Mixed-media Portraits
Urban Landscape
The Magic of Flamenco
Free A2 Poster —
Vivid Volcanoes

Plus
Egyptian art
Early Years
Hundertwasser
Taking the pain out of painting!
News, gallery round-up and reviews
Inspiration and Ideas

CROSS-CURRICULAR ISSUE
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Cover image: Lighthouse Keeper collage.

Please note: While every effort is made to check websites mentioned in this publication, some may contain images unsuitable for young children. Please check any references prior to use in the classroom. Please note that the username to access units of work on the NSEAD website has changed to 'gormley' and the password to 'drury'. See page 33 for further details.

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START
News

FREE DOWNLOADABLE PUBLICATIONS
Supporting innovation in schools
The new handbook, Promoting Transformative Innovation in Schools, is designed to prompt debate about the nature and purpose of innovation in schools. It aims to offer evidence, insights, ideas and recommendations that can be built upon to support and nurture a culture of transformative innovation within education and to share approaches and tools that can support innovative practice in schools. This handbook is available to download free from www.futurelab.org.uk/handbooks

Early Learning years
A new report, Perspectives on Early Years and Digital Technologies, based on research from Futurelab’s PhD studentship network, investigates the role of digital technologies in Early Years learning. It provides you with ideas for the classroom, for teaching and learning outside the classroom and for settings other than in school.

NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND ART COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS 2009
Closing date Friday 8 May 2009
Scottish school children are invited to enter this very popular annual competition, now in its sixth year. Full details can be viewed on the National Galleries of Scotland website, www.national-galleries.org. Follow the link to Education and click on Competitions. There are six categories, each with a different theme. Pupils are asked to view a small selection of works of art online. Teaching notes and discussion ideas are provided. In support of the new curriculum for excellence, there are suggestions on cross-curricular approaches. Pupils are invited to make their own artwork, inspired by the theme and works of art.

Four primary school children exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts
Four UK primary school children have been selected by a panel including Professor Maurice Cockrill RA, Keeper of the Royal Academy of Arts, as the Sightseers’ International Junior Painters of the Year for 2008. Their paintings, depicting ‘the sight I would most like to see’, beat entries from almost 9000 primary school children from across the UK. The four are among the youngest artists exhibited in a special exhibition in the café gallery at the world-renowned Royal Academy of Arts in London since November 2008. From a captivating portrait of two family pets to an imaginative piece depicting good beating evil, the paintings were selected by the judging panel, led by Professor Cockrill, for their understanding of the theme, their use of colour and their originality. Professor Cockrill praised the winners for their vivid imaginations.

The 2009 Junior Painter of the Year Awards will be launched in the spring and details will soon be available at www.sightsavers.org/schools

MEGA MOSAIC-MAKERS 2008
Over 90 schools participated in this year’s competition. The standard was very high and all the mosaics will be a source of pride for years to come. In reaching their decision, the judges tried to balance several factors: they wanted to recognise those projects that were clearly driven by the original ideas of the children, while acknowledging that it was important that adult help was given, but with a light touch, and wanting to reward the high quality of execution and finish that so many mosaics displayed. The prizes totalled nearly £2600 in value, in the form of vouchers for mosaic materials and books. First prize (£600) was awarded for The Weir Link, by St Bernadettes Junior School, led by artist Julie Norburn. Second prize (£450), for Funny Jungle, went to Hillingdon Infant School, led by artist Maylee Christee, and third prize (£350) was won by Windem Church of England Primary School, led by artist Kate Hale, for Cornish Wildlife Seat. The competition will run again in 2009 and all schools are encouraged to plan now for entry. Mosaics made in the last three years may be submitted, but may only be entered in the competition once. Hints on mosaic making in schools can be found on the Education page of the BAMM website, www.bam.org.uk.

Many thanks are due to Topps Tiles for sponsoring this event.

An awards ceremony will be held in the National Gallery of Scotland in June 2009. The £3 winning entries from 2008 will be on public display at the Pentagon Centre, Washington Street, Glasgow, from 10 November 2008 to 15 January 2009 (open daily 9:00am–5:30pm). The exhibition will then travel to the Raigmore Hospital, Old Perth Road, Inverness, where it will run from 1 February to 31 May 2009. The competition is sponsored by Scottish Widows.

