

Artists for Kids Trace Monotype Kit: Self-Portrait Lesson Plan

Grades K-12

Created in collaboration with artist Janet Wang

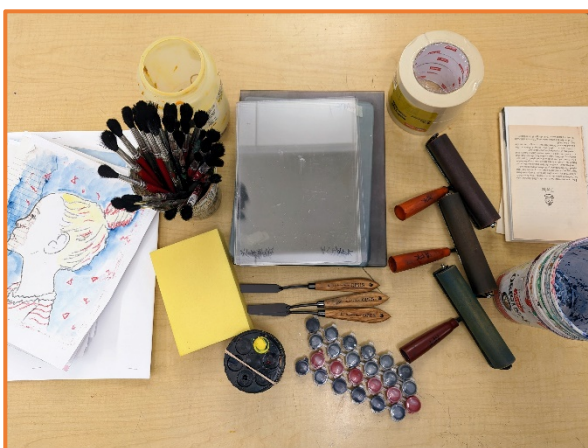


Activity:

Students will use trace monotype printmaking and mixed media collage techniques to create a self-portrait that communicates feelings and ideas about self through colour, gesture, and symbols.

Students will learn the following skills:

- drawing facial features such as eyes and noses in profile
- tracing, cutting, and gluing techniques
- collaging shapes with lined paper and recycled book pages
- using watercolor paint to add pops of color
- planning and design processes and principles of design



Materials Provided in Trace Monotype Print Kit:

- Black, red, and blue ink
- 22 Plexiglass plates (14 for black Ink, 4 for red, 4 for blue)
- 3 brayers
- Spatula/palette knife
- Watercolour paint (red, blue, yellow, and green)
- Watercolour brushes
- Water cups
- Recycled book pages
- Sponge (for clean-up)

- Masking tape
- Elastic bands
- Laminated lesson plan
- Teacher samples of artwork

Materials Provided by Teacher/School:

- Glue sticks or white glue
- Scissors
- Lined writing paper (torn in half lengthwise), 1 per student
- Thick white paper (approx 9"x11"), 1 per student (can be mixed media paper, card stock, or Accent Opaque Vellum)
- White printer paper or page from a drawing book, 1 per student
- Printed photos (black and white on copy paper) of students taken in profile, 2 copies per student
- Coloured pencils



- Optional modification for primary grades: hat shapes cut from colourful construction paper, fadeless paper, or recycled paper

Inquiry Questions:

- What is a conversation? What are examples?
- How do we engage in meaningful conversations?
- How do we communicate without words?
- How can hairstyles, clothing choices, or accessories convey a person's identity or feelings without words?
- How does digital engagement impact the way we communicate self and identity?

Big Ideas:

- Engaging in creative expression and experiences expands people's sense of identity and belonging **(Arts Education)**
- Artists experiment in a variety of ways to discover new possibilities and perspectives **(Arts Education)**
- Works of art influence and are influenced by the world around us **(Arts Education)**

First Peoples Principles of Learning

- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focused on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).

Curricular Competencies: What students will DO

Students will be able to use the following creative process(es):

- Create a trace monotype print using ideas inspired by imagination, inquiry, experimentation, and purposeful design **(Arts Education)**

- Develop technical skills in a variety of visual art forms including printmaking and mixed media collage **(Arts Education)**
- Describe and respond to visual artworks and explore artists' intent **(Arts Education)**

Concepts and Content: What students will KNOW

Students will know the following concepts and content:

- Processes, materials, and techniques needed to create a trace monotype self-portrait including: drawing facial features such as eyes and noses in profile; tracing a reference image over a layer of ink to create a print; cutting and collaging layers of paper; painting with liquid watercolour paints **(Arts Education)**
- A variety of regional and national works of art and artistic traditions from diverse cultures and communities including the works by Canadian artists George Littlechild, Graham Gillmore, Janet Wang **(Arts Education)**

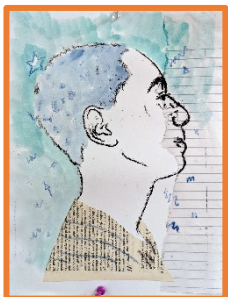
Core Competencies (suggested questions for reflection)

- **COMMUNICATION:** What lines and shapes did you choose to trace in your monotype print to depict yourself successfully?
- **THINKING:** What are different ways that the artists discussed in this lesson communicate ideas and feelings through their art?
- **PERSONAL AND SOCIAL:** How did you communicate ideas about yourself in your print? What kinds of conversations are depicted when the self-portraits that you and your classmates created are placed next to each other?

