Unit 1.3 Who Am I? Lesson: Full-Body Self-Portrait Collages Grade Levels 2–4

Yearlong Objectives
- I can recognize my own unique skills.
- I can express myself with words and art.
- I can work as part of an ensemble.

Essential Questions
- How can I work with a partner to better contribute to an ensemble?

Lesson Objectives
- Define and describe “comfortable” and “uncomfortable” emotions.
- Create a collage-based self-portrait.

National Arts Standards
Note: For consistency, all arts standards listed are second grade standards. However, National Anchor Standards naturally build on each other. To adjust for your grade level, find the corresponding Anchor Standard for your grade.

- Make art or design with various materials and tools to explore personal interests, questions, and curiosity. (VA:Cr1.2.2a)
- Create works of art about events in home, school, or community life. (VA:Cn10.1.2a)
- Categorize images based on expressive properties. (VA:Re.7.2.2a)
- Contribute to group guided drama experiences (e.g., process drama, story drama, creative drama) and informally share with peers. (TH:Pr6.1.2.)

Materials needed
construction parchment paper, crayons and pastels, large marker (for tracing), thought journals (from last session), emotions cards

Time needed
90 minutes

Vocabulary for this lesson
Social-Emotional: comfortable, uncomfortable
Visual Arts: collage, shape, composition, portrait
Theatre: ensemble

Warm-Up Phase (15 minutes)
Circle: “Would you rather” question: Would you rather be a giant or very small?
Feelings question: Sometimes we feel things like sad, mad, or scared. Those are UNCOMFORTABLE feelings.
Sometimes we feel things like happy, glad, or joyful. Those are COMFORTABLE feelings. How are you feeling right now, comfortable or uncomfortable?

Team-building game: Build a Song, Level 3 (see Team-Building Games)

I Do/ We Do (20 minutes)
Explicitly Teach
- Revisit class objectives.
- Revisit “comfortable” and “uncomfortable.”
- Revisit the definition of collage, and have students help you remember the qualities of an interesting and unique collage composition.
- Introduce the new objective. We all look different. We all see ourselves in different ways. We are unique and special!

Today we will be working with a partner to create a portrait. That will help us get ready to work with more people as part of the larger ensemble.

Keep in Mind
- Go over norms for the art space. (Class may decide to make these norms themselves, or the teacher may create them. A possibility is, “Everyone remains safe, respectful, and seen.”)
- Reminders on how to use the supplies and materials safely.
- How can I keep my partner safe?
- What might I do while I’m lying down to ensure that my body shape is a shape I like?
- What could I do if I didn’t like the way my shape turned out?

You Do (55 minutes)
The project, step-by-step
- Select a partner (see Note, below), and decide who will go first.
- One person will lie down on the paper and her partner will trace her body as she lies still.
- Partners switch and repeat the process.
- When both children have done this, they may use crayons to decorate their bodies. Remind them that they will be affixing the self-portraits they made last week for heads to the tops of their bodies, so head decorations are not necessary.

Extensions: Add details to body with crayons or colored pencils.
Closure: Return to circle. Give your partner a shout-out or a compliment.
Optional Writing Prompt: Do you feel comfortable or uncomfortable today? Draw a picture to accompany your answer.

Big Picture
Eventually, we will combine our face portraits and our body pieces to make a full-scale collage.

Adjustments for K-1
Warm-Up Phase
Either ask the question or play the simplified version of the game.

I Do/ We Do
Revisit comfortable and uncomfortable, and introduce the new objective, but don’t take too long. Shorten to 10 minutes.

You Do
Kids color in outline body shapes to show the way their clothes look. They match with a partner to discuss the clothes and to work closely to make sure shapes look right. Meanwhile, an adult pulls students to trace the full bodies. This could also be done during recess or other class times.
Note on Partners

Have students match up based on height, birthday, or number. For example, if there are 30 children in a classroom, write each number, 1–15, twice on slips of paper. Place the papers in a hat or a box and have students select a number, then find their match. It's important for students to become used to working with children they might not otherwise work with. However, anticipate that this will be difficult for some students, and model the right way to meet a new partner. (Greet them, give them a high-five, etc.) Praise children who do this well.