From the Editor
Happy New Year! I hope that by now you are well on your way to creating exciting art projects in the classroom. This issue is a cross-curricular edition, with lots of ideas on how to sneak in extra time for art through literacy, RE, dance and history.

I hope that you will make the most of the outdoors in your lessons as the seasons begin to change and nature starts to awaken! I urge you to start a nature table in your school, perhaps with a modern name to give it a fresh feel. We called ours ‘the nature museum’. However old-fashioned the concept of a nature table might seem, getting children to go outdoors, to collect and display their findings, and inspiring them to ask questions, surely makes nature cutting edge. Some of the most exciting projects I have undertaken have come from the simplest of child-initiated starting points – from fossils found on beaches to birds’ wings that led to an exploration of flight. Thank you to all those who have joined the readers’ panel. My new year’s resolution is to email you more often! I am always thrilled to hear about anything that you might be doing in your school, have read, seen or heard about, as well as questions you might want answered. This is very much your magazine and we are keen to respond to your needs and ideas.

This is going to be an exciting year, with many impressive exhibitions to visit, and not just in London. Don’t forget that many of the museums and galleries do offer teachers private views and teacher packs, and do want you to visit with your pupils, so get in touch and talk to your local gallery and see what they can offer your school. Even if you can’t take your class to an exhibition, going in your spare time is an important way of promoting your own CPD.

On the subject of CPD, The NSEAD START summer school is taking place in Winchester again this year, from 17 to 19 July. To book your place, go to the website, www.nsead.org. The website also contains a brand new primary section, which is full of practical ideas, links, information and primary material to keep you up to date with art education at the touch of a button. Please use it.

The next edition of START will have a ‘textiles’ theme, and the summer edition a ‘sculpture’ theme. We would love to hear about any exciting projects that you have undertaken in your school, however small. Yours in art

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NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND ART COMPETITION FOR SCHOOLS 2009

Michele Kitto
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University of Winchester, Hampshire
17-19 July 2009
Two days of practical art experience relevant to the primary classroom. Following the very successful first NSEAD START Primary summer school in July 2008, booking is now open for this year’s summer school.

Fees: Residential: START subscriber £195; non-subscriber £230; Non-residential: START subscriber £200; non-subscriber £240. Further details from Anna Ingal, Tel: (01249) 714426.

www.nsead.org

Start the magazine for primary and pre-school teachers of art, craft and design

From the Editor
TATE MODERN

Roni Horn aka Roni Horn
25 February–25 May 2009

This exhibition, the most significant overview of American artist Roni Horn’s practice to date, will show her earliest works from the mid-1970s alongside pieces from the intervening years and new sculptures. Horn has always defined the meaning of her work as the experience that the viewer has with it.

Many of Horn’s works are connected to her ideas about identity. This exhibition will also look at her engagement with Iceland, a place in which geographical identity is continually in flux. Since 1990, she has produced an extraordinary series of books entitled To Place, with photographs of lava, geysers, glacial rivers, and hot pools, which will be presented within a room of cabinets. Adjacent to this display there will be the related photographic installation Pi (1998), which explores geological, animal, and human cycles of life around the Arctic Circle.

www.tate.org

MODERN ART OXFORD

Encounters: Raphaël Zarka
31 January–29 March 2009

As part of its established Encounters series, Modern Art Oxford showcases the work of Raphaël Zarka this spring, in what will be the young French artist’s first exhibition in the UK.

Paris-based artist Raphaël Zarka is a collector of sculptural forms. His ongoing series Les Formes du Repos (Forms of Rest) (2001–), consists of photographs of remnants of unrecognised constructions that litter the landscape: a stretch of unfinished monorail, a concrete breakwater, a stone pylon. Zarka captures the sculptural possibilities of these forms as part of a lexicon that runs from Plato to modernism and post-minimalist sculpture. His series Riding Modern Art extends his investigations further, combining the found forms of public sculpture with ‘found images’ from the sub-culture vernacular of the urban skateboarder.

