

Express Yourself

Commissioned Portrait

LOCATION: Central Garden or back in class

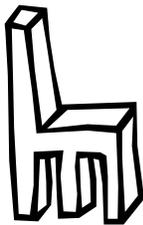
Name _____

A "commissioned" portrait is made by an artist who has been asked or hired to create a portrait of someone. A portrait may be commissioned by the sitter, or by someone who is related to the sitter, such as the sitter's spouse or parent. The person commissioning the portrait may ask the artist to include certain qualities in the portrait, such as the sitter's favorite objects or a meaningful setting. The sitter may also be shown performing his or her job, or a hobby. A sitter may even ask the artist to improve his or her appearance.

The artist decides how to visually convey the sitter's personality in the portrait. Perhaps a tilt of the head, or a facial expression captures the sitter's character. In this way, the portrait is a collaboration between the artist and the sitter.

First, working with a partner, one of you will be the "artist" and the other will be the "sitter." The sitter then explains to the artist exactly how he or she wants to be represented in the portrait.

Then...



If you are the sitter:

Be as descriptive as possible. Tell the artist what you should wear in your portrait, what the surroundings should look like, and the facial expression and gestures you want to have.



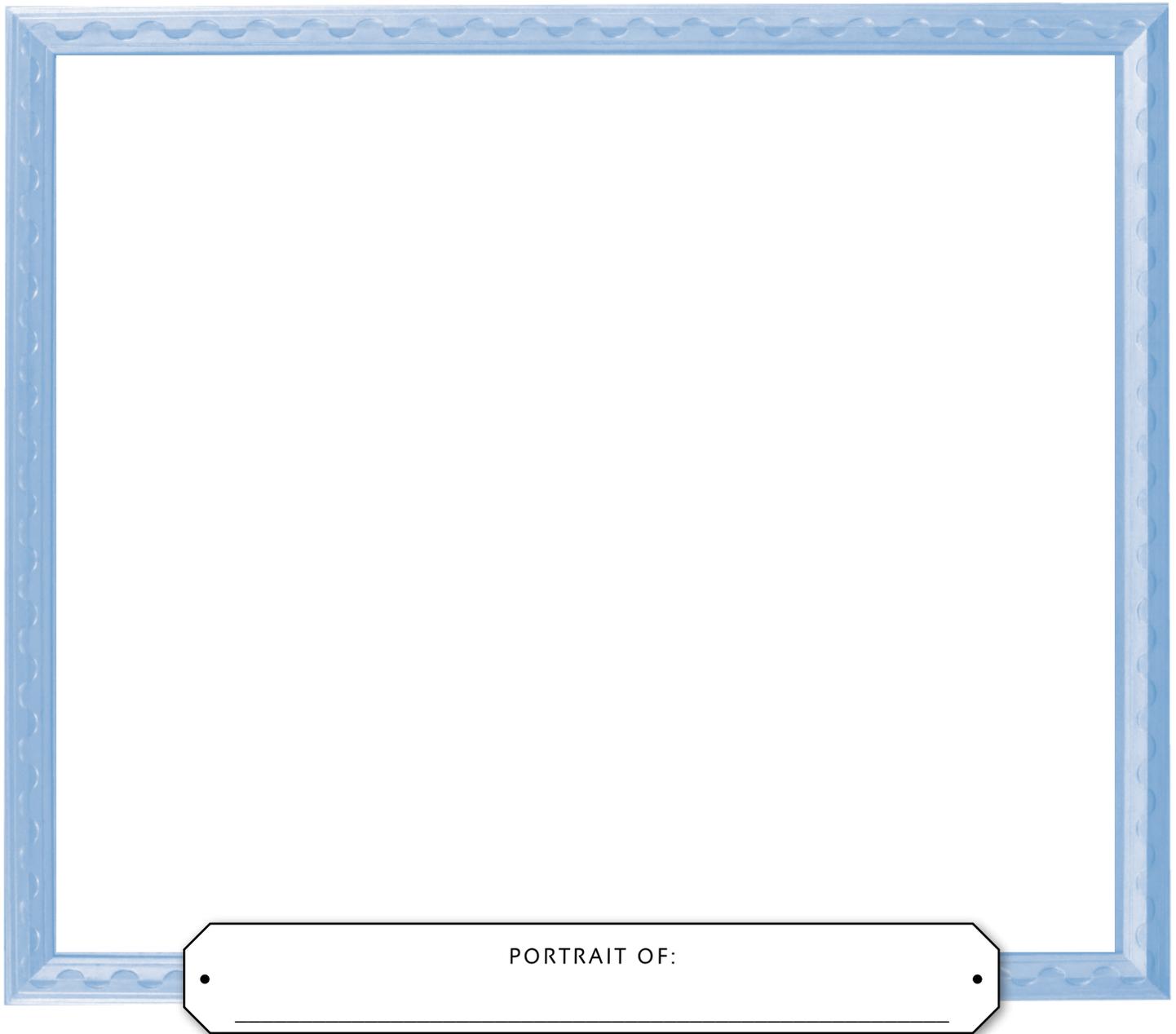
If you are the artist:

Ask the sitter questions to help you create a portrait he or she will be happy with. Then, think of a particular quality of your sitter that YOU would like to include. When you have the information you need, draw the portrait on the next page.



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After the artist draws the sitter's portrait, the two of you should talk about the portrait together.

Discuss the following:

1. Did the artist create the kind of portrait that the sitter was expecting? Why, or why not?
2. Where would the sitter display this portrait?
3. If you could commission another portrait, what would you do differently as a sitter? As the artist?

If time allows, switch roles and draw a new portrait.

SCHOOL



Education at the J. Paul Getty Museum

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