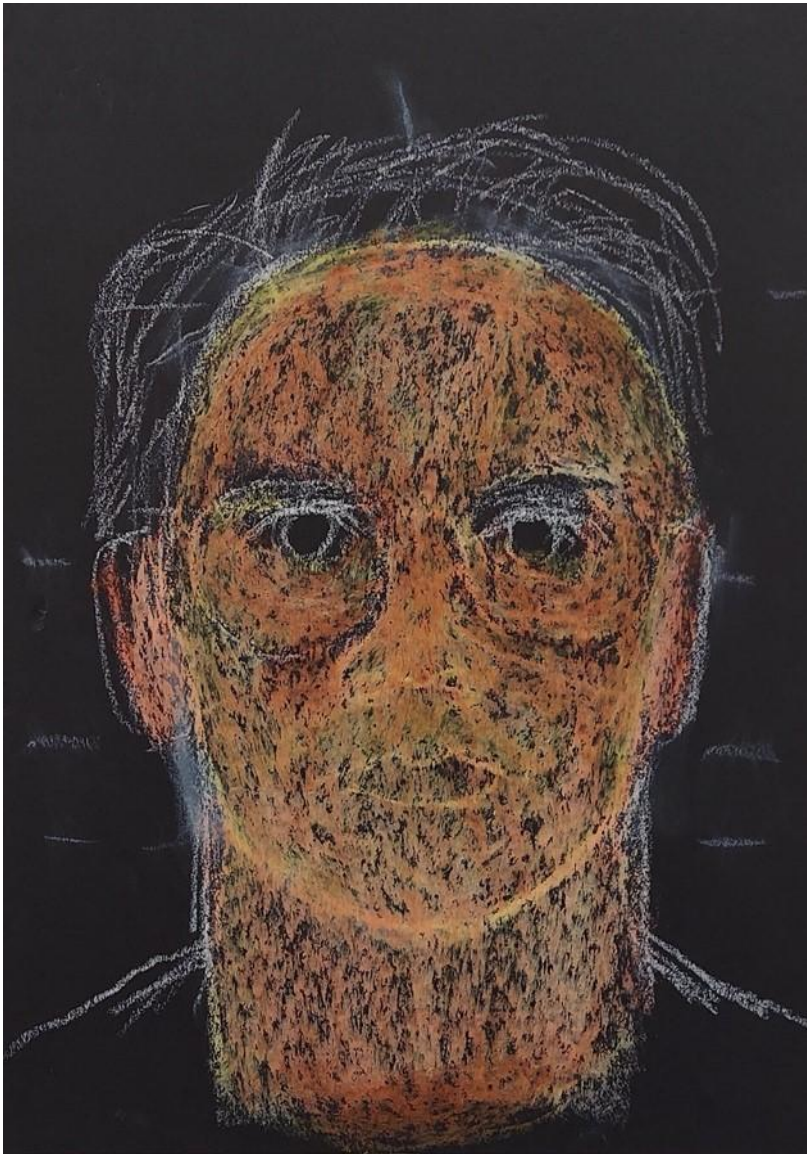
Demonstrate building up a skin color by starting with a thin layer and building toward a thicker, more opaque color.

Ask:

Will you make a realistic or expressive skin color?

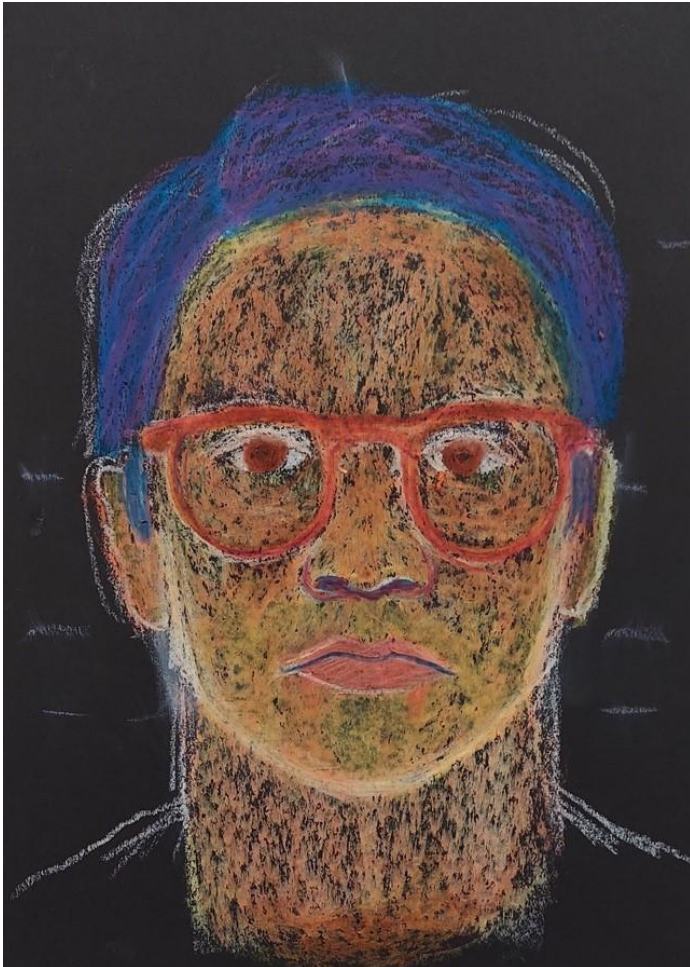
What colors can you mix to make this color?

