

Examining Portraits

A creative guide to portraiture

Why are we studying this

Objective:

Portraits can describe a person's physical likeness, status, personality, and/ or interests. This unit presents the range of ways artists represent people. As you examine the works consider what portraits reveal about the sitter and what they tell us about the artist.

Read, learn, explore, and art

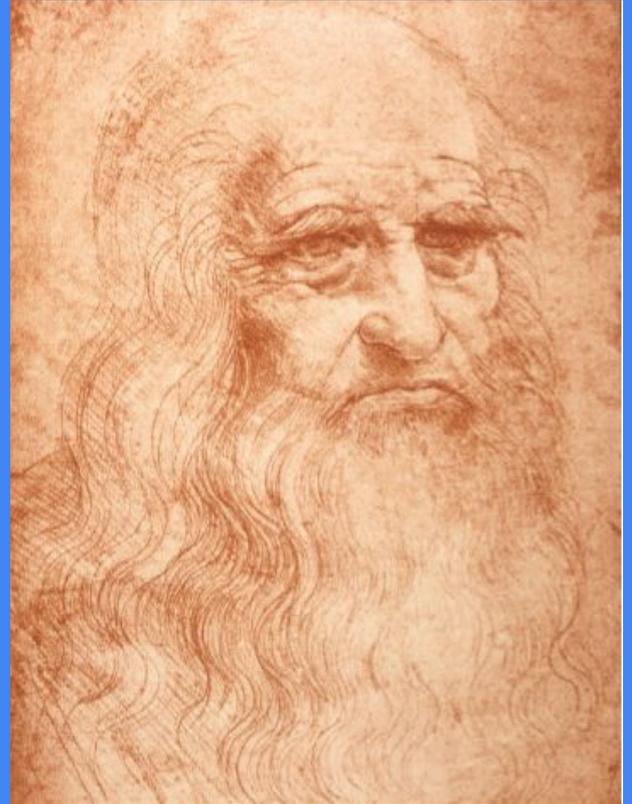
Directions:

- Please read every slide
- Learn from every artist you will meet
- Sections will ask you to explore (sketchbook work)
- Sections will ask you to create art (art piece)

Section 10-2

Leonardo da Vinci

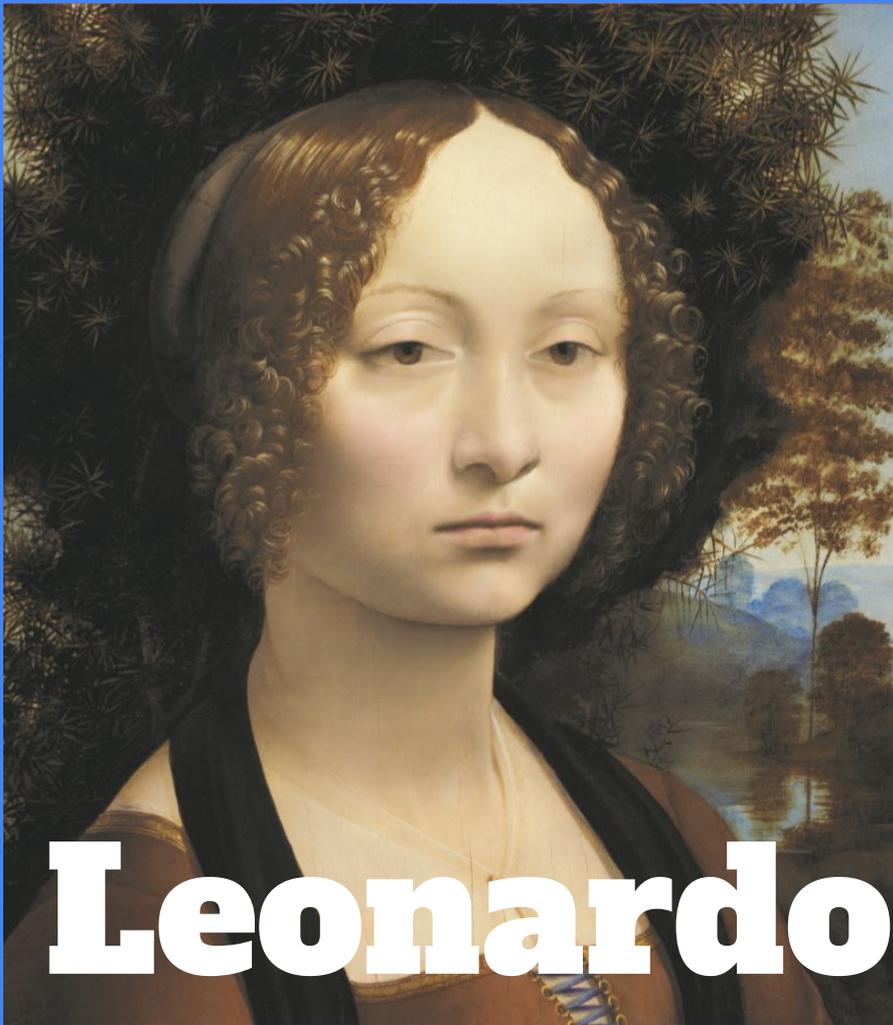
Italian artist Leonardo da Vinci (1452 – 1519) lived during an exciting period known as the Renaissance (French for “rebirth”), a time recognized for a renewed interest in knowledge, the arts, and science. He was an artist as well as an inventor, architect, engineer, musician, mathematician, astronomer, and scientist. In many ways, his intellectual curiosity, careful observation of nature, and artistic creativity characterized the Renaissance itself.