For his exhibition at Modern Art Oxford, Zarka presents a new installation comprising Les Formes du Repos, and his recent sculptures Les Billes de Sharpe (Sharpe’s Beans), (2008), eight solid-oak forms scored with geometric patterns, described by the English astronomer Abraham Sharp in his 17th-century treatise Geometry-Improved. Zarka’s recent video Topographie Anecdotée du Skateboard, a high-octane chronicle of the history of the urban skateboarder, extends his series, exploring the possibilities of these forms as part of a modernist and post-minimalist sculpture. His series Riding Modern Art extends his investigations further, combining the found forms of public sculpture with ‘found images’ from the sub-culture vernacular of the urban skateboarder.

www.modernartoxford.org.uk

THE ROYAL ACADEMY, LONDON

BYZANTIUM 330–1453

The Royal Academy’s ground-breaking exhibition, Byzantium 330–1453, highlights the splendours of the Byzantine Empire. The exhibition comprises over 340 objects, including icons, detached wall paintings, micro-mosaics, ivories and enamels, plus gold and silver metalwork. Many of the works have never been displayed in the UK before. Byzantium 330–1453 includes great works from the San Marco Treasury in Venice and St Catherine’s Monastery, Mount Sinai, together with rare items from collections across Europe, the USA, Russia and Ukraine. The exhibition covers the creation of Byzantine art between the foundation of Constantinople in 330–337 by the Roman Emperor Constantine the Great, and the fall of the city to the Ottoman Turks in 1453. This is the first major exhibition of Byzantine Art in the United Kingdom in 50 years.

www.royalacademy.org.uk

TATE ST IVES

A Continuous Line: Ben Nicholson in England
24 January–4 May 2009

Ben Nicholson (1894–1982) was one of the most radical British artists of the twentieth century and has long been recognised as a leading exponent of the modern movement in Britain between the wars. The first major presentation in the UK of his work for over fourteen years, the exhibition concludes its tour at Tate St Ives.

Ben Nicholson began his career as a figurative painter and developed a deep and enduring relationship with the English landscape. The exhibition reconsiders his position in British art history, offering a new understanding of the modern in art, particularly in relation to national and local identities.

Focusing on Nicholson’s English years, the three principal sections – Landscapes of the late 1920s; Abstract and landscape works made in St Ives during World War II, and the Cubist still lifes made between 1945 and 1958 – draw on a selection of key works to demonstrate his continuity of vision and approach. The exhibition is organised by Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Die Le Waart Pavilion and Tate St Ives.

www.tate.org
Oriel Myrddin Gallery, Carmarthen
Tony Cragg – New Stones, Newton’s Tones

10 January–21 February 2009

On tour from the South Bank Arts Centre, Tony Cragg’s colourful 1978 installation will be showing at Oriel Myrddin Gallery during January and February. The internationally renowned artist won the prestigious Turner Prize in 1989 and his prolific output since the early 1980s has deeply influenced work by contemporary sculptors. New Stones, Newton’s Tones features plastic debris arranged by colour category on the gallery floor and is influenced by the scientific Isaac Newton’s theories of colour. Despite the fact that it is 30 years since the work was first made, the theme of recycling and questions of colour are even more relevant today. A great opportunity to see this important work in west Wales.

My Place
28 February–28 March

In the summer of 2000, Oriel Myrddin Gallery issued a call for film submissions, responding to the theme of ‘My Place’. Creating a film open was a new and exciting departure for the gallery. An expert panel was invited to help select the best films from those submitted. www.orielmyrddingallery.co.uk

Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA)
The End of the Line: Attitudes in Drawing
27 February–10 May 2009

The End of the Line: Attitudes in Drawing presents new or recent works by eleven highly acclaimed international artists, whose work has not been shown extensively in the UK. The exhibition explores a diverse range of contemporary approaches to drawing by a new generation of artists, whose works will appeal to the imaginations of a broad public.

In the Western tradition, drawing was the foundation of art education and the essential discipline underlying all others. The medium, which flourished in the late 20th century owing to a more academic and conceptual approach to teaching and art production, has recently undergone resurgence in popularity, partly as a result of its accessibility as a tool for communicating ideas.

The exhibition explores a diverse range of contemporary approaches to drawing by a new generation of artists, including Jan Albers, Michael Borremans, Garrett Phelan and Naoyuki Tsuji. The End of the Line: Attitudes in Drawing is organised in collaboration with mima, Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art and The Bluecoat, Liverpool, in association with The Drawing Room, London. www.visitmima.com

Karen Lloyd describes an exciting mixed-media portrait project she undertook with Year 4 children at Ghyllside Primary School in Kendal, Cumbria, revealing how sharing a personal visit to a gallery or exhibition with children can spark off interesting project work in the classroom.

