

Me and My Grown-up Poetic Collage: Inspired by Shin Yu Pai and Torea Frey



Example by Jessica Conway

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY
SHARED BY MONA EDUCATORS

Description

Using the poetry of Shin Yu Pai and collage by Torea Frey as inspiration, students will write a Verb Portrait Poem about themselves or their chosen adult, and publish their writing with a photo of them.

Vocabulary

- Verb list
- collage
- poetry terms

Materials

- A printed photograph of student and/or their grown-up (at least one)
- Sharpies, pencils, markers
- Construction paper or printer paper
- Glue sticks
- Scissors
- **Instruction worksheet:** (<https://www.skagitriverpoetry.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Verb-Portrait-Poems.pdf>)
- **Optional:** Big Book of Families by Mary Hoffman, printer and paper for printing typed-up poems, other decorative materials available (stickers, glitter, stamps) and laminator and lamination sheets

Inspiration

Share the poetry by Shin Yu Pai and collage by Torea Frey to get students excited! Both are included at the end of this lesson.

Instructions

- 1) Pass out the verb list and materials, and model the lesson by writing a "Me poem" on the whiteboard.
 - a. Write "my teacher" on the board.
 - b. Ask students for verbs that they think describe their teacher and write them down.
 - c. Ask students to put the verbs into descriptive sentences and construct an example poem.
- 2) Next, have them create a list of verbs for themselves/their grown-up. Encourage them to think of hobbies, favorite foods, things that make them unique.
- 3) Give them time to write, 30 minutes or so should be enough to create a short poem.
- 4) Once they are ready to publish, they will have to think about how they want to arrange the poem and picture. Students can glue the poem to construction paper with their picture on the other side, run the picture through the printer to put the poem over it, or use a sharpie to hand write their poem. They can add more pictures or images from magazines to make a collage and decorate as much or as little as they want.
- 5) **Optional:** Laminate final product to display or take home!

Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cr2.1.5** (Experiment and develop skills in multiple art-making techniques and approaches through practice)
- **VA:Cr1.1.5** (Combine ideas to generate an innovative idea for art-making)

"Search and Recovery"

by Shin Yu Pai

it could have
happened to any
of us

a wrong turn
down a logging road
tires tunneled
into snow

a man's undying
love for his children

moves satellites
maps aerial images

eighteen care packages
dropped over 16
miles of the Siskiyou,

bearing handwritten
notes from a father
to his son

the signs
you left for those
who came after you

a red t-shirt
a wool sock,
a child's blue skirt

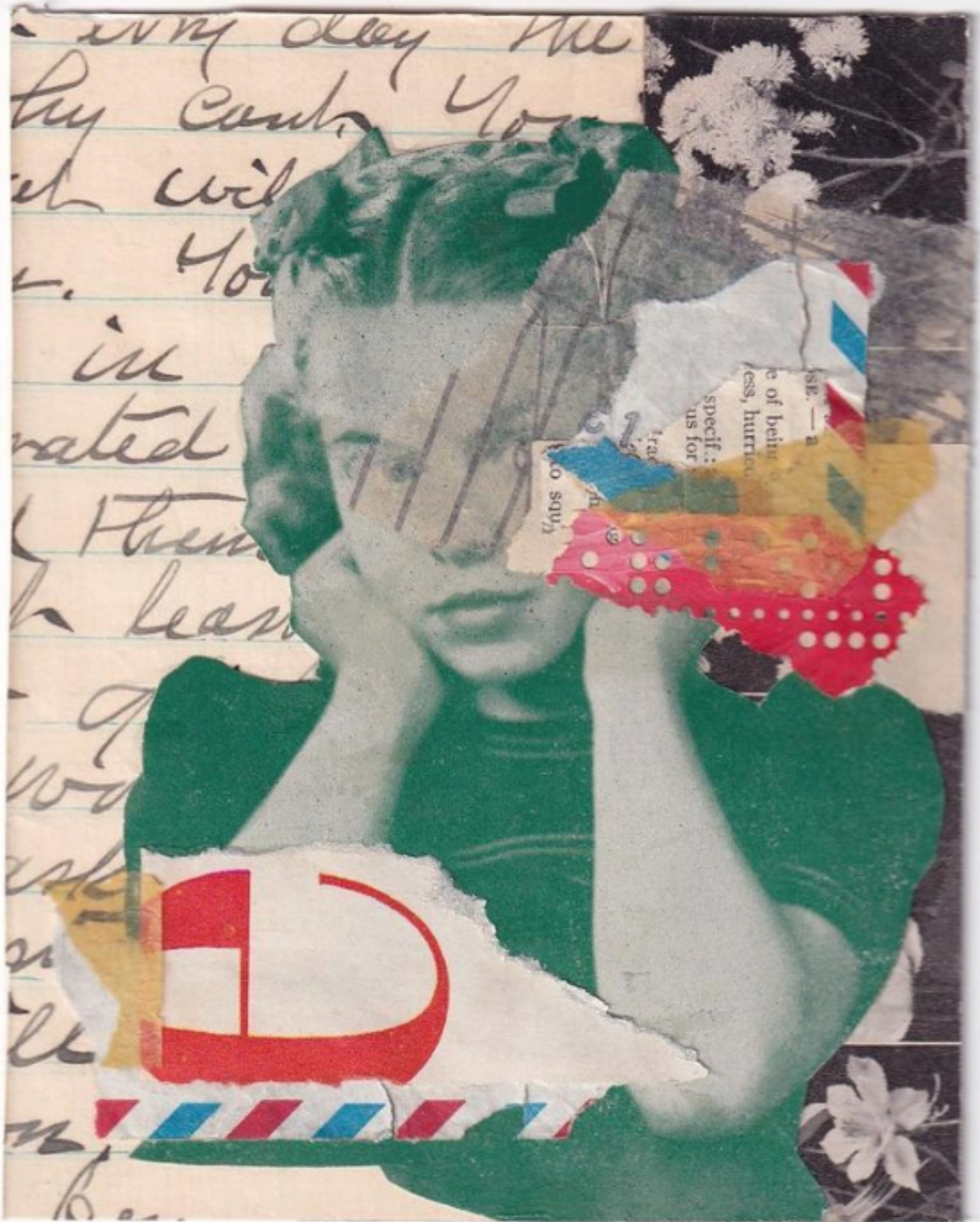
layers of a life,
stripped down to
a family's fate —

the weight of being
unseen — to travel
a path back to

what you knew
at birth, the warmth
of being held close

brought home

Collage by Torea Frey





Shin Yu Pai

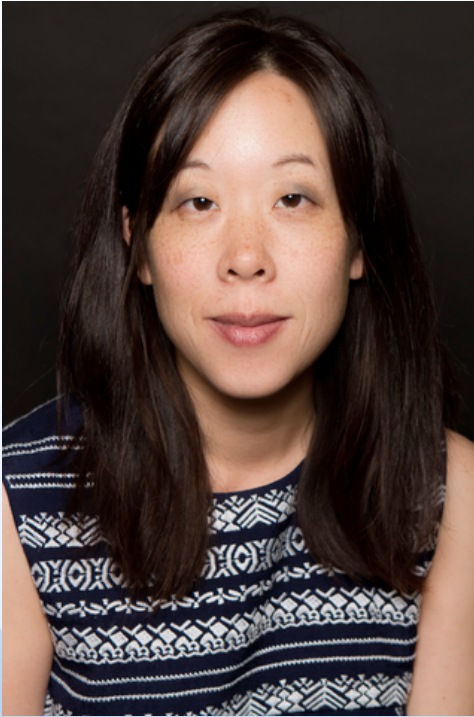


Image Source: <https://shinyupai.com/about-shin-yu/>

Shin Yu Pai is a writer and author whose work has been exhibited throughout North America and Asia. She has written 11 books, and also produces a podcast called The Blue Suit that highlights Asian American stories. She also creates video poems, exhibits her photography, and participates in many Seattle-based events and projects that benefit the AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) community.

Torea Frey is an Oregon writer editor, and artist. Her collage works look at gender, memory, and the power of the mundane. Many pieces use old photos and pages from books, making them feel very personal and connected to the viewer. Frey's work has been shown across the US, and she is part of several collage artist groups.

Torea Frey

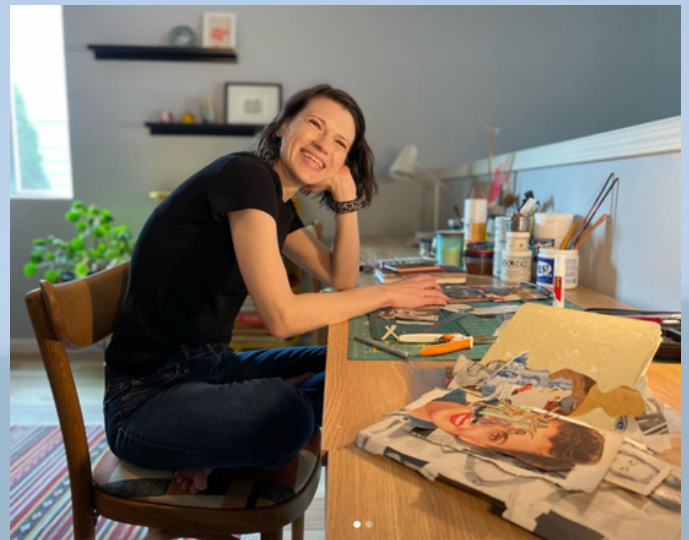


Image Source: <https://www.instagram.com/toreajade/>

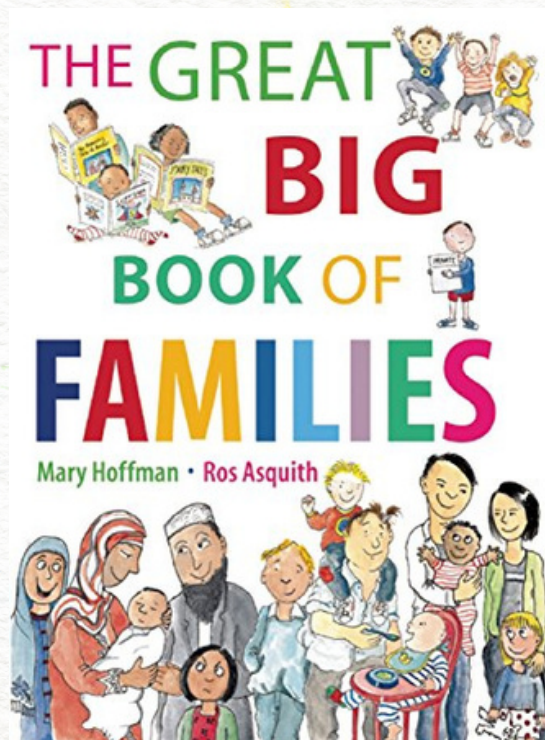
For Further Exploration: The Great Big Book of Families

What makes a family?

Utilize this lesson linked below to explore more ways to talk about "family."

Not only does this book encourage kids to keep an open mind about the idea of a family, but it shows many kids that their "different" families are just as valid.

https://assets2.hrc.org/welcoming-schools/documents/WS_Lesson_Great_Big_Book_Families.pdf



The qualities that make up a family can range from person to person. Help the students describe what they like about their family, and share if they are comfortable.