

Personality Portraits Inspired by the Druid Calendar of Trees

The Druids were the wise men of the Celtic culture. They lived in the British Isles sometime after Stonehenge was erected. They were philosophers, teachers, artists, and scientists. They created a lunar calendar of thirteen months and believed that each month was governed by a powerful tree possessing many attributes. People inherited the traits of the trees under which they were born. What is your Druid calendar tree sign?

Birch – December 24-January 20
Rowan – January 21-February 17
Ash – February 18-March 17
Alder – March 18-April 14
Willow – April 15-May 12
Hawthorn – May 13- June 9
Oak – June 10-July 7

Holly – July 8-August 4
Hazel – August 5-September 1
Vine – September 2- September 29
Ivy – September 30-October 27
Reed – October 28-November 24
Elder – November 25-December 23



Teacher-created examples of personality portraits

Target Grade: 8th Grade

Goal (Terminal Objective): Students will create personality portrait art works that result from their understanding of the Druid Calendar of Trees.

Objective: Students will research the Druid trees under which they were born. They will draw and color interpretations of these trees, focusing on the elements of design and composition balance. Each student will incorporate the Druid descriptive tree words that describe their personalities. The art works will show students' understanding of the

Druid culture. Art tells us who we were. Students' art works will show that these ideas can also tell us who we are.

National Standards:

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 2: Using knowledge of structure and functions

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual art in relation to history and culture

Visual Arts Grades 5-8 Content Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

Purpose: Students will learn about the Druid culture and their calendar of threes. They will create interpretative self-portrait drawings inspired by acquired knowledge of the Druid calendar of trees. Students will discover and research their Druid birthday trees. They will draw realistic or abstract interpretations of the trees. Incorporated into these drawings will be descriptive text, thus creating personality portraits.

New Vocabulary: Druids, Celts, Stonehenge, abstract, interpretation, mixed media, personality portrait

Materials:



#22-7200 colored pencil best-buy assortment



#22-1530 classic broad tip peggable carton markers



#22-4125 Landscape Square Pastel



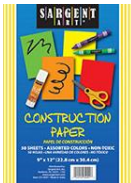
#22-4132 colored drawing chalk



#23-5027 60 sheet Sketch Pad



#22-7244 144 ct. Graphite Pencils



#23-40xx 50 ct. Construction Paper Pack



#22-1565 4 ct. Black Fine Bullet Tip Permanent Markers

Pictures of the trees in the Druid calendar of trees, lists of words describing the trees

Time: 4-5 lessons (45 minutes each)

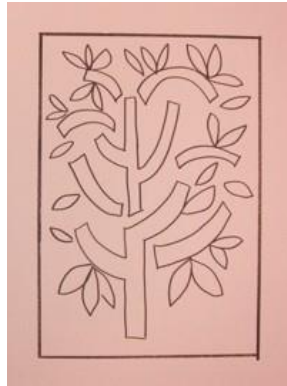
Introduction and Motivation (Set): Teacher introduces students to the Druid culture and the calendar of trees. The introduction includes a teacher-created power point presentation about the Druids, Stonehenge, teacher exemplars, and the drawing process students will follow. Personality portrait drawings by other students are also presented. Students brainstorm ideas to create personality portraits inspired by the Druid trees of their birthdates. Teacher gives students handouts with the calendar months and corresponding trees, following with class discussion about the interpretative drawing assignment. Descriptions of the trees are not given to students during this lesson. Students are given time to research their trees using the internet and books provided by the teacher. Teacher demonstrates visual interpretation drawings (realistic and abstract) for one of the trees. Students are given time to make thumbnail sketches for their final drawings. They are reminded that their final art works will incorporate text that describes both the trees and their personalities.

Instruction:

Lesson 1:

Teacher and class discuss ways to compose drawings, combining tree imagery with text. Borders may be used or the text may be designed into the tree drawings. Teacher demonstrates the effect of colored pencils, drawing chalks, chalk pastels, and markers on neutral colored paper and how they can be used together (mixed-media) in the final drawing. Students transfer final sketches onto drawing paper. Students will incorporate

the names of their trees into the compositions. The months and dates may also be included. Students outline their drawings with permanent black marker.



Lesson 1



Lesson 2:

Students colorize their drawings, using Sargent Art colored pencils, markers, chalk pastels, and/or drawing chalks.



Lesson 2



Lesson 3:

Using website information, teacher prepares a description list for each of the trees. After completing Lesson 2, students receive the lists for their trees. They select the words that best describe their personalities and incorporate them into their drawings. Students may also sign their names into the drawings. Completed drawings may be mounted on colored paper and then on white tag board for exhibition. A short explanation of the project is posted for viewers who are not familiar with the Druid calendar. Students are given time to evaluate their drawings and enjoy the drawings of classmates, regarding respect for individuality.



Lesson 3



Activities:

(1) Guided Practice:

- A. Students learn about the Druid culture and their creation of the calendar of trees. Students watch teacher's step-by-step demonstrations and discuss teacher exemplars.

- B. Students sketch abstract or realistic interpretations for the trees corresponding to their birthdays.

(2) Independent Practice and Check for Understanding:

- A. Teacher circulates through the room during student work time, answering questions, and offering support as needed.
- B. Teacher notes students' understanding of directions and reviews with the class if necessary.

(3) Closure:

- A. Students exhibit their completed drawings and enjoy viewing the work of classmates.
- B. Students discuss the importance of respect for individuality.

Evaluation: Teacher creates a rubric with students during Lesson 1.

Art works are evaluated on the following criteria: composition, originality, and craftsmanship.

- Composition = 4-0 points (The student arranged tree imagery and text in a balanced composition.)
- Originality = 4-0 points (The student used positive and negative space, color, and text creatively.)
- Craftsmanship = 4-0 points (The student worked carefully and neatly with selected tools.)

Extension: Students may use the internet to research further information on Stonehenge. They can gather facts and write a story about Stonehenge or make a model of this architectural structure. Students will present their projects to the class.

Resources:

Druid tree descriptions

<http://pages.prodigy.net/groovyskye/11.html>

<http://www.whisperingwood.homestead.com/DruidTrees.html>

<http://members.aol.com/torcboy/celticastrology.htm>

<http://www.care2.com/greenliving/your-celtic-tree-horoscope.html>

Information on Druid culture

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Druidry>

<http://www.crystalinks.com/druids.html>

Information on Stonehenge

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stonehenge>

<http://witcombe.sbc.edu/earthmysteries/EMStonehengeC.html>

BY MARY BORTZ
Art Consultant