Background
A long-time devotee of Scottish artist Joan Eardley (1921–1963), I was inspired to do this project after I visited the hugely impressive Retrospective of her work at Edinburgh’s National Gallery Complex in 2007.

Joan Eardley is well known for the two main strands in her work – firstly, her large elemental landscape and seascape paintings, and secondly, her paintings of children from the tenements of Glasgow, where she had a studio. In particular, she befriended and painted the Samson family, of whom there were twelve! These works range from large mixed-media pieces – collage and oil on canvas, for example – to small, sensitive and intimate portrait drawings made using pastel. I thought that the range of marks and techniques that Eardley used, together with the naïve quality of the portraits themselves, would make them inherently accessible as source material and inspiration to eight- and nine-year-olds.

I was given the opportunity to explore this with Sue Clarke, deputy head and art co-ordinator at Ghyllside Primary School in Kendal, and ran a two-day project that would enhance and extend the children’s skills in using paint and other media. We both felt that the idea of the children making portraits of themselves and their friends using Eardley as source material was very exciting. I therefore planned to incorporate a variety of experimental techniques in the project, and to help the children build up a repertoire of mark-making experiences that they could take with them as they went up the school.

Preparation
The children were asked to bring in favourite photographs from home, showing themselves, perhaps with a sibling or a pet. In advance of the project, I also went into the school to take photographs of all the children involved, in order to widen their choice of source material and also to make sure that everyone actually had at least one photograph to work from.

Karen Lloyd describes an exciting mixed-media portrait project she undertook with Year 4 children at Ghyllside Primary School, Kendal, Cumbria, revealing how sharing a personal visit to a gallery or exhibition with children can spark off interesting project work in the classroom.

The project
As an introduction to the project, we looked at the work of several contrasting portrait artists – talking about artists from the fifteenth century up to today, including Bronzini, Van Eyck, Vermeer, Lucien Freud and Eardley – and discussed why people make portraits, and why people have portraits of themselves painted. We also looked at photographs of Glasgow street children, to put Joan Eardley’s portraits into social context. The pupils responded enthusiastically to her work, and to the story of how children would knock on her studio door and ask if she would paint them! (This was a time when lots of children were made to be outside for most of the day – presumably the fact that it was warmer in her studio added to the kudos of having one’s picture painted!)

Work on our project started with pastel drawings, prefaced by me demonstrating ways of using chalk pastels expressively...
and also in a more controlled, contrasting way. We talked about using scale and cropping to make the compositions tighter and more interesting. We looked at how the resulting drawings could be used as ‘working drawings’ that could be changed or developed later on.

‘... the idea of the children making portraits of themselves and their friends using Eardley as source material was very exciting.’

I was keen to get away from using standard A4 paper, so we used a variety of shapes and sizes. Most children were already familiar with the idea of making portraits of themselves and their friends, but they seemed more interested in this activity than others. Some of them had previously used Eardley’s work as source material for their drawings, and they were keen to talk about their achievements and their learning.

For their main portrait pieces, the children began by drawing the outline of their portrait and/or composition in pencil. Using acrylic paint (and of course wearing protective shirts), they then painted in the under-painting. We talked about what this means, and how it gives an underlying structure to the work. We left the figures blank at this stage, to be painted in last – the proverbial icing on the cake. As acrylic paint dries quickly, we were able to move on fairly swiftly to begin applying the collage. A large selection of interesting collage materials was available, but individual choice was limited by what was provided on each table. This was because I wanted the children to think about colour themes in their work, in a similar way to how the resulting drawings could be used as ‘working drawings’ that could be changed or developed later on.

I was really pleased by the way in which the children took on board the spirit of Joan Eardley’s use of collage – really thinking about placing each of the collage materials carefully so that it added something to the overall composition. Inevitably, some made a ‘frame’ around the portraits, but these were applied with careful thought to the use of colour and texture. Once the collage was at least semi-dry, the children began painting in their portraits and then augmenting their work by applying more paint using the collage materials carefully so that it added something to the overall composition. We talked about using scale and cropping to make the compositions tighter and more interesting. We looked at how the resulting drawings could be used as ‘working drawings’ that could be changed or developed later on.