Displaying Student Artwork

The following are tips for displaying the finished trace monotype self-portraits at your school:

- Have students work together to arrange their finished artworks, creating a collaborative class composition depicting the students in conversation with one another.
- Include a title and description with the display of finished artwork. For example:



Trace Monotype Self-Portraits by Div. 2
Created with the Artists for Kids Trace Monotype Kit

Inquiry Questions:

What are examples of conversations?
 How do we engage in meaningful conversations?
 How do we communicate without words?

We learned techniques for creating trace monotype prints and mixed media collages!



Suggested Summative Assessment Rubric for Monotype

Teachers are invited to adapt and edit the following evaluation rubric:

TRACE MONOTYPE SELF-PORTRAIT

Technique and Attention to Detail: Demonstrated care, craftsmanship, and attention to detail in completion of details including: tracing a photograph, adding collage details, drawing personalized symbols and details with ink, and painting with watercolour paints	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
Composition and Image Development Thoughtfully chose a pose to be photographed in. Planned the composition of self-portrait considering positive and negative space, a limited colour scheme, and using the elements of line, space, and balance	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
Studio Habits: Contributes to a positive and respectful learning environment and actively cleans up and cares for the art materials and workspace	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
OVERALL:	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING

NAME: _____ DIV: _____ DATE: _____

TRACE MONOTYPE SELF-PORTRAIT

Technique and Attention to Detail: Demonstrated care, craftsmanship, and attention to detail in completion of details including: tracing a photograph, adding collage details, drawing personalized symbols and details with ink, and painting with watercolour paints	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
Composition and Image Development Thoughtfully chose a pose to be photographed in. Planned the composition of self-portrait considering positive and negative space, a limited colour scheme, and using the elements of line, space, and balance	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
Studio Habits: Contributes to a positive and respectful learning environment and actively cleans up and cares for the art materials and workspace	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING
OVERALL:	EMERGING	DEVELOPING	PROFICIENT	EXTENDING

NAME: _____ DIV: _____ DATE: _____

Step-by-Step Trace Monotype Self-Portrait Lesson Guide

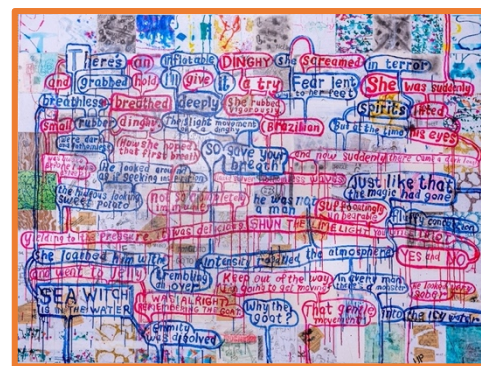
CLASS DISCUSSION AND MIND MAP:

Ask students the following questions, have them share answers in small and whole group discussion. Record a mind map of student responses on board.

- What is a conversation?
- What are examples of conversations?
- How does technology impact and enable communication?
- How do we communicate without words?

VIEW AND DISCUSS ARTWORKS BY GRAHAM GILLMORE, GEORGE LITTLECHILD, AND JANET WANG:

- Project image of **Harlequin (2003) by Graham Gillmore** (see end of document). Ask students the following questions:
 - Why do you think the artist included some words in blue and some in red?
 - What do you notice about the shapes that the artist has drawn around the words?
 - What do you notice about the collage details that are layered behind the red and blue words?
- Share with students the following information about Graham Gillmore and this artwork:



Graham Gillmore, *Harlequin*, 2003

- Graham Gillmore is a Canadian painter who was born and raised in North Vancouver. He's well known for his use of text in his artwork, which he takes from many different sources including books and advertisements. *Harlequin* was created at the Artists for Kids Paradise Valley Summer Visual Arts Camp. The collaged artworks in the background were made by students at the camp. Graham Gillmore provided students with pages from novels. Students circled words and phrases that stood out to them, and he then merged these together in this painting.
 - In the print that we create in this lesson, we'll take inspiration from this painting. We'll include collaged layers and we will be using red and blue ink.
- Project image of **Plains Cree Chiefs (1996) by George Littlechild** (see end of document). Ask students the following questions:
 - Look closely at the four people represented here. What can you learn about them from the way that they're sitting, their facial expressions, and their clothing?
 - Describe the colours that the artist has layered on top of the photographs.
 - What kinds of shapes and symbols has he included?
- Share with students the following information about George Littlechild and this artwork:
 - George Littlechild is an artist originally from Alberta and is a member of the Plains Cree Nation. He's known for his artworks that explore his ancestry and incorporate symbols, bright colours, strong shapes, and photographs. This print was created to honour



George Littlechild, *Plains Cree Chiefs*, 1995

his ancestors and the Plains Cree people. These four chiefs are all relations of George Littlechild. He wanted to honour their legacy and their stamina in maintaining culture, pride, and traditions in a time when old ways were being challenged and replaced by new ones.

- When creating the prints in this project, we can take inspiration from the personalized colours, lines, shapes, and symbols that George Littlechild uses to communicate his feelings about the individuals that he's featured in his print.
- Project image of **Group Chat (2023) by Janet Wang and NVSD Students** (see end of document). Ask students the following questions:
 - What do you notice about the faces portrayed in this artwork? What are these people doing?
 - Why do you think the artist has used the colours blue and red?
 - What do you notice about the lines layered underneath the student portraits? Where have you seen paper with these types of lines?
- Share with students the following information about Janet Wang and this artwork:
 - Janet Wang is an artist and educator based in North Vancouver. She creates paintings and also incorporates sculptural installation practices and digital media into her works. To collect the prints that were used for this artwork, Janet visited schools across the North Vancouver School District and carried out art workshops. Students created trace monotype self-portraits depicting themselves in the act of conversation. These prints are inspired by the work *Chain of Gossip* (1948) by American illustrator Norman Rockwell (see end of document for image). Rockwell's work illustrates the comedic journey of gossip passing through the conversations of a small town's inhabitants. The student prints were scanned and arranged to create a chain of conversation linking students across diverse ages, cultural backgrounds, and communities of the North Vancouver School District.
 - Janet Wang layered in the blue lines found on writing paper used in classrooms. This type of paper is used as a collaged layer in the following printmaking lesson.



Janet Wang and NVSD
Students, *Group Chat*, 2023

INTRO PROJECT:

Students will use trace monotype printmaking and mixed media collage techniques to create a self-portrait that communicates feelings and ideas about self through colour, gesture, and symbols.

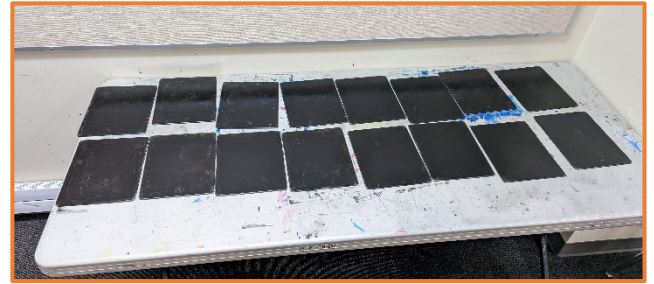
PREPPING MATERIALS:

- Take a photograph of each student's side profile, allowing them to pose as if they are in conversation.
- Print 2 copies of each students' portrait in the maximum size of the printer paper.

PREPPING THE INKED PLATES:

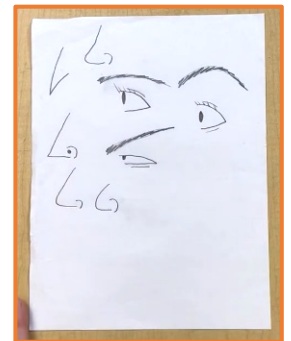
- Take 14 of the plexiglass plates and ensure that the plates are clean and dry. This is important for the ink to adhere evenly to the surface.
- The provided ink, Akua Intaglio, dries slower than traditional block printing ink (like Speedball) and is water-soluble for easy cleanup. Additionally, it requires less ink for application.
- Using the provided palette knife, apply a pea-sized amount of black ink to each plate.

- Use the brayer provided to roll out the ink evenly and thinly on the entire surface of the plate.
- Repeat the inking process on all 14 plates to prep them with black ink before the students begin, ensuring efficiency.
- Repeat the same process for the 4 red and 4 blue ink plates.
- To ensure the correct amount of ink, use a test piece of paper. Place it on top of the newly inked plate, then draw on the paper with a pencil. Carefully remove the paper, leaving a clean traced line.
- If the test print shows splotches or smudges, there may be too much ink. In this case, blot the excess ink with a dry paper towel.