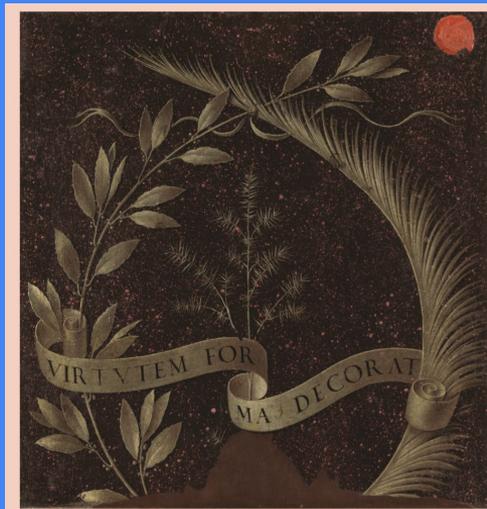
1452 – 1519

“A face is not well done unless it expresses a state of mind.”

- Leonardo da' Vinci



Leonardo



Leonardo da Vinci, Ginevra de' Benci, c. 1474 / 1478, oil on panel, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund



Leonardo da Vinci, Wreath of Laurel, Palm, and Juniper with a Scroll inscribed Virtutem Forma Decorat (reverse), c. 1474 / 1478, tempera on panel, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Fund

It is believed Prince Carl Eusebius of Liechtenstein purchased this painting after 1611. The red wax seal on the upper right corner of the panel was added in 1733, when the painting was inventoried as part of the collection of Prince Joseph Wenzel of Liechtenstein. Ginevra de' Benci was purchased from Prince Franz Joseph II of Liechtenstein for the National Gallery's collection in 1967.

Da' Vinci

Explore A Double-sided Portrait

In addition to the front side of the portrait, Leonardo was asked to create an image on its reverse. On this “verso” side, Leonardo painted a scroll entwined around a wreath of laurel and palm branches, with a sprig of juniper in the center. While the front of the painting is a physical portrait of Ginevra, the reverse is an emblematic portrait: it uses symbols to describe her personality. The juniper sprig identifies Ginevra by name, and the laurel and palm branches represent two of her attributes: intelligence and strong moral values. The scroll bears a Latin inscription: *virtutem forma decorat*. This translates as Beauty Adorns Virtue, which was Ginevra’s motto.

You will need 4 pages for this section in your sketchbook.

Left side

Study of what are portraits.

-Need two reference pictures of yourself.

- Look for one artist that is known for portraits that tell a story or have symbolism (cite and write a short paragraph about the artist work). e.g

Shawn Barber Artist

Mapping what your own emblematic portrait might include (words, symbols, and so on).

Think about what you would illustrate about yourself. Which of your personality traits do you want people to remember? What characteristics make you unique?

Right side

Study of Leonardo da’ Vinci work and life.

Include but not limited:

3 Portraits (not the Mona Lisa)

Sketches

Anatomy

Artifacts

Directions Create a double-sided self-portrait in between the two outer process portfolio studies, with one side showing your physical appearance and the other side presenting an emblem of your personality and/or interests.

