



Artwork by Annie Rinaldi, above



Artwork by Dara Delgado, above



I Am an Artist

Shani Higgins, Art, High Tech High North County

Students explored dimensions of their identity and created a double-sided canvas that visually expressed two sides of their selves. On the front of the canvas, they painted an acrylic self-portrait that represented their outer self—how they present themselves to others. On the back side of the canvas, students produced a collage that represented their personal vision and the things that make them unique.

Essential Questions

What do I want in life?

How can I represent who I am without using words?

Teacher Reflection

This project provided students with a way to express who they are and what is important to them, but also to learn about things like composition, color scheme, and how to use acrylic paints and mixed media. It was good for students to think about how to use color and facial expressions, not just words, to represent themselves.

I encouraged students to work in groups to display their works as one unified work of art. The challenge was to make sure that however and wherever the work was displayed, both sides of every piece could be seen by the audience.

—Shani Higgins

Student Reflections

It's important for people of all ages to take art. Art allows people to express themselves and takes their minds off of stressful things like school or some problem they have elsewhere. It can stop people from expressing themselves in destructive ways. It's like therapy. Students who have trouble in other subjects might excel in art, gaining a sense of self-confidence and worth.

—Anthony Arcaro, 9th grade, HTH North County

Art, in my opinion, is the most important class schools have to offer. Art is what makes the world diverse. It lets us express who we are and what sets us apart. We were all made with special gifts and talents, and art gives us a way to express those.

—Anthony Livingston, 9th grade, HTH North County

To learn more about this project and others, visit the HTH Digital Commons and Shani Higgins' digital portfolios at

<http://www.hightechhigh.org/> and <http://hthnc.hightechhigh.org/~shiggins/>