Establish a Skin Tone



Demonstrate adding layers of color using the side of your oil pastel to create an even layer.

Re-draw features and fill in hair



Demonstrate looking in the mirror as you re-draw some of your basic features with a light oil pastel.

Ask: What color do you plan to make the base color of your hair?

I like to choose something that contrasts or stands out against my skin tone.

Demonstrate looking in the mirror as to re-draw your features, as needed.

Ask: What color will you use for your hair?

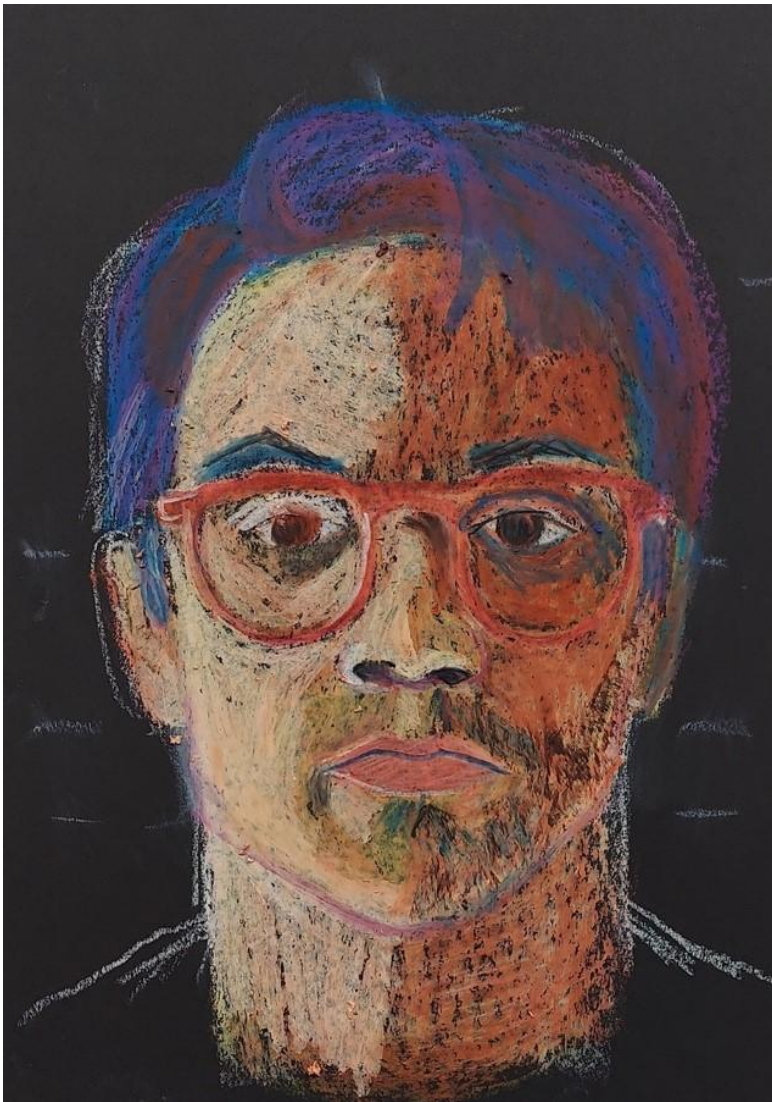
You can consider choosing a color that contrasts, or stands out, against your skin tone.

Add highlights and shadows.

Point out highlights and shadows on your face, then begin demonstrating drawing them in your self-portrait.

Ask: Where do you see the highlights? Where do you see the shadows?

Use a light oil pastel, like white or peach, to make highlights and a dark oil pastel, like blue or purple, to add shadows.



Reflection Questions for Discussion

- *Where did you add highlights or shadows to your self-portrait?*
- *How did adding highlights or shadows change your self-portrait today?*