
4th Grade LWSD Art Docent Project: Merfolk

Focus on Portraiture

Objectives: To draw a portrait with proportions that approximate those of the human face, to use best practices with watercolor paint, and to let the imagination run free, creating imaginary beings.

Artistic Influence: the mermaids of Australian artist Jane Davenport



Materials:

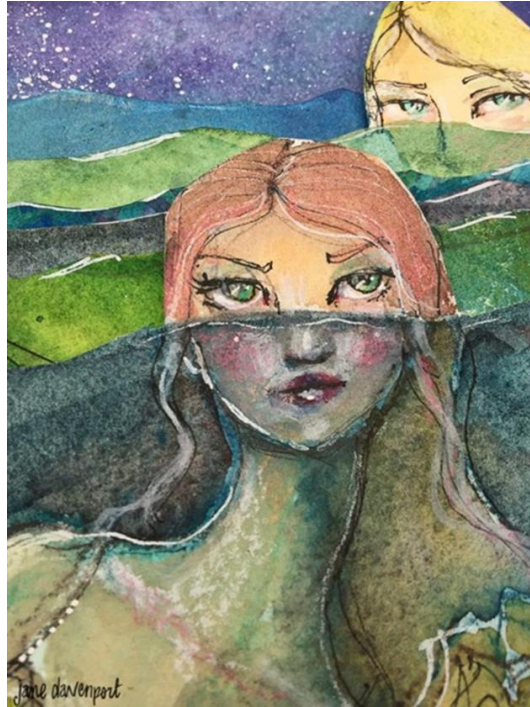
- **A regular graphite pencil from the students' desk**
- **A good, clean eraser**, (hi-polymer or similar, if possible)
- **Watercolor paper** (90# white sulphite paper is a possible substitute in the absence of watercolor paper)
- **Watercolor paint** (either trays or individual cakes, making sure to have plenty of blue tones)
- **Paintbrushes** (a mix of sizes, large for water, small for facial details)
- **Water cup**
- **Paper towels**
- Large prints of the included portrait drawing guides if possible
- Optional: blue liquid watercolor

Instructions and notes:

1. Ahead of teaching, print either large copies of the included portrait drawing guides or enough smaller copies for every student to be able to see one.
2. View the lesson slides with the students, really stressing the guidelines and proportions of human features.
3. Tell students to draw their guidelines lightly in pencil and the facial features more firmly, so that they do not get erased when erasing the guidelines.
4. Watercolor paint can be substituted with watercolor pencils. Note: Watercolor pencils can be more precise; however, it takes more time for students to color with watercolor pencils and then paint over the pencil marks.
5. Blue liquid watercolor can be used to save time when painting the ocean.
6. Invite students to share their art and talk about the process, if time allows.
7. Distribute parent information page for students to take home, and print an extra page to post on your bulletin board with the finished art. See following page.
8. Please complete the brief [LWSD Art Docent Program Feedback Survey](#) for this lesson.
9. Thank you for supporting our elementary students' visual arts education.

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The goal of this 4th grade lesson was to have students draw a fun portrait based on a fantasy-based creature.



WA State Visual Arts Standard

When making works of art, utilize care for materials, tools, and equipment in a manner that prevents danger to oneself and others. (VA: Cr2.2.4)

In this art lesson taught by volunteer art docents, our goal was to have students draw a portrait with proportions that approximate those of the human face, to use best practices with watercolor paint, and to let the imagination run free, creating imaginary beings. Creating a creature that is not quite human can be a stress-free way to practice drawing a human portrait.

Our inspiration for this project was the portraiture of Australian artist, art teacher, and entrepreneur, Jane Davenport who loves to draw mermaids.

