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Historical Art Frames (Pk/12)

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# S&S Worldwide

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## Historical Art Frames (Pk/12)

PLEASE READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE STARTING



**AGE GROUP: 7 and up**  
**PROJECT TIME: 30 minutes**

**YOUR KIT CONTAINS:**

- Cardstock Frame Designs
- Assorted Metallic Markers
- Assorted Colored Pencils

**YOU WILL NEED:**

- Scrap Paper
- Pencils
- Erasers
- Scissors

**EACH PERSON SHOULD HAVE:**

- A frame design of their choice

The markers and pencils will be shared among the group.

**“A picture without a frame is like a soul without a body.”**

**Vincent Van Gogh**

Frames have existed since the 2nd century B.C. when borders were found drawn around Etruscan cave paintings. It seems that since people have been creating art they have searched for the proper way to display it. The frame may have started out as a form of protection but its visual and symbolic purposes soon became equally important. The frame separates the work of art from its surroundings and may help focus the viewer's attention. At the same time it can actually unite a work with its surroundings by forming a transition or a link to other works or to the wider setting. The frame can become part of the setting itself when it is designed to fit into an architectural scheme. More obviously, the frame is usually intended to enhance a picture visually.

**“The frame marks out a picture as a picture, that is as an illusion rather than reality.”**

**From The Art of the Picture Frame by Jacob Simon.**

As long as people have made art there have been portraits. A traditional portrait is a painting, drawing, sculpture or a photograph of a person. The purpose of a portrait is to show the likeness, essence, personality, and even the mood of the person. For the first few thousand years at least, portraits, whether drawn, painted or sculpted, were mostly reserved for those deemed important enough to be honored with a work of art bearing their likeness. The wealthy--mostly royalty and nobility-- and important religious and historic figures were the most common subjects.

In the 17th Century, oil painting portraiture became the art form of choice for the wealthy. The frame in which these valuable portraits were displayed quickly became equally as important. By the time of the Baroque period following the Italian Renaissance, some painters had also begun to take an interest in portraits of the common man. The wealthy soon began to focus on embellishing the portrait frames with excessive valuables as a reflection of their status and power. You can see in Europe and the Near East, frames of Baroque and later on Rococo styling took a backward step and were emblazoned in gold leaf or inlaid with gold motifs and other valuable gemstones.

The Baroque style is still popular today, not only in regards to frame design but general modern day décor across the world. As you create your portrait and decorate its frame, reflect on the characteristics listed below that define the Baroque and Rococo art movements to help inspire your modern creation. For further inspiration research the works of famous 17th Century artists **Rembrandt** (Baroque) and **Caravaggio** (Rococo).

### **Baroque**

- Dramatic Light
- High Contrast
- Emotionally Saturated
- Sensuous Richness
- Exaggerated Motion
- Exuberant
- Realistic Detail
- Bold Ornamentation
- Heroic
- Symmetrical

### **Rococo**

- Whimsical
- Playful
- Ornate
- Elegant Curves
- Luxurious
- Light-Hearted
- Hyper-Embellished
- Exuberant
- Idyllic
- Asymmetrical

## **CREATE A FRAMED PORTRAIT**

### **INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Everyone should choose a frame design, set up their work space and gather all the necessary supplies.
2. Using scrap paper, have each person sketch out what they would like their artwork to be in the frame. It could be a portrait of a pet, a friend, or a self-portrait.
3. Once everyone has sketches of the artwork they want to create, have everyone lightly redraw their sketch inside the frame design.
4. Have everyone share the colored pencils and markers to create their portrait and decorate the frame.
5. Using scissors, cut following the dotted line around the outside of the picture frame to complete the project!
6. Create a gallery of the finished pieces by hanging them all together on a wall. Photocopy the included label and have each artist fill it out including a statement about his/her work!

**What is an Artist Statement?** Essentially it is a short statement about a piece of artwork or body of art – the “who, what, where, when and why.” It can be as detailed or as basic as each artist chooses it to be.

### **Artist Labels (photo copy as needed)**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Artwork was created: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Materials used in creating: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Artist Statement: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Artwork was created: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Materials used in creating: \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Materials used in creating: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Artist Statement: \_\_\_\_\_  
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## **Fun Facts!**

- The earliest known frame originated in the 2nd century AD, where a Fayum mummy portrait was discovered in an Egyptian tomb surrounded by a decorative wooden frame.
- The early American frames are very spare and utilitarian. Towards the mid 1800's frames can be distinguished by agricultural symbols that were used to decorate the frames like tobacco, corn and wheat.
- There are no copyrights held on frame designs so many frames today are produced to look like earlier designs.