

Portrait Personalities

When an artist paints a portrait he or she sometimes tries to show us what a person is like inside, not just what he looks like on the outside. To find out what messages the artist may be revealing about the subject of a portrait, we must look for the visual clues that he has left for us. (Visual clues can be: use of color, line, shape, light and shadow, texture; objects contained in the portrait; background; facial expressions and body language.)

Imagine that you are the subject of the portrait, *The Twins: Virginia and Jane*. List the visual clues the artist has painted that reveal something about “your” personality.



Joseph T. Pearson, Jr. (American), (1876 – 1951), *The Twins: Virginia and Jane*, 1917, Oil on canvas, H. 60 x W. 72 inches, James A. Michener Art Museum, Gift of Oliver Pearson.

Write a short story “autobiography” describing, in detail, “your” personality. (Refer to your list of visual clues for ideas.) Use the other side of this page if needed.

Self-Portrait Activity:

On another paper, create a self-portrait emulating one of the styles of art that you learned about today. Use oil pastels, colored pencils, or any appropriate medium that suits the style you choose. Include some visual clues (such as: use of color, line, shape, light and shadow, texture; objects contained in the portrait; background; facial expression and body language) to tell the viewer about your personality.