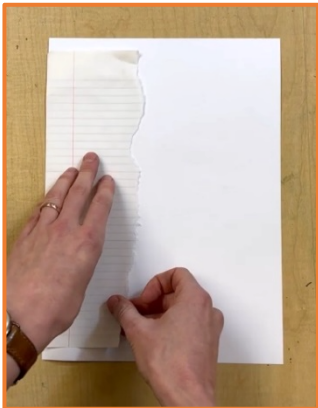


PRACTICE DRAWING SIMPLIFIED FACIAL FEATURES IN PROFILE:

- Demonstrate by drawing on the whiteboard the important features of the face in profile, highlighting which parts to emphasize while tracing (e.g. eyes and nose). Have the students practice on a separate practice sheet of paper.
- Show how to draw various simplified eye expressions and different types of noses from a side profile view.



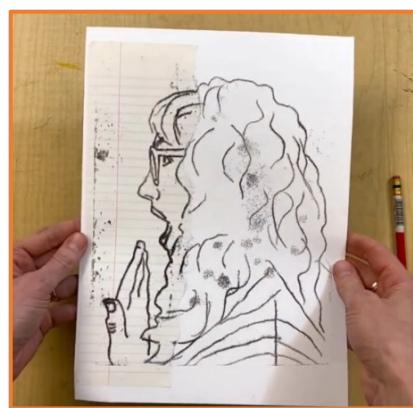
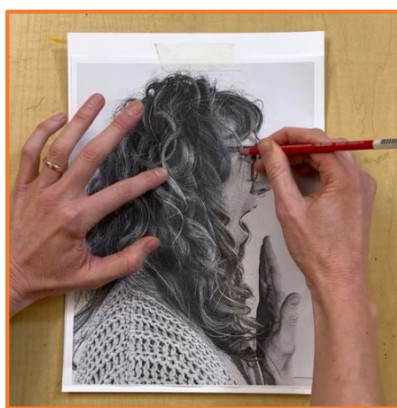
PREPPING PAPER FOR PRINTMAKING:



- Distribute one sheet of thick white paper and a half sheet of lined writing paper (cut in half vertically).
- Optionally tear one side of the lined writing paper and glue paper onto the thick white paper, creating the first collaged layer for the self portrait print. (Recommend that students glue the lined paper vertically on either side, rather than diagonally, to ensure balance in the composition.)
- Once the glue is dry, have the students flip the paper so the collaged surface is facing down.
- Place the printed portrait photos on the back side of the collaged paper and fasten in place using a small piece of tape so that the portrait doesn't move when they begin tracing.

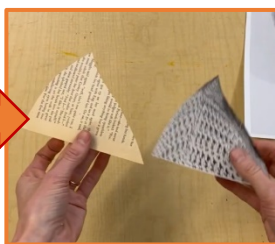
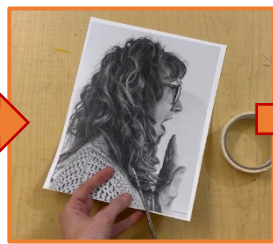
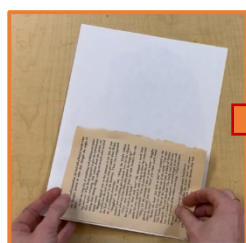
MAKING A TRACE MONOTYPE PRINT:

- Give each pair of students a black inked plate to share.
- Gently place the collaged side of the paper down on the inked plate, ensuring the printed photo side faces up for tracing.
- Instruct students to use a colored pencil when tracing to help highlight the contour lines as they trace.
- Remind students not to drag their hands on the portrait or apply pressure to any areas of the portrait resting on the inked plate, as this can transfer ink to unintended areas.
- Recommend that students take turns holding the paper down at top corners while the other traces to keep the paper from shifting and to ensure clean line transfers.



ADDING COLLAGE DETAILS:

- Use the second printed portrait photo as a guide for cutting a shape to collage onto the self-portrait.
- Using recycled book pages (provided in the kit), have the students choose an area of their portrait to cut out and collage (e.g., sleeve, t-shirt, hoodie, glasses).
- Place the recycled paper on the back side of the area you want to cut out and use tape to hold it in place.
- Use the portrait as a guide to cut along the contour lines of the chosen area for the collage.
- Glue the cutout onto the print.

