

ESSENTIAL SELF

abstract collage self-portrait



Before you begin....

An abstract self-portrait is a representation of the artist. It may not show what the artist actually looks like in reality, but instead captures an essential—or very important—feeling or idea. Here are some things to consider before you start your abstract self portrait

Think of 2 or 3 things about who you are INSIDE that are essential to you. Maybe you're the funniest person in your family, or maybe you're a math superstar.

What are some adjectives you might use to describe your personality or your feelings? Are you sensitive, silly, brave, curious?

What colors or shapes might represent these ideas?

What are some essential things about you on the OUTSIDE—important features or aspects of your appearance. Does your smile light up a room? Are your eyes just like your mom's?

Consider how you might include these in your portrait.

Materials Needed

- Construction paper in assorted colors
- Scissors
- Glue stick or other glue
- Crayons, Markers, or Oil Pastels

Don't have all of this? Don't worry! You can use any supplies you have. Newspaper, magazines, or plain paper colored with crayons or markers work in place of construction paper. You can tear out interesting shapes with your hands instead of cutting with scissors. No Glue? Attach with tape. You could even experiment with folding or weaving pieces together.

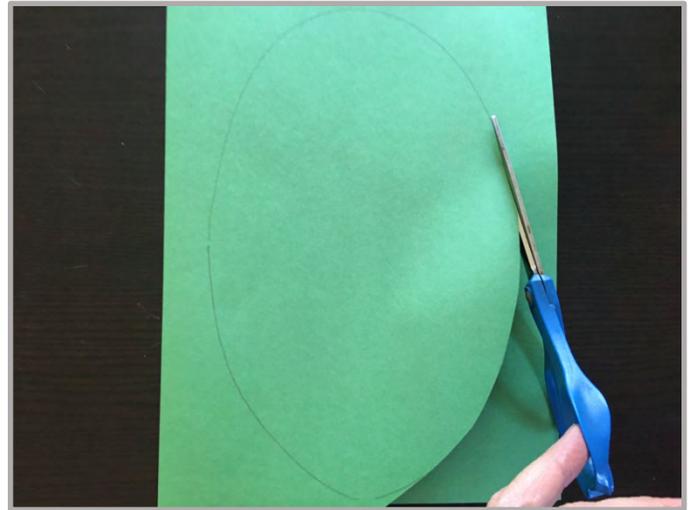
Making Your Portrait

Choose a piece of paper to be your **background**, where you build your collage. This can be white, black, or another color.

Then, choose a paper **color for your head/face**.

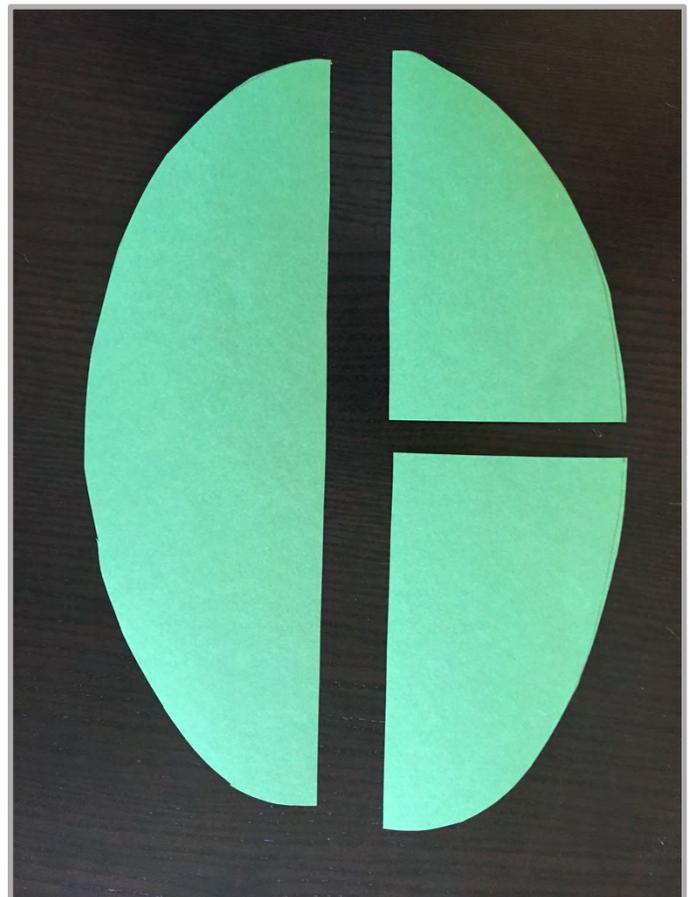
Draw your face shape on the color you've chosen. Make sure to work big, use most of the page.

Cut it out.



Cut the face shape **in half vertically**, then cut **one of those pieces in half again**.

You can do this with straight, even cuts (as shown), or make curving lines and uneven pieces.

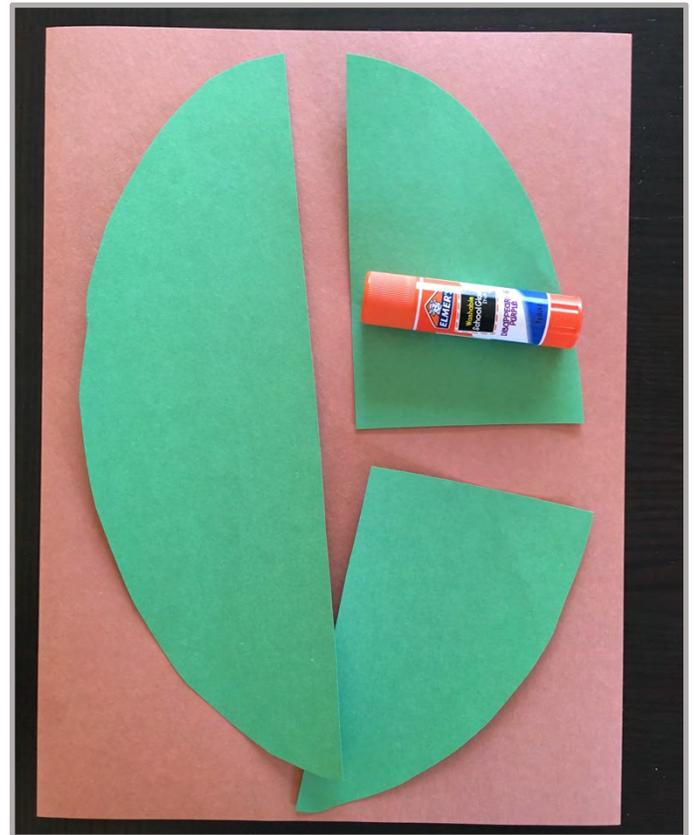


Arrange the 3 pieces on your background.

Experiment! Flip your pieces upside down or sideways.

Try different layouts and angles.

Once you've decided on your arrangement, **glue it down**.



Next, **make the facial features**.

Cut out lots of **different shapes** in many colors.

Draw features--eyes, nose, mouth, ears, hair--on the pieces. Use markers, crayons or pastels.



Think back to the ideas you brainstormed at the start of this activity. How can you display or represent them using these abstract features?

Use ideas from the chart at the end of this guide for inspiration, or create your own.



Arrange your pieces to create your abstract face.

Remember, there is no right or wrong way. The only goal is to represent something essential about you in a creative way.

You can add extra features (notice the 3 eyes and 2 mouths in this example), or leave some out.

Experiment! Take your time.

Glue everything down when you're ready.

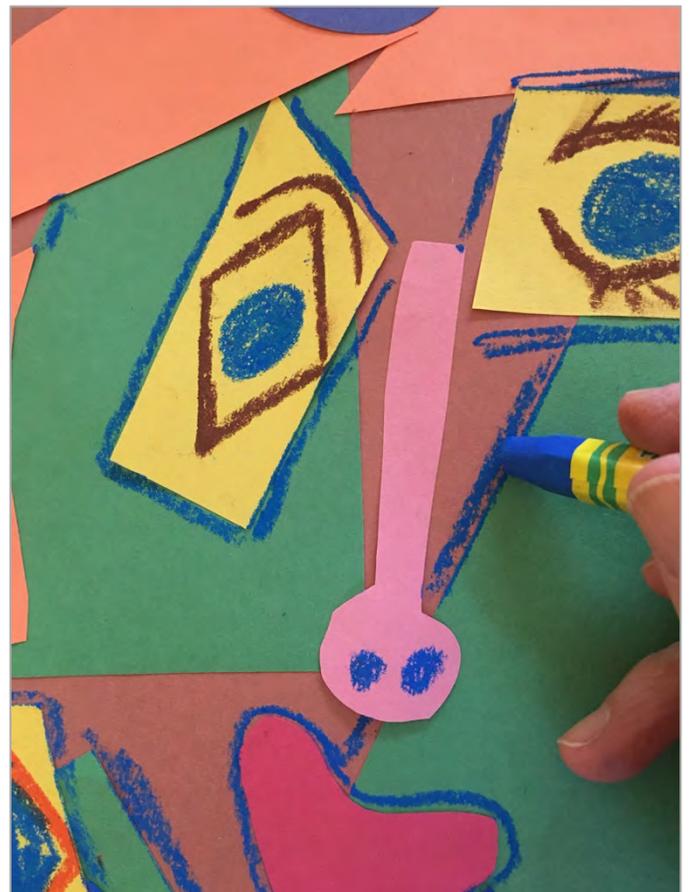


Add the finishing touches.