In two days, the children produced work of both volume and quality. They were very keen to talk about their achievements and what they had done when using only two colours in the mark-making experiments. They were also very proud of their work, which was displayed for the whole school to see. It would be an exciting project to take forward and develop further!

Resources

Photographs, chalk pastels, paper of various shapes and sizes, primer, pencils, brushes of various sizes, objects for mark-making, ready-mixed paint, acrylic paint, collage materials.

Background

Karen visited Joan Eardley (6th November 2007 to 13th January 2008) at the Royal Scottish Academy. This is one of the largest Joan Eardley exhibitions ever held, and it is also the first major exhibition of her work in nearly twenty years. Joan Eardley RSA (1921–1963) was born in Sussex, Eardley moved to Glasgow in 1940, studying at Glasgow School of Art. Her paintings of children playing in rundown Glasgow tenements, and her landscapes painted in and around the fishing village of Catterline on the north-east coast of Scotland, are among the most celebrated works in Scottish art. Her career was cut tragically short in 1963, when she died of cancer at the age of 42.

© with kind permission of the Eardley Estate 2009

Kate Allen reflects on her meeting with Carla Soto, a dancer of Cuban-Spanish descent, who shares her art form with children. Kate describes Carla’s successful flamenco workshop at West Park Centre, Leeds, in which primary-school children learned not only about another culture but also about the wonderful rich cross-curricular arts it embodies.

Although born in Kent, Carla Soto spent 23 formative years in Venezuela. There she received comprehensive dance training, from classical to African. It was in Venezuela that Carla discovered flamenco – the true musical form of movement and expression she sought. She has studied both the theory and practice of flamenco and, as well as performing here and overseas, now runs flamenco workshops and, as well as performing here and overseas, now runs flamenco workshops.

Flamenco originated in Andalusia and is a musical expression of oppressed communities, from Arabic to the Spanish working classes. It is a fusion of dance, drama, music and singing, heavily influenced by Gypsies and Travellers. Carla’s art form, therefore, was a particularly apt choice for Education Leeds’ Gypsy Roma Traveller History Month (GRTHM) 2008.

In June, the first national celebration of its kind, Carla’s three-day flamenco workshop with local primary-school children took centre stage amid a week-long festival of events, which included story-telling, an art exhibition and music.

The brief
Carla’s brief was straightforward: to deliver tailor-made workshops on the theme of ‘The Gypsies and Flamenco’. Objectives were to highlight Gypsy roots and culture, tackle prejudice and discrimination, and to enable children to choreograph their own flamenco. The workshop began with live flamenco music (percussionist on castanets and flamenco drum and a guitarist) and an introduction from Carla in Spanish. A preview of the workshop, questions and answers about the children’s knowledge of flamenco, a musical Gypsy story and a flamenco demonstration by Carla followed. A world map enabled Carla to show children the journey Gypsies made (bringing cross-curricular links to geography, history and citizenship), and authentic flamenco dress. Many other cross-curricular links were made during the workshop, for example to literacy via story-telling, to modern foreign languages (MFL) through Spanish, to PSHE & citizenship via ethnic identity, and to music and PE. Children developed their rhythm through clapping, clicking, tapping and playing the drum and castanets, and coordination, posture, balance and motor skills were nurtured through movement.

Preparing and performing
To prepare participants for developing their own choreography, Carla set them to work on an animal improvisation exercise. Children were split into groups of three, four or five, with a particular emphasis on teamwork. Carla helped the children to mimic the movements of their favourite animals – the movement of animals being a primitive source of dance inspiration – and to draw on flamenco elements learned during the workshop (clapping, clicking, tapping, moving hips, arms, hands and fingers). This exercise was the foundation for group performances of longer choreographies. These were supported by rhythmical clapping and accompanied by flamenco music. The only things left were to guess which animal had been presented and to critique the project. Several participating teachers noted the many cross-curricular links, the excellent learning experience involving different cultures and beautiful follow-up work. Some children were so inspired, they continued dancing after the workshop had ended.