Step One

Step two

Step Three

Step four

Section 11-2

Elisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun

Élisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun (1755 – 1842) was so successful as a portrait painter in France during the late eighteenth century that she often had a waiting list! Why was she so popular? She pleased her clients by making them look attractive, with graceful poses and happy expressions. Her works mirrored fashionable life before the French Revolution of 1789.



1755 – 1842



By: Élisabeth-Louise Vigée Le Brun, The Marquise de Pezay and the Marquise de Rougé with Her Sons Alexis and Adrien, 1787, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Gift of the Bay Foundation in memory of Josephine Bay Paul and Ambassador Charles Ulrick Bay



By: Jacques-Louis David, The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuileries, 1812, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection

Analysis

Analysis of formal qualities: the work of french artist Elisabeth Louise Vigee Le Brun. You will be analyzing this artwork on a one page spread. Look at the examples and follow them....



ANALYSIS OF 'SEATON DELAVAL, THE CENTRAL BLOCK' BY JOHN PIPER

Seaton Delaval, *The Central Block* is a 62 x 51cm oil painting. Oil, along with watercolour, gouache and ink, were media that Piper often used when recording architecture due to their versatility. Though not large, this painting captures the desolation of the once-splendid building that Piper experienced, especially through the use of colour and texture.

Piper used sgraffito and wax resist to create a messy texture. This conveys destruction and demonstrates the ruined state of the building. These patterns almost look like animal scratches, and reflect the rough surfaces of the structure itself due to neglect. The dynamic grazes contrasts with the still, lifeless structure, and suggest anger and cruelty of the environment and of human abandonment. The artist was known for his experimental manipulation of texture in his works.

Piper's use of dark edges is a motif in his architectural paintings and this ominous feature adds to the theme of destruction. Here, it almost looks like leaves that frame the work.

The painting is composed of the main subject building in the centre with a cold background. This is to suggest the grandeur of Seaton Delaval, a building that was designed to praise Admiral George Delaval and to echo the profligacy of their family. An angled view of the building allows the audience to gain a better idea of its size and shape, and accentuates the flight of stairs which shows that the building is elevated.

However, quite a lot of space is used for the background. The painting also depicts the structures at the back, which serves to emphasise the Central Block's size but also draws our attention away from it. This contrast perhaps conveys the diminishing liveliness of the structure.

In this corner Piper uses very solid and dark colours to establish the foreground. This contrasts with the front façade of the building, and also makes the place seem unpleasant.

On the whole, the use of colour is quite soft and dull, and this dark tone evokes a sense of melancholy.

The gentle browns of the building were painted according to the reddish bricks that resulted from major house fires. The use of warm colours also indicate age.

The warm coloured structure is juxtaposed by the blue and greyish background. This again highlights the dismal mood of the painting, while putting the audience's focus on the main building itself.

There is a big contrast between the light and shadowed parts of the building, which makes the lighting seem artificial but makes the building stand out.



Image from: Leicester Galleries

How to analyze Artwork:



Jacques-Louis David, *The Emperor Napoleon in His Study at the Tuilleries*, 1812, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Samuel H. Kress Collection

Military Leader

- Napoleon wears the blue, white, and red uniform of a general in the French military. This reminds viewers that he was the commander of the troops.
- A gold-handled sword rests nearby, another symbol of his military power.
- A half-rolled map used for military plans is on the floor, behind the left side of the desk. (David placed his name on it as a way of signing and dating his painting.)
- On the floor under the desk is the book *Lives by Plutarch*. It contains biographies of Julius Caesar, Hannibal, and other powerful generals. This suggests Napoleon is continuing their tradition of military greatness.

Lawmaker

- The rolled paper on the desk with the letters C O D E refers to the Napoleonic Code, a new system of laws for the people of France.

Hard Worker

- The clock reads 4:13. Has Napoleon been working all night?
- The candles on the desk have burned almost completely down, another indication that he's been at his desk for several hours.
- The fabric on the chair is decorated with gold bees and the letter N of his imperial emblem. The bees suggest the emperor is industrious, diligent, and works tirelessly for the people of France.

ANALYSIS OF "SEATON DELAVAL, THE CENTRAL BLOCK" BY JOHN PIPER

Seaton Delaval, The Central Block is a 62 x 51cm oil painting. Oil, along with watercolour, gouache and ink, were media that Piper often used when recording architecture due to their versatility. Though not large, this painting captures the desolation of the once-splendid building that Piper experienced, especially through the use of colour and texture.

