Zara’s Portrait Masterpiece: A Creative Study

Learning objective: To analyse the artistic techniques used in portraits and apply observational skills to describe facial features and personality.

Choose a historical figure, a family member, or a friend to be your subject. Look closely at their features and their personality. Use this template to plan your portrait before you begin your painting or sketch. Zara the zebra says: 'Don't just look at the shape of the eyes; think about the story they tell!'

Word bank: expression · proportion · texture · shading · mood · composition · feature · character · perspective · detail

1. Subject Selection: Who is your portrait subject and what is their relationship to you? Describe one key personality trait you want to show. (2 marks)

2. Facial Features: Describe the shape of your subject's eyes, nose, and mouth. How will you use shading to show depth and texture? (3 marks)

3. Mood and Expression: What emotion is your subject showing? How will you use colour or line to represent this feeling in your artwork? (3 marks)

4. Composition and Background: Will your portrait be a close-up or include the shoulders? What will you put in the background to tell us more about the person? (2 marks)

5. Artistic Techniques: Which tools will you use (e.g., charcoal, watercolours, pencils)? Why have you chosen these for this specific portrait? (2 marks)

Extension challenge: Research a famous portrait from history. Write a short paragraph explaining how the artist used light and shadow to create a focal point on the subject's face.