Cultural awareness
Gypsies, Roma and Travellers are the European Union’s largest ethnic minority community and have enriched world culture immensely. However, they remain the most marginalised group. The need to raise awareness of these communities and their contributions has been supported by Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools and Learners. In addition, Education Leeds has raised this initiative with the European Union and the United Nations in the hope that GRTHM may become an international event. Furthermore, from 2010 it will be compulsory for children from the age of seven to 14 to learn a modern foreign language, and in so doing to develop an interest in the culture of other nations. Carla’s Flamenco workshops pave the way for creative, cross-curricular learning about other communities and nations. Between professional performances in Caracas and Estonia, Carla is developing her work in schools and hopes to foster more children’s creativity and international awareness via flamenco.
Kerry O’Brien talks about how her involvement in Create2gether, an initiative to bring artists and out-of-school settings together, gave rise to a wonderfully inspiring project about Egypt, linking with history and tying in with drama work on the musical Joseph. The aim of Create2gether was to help develop confidence and skills through creativity, by running a series of ten workshops. Experience of working with early years was essential, as this project was to be accessed by all children attending after-school clubs. The project was funded by the Big Lottery Fund for Children’s Play and supported by Jill Musson at Newark and Sherwood Play Support Group and Anita Turtle from Nottinghamshire County Council.

A meeting was held between the out-of-school-setting coordinators and the artists, in which the latter introduced themselves and their work. The artists’ portfolios were quite diverse, ranging from fine art to pottery and beadwork. The coordinators were then able to discuss with each artist their own individual thoughts and ideas. By the end, coordinators and artists had been paired up, with further meetings in the settings arranged to finalise the projects.

I had been chosen to work with Dean Hole C of E Primary School in Caunton near Newark in Nottinghamshire. Julie McGrath, the out-of-school coordinator, and Ann Clark, a class teacher, had combined their after-school and art clubs for this occasion. They wanted artwork with an Egyptian influence, to tie in with the curriculum area they were studying and a forthcoming school performance of Joseph. Their creativity was nurtured even further by a whole-school visit to the Tutankhamun exhibition at the O2 Arena in London, which left them buzzing with yet more inspiration.

Create2gether out-of-school project – Egyptian art

Silk-painting
At the first workshop, I encouraged the children to share what they knew about the Egyptians. This enabled all years to contribute and everybody had something beneficial to say. We talked about how we could create two banners by making lots of different pieces of art. Books were used as a reference tool and aided the children when sketching ideas in their sketchbooks. From these images, the children made their own drawings for a silk painting, which included the scarab beetle, amulet designs of the eye of Horus and the pyramids. These were drawn in black felt-tip pen on to a square of white paper. A square of silk was then taped over each piece of paper. With gold and silver metallic pens, the children traced over their design, ensuring that all lines were thick enough to resist any silk paints applied. Once this had been done, the silk was pinned to a wooden frame. While looking through the books, the children had taken note of the colours used by the Ancient Egyptians. This then influenced their choice of colours when applying the paint.

Silk-painting was a big hit with all ages, as the results were instantaneous. To observe the sense of achievement in the children’s faces when the colour brought their images to life re-affirmed why I love sharing my skills with children so much!

Papier mâché
Papier mâché was next on the agenda. The aim was to bring relief to the banners by adding a 3D element. Some children used plastic masks as a base and built them up using kitchen roll layered over the top and attached with masking tape. Then, using watered-down PVA glue, a final layer of coloured tissue paper was applied. Pharaohs, Egyptian women and the funerary mask of Tutankhamun were re-created in all their stunning glory! Smaller papier-mâché artefacts, such as mummiﬁed cats, ankh symbols, urns and boats, were made using the same technique as for the masks. Metallic papers, gold paint and glitter added to their vibrancy!

Weaving
The next skill taught was that of weaving. Gold card cut into strips was used, with a variety of green, gold, blue and orange papers and ribbons woven between the strips. A certain amount of dexterity was needed, which wasn’t always easy for some, but with patience, results were achieved, and they were well worth the perseverance. Some children, showing wonderful imagination, commented that the arrangement of colours depicted the sun shining on the sand and the colour of the sky and the Nile. Their creativity was nurtured even further by a whole-school visit to the Tutankhamun exhibition at the O2 Arena in London, which left them buzzing with yet more inspiration.
Hieroglyphics

The banners were now beginning to take shape, but there was still more work to be done. In class, some children had studied the art of the hieroglyph. We felt this was an important area of Egyptian art and had to be included. Rectangles of stiff card were cut and strips of cotton fabric were glued to them to represent papyrus. Research was done while we waited for the glue to dry, and we talked about how we could make these small panels look like something the intrepid explorers of yesteryear might have discovered. Most children decided to write their names in this ancient writing form and used permanent black marker pens to draw around the shape of the strips of fabric. Then, a mixture of bronze and gold metallic paint and water was painted over the top to create artwork that resembled that of a long-forgotten civilization.

