

# PORTRAIT STORIES

## Family Gallery Guide

EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
Kimbell Art Museum



### What does a portrait tell you?

Portraits are about more than just looks. We also catch hints about a person's interests, personality, or how he or she wanted to be seen by others.

Keep your eyes open for clues like body language, facial expression, costume details, or other objects that add meaning. Color and line also help to focus how we see people in pictures.

Check out different portraits in the galleries, and decide which ones match the words below. Add your own words for other portraits that grab your attention.

A faint, light blue illustration of two paintbrushes is positioned on the left side of the page. One brush is larger and taller, while the other is smaller and shorter. Both have pointed tips and cylindrical handles.

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**Friendly**

**Brave**

**Smart**

**Serious**

### Imagine that!

Make up a story about the person shown in one of your favorite portraits. Use the clues in the picture for ideas.

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## Look for this self-portrait.

Need directions? Ask a gallery attendant.  
We are glad to help!

Many people enjoy looking at this picture of a beautiful young woman. What do you notice first? What words would you use to describe her?

Over 200 years ago, this elegant woman was one of France's most successful portrait painters. She even had a waiting list of people who wanted her to paint their pictures.

Why was she so popular?  
Because she made her sitters look good! See how she paints her own rosy cheeks and lips?



Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun,\* French, 1755–1842  
*Self-Portrait*  
c. 1781, oil on canvas

Vigée Le Brun's father introduced her to painting, but she learned most of it on her own. Notice how she paints different textures for fabrics, hair, and soft skin. You can understand why she became the Queen's favorite painter!

There's only one other self-portrait in the entire Museum.

Paul Gauguin\* shows himself wearing a heavy coat in a cold attic studio. What does his self-portrait tell you?

\* Vigée Le Brun is pronounced vee-zhay / luh / bruhn.  
Gauguin is go-gan.

## Picture Yourself

What clues would you include in your self-portrait or a family portrait? Create a portrait for the frame below.