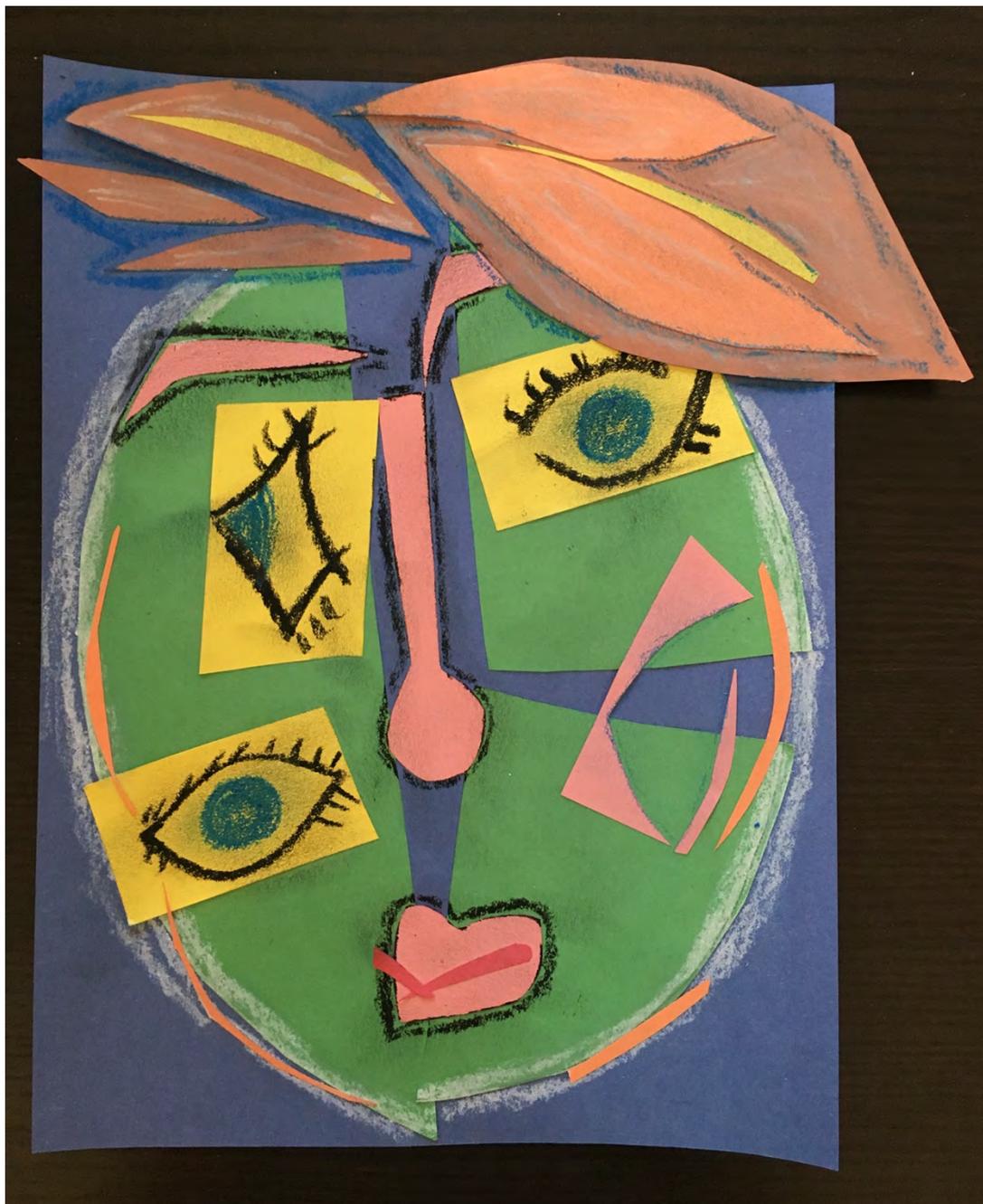
Outline your shapes with marker, crayon or pastel.

Smudge or layer colors if you choose.

Add any **details or important words**.



FINISHED!



ABSTRACT FEATURES

Use this chart for inspiration when creating your eyes, ears, nose and mouth. You can use one the options below, or create your own.

Ears	Nose	Mouth	Eye #1	Eye #2
				
				
				
				
				
				