

Week 3

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) Mexico

'I am my own muse.

I am the subject I know best, the subject I want to better'



This painting by **Frida Kahlo** is called **Fulang-Chang and I**. It was painted in **1937**.

It is a self-portrait with her pet monkey.

It has a decorative mirror frame.

Frida Kahlo is a modern day icon, her self-portraits have earned her the nickname '*mother of the selfie*'.

Her image is a work of art printed onto all sorts of memorabilia, mugs, t-shirts, bags etc.

This week you will need.....

From your Art Bag	From Home	For the extra project
Sketchbook Pencil Wax crayons Colour pencils Felt tips Coloured paper Berol pen Scissors Glue Cocktail stick	A mirror or a photograph of you or a friend or family member, or a picture of someone from a newspaper or magazine.	You will also need.... A clean foil food container eg from a pie or ready meal If you don't have one you could try with aluminium foil A magazine or newspaper

About the artist.....

Frida Kahlo was born in Mexico. She was a strong, independent woman who was proud of her Mexican heritage.

She was a firm believer in equality for all people regardless of class, gender, race or religion.

Her life was filled with immense physical and emotional suffering, her paintings tell her story.

At 6 years old, Frida had polio and spent 9 months in bed. She recovered but her right leg was weak for the rest of her life and eventually had to be amputated.

When she was 18 a bus crashed into the tram she was travelling on and a metal handrail pierced her torso, miraculously she survived but suffered many injuries and as a result was never able to have children.

After the accident Frida spent many months on bed-rest, her mother had a special easel made for her and fixed a mirror to the ceiling above her bed and so she began to paint herself.

Activity 1 – Framed Self Portrait

You are going to have a go at a self-portrait!

You can use a mirror and draw from life or copy from a photograph. If you prefer you could draw someone else, either from life, from a photo or from a newspaper or magazine.

Begin by making a soft pencil outline then add shading and colour using your pencils, crayons and pens.

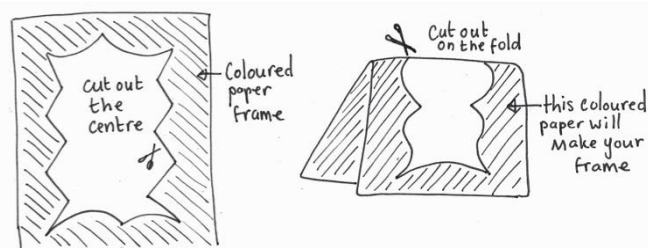
Look carefully where things actually are on your face, your eyes are nearly halfway down!

Look at the distances between your eyes and nose and mouth, and check exactly where your ears are.

Always draw what you see not what you think you look like and don't be afraid to experiment with colour.

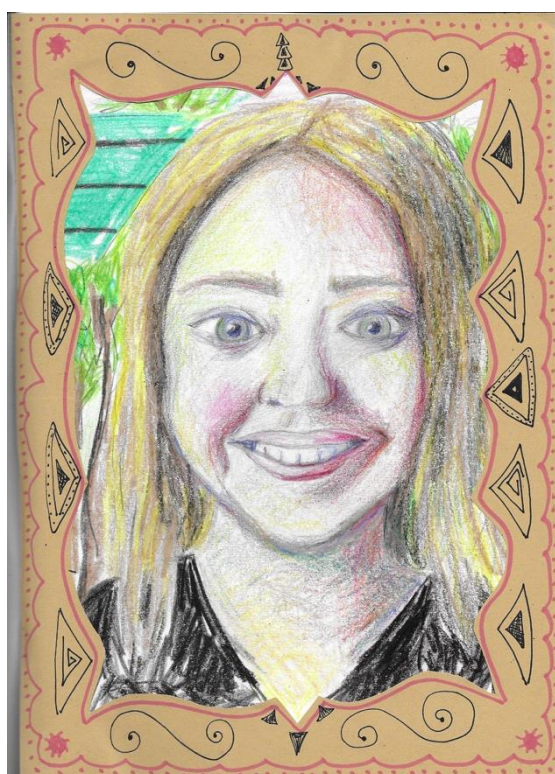
When you have finished your portrait make a colourful decorative frame to fit around it.

Cut the frame out of a sheet of your coloured paper. Draw the outline onto the paper and cut out, to make it easier you can fold the paper in half and draw half the frame.



Then glue your frame in place around your portrait and decorate it with pens & pencils.