Assembling the banners

With the artwork completed, it was now the moment everyone had been waiting for. Everything that had been created was to be permanently attached to the canvas banners. To make the silk painting adhere securely, I used Bondaweb, the fabric world’s equivalent of double-sided sticky tape. With the paper backing off, one side is ironed on to the reverse of the silk. The paper is then peeled off, and the silk placed on top of the fabric and ironed in place, so the glue backing bonds to the base fabric. The paper mäché, paper weaving and hieroglyphics were all stuck down with generous applications of PVA glue.

As with many of my projects, I am always looking at how the end results can be enhanced. Although I felt the children had produced some wonderfully inspired work, the banners just needed those essential finishing touches. These took the form of patterns made with glue between the artworks and sand and glitter sprinkled on top. The banners were now finally complete and ready to be hung up in the school entrance. The school is also a centre for the community to attend classes and concerts, and the banners certainly made a striking feature to welcome visitors. They have attracted many compliments.

The results

For the children to express their own views on this project, an evaluation folder was compiled, to be kept as a visual record for others to view. Each child was given a sheet of A4 paper and asked to write about and illustrate what they felt they had achieved and the highlights of the project. One child wrote, ‘I have enjoyed doing all these fantastic activities and am glad I had a chance to do them all.’

I invited back to the school to watch their superb performance of Joseph. The banners were used as a backdrop to the show. The children had plenty to be pleased about and this project has definitely helped their creativity shine through. Dean Hole C of E Primary school have a committed staff, who dedicate themselves to giving the children an all-round view of the arts, which made all the difference. The children have since been to see Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat at Nottingham’s Theatre Royal, which I’m sure was the icing on the cake for most of them!

Create2gether enabled me to forge strong links with a school I perhaps would never have had an opportunity to work with. It also gave the school the chance to develop their creative skills and receive artistic knowledge without the worry of trying to finance the workshops through limited school funds.

‘Anything that can engage the children as fully as this has got to be a good thing.’

Headteacher John Dodd

The project culminated in a presentation at a local community centre. Each artist that had participated in an out-of-school setting took along one of the pieces of work made during the workshops or photographic evidence to show other groups and invited guests what had been achieved. They also ran a workshop for visitors to sample an art activity that was undertaken by the children. I encouraged people to try their hand at silk-painting; some adults who hadn’t experienced this before showed the same sense of wonderment as the pupils had!

Resources

Squares of white paper, silk squares, wooden silk painting frames or embroidery hoops, gold and silver metallic pens, silk-prints, fine nylon brushes, plastic masks, cardboard, kitchen roll, masking tape, bleed-proof coloured tissue paper, metallic paints, glitter, metallic cardboard and paper, coloured papers, ribbons, stiff card, strips of cotton fabric, black permanent marker pens, sand, PVA glue, Bondaweb, canvas or calico for banners.

Useful books

Ancient Egyptians at a Glance by Rupert Matthews (Macdonald Young Books);
A Visitor’s Guide to Ancient Egypt by Lesley Sims (Usborne Publishing Ltd);
The New Book of Pharaohs by Anne Millard (Aladdin Books Ltd);
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Plan of action

Consultation with the Headteacher, Pat Wood, and the LEA art advisor, Lorraine Buck, resulted in the following plan of action:

• to invite parents, school governors, advisors, other schools and the local community to the exhibition
• pupils to create invitations, posters and a catalogue to advertise the exhibition
• to invite the local press to take photographs and write an article about the exhibition.

Developing a rationale

The training highlighted the point that providing creative learning experiences is fundamental to the development of the whole child. Specifically:

• to develop self-confidence
• to make choices
• to solve problems
• to communicate their feelings
• to improve concentration
• to explore and play
• to make sense of their world
• to improve behaviour
• to develop pupils’ natural curiosity.

In addition, it was important for us to understand that in our teaching we should demonstrate skills and how to use materials, tools and techniques, but also provide opportunities for children to explore and develop skills independently. The teacher may intervene to encourage or refactor the child’s thinking, but should never take over in such a way that the work is not longer owned by the child.

