



Analyzing a self-portrait

GRADES 4–6

Barbara Astman examines and communicates aspects of her identity in her series of self-portraits, *I as artifact*. Explore the ways you can express and communicate your identity with the following activities:

Art Activities

Create an unconventional self-portrait

Think about different materials in your home and classroom that connect to parts of your identity. It can be anything from your favorite food to an old shirt that you don't wear anymore. After finding the materials that matter to you, draw a rough sketch of yourself on a piece of paper. Cut or mold the materials into different shapes and glue the materials on the paper to create your unconventional self-portrait! For example, you could use dry pasta for your hair, or cut out scraps of an old shirt to make your nose and eyes.

Make your own *I as artifact* inspired print

Use a peel-off face mask. After you're done with it, carefully remove it (it's ok if it rips a bit!) and shape it into a face that you feel represents you. Leave it somewhere to fully dry for a few days. Finally, take a photo, or make a photocopy of it.

Create different representations of yourself

Choose four mediums and make four different self-portraits of yourself, one with each material. Experiment with your pose, your expression and the colors you use. Some ideas for materials are paint, pastel, collage, clay, fabric and much more! When you're done, compare the portraits. Which is your favourite and why?

If you'd like to extend the lesson beyond visual art, here are some other activities:

Journal about a special day (language)

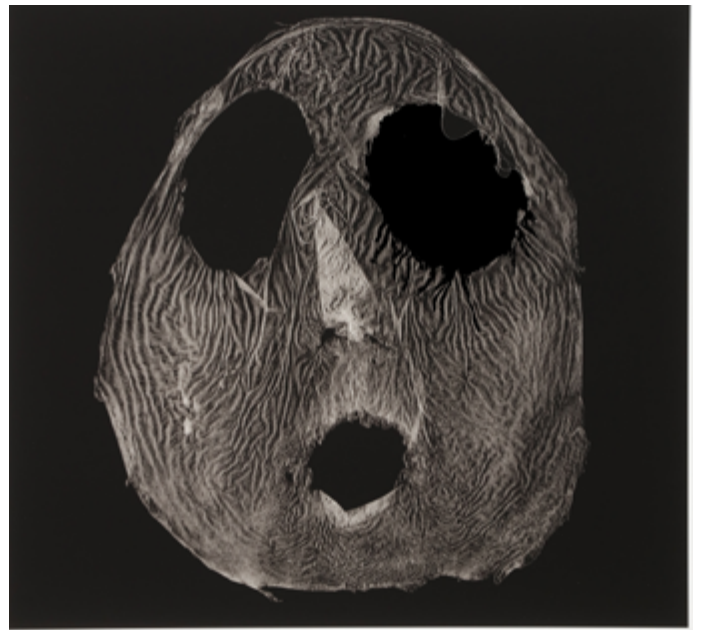
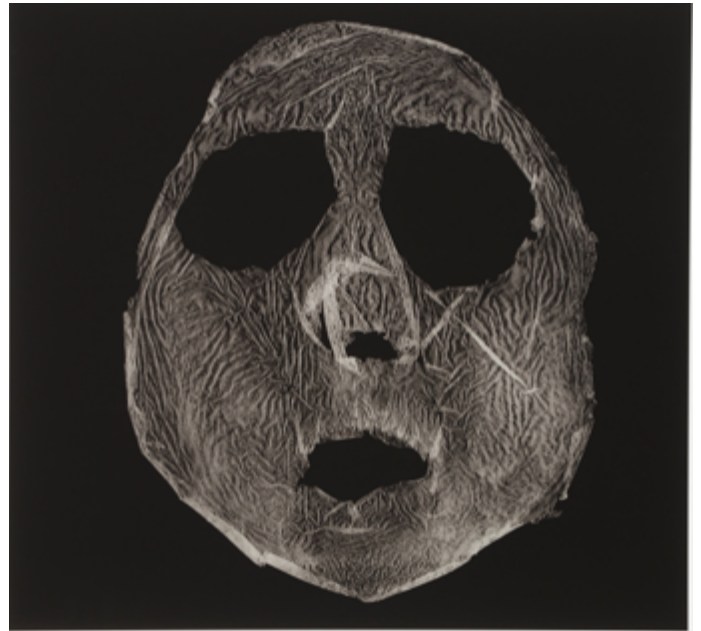
One of the things that make up your identity is your experiences. Think about a day that was very special to you and the details that made it important. Was it the people around you, the place you went, or what you saw? Write a journal entry about that day and your feelings about it.

Dance to your favourite song (health and physical education)

The music you enjoy is part of who you are. Pick your favorite song that you love to dance to and come up with 3-5 dance moves for it. To extend this activity with a group of friends, create individual dance moves that show each person's individual identity, and another dance move that shows your shared identity.

Explore your identity with a mind map (social studies)

Brainstorm a list of words to describe who you are. This could include what you look like, but also what you like, your family history and more. Turn this list into a mind map that showcases your identity, characteristics and interests.



Glossary

Mural: A painting or other artwork made directly on a wall or ceiling that was designed for that space.

Self-Portrait: A work of art that an artist creates of themselves.

Medium: The material that an artist uses to create art.

Identity: The qualities, beliefs, personality traits, appearance, and/or expressions that characterize a person or group. Identity includes how one sees oneself within various communities; local to global.