



## LESSON 5 LEVEL B FACES & FIGURES

### WHAT YOU WILL LEARN:

drawing and beginning printmaking

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

a potato; oil pastels or felt markers; manila or drawing paper; "scratch" paper; tempera paint; paper towels; a pie tin or saucer; thick newspapers to protect the work area; a mirror.

**"TIPS":** Cut a potato in half to make an oval, oblong or round shape. Blot the sections for several minutes on paper towels.

Meanwhile, make a stamp pad. Make a stack of 6 pieces of paper towel in a pie tin or saucer. Moisten the paper with water. Mix tiny amounts of orange and blue tempera into a tablespoon of white to make any basic flesh color.

Spread the paint smoothly over the pad to make a shape about the size of the cut potato. Practice making a "head" by pressing the cut potato into the paint and then printing it on some scratch paper.

## A POTATO PRINT FAMILY A Family Portrait



Charles Willson Peale The Peale Family, 1809  
The New York Historical Society

### Getting Started:

Study this painting by Charles Willson Peale of his family. Notice the way all of the separate figures are made into a group. See how each face looks toward the front or a bit to the side. How could you make a simple oval shape become a front view, a side-view or a three-quarters (in between) view of a face?

1. Plan: How many people do you want to include in your picture. . . your family? A couple of friends as well? Will they be sitting down or standing? Each potato print you make on the drawing paper will become one head.

2. Press the potato section on the paint pad. Then press it on the paper for each head.



practice drawing the faces on your scratch paper prints. Use crayons, pastels or markers. Will they be happy? Sad? Angry? Excited? Surprised? Show these feelings looking in a mirror. See how your eyes, eyebrows, and mouth change.



Faith Age 7

4. Draw the face on each person in your family portrait.

5. Starting with the face closest to the bottom of the paper, add a body to each head. You will be able to show only parts of the people standing in the back. Make some patterns on the clothes. Maybe draw some hats.

6. Add a colorful border around your Potato Heads Portrait to frame it.

**CLEAN UP:** Before you throw away the paint pad, make another set of prints for a another picture. You can draw it later. Then wrap the pad in the newspapers and put it in the trash. Return your drawing materials to where you keep them. Rinse the potato sections off while you wash your hands. Throw them in the garden compost or the garbage. (The potato. Not your hands!) If you have a piece of potato with an eye in it, put it in a shallow dish of water. Keep it wet. In time, it will sprout!

**TALK ABOUT IT:** Can your family members recognize themselves? What changes will you make when you do another picture?

**MORE IDEAS:** 1. Use watercolor paints instead of tempera. Blend two colors to make an unusual one. Make a portrait of an outer space family or "Fantastic Friends."

2. Use a paper clip to cut a design into the flat surface of the potato. Stamp a repeat pattern across a big sheet of newsprint to make some gift wrap paper.

**CONNECTIONS:** Read a story about a family. You might like *Tar Beach* by Faith Ringgold or *Old Father Storyteller* by Pablita Velarde. Ask your librarian for more suggestions.