

□ Make a Van Gogh-Style Self-Portrait

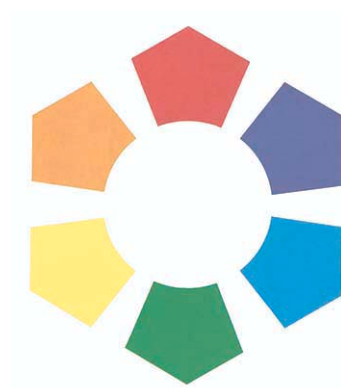
In this activity you will make your self-portrait, using Van Gogh brushwork and color. First, be sure to review some of the characteristics that make up a Van Gogh painting.

Plan to make two self-portraits (remember, Van Gogh made 36!) on different days to show two different sides or moods of yourself. Try to answer these questions in each one:

- Who am I?
- How am I changing from day to day?

To work like Van Gogh, you must include these two essential qualities:

1. Complementary colors placed next to each other:



Complementary colors

Red-green
Blue-orange
Purple-yellow

Choose one set of complementary colors for the background, another for your face, and another for your clothes.

2. Distinctive Van Gogh-style brushstrokes, placed side by side.



Vincent Van Gogh
Self-Portrait (detail) 1889



Vincent Van Gogh
Self-Portrait (detail) 1889



Vincent Van Gogh
The Harvest (detail) 1889

Make a Van Gogh-Style Self-Portrait

You will need: a photograph of yourself, use of a photocopier, scissors, cardboard backing, glue, paintbrushes, tempera, poster or oil paint or oil pastels.

1. Bring in a light photocopy of your photograph (such as your school or sport picture), or have your teacher photocopy your photo for you. You may want to enlarge it, so that you'll have plenty of space for your "Van Gogh" brushwork.
2. Cut out your photocopied portrait to make a silhouette.
3. Paint the entire background paper with your first set of complementary colors and type of brushstroke.
4. Glue your cut-out self-portrait onto the painted background.
5. Using different complementary colors and brushstrokes, paint your face.
6. Using a third set of colors and brushstrokes, paint your clothes.
7. On another day, create a second self-portrait. Follow the same instructions, but change the colors and types of brushstrokes to show a different side of you.
8. Compare the two paintings. Do they each express who you are—on different days, in different moods? Share them with your class. How does color and pattern affect your self-portrait?

Van Gogh wrote detailed letters analyzing his thinking about his work. Write a letter to a friend about one of your self-portraits.

1. Tell your friend why you based your self-portrait on that particular photograph.
2. Explain why you used the specific colors and types of brushstroke.
3. Explain what you are communicating about yourself. How does your finished artwork answer the question: Who am I?
4. Don't forget to sign and date your letter.
5. Print it out, attach it to your self-portrait, and place it in your self-portrait portfolio.
6. To read more of Van Gogh's letters online, visit: <http://webexhibits.org/vangogh/>