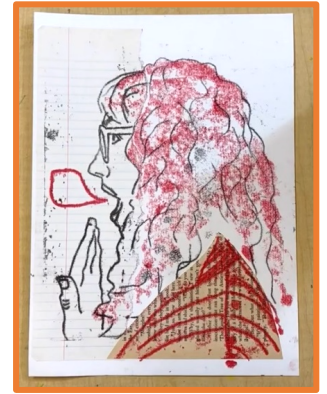


ADDING BLUE AND RED DETAILS WITH INKED PLATES:

- Set up two stations with plexi plates that have been prepped with blue and red ink (4 plates with blue ink, 4 plates with red ink).
- Optionally, provide one brayer per station to spread the ink between student uses.
- Students will add details to their self portrait using either blue or red ink (not both).
- Prior to using the stations, instruct students to take some time to think about additional details that they will add to their print that will communicate something about their personality or identity. Ask students to share with a neighbour their plan for adding details.

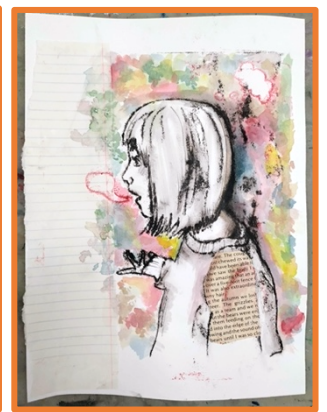


- Optionally, view George Littlechild's print *Plains Cree Chiefs* (1996) to draw inspiration for designing personalized symbols, shapes, and patterns.
- Optionally, create a mind map as a class to brainstorm the question: "How can we express ourselves without using words?"
- Advise students not to use blue or red ink on the face to ensure the facial details remain clear.
- Students can go to the station of their choice with their prints to add personalized details, either using a colored pencil to draw with or their fingers to add lighter shading.



ADDING WATERCOLOR DETAILS:

- Distribute the small circle watercolor palettes, brushes, and water cups (provided in the kit).
- The watercolour palette consists of red, blue, green, and yellow. Advise students not to mix the colours to maintain a limited color palette.
- To activate the watercolour paint, use a brush to soak up some water from the cup and mix it with the desired color.
- Similar to the blue and red plates, advise students to not use colour on the face and hand (if included in the image). This will help the face and hand to stand out in the finished artwork.
- Remind students to use ample amounts of water when painting with watercolours, so that the paint is applied in a thin, transparent way.



ADAPTING THIS LESSON FOR PRIMARY GRADES:

- This lesson can easily be simplified for primary grades. Students can create "Party Self-Portraits" by simplifying certain steps and adding collaged hats and confetti-like patterning to the background.
- Optionally, skip gluing down the lined writing paper and use only black ink (eliminating the step of adding red and blue ink).
- During the portrait tracing step, students can add patterning to their background, drawing inspiration from confetti, party decorations, or festive lighting.
- Optionally provide party hat tracers for students to trace and cut out from colourful paper. Alternatively, students can design and cut out their own hats to reflect their personality.
- The cut out hats can then be collaged onto the portraits.

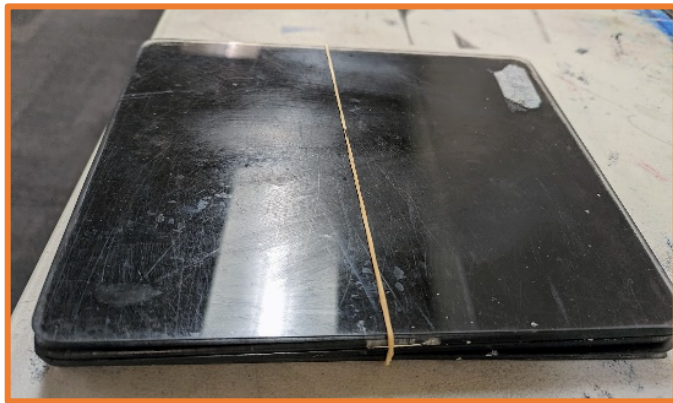


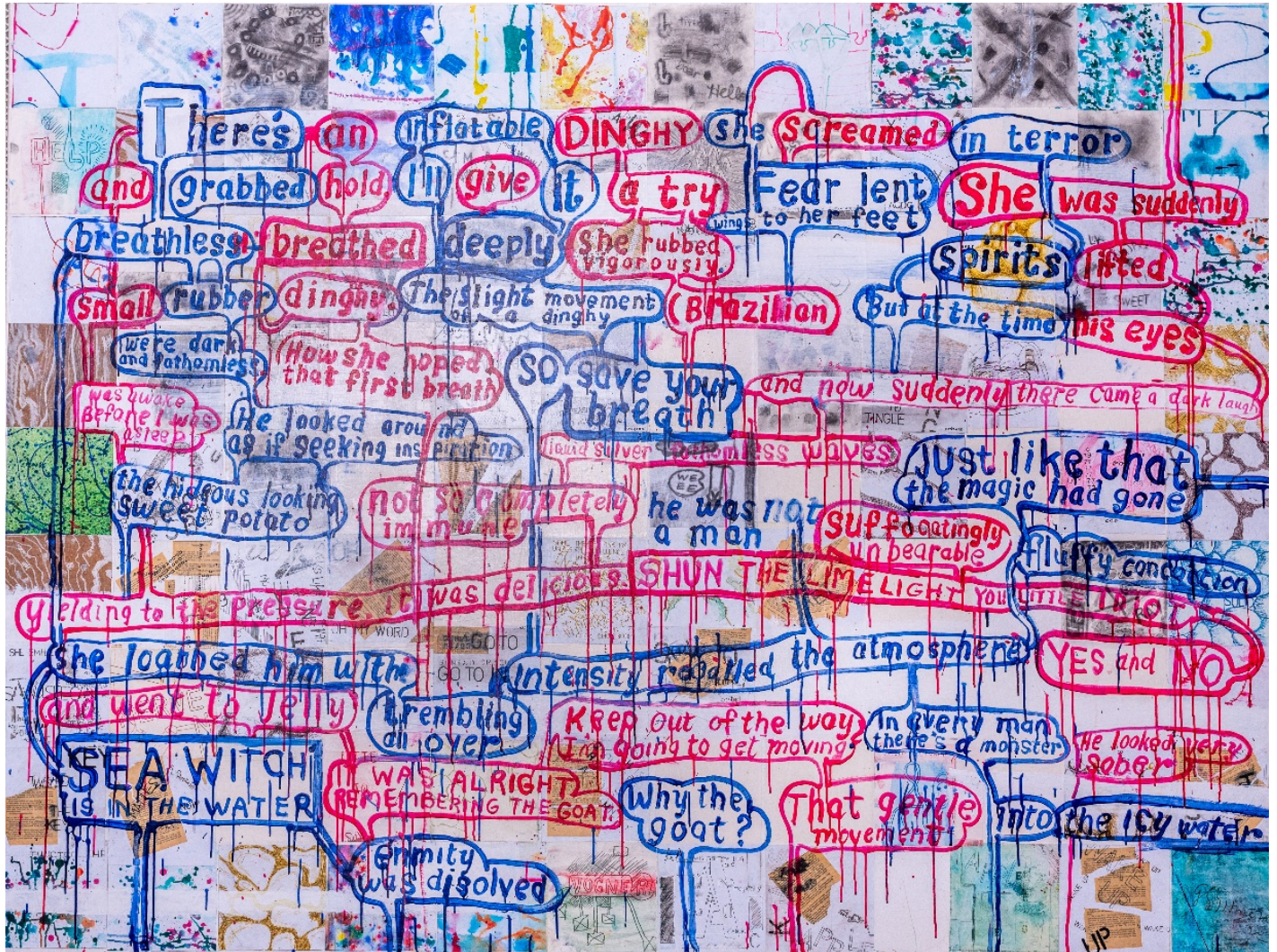
CLEANING UP:

Please note that for clean-up the Akua Ink Is water soluble when you use both SOAP and water

- When returning the kit back to Artists for Kids, use soap and a sponge to thoroughly clean the ink plates, palette knives, and brayers for the next classes to use.
- Dry the clean plates and brayers before placing them back into the kit.

* If you're using the plates for multiple classes, there's no need to clean off and replace the ink each time, as the oil in the ink will prevent it from drying out. Simply take two ink plates, sandwich the inked surfaces together, and use the provided elastic bands to keep the ink fresh between uses. Small amounts of ink can be rolled on to refresh the plates between uses.





Harlequin

Graham Gillmore

2003, mixed media on canvas,

72" x 96"



Plains Cree Chiefs
George Littlechild
1995, photocopy & pastel on paper,
30" x 22"



Group Chat

Janet Wang & North Vancouver School District Students
2023, trace monotype prints and digital illustration printed on paper
Photo Credit: Rachel Topham



Chain of Gossip
Norman Rockwell
1948, oil painting