Piper used sgraffito and wax resist to create a messy texture. This conveys destruction and demonstrates the ruined state of the building. These patterns almost look like animal scratches, and reflect the rough surfaces of the structure itself due to neglect. The dynamic grazes contrast with the still, lifeless structure, and suggest anger and cruelty of the environment and of human abandonment. The artist was known for his experimental manipulation of texture in his works.

On the whole, the use of colour is quite soft and dull, and this dark tone evokes a sense of melancholy.

The gentle browns of the building were painted according to the reddish bricks that resulted from major house fires. The use of warm colours also indicate age.

The warm coloured structure is juxtaposed by the blue and greyish background. This again highlights the dismal mood of the painting, while putting the audience's focus on the main building itself.

There is a big contrast between the light and shadowed parts of the building, which makes the lighting seem artificial but makes the building stand out.

Image from: Leicester Galleries



Piper's use of dark edges is a motif in his architectural paintings and this ominous feature adds to the theme of destruction. Here, it almost looks like leaves that frame the work.

The painting is composed of the main subject building in the centre with a cold background. This is to suggest the grandeur of Seaton Delaval, a building that was designed to praise Admiral George Delaval and to echo the profligacy of their family. An angled view of the building allows the audience to gain a better idea of its size and shape, and accentuates the flight of stairs which shows that the building is elevated.

However, quite a lot of space is used for the background. The painting also depicts the structures at the back, which serves to emphasise the Central Block's size but also draws our attention away from it. This contrast perhaps conveys the diminishing liveliness of the structure.

In this corner Piper uses very solid and dark colours to establish the foreground. This contrasts with the front façade of the building, and also makes the place seem unpleasant.

Close up of
Analysis work.

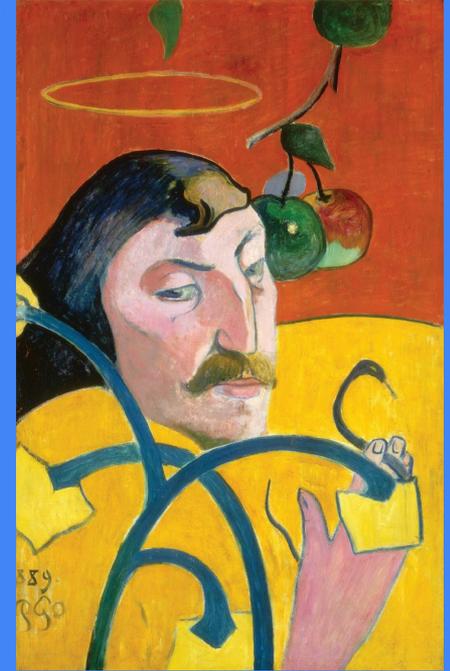
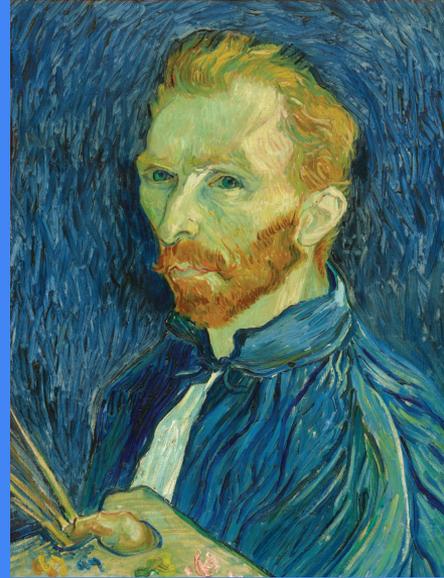
Close Up



Section 12-2

Van Gogh & Paul Gauguin

Both experimented with the expressive possibilities of color and line to create distinct personal styles of painting.



They say—and I am very willing to believe it—that it is difficult to know yourself—but it isn't easy to paint yourself either.”

