Grade 4 Art Assessment: The Power of the Portrait

Learning objective: To demonstrate understanding of portraiture techniques, facial proportions, and the use of artistic expression to convey personality and emotion.

Read each question carefully. Use the provided word bank to support your answers where appropriate. Ensure your responses are detailed and reflect your knowledge of techniques such as shading, composition, and expression.

A portrait is more than just a picture of a face; it is a visual biography. Artists use composition and lighting to tell a story about the subject. By carefully observing the distance between features, such as the eyes and the chin, an artist can create a realistic representation. Furthermore, by using varied pressure with pencils or charcoal, an artist creates depth through light and shadow, bringing a two-dimensional surface to life.

Word bank: Proportion · Expression · Composition · Shading · Tone · Feature · Medium · Perspective · Contour

1. Explain why the placement of the eyes is crucial when drawing a human face. Use the term 'proportion' in your answer. (2 marks)

2. Compare and contrast a portrait that uses soft, blended shading with one that uses bold, dark outlines. How does each style change the 'mood' of the artwork? (3 marks)

3. Identify two different artistic mediums you could use to create a portrait and justify which one you would choose to best show a person's joyful expression. (3 marks)

4. What might happen to the 'perspective' of a portrait if the artist draws the subject looking slightly upwards from a low angle? (2 marks)

5. Zara the Zebra wants to paint a portrait of her friend Leo the Lion. Describe how Zara could use color and brushstrokes to show that Leo is a 'brave but gentle' leader. (5 marks)

6. Define 'composition' in the context of portraiture. Why is it important to consider what is happening in the background of a portrait? (3 marks)

7. If you were commissioned to create a portrait of a historical figure, explain how you would select specific items or symbols to include in the background to represent their life's work. (5 marks)

Draw: In the box below, draw a self-portrait or a portrait of a friend. You must demonstrate your understanding of facial proportions and use at least two different shading techniques to create the illusion of three-dimensional form (e.g., cross-hatching or blending).

Extension challenge: Total: /25. Creative Extension: Write a brief 'Artist's Statement' (no more than 100 words) explaining the choices you made in your drawing. Why did you choose this pose? What emotion were you trying to capture, and how did your technical skill help you achieve this?