My role was to make sure that the programme provided a variety of learning experiences and, wherever possible, children worked from first-hand experience and learners focused on processes rather than on end products.

Planning

See chart below.

Project ideas

Make a Face (Nursery)

Pupils were encouraged to:
• make choices – colours of paint, paper
• explore and experiment using their fingers and paint
• explore and experiment with mark-making using ICT
• develop and use understanding of colour, texture, shape and line
• experiment making encased shapes using fingers and paint
• develop understanding of taking photographs of each other
• reflect on the work of others, for example prints of Marilyn Monroe by Andy Warhol, using the interactive whiteboard
• make choices of colour for design of face (background and image)
• create an image that communicates their face and features

Year 1

Winter

Using sponge rollers

Using cold-coloured printing inks

Weaving with prints

Year 2

Fantastic Creatures

Using sponge rollers

Using block-printing tools

Jane Davies, art coordinator at Llanfabon Infants School in the village of Nelson in the Rhyne valley of South Wales, tells us how she has been proactive in raising standards and achievements in art. She takes us through her journey, from training staff and planning outcomes, to celebrating the achievements of all with an exhibition for parents and the wider community – a wonderful example of enriching the lives of teachers, pupils and parents.

The Llanfabon Infants School in the Borough of Caerphilly has approximately 180 pupils ranging in age from 3 to 7 years. We needed to provide a better environment for creative learning and wanted the pupils to have more opportunities to:

• investigate the world around them
• explore the properties of materials
• develop visual, tactile and spatial abilities
• develop fine and gross motor skills in order to control materials and make decisions regarding their use
• use their imagination and creative potential
• communicate feelings
• solve problems
• make choices and talk about their work and that of others.

The results

The project culminated in a presentation at a local community centre. Each artist that had participated in an out-of-school setting took along one of the pieces of work made during the workshops or photographic evidence to show other groups and invited guests what had been achieved. They also ran a workshop for visitors to sample an art activity that was undertaken by the children. I encouraged people to try their hand at silk-painting; some adults who hadn’t experienced this before showed the same sense of wonderment as the pupils had!

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Year 1

Winter

Using sponge rollers

Using cold-coloured printing inks

Weaving with prints

Year 2

Fantastic Creatures

Using sponge rollers

Using block-printing tools
Our Homes (Reception)

Pupils were encouraged to:
• communicate and express their memories of their homes creatively, using a variety of mark-making tools
• develop and use understanding of closed shapes, including use of ICT
• experiment with a variety of materials and tools to create a pattern, design or house picture
• make choices using a variety of equipment, e.g. Logi blocks, 3D blocks, mosaic tiles, Lego to make 2D and 3D models of houses
• develop understanding of ‘hot’ and ‘cold’ colours
• experiment with sponge rollers to print over a large surface using hot or cold colours
• experiment with ‘stamp’-printing techniques using a large shape or picture template
• reflect on the work of famous artists, e.g. Lovy’s An Old House
• design and make prints using shape stencils and hot and cold colours
• reflect on their work to add detail using a variety of mark-making tools, e.g. bricks, tiles, window sills, textures, and so on.

Winter (Year 1)

Pupils were encouraged to:
• develop their understanding of cold colours using the outside environment
• explore and experiment with tones of cold colours, including use of ICT
• make choices to create collages of cold-colour words, write poems or short stories about Jack Frost
• reflect on the work of a Welsh artist Kyffin Williams, e.g. painting entitled Snow
• develop their understanding of cold colours by mixing cold colours used by Kyffin Williams
• develop their understanding of pattern by listening to the story We’re Going on a Bear Hunt (e.g. ‘over and under’ for weaving)
• experiment with a variety of materials to develop their understanding of pattern and ‘warp and weft’
• design and make a branch weaving using cold colours (fork-shaped pieces collected from school grounds)
• explore and experiment with sponge rollers using cold colours

Fantastic Creatures

(Year 2)

Pupils were encouraged to:
• explore and experiment with textures by making ‘rubbings’ of objects in their environment
• reflect on the work of Max Ernst using ‘fractage’ and develop their understanding of pattern and texture
• communicate and express their ideas using ICT
• develop their understanding of ‘fantastic creatures’ by creating a collage of different animal parts and making observational drawings of Greek monsters
• reflect on the work of the surrealist Salvador Dali
