

BEFORE YOU WATCH

1 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

- Are you interested in art? Why/Why not?
- How often do you visit art galleries?
- Do you like looking at portraits?
- Look at portraits A–D. Which ones do you like? Why?



painting



sculpture



drawing



photograph

2 Read the article and choose the best summary (a, b or c).

- how to paint a good portrait
- the history of portraits
- famous portrait artists



From cave paintings to selfies, we all love pictures of people. But why are we so interested in looking at faces?

Nowadays, people love taking selfies, but creating pictures of people isn't new. Artists in the ancient civilisations of Egypt, Greece and Rome made lots of portraits and some people think that people started making portraits even earlier – almost 30,000 years ago.

Before the invention of photography in the 1830s, painting, drawing or sculpting a portrait was the only way to show what people looked like. We know what kings, queens, and famous people in the past looked like because of the portraits in art galleries around the world today.

But portraits show us much more than how someone looks. Portraits show us the personality of the person. They can also tell us about a period of history. Portraits don't only tell us about the person in the picture, they also tell us about the personality of the artist who created the picture. Also, portraits make each of us think and feel different things and that is why they are so interesting.

3 Read the article again. Are the sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- The first portraits came from ancient Egypt. ____
- There were no photos before the 1830s. ____
- Portraits only show us what people look like. ____
- We can learn about history from portraits. ____
- Portraits tell us about the artist and the person in the portrait. ____

The power of portraits

MARION DUVAL Art editor

WHILE YOU WATCH

4 Watch the video and answer the questions.

1 Where does Esme go in the video?

2 What is Jess' job?

3 What do Esme and Jess make?

4 Does Esme have fun?

5 a Match paintings 1–4 with the words and phrases in the box.

bald beard blue eyes brown eyes glasses grey hair
long dark hair long red hair moustache small ears

b Watch the video from 00:43–01:43. What does Esme say she likes about paintings 1 and 2?

6 a Work in pairs. Choose the correct answers (a or b).

1 How often is London Art Week?

a every year b every two years

2 Where does Jess show her work?

a in local galleries b in local shops

3 What does Jess say are difficult to paint?

a eyes and ears b beards and moustaches

4 Why does Jess usually paint people?

a She can use lots of different colours. b They're interesting.

5 What does Esme do before she starts her sculpture?

a a drawing b a painting

6 Why do Esme and Jess sculpt a bald man?

a because it's quicker b because it's easier

7 What do they sculpt first?

a the shape of the head b the features of the head

8 What does Esme find difficult to sculpt?

a the mouth b the ears

b Watch the video again and check your answers.

AFTER YOU WATCH

7 Work in pairs. Discuss the questions.

1 Which was your favourite work of art in Jess' studio? Why?

2 Can you paint or sculpt?

3 What is your favourite type of art? Why?

8 Work in pairs. Choose one of the portraits in Exercise 1. Describe it to your partner. Your partner guesses which portrait it is.

A: She's got long red hair and brown eyes.

B: Is it A?

