

*Revised Sept. 2011*

**FAMOUS ARTIST SERIES: LEONARDO DA VINCI (Kindergarten)**

Mona Lisa

Oil on panel

30 ¼" " x 21"

Musee du Louvre, Paris

**Supplies needed:**

- \* Framed print of “Mona Lisa”, and Mary Cassatt’s “Breakfast in Bed”
- \* One laminate in supply box
- \* **Portraits**, King book from Butterfield library (see book list)
- \* Students will need their crayons or markers
- \* ½ sheet white paper per student from teachers workroom
- \* Magnifying glasses, in supply box
- \* Master copy of take-home drawing of “Mona Lisa”
- \* Project Sample in supply box
- \* Mirrors & skin tone crayons for project in supply box
- (PLEASE make an effort to collect crayons and put them back in the supply box after the project)**
- \* Master sheets for drawing faces
- \* **First Impressions: Leonardo da Vinci** McLanathan is available FYI in the 5<sup>th</sup> Grade da Vinci supply box

**Reference Books**

- \* The Unkown Leonardo, Ladislao Reti
- \* The Hidden Leonardo, Marco Rosci
- \* The Life and Work of Leonardo da Vinci, Sean Connolly
- \* Leonardo Da Vinci The Complete Paintings, Pietro C. Marani
- \* Portraits, P. King 704.9 KIN

***AHEAD OF TIME NOTE: You will need the book Portraits from Butterfield library. Make sure there are enough ½ sheets of paper for each student to complete the project. In addition, please be sure to make copies of the master “Famous Artist Series” note for the students to take home and the master of the “Mona Lisa” drawing, also to send home with the students.***

***Present “Mona Lisa” and “Breakfast In Bed”. Ask the students what do the pictures have in common? Discuss with children what similarities and differences there are.***

These are pictures or images of people. A picture, sculpture or image of a person or even a pet is called a “portrait”.

**Ask students why an artist would make a portrait. Give children a chance to discuss.**

In the olden days, if people wanted to remember how someone looked, they would have a painter paint a portrait. Even way back in Ancient Egypt, people made portraits on the heads of mummies. Today, when we want a “portrait” we usually take a photograph. But the camera was invented about 100 years ago and only became commonly used in the last 75 years.

**Show laminate #1 of Leonardo’s self-portrait. That means the artist painted himself. This is the only known drawing of him and scholars think he did this when he was around 60 years old.**

There are so many ways an artist can paint a portrait. There are paintings (Cassat and DaVinci) and images (**flip through Portraits book**) that might look like they could represent anybody. There are sculptures made out of stone and metal.

**Present framed “Mona Lisa”.**

The Mona Lisa is one of the most famous paintings in the world. It is a portrait. The artist is very famous too --Leonardo DaVinci. Mona Lisa was a real person who had her portrait painted in 1499 (over 500 years ago). In some countries, the painting is called “La Gioconda” (pronounced jah con da), which was Mona Lisa's last name. The painting can be seen in a famous art museum in Paris, France, called the Louvre.

**Ask students what they “see” in the painting. Have students raise their hands to offer comments.**

- **Leonardo’s painting is so realistic it almost looks like a photograph.**
- **Can you see the tiny details in her dress?**
- **Do you think the background looks realistic? It is a very dreamlike, misty landscape with water among jagged peaks. Leonardo liked using “hazy or smoky” backgrounds. This was called sfumato, a blending of colors and shades to produce a misty look.**
- **Do you see the roads and bridge?**
- **What do you think about her smile? Is it just beginning or is it fading?**
- **Are her eyes mysterious to you? They almost seem to follow you around the room? Can you tell what she is thinking? or feeling...is she is keeping a secret?**

The most obvious part of the picture is the figure of Mona Lisa. DaVinci’s picture is so realistic it almost looks like a photograph.

***Take a few minutes to have each student look at the painting through the magnifying glass. Tell the students to look very closely. Can they see the stitching on her dress? What else can they see?***

To me the background does not look realistic — it almost looks like an image of another planet with the tall, pointy mountains in the background. DaVinci was a great painter and inventor and did a lot of bridge building and city planning. There is a bridge on left side of the painting and some roads. But the background comes second to the picture of the woman. Mona Lisa is the most important thing in the picture.

***Ask the students how the artist lets us know what the most important thing is in the picture...the biggest image is often the most important. Allow for discussion.***

Usually, the most important thing is the biggest thing in the picture. Here, you know Mona Lisa is the most important part of the picture by her size compared to the size of the landscape.

#### **PROJECT:**

***Today we are going to create a portrait like Leonardo da Vinci. We are going to do a self- portrait, which remember we said means the painter (which will be you today!) paints or draws themselves. I will pass out a piece of white construction paper for you to use.***

***[Using the sample “Head” diagram and the blackboard, draw the basic head shape and divide it as shown to place the eyes, nose & mouth. Then have students use their pencils first to reproduce the basic shape. Once they have that, they can use their crayons to begin making their self portrait.]***

***We do have some special crayons for different skin tones that you can share. (for noses, etc.) I will pass around mirrors for you to look into if you need help with your self-portrait! (Students will have to share mirrors)***

***You may draw any background you would like in the painting, maybe a mountain, river or it could be buildings. Remember to sign your work.***

**PLEASE LEAVE AT LEAST FIVE MINUTES OF TIME AT THE END OF THE PRESENTATION FOR THE STUDENTS TO PRESENT THEIR WORK TO THE CLASS.**

## **Famous Artist Series**

### **Leonardo DaVinci**

Today in class a volunteer parent presented the works of Italian Renaissance artist and inventor Leonardo DaVinci. The students learned about “The Mona Lisa” and worked on their own portrait of a loved one. Ask your child to tell you what a “portrait” is and why an artist would paint a portrait. Attached is an outline drawing of the “Mona Lisa” for your child to enjoy.

If you have access to the web, the Mona Lisa can be seen at the Louvre’s website: [www.Louvre.fr/louvrea.htm](http://www.Louvre.fr/louvrea.htm).

In addition, Cook Library has a children’s book entitled Katie and the Mona Lisa by J. Mayhew which would be fun to read with your child.

Sincerely yours,

Art Volunteer