In this example my daughter Amber has drawn her self-portrait from an old holiday photograph. She used the same materials that you have and has made brilliant use of colour!



Activity 2 – Drawing plants and animals

Frida was also inspired by the natural world, she loved animals and plants and they often feature in her paintings.

As well as her pet monkey she also had a dog, a parrot and a fawn, she often paints herself with these animals and surrounded by exotic Mexican plants.

For this activity you are going to make a nature page, you can make a double page if you like.

If you have a pet you could draw them.

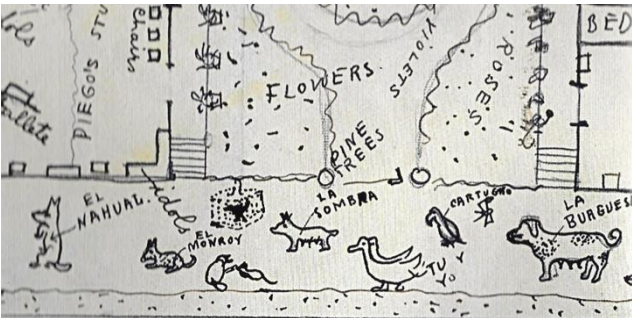
You might also be able to watch birds through your window or ducks in the park.

You could look at trees and plants when you're outdoors or if you have a garden or you may have a house plant you can draw.

Or you can use pictures from books, magazines or on your phone!

Enjoy drawing a page full of animals and plants, have fun and be adventurous with colour.

Below are some ideas to help you get started.



Part of a drawing by Frida Kahlo of the garden at her house Casa Azul (Blue House)



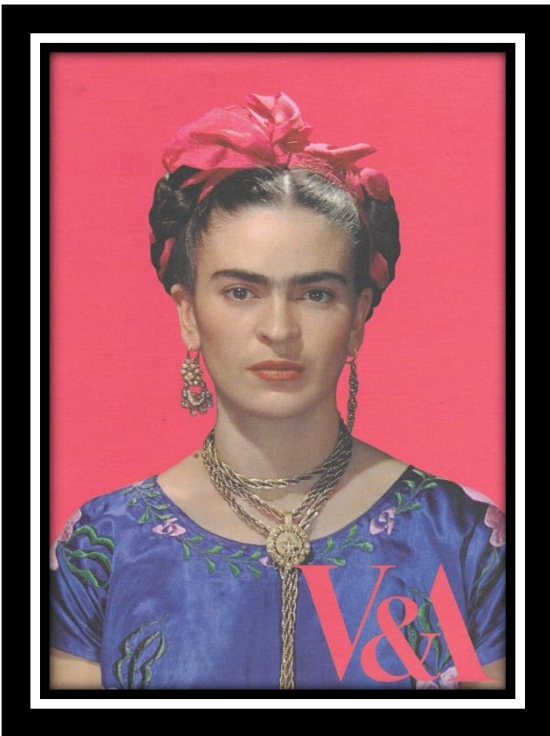
Mexican folk art figurines from the British Museum



Amber has been inspired by the Mexican folk art style to create this colourful page in her sketchbook.

You can see Frida's exotic pets in a bold and bright garden.

If you are enjoying Frida Kahlo then you can try this **extra activity**: Mexican Tin Art



Frida Kahlo liked to wear traditional Mexican clothes and lots of jewellery.

Her style, clothes, make up and accessories were as much a part of her art as her paintings.

Below is a detail from one of her necklaces, if you look closely you can see engraved birds and shells.



Take your foil food container and cut the base out with your scissors, **be very careful not to cut yourself!** the best way is to cut a bit off at a time rather than try and cut all the way round in one go. If you are using kitchen foil cut a few pieces roughly 15cm or 5 inches square.

Place your foil on top of a magazine or newspaper. Choose a sharp coloured pencil, any colour will do.

Draw your design into the foil – **the side you are drawing on will be the wrong side**, if you prefer you can draw onto paper first then put your paper design on top of the foil and press hard so your drawing goes through onto your foil.

You can be inspired by Frida's jewellery or make up your own designs.

You will be embossing the surface of the metal, if you are using kitchen foil don't press too hard.

Add details with dots and lines until you are happy with your design.

Turn it over and admire your Mexican tin art.

You can glue it in your sketchbook or tape a ribbon to the back and hang it in your window or garden.



In my example I have drawn the shells and a bird from the necklace and added some feathers, leaves and seeds.

I hope you enjoyed Frida Kahlo week, next week we are looking at Warli Tribal art.