Lesson Plan- Self Portrait

Materials: Chart paper & markers, Van Gogh portrait (Lyon), Van Gogh book (I rewrote the story and gave a hand-out to each child (visual learners), Charades Game, class set of hand-held mirrors (my teacher has them), sketch paper, pencils, markers.

Time: 60 minutes total. Your "rug time should be no more than 25-30 minutes. You will lose them otherwise.

Directions:

1. Prior Knowledge: Ask the class what they already know about Van Gogh, and write the responses on chart paper. (2 minutes)

2. Show portrait and ask what they see, colors etc. Focus on Van Gogh's expression (which is sullen). Ask questions about his expression. (3 minutes)

3. I recommend reading excerpts from the Van Gogh book—it's too long. I rewrote the story in story frames (use info from the letter, below), and showed a few pictures. Make your story 5 minutes long. (5-7 minutes)

4. Introduce the self portrait, and the fact that Van Gogh painted more self-portraits than any other painter (Van Gogh could not afford to hire models.) Ask why painters need to paint self portraits. Answer: to practice, cheaper, and to practice expression. (3 minutes)

5. Focus on expression. Model an expression, and ask the class to guess your expression. Play charades (no more than 5-7 minutes)

6. Hand out mirrors, and practice using them (1 minute)

7. Go to desk, and do *Here's Looking at Me!* activity. They need to pick 4 expressions (from charades game) to sketch using the mirror. Have them sketch just their face and neck. Focus on details: for example: how the eyes look when sad. Have them look at their forehead when they act surprised. etc. They will choose one to make their self-portrait (10 minutes).

8. Distribute art paper. They will sketch their self-portrait. Add details using color markers (20 minutes).