

Expressing emotion in pictures

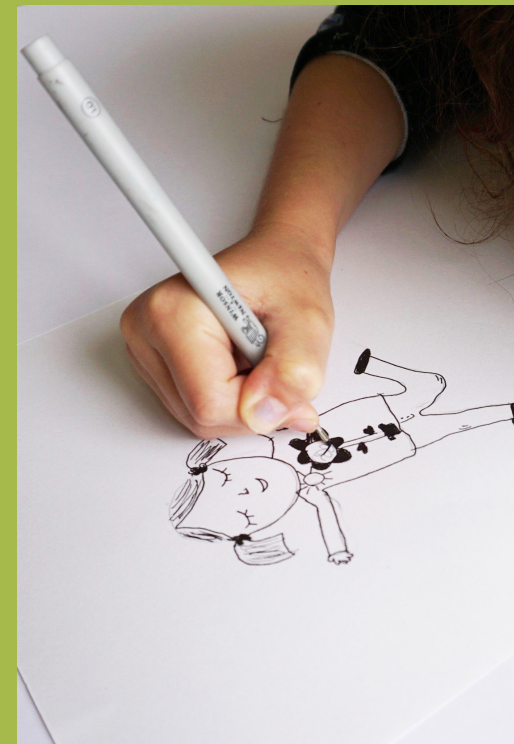
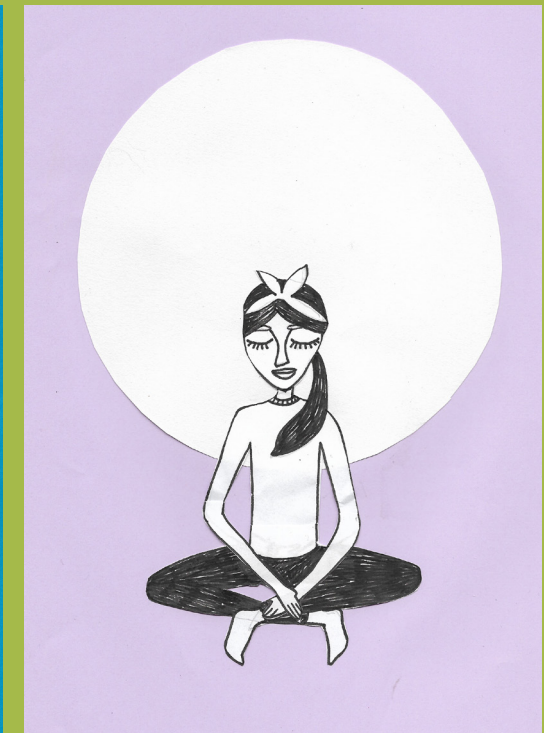
Illustration gives us the tools to communicate how people are feeling through pictures. This can be used to powerful effect whether telling stories in graphic novels or making political posters. In this activity you will begin to look at the ways you can make figures convey emotion and some techniques for building strong compositions.

materials

- A4 white paper
- A4 coloured paper - a choice of a few colours is ideal
- Pencil
- Black pen or fineliner*
- Scissors
- Gluestick

Drawing your figure:

1. Begin by thinking of a range of emotions and acting out how you might show those feelings with your whole body. Might you jump for joy or slump in boredom? Try out some positive and negative emotions.
2. Select an emotion and begin to sketch out a figure lightly on a white piece of paper. Think about the shape the body makes when the emotion is felt. Remember that the goal is to express a feeling not draw a perfect person.
3. Next think about the facial expression. You might try acting this out in front of a mirror to give you ideas. Add this to your sketch.
4. Once happy with your figure you can draw over and add texture to your sketch with black pen. Remember even the kinds of lines you use can help: quick lines for excitement, scratchy lines for anger, smooth and slow lines for calmness.



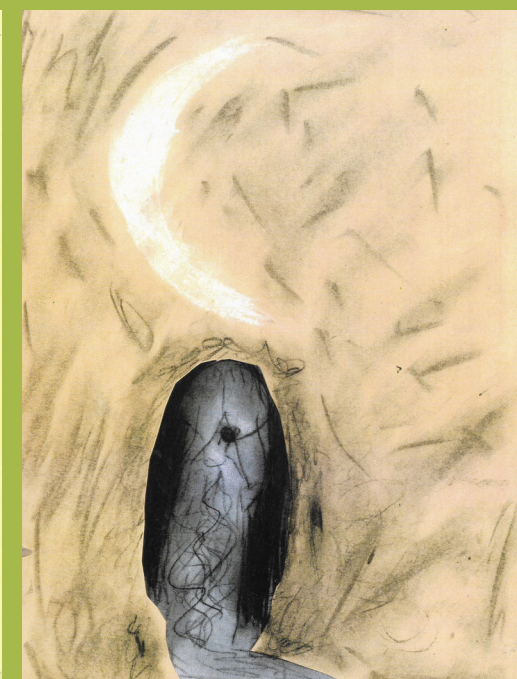
Assembling your picture:

- Cut out your figure.
- Select a coloured background that you feel relates to your emotion. For instance, blue for sadness or yellow for joy?
- Take another piece of white paper and draw a large shape on it that you associate with your emotion. Perhaps an explosion shape for excitement or a heart for love?
- Cut out the shape.
- Arrange the white cut-out and the cut out figure on the coloured background until you are happy with the composition.
- Glue into place.

You may find that you start to take on the emotion that you are drawing, so if you've illustrated a negative emotion try another more positive one. It also might be a good opportunity to talk about how you are feeling together or what coping strategies you could use when you experience negative emotions.

*Other mediums

This activity works well in black pen, but you could choose to use other mediums to great effect. The examples to the right were done using charcoal to draw the figures and white chalk to draw and colour in the shapes. Stick and ink or black pencil crayon would also work well.



**Quentin Blake Centre
for Illustration**

These resources were developed by Toya Walker for Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration