

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL MAPS

For this project we will be exploring our selves, our lives, our relationships through the idea of mapping. When we think of the idea of a map we usually think about a map that will help us get from one place to another – a map that will help us find something. What I want you to think about is – what will that SOMETHING be to you and what will we map in order to find it? I want you to explore the idea of self-portrait through the idea of mapping. I want you to explore and communicate about WHO YOU ARE. Make it interesting, make it entertaining, make it worthwhile and make it fun. What are you going to map?

A PLACE

Your city, your neighbourhood, your home? What connection does it have to you? Why is it important? What happened there? What stories can we tell through that place?

YOUR BODY

Stories to tell through an investigation of your body? How do you use your body? What are different parts of your body used for in your life? What is your relationship to your body?

YOUR HEAD

This is called Phrenology. What goes on in there? What occupies your thoughts? What is your brain for?

Your FAMILY

This is called Genealogy. You know a family tree? That's a map! Who is in your family? What do they do? Describe your relationship with them. Any stories? Why should we be interested (beyond just knowing what your grandmas name is)

An EVENT or a JOURNEY.

Maybe this is connected to a place? Maybe it is a map of a vacation you took or a significant event in your life? Why was it so important? What effect did it have on you?

IMAGERY:

How are you going to describe the various elements on your map. You can choose one of three ways.

1. Pictures and Words (duh)
2. Only words
3. Only pictures (although your legend probably needs words, and your cartouch
- more on that later)

MATERIALS and TECHNIQUES:

By now you should be familiar with a multitude of methods and materials that you may choose to use in the construction of your map.

This may include:

- Watercolour
- Ink
- Acrylic paint
- Paint markers
- Pochoir
- Transfer paper
- Calligraphy
- Pencil and pencil crayon
- Collage methods

LEGEND

You need one. This is where you describe the LANGUAGE of your map. Maps always entail a simplification of details, objects and ideas. The degree of simplification is up to you. Most of the time simple icons or symbols will stand in for more complex ideas. For instance a series of jagged lines will represent a mountain range or green triangles grouped together represents a forest. A dotted line might represent a road or a path taken. Or a particular colour may indicate something. What symbols or icons do you need in your map and what will they represent? How simplistic you make your illustrations should be consistent and will dictate the style of the map. It will probably go in one of the corners of your composition but in any case you will have to build it into your composition.. Mr. Long has examples for you!

CARTOUCHE

This is a super fancy title for your map. Come up with a snazzy name for your map, a cool lettering style (calligraphy, 3-D letter etc) and put it at the top of your map. Put it all in a fancy box. Your teacher will help you with all of this.

By now it should be apparent that you have A LOT of freedom with this assignment. You have a lot of choice in what materials and methods you use, what your map will be about and what it will look like in the end. But REMEMBER: with great freedom comes great responsibility! There are no cookie cutter steps to go by, only general guidelines. Your teacher cannot tell you exactly what to do or how your map can look, he (Mr. Long in this case) can only make suggestions and recommendations AND... your planning and development work on your sketchbook will be very important so be diligent in it.

STEPS:

1. Choose a couple to brainstorm about in your sketchbook. Look at the resources available. Think about the content and what each might look like. Which one are you most excited about? Which one is the funniest? Which one is the most interesting one to you? Which one can you NOT WAIT to get started researching!? **Each of these ideas that you brainstorm should take up a sketchbook page** and be communicative but they DON'T have to be refined or pretty.
2. Choose your favourite and start developing it. Do any research you might need to. Think about the style of the map: what materials do you like using and what methods are the most fun to you? What style of representation will you employ? This means: how will you draw or paint the mountains and grass and buildings etc... Make notes and experiment. If you don't love drawing you don't necessarily have to but your text design work better be pretty cool! Expand on and refine your ideas. **This should be at least 4 pages extra in your sketchbook.**
3. Rough draft. Here is where your ideas take form and you make decisions about your map. Start incorporating colour. Showing roughly what your final will look like. Make decisions about your legend and your cartouche. How will you represent different ideas and images in your map? You should be able to answer most questions about your map at this point. **1 page or more.**
4. Good copy. Start with your material - Watercolour paper? Board? And start sketching out your composition lightly in pencil. This is where your process is really going to start looking different from your neighbours'.

