

## The Role of Self-Portrait in Shaping Students' Personal Identity and Creative Expression

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**Abstract:** In today's era of globalization, the issue of personal identity and self-awareness among youth has become one of the most urgent problems. In art education, self-portrait practices not only improve artistic skills but also help students reveal their inner world, understand themselves, and rediscover national and personal values. For this reason, the self-portrait is becoming an important component of the pedagogical process.

**Keywords:** self-portrait, personal identity, creative expression, art education, aesthetic education, self-understanding.



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At present, one of the main goals of education is the formation of personal identity in students, the development of independent thinking, creative expression, and aesthetic outlook. In this process, art education plays a crucial role. In particular, the creation of self-portraits not only develops artistic skills but also enables students to express their inner world, emotions, and personal views. Therefore, the self-portrait deserves special research as an effective means of forming personal identity and creative expression in art education. A self-portrait is the process of depicting the artist's own image in an artistic form. For young creators, this process becomes an effective tool for exploring personal identity and expressing their inner world. While depicting their facial expressions, gaze, and emotions, students discover themselves. Thus, art lessons serve the development of self-awareness and creative thinking.

From a psychological perspective, the self-portrait is a creative response to the question "Who am I?". By depicting themselves as the hero of an artwork, the student realizes personal qualities, emotional states, and social roles. This contributes to self-esteem, confidence, and a positive perception of personal characteristics.

Through the self-portrait, children not only see their external appearance but also express their inner feelings through artistic language. This process helps to develop self-perception, awareness of personal traits, and positive self-evaluation. The act of reflecting one's facial expression, gaze, and emotions becomes a creative search for the answer to "Who am I?".

The self-portrait fosters creative freedom, stimulates imagination, and contributes to the development of an individual style. Unlike traditional portraits, which often emphasize external likeness, the self-portrait allows students to freely reflect their emotions and express themselves

through artistic language. Self-portrait practices also encourage experimentation. Students use different techniques (drawing, painting, collage, digital media) to depict themselves, thereby enhancing creative imagination, visual analysis skills, and originality.

#### Methodological recommendations:

1. **Elementary stage:** simple pencil drawings of facial features.
2. **Intermediate stage:** depiction of emotional states (joy, sadness, surprise).
3. **Advanced stage:** painting, collage, and digital media self-portraits.
4. **Modern approach:** explaining differences between self-portrait and selfie, and creating self-portraits using digital graphics.

Through these activities, students not only develop artistic skills but also learn to express their personality in a unique way. At the elementary level, it is advisable to begin with simple lines and gradually progress to complex forms and artistic expressions. Introducing the difference between a self-portrait and a selfie helps direct students towards deeper art practices. A recommended method is the “portrait of emotion” (e.g., drawing oneself in a state of joy, surprise, or anxiety). Using digital technologies in self-portrait creation also brings students closer to contemporary art forms.

**Conclusion.** Self-portrait art is an effective pedagogical tool for shaping students’ personal identity, self-awareness, and creative expression. The use of self-portrait practices in art education fosters creative activity, aesthetic taste, and self-reflection among students. Therefore, the regular integration of self-portrait into the educational process, combined with modern pedagogical methods, is one of the urgent tasks of contemporary education.

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