

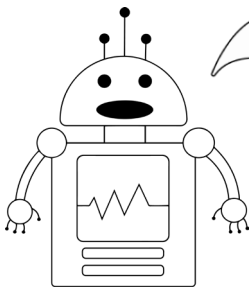
The Science of Selfies

This activity was created by Olivia.

You might notice that some apps make your face look different than what you're used to. On Snapchat and Instagram, you look more normal than on your phone's camera app. Why does that happen? Why does your mind say "wow I don't look like myself" when you see a selfie from the camera app?

During your life, you see yourself a certain way when you look in the mirror. Basically, you see your face as the opposite of what it actually looks like! Since your face is not symmetrical, when you see your face in a picture that does not use the mirror effect, your brain isn't used to seeing yourself that way, so you tend to notice everything that isn't "perfect" about you. Keep in mind, no one is perfect! It's your brain's reaction to something that is familiar but slightly different than you're used to seeing.

- 1 Get one of your friends to draw a picture of you.
- 2 Next, draw a picture of yourself in the mirror.
- 3 When both drawings are done, look at them and compare them. Are there any differences between them? Do you part your hair on one side, or have any characteristics that appear on opposite sides of your two drawings?
- 4 Recognize that in the end, both versions are based on a perception (and one is not better than the other). Going forward, when you look at a picture of yourself, remember that it is the same you, just a little different than how you are used to seeing yourself.



Some computers are trained to recognize faces. **Facial recognition** uses the unique parts of your face in order to make a pattern that later allows it to recognize you. It uses things such as the distance between your eyes, the slant of your eyebrows and the size and shape of your lips and nose to set you apart from others.