

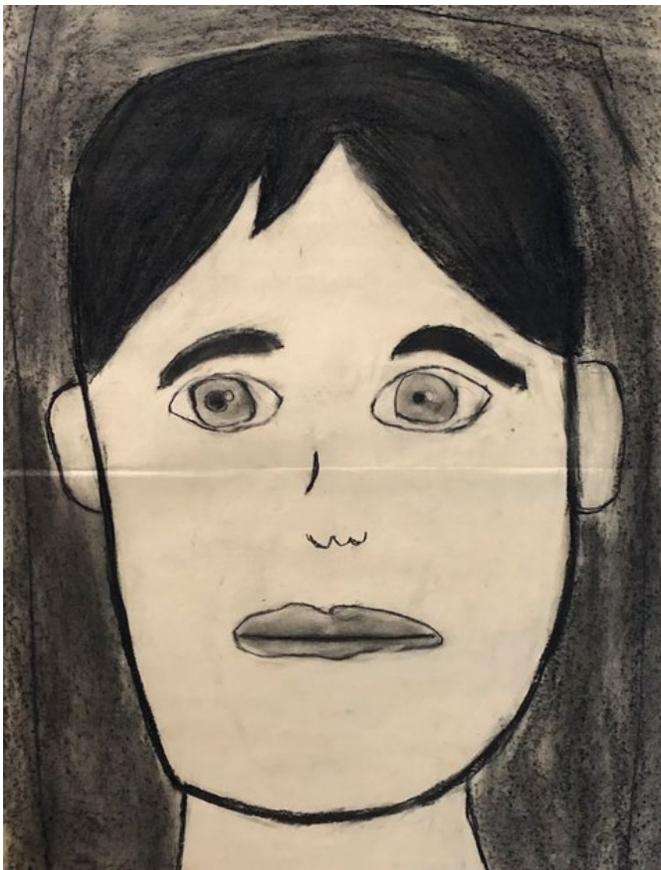
# Portraits in Proportion

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*Grades 5-8*

## Overview

Students will create portrait or self-portrait drawings or paintings. They will be introduced to facial proportions. Students will apply a variety of guidelines for the placement and size of facial features such as eyes and noses to their portraits to help them create more realistic depictions of faces. Students will be able to complete their portraits in their medium of choice.



## What you will need:

- Paper
- Pencil
- Something to colour with – markers, oil pastels, pencil crayons, wax crayons, pen, chalk, charcoal

## What you can also use:

- Watercolour/painting paper
- Paint
- Brushes
- Mirror

## What are Proportions?

Proportion refers to the relationship of the size and placement of one object compared to another. If proportions are incorrect, the image can look less realistic. Facial proportions refer to the general locations and sizes of features on the face such as eyes, lips and noses. There are many approaches to facial proportions, but they all follow similar guidelines.



This portrait is part of the Helson Gallery's exhibition, The Collector's Eye. The exhibition features artwork by Canadian artists. This artwork is titled Portrait of Anne Andrews and was painted by Laurie McGaw. We are going to draw our own portraits.

Where in relation to the face shape as a whole are the eyes, nose and lips located?

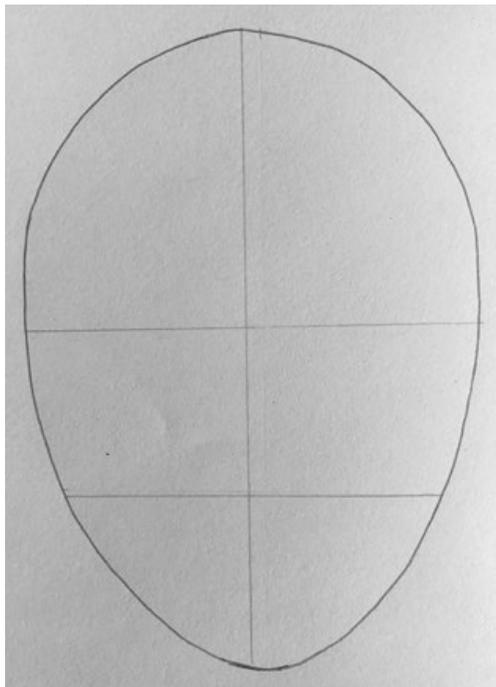
Do the features look proportional to the face and do these proportions help to make the portrait look realistic?

We are going to draw portraits or self-portraits while applying facial proportions to make them look more realistic. A portrait is an artwork of someone else, while a self-portrait is an artwork of yourself. To better understand and apply facial proportions, we will draw portraits or self-portraits that focus on the face rather than the entire body. We will draw faces from the front.

Think about who you would like to draw. Do you want to draw yourself or someone else? You can draw someone you know or someone famous. You can even make someone up. Think of the features that make your or the person you will be drawing unique and distinctive.

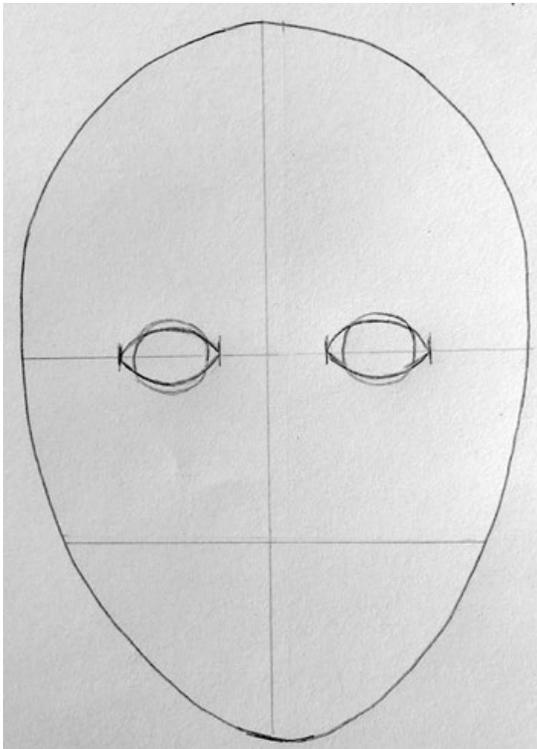
## Step 1: Initial Placement

Begin by drawing a face shape. Everyone's face is shaped differently, but a general shape is like an upside down egg that is wider at the top and narrower at the bottom. Now draw a line that divides your face in half vertically, followed by another line that divides your face in half horizontally. It should look like a cross. Take the bottom half of the face and divide it in half horizontally again. These lines are guidelines and will be erased after, so draw them lightly. It should look something like this:



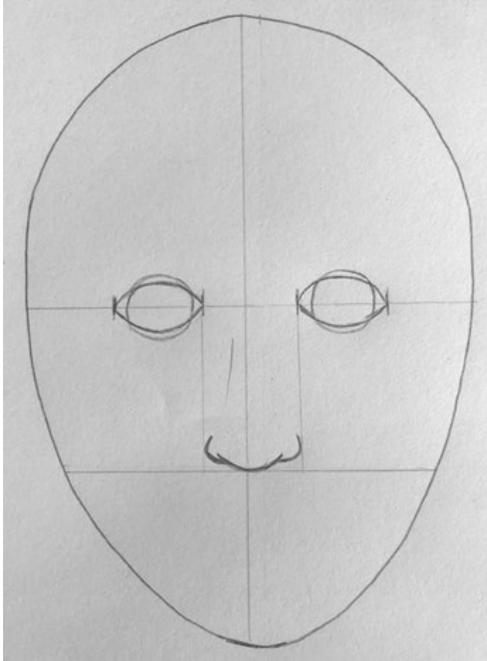
## Step 2: Eyes

Now we will draw the eyes. Typically, when we draw eyes, we place them too high up on the face. The eyes are actually located half-way on the face, in the middle. You can look in a mirror to see where the eyes and other features are on your own face. Divide the middle horizontal line into 5 equal areas with small dashes. This will give us the proper size and placement of the eyes. Draw the eyes in the second and fourth space, centered on the horizontal line. The eyes are shaped roughly like almonds. Next, draw the irises, or coloured parts, of the eyes. We often make the mistake of drawing irises touching the bottom and top of the eye shape, but they are usually covered slightly by the eyelids. To draw them properly, lightly draw circles in the middle of the eye that extend beyond the top and bottom of the eye shape. The eyes should look something like this:



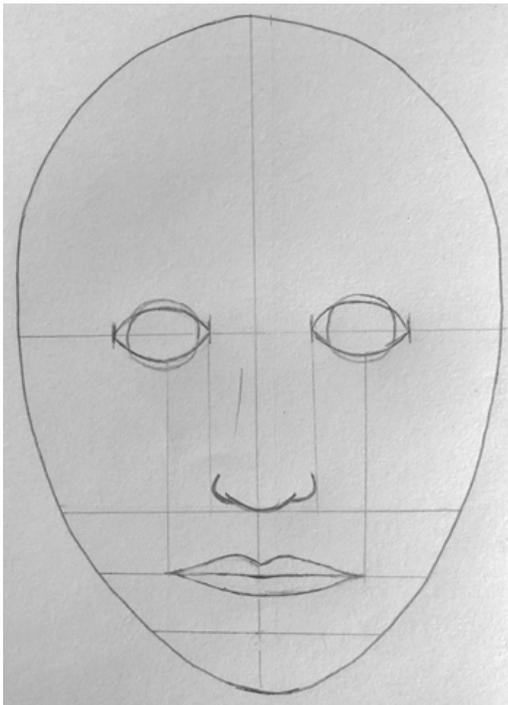
## Step 4: Nose

Draw a vertical line from the inside corner of each eye down to the next horizontal line. This is the space where the nose should be placed. Noses are not easy to draw because the outlines are not as defined as other features. A simple guideline is to start with a small curve like a smile, touching the bottom line right at the middle. Then draw the two sides of the nostrils touching the side guidelines. Draw a faint curve or line on either side of the bridge of the nose like this:



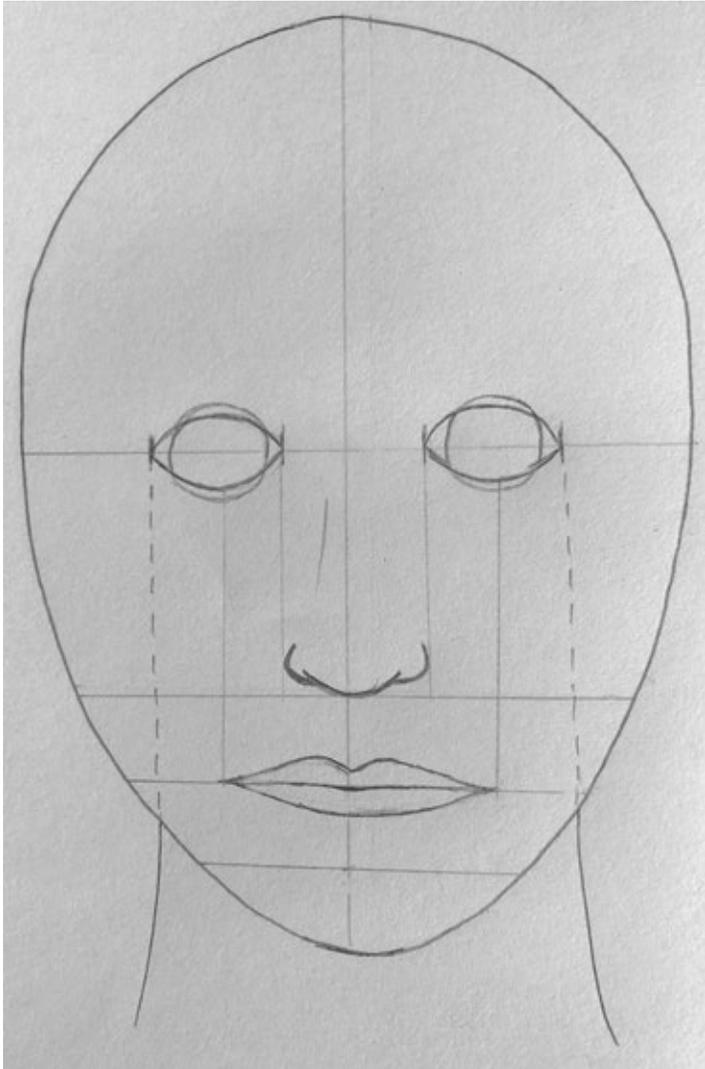
### Step 5: Lips

Now we will be working in the space underneath the nose. Divide that space into thirds, horizontally with two lines. The topline is where the middle of the lips will sit. Draw a line from the middle of each iris down to the lip line. This is how wide the lips will be. Draw lips.



## Step 6: Neck

We typically draw necks too small or narrow. Draw a dotted line coming down from the outside corner of each eye to the bottom line of the face shape near the chin. This is how wide the neck should be. Draw a neck.



## Step 7: Features and Details

Now that you have completed your pencil self-portrait or portrait, you can erase the guidelines. It's time to add features to make your portrait or self-portrait look more realistic and unique. Complete the eyes with pupils and lashes. Add common features such as ears, eyebrows and hair. You can also add glasses, a hat, jewelry and clothing. What you add is up to you.

## Step 8: Final Touches

To complete your portrait, you can add touches of shading with pencil or you can go over it with another medium such as pen, marker or charcoal. If you like, you can colour it fully using your material of choice such as markers, pencil crayons, wax crayons or oil pastels. You can also use paint. You can even combine materials.