Vincent van Gogh, letter to Theo van Gogh, September 1889ges, even stone”

Explore

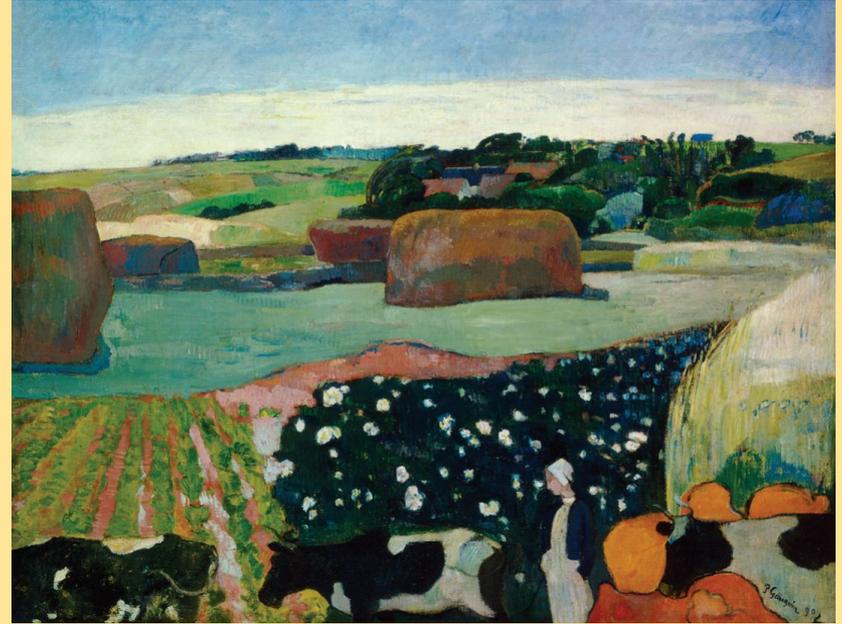
VENN DIAGRAM: Compare these two landscapes. How are they similar? How are they different? Use as many words as you can.

Vincent van Gogh



Vincent van Gogh, Farmhouse in Provence, 1888, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Ailsa Mellon Bruce Collection

Paul Gauguin

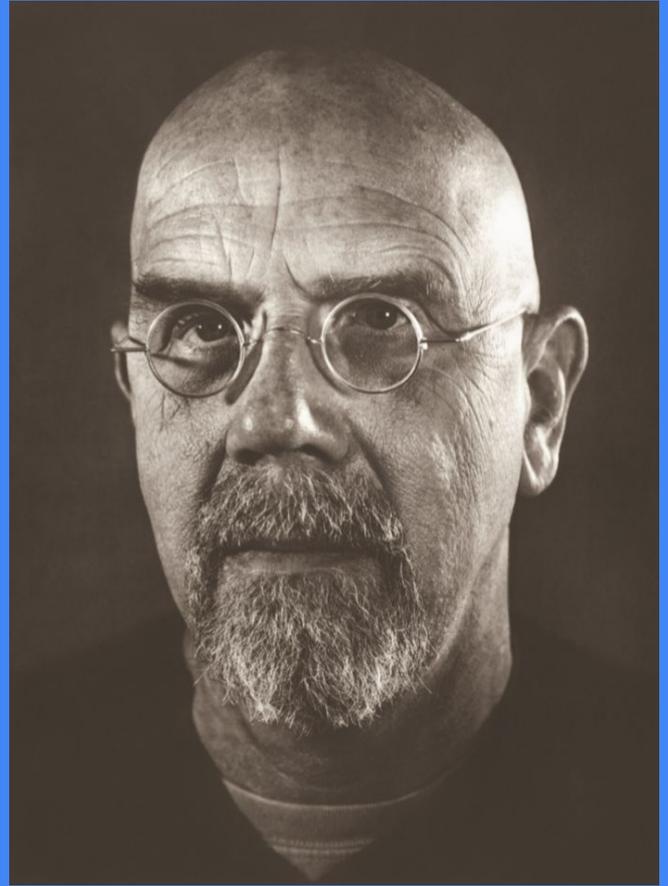


Paul Gauguin, Haystacks in Brittany, 1890, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Gift of the W. Averell Harriman Foundation in memory of Marie N. Harriman

Section 13-2

Chuck Close

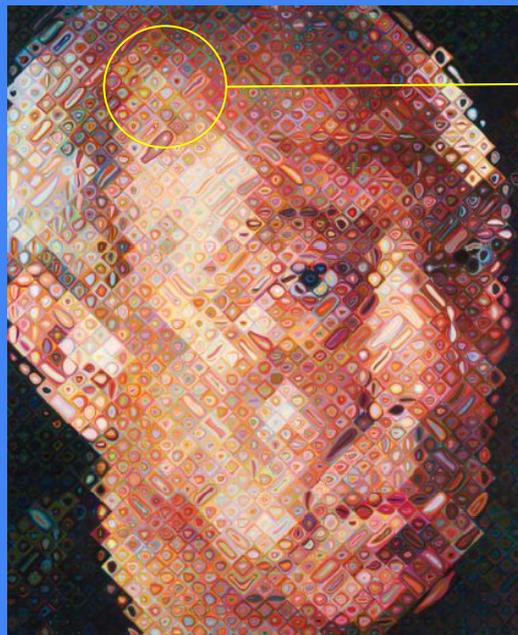
American artist Chuck Close (born 1940) is famous for painting giant portrait heads. He's also well known for facing some big challenges in his life.



1940-Present



Chuck Close, *Fanny/Finger-painting*, 1985, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Gift of Lila Acheson Wallace



Chuck Close, *Jasper*, 1997–1998, oil on canvas, National Gallery of Art, Gift of Ian and Annette Cumming

Fanny

Jasper

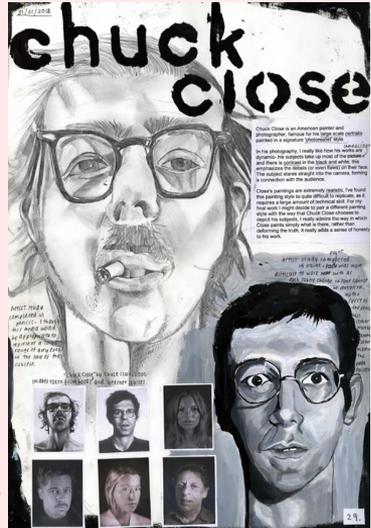
Explore and Create

One page in sketchbook:

One: Write about Chuck Close and create a one master study of his work and a small one of your classmates or self.

Up Close

Two: Compare and Differences: Using Jasper and Fanny, How are they similar? How are the two paintings different? Look closely and list as many similarities and differences as you can find.



<https://www.studentartguide.com/featured/identity-ib-visual-arts>

Use two pages and turn sketchbook Vertical:

Grab your mom, dad, grandma, and or grandpa for this one. Choose one person from the above list. Take about 5 to 6 pictures and choose the best one (you must add all picture you took to page). **Then** make a grid on the picture using a plastic sheet or directly onto the picture. Transfer their grid portraits onto the sketchbook by also using a grid. The grid scale will depend on the size of the sketchbook for detail of measurement check out next slide. To transfer a grid onto a canvas, create a grid on the portrait image. With a smaller grid on the image and a larger grid on the “canvas”, the drawn image will appear much larger. Once you have determined the desired size of the grid, begin transferring portraits onto the “canvas”, working one square at a time. Students should focus on re-creating the lines and shapes in each square to create an overall larger replicated image. With the image duplicated, students can begin filling in their grid portraits with paint. Students must focus on the shapes they see in each square of the face. Working one square at a time, create abstract shapes that relate to the images in their portraits. Students try using a similar color palette throughout the grid to create unity in the overall artwork. Reference Close’s paintings to emphasize his use of creating joined squares in the face as well as his ability to achieve unity. When students are finished, they can define their facial features if they choose.



This is an example how to place work on page. Placement should be different or similar for students. You write about sizes you used examples of images etc..

1. Select photograph of high contrast - cut down to 6" x 8" (15 x 20 cm). Measure a grid using ruler marking at one half inch intervals on top/bottom and sides of photograph. Draw line on photograph with ruler. (Alternative method: Have ½" grids made on photocopier using transparencies - tape transparency over photograph). Each ½ inch square will be transferred to each 1 inch square on the students' work.

2. Mark a ½ inch border at top of 12" x 18" (30 x 46 cm) white drawing paper (This ½ inch (1 cm) border was used to organize coordinates). Measure grid at 1 inch intervals at top, bottom and sides of paper. Draw grid using ruler - being careful to insure lines are straight and exactly one inch apart.

3. Students were encouraged to concentrate on the value of a square in the photograph and replicate the value in the corresponding square on their drawing. Those who were most successful were able to "see" the value and not get lost in line or object. In this way, it now became an exercise in seeing and perception. Students are encouraged to make each grid a small "work of art". Use Fine tip markers and Ultra fine tip markers. Some kids drew directly with marker --others drew in pencil, and then went over their marks with marker. (Students may want to experiment on scrap paper)

Grid Measurements

Next is Telling Stories through art

Meet Jacob Lawrence one the
artist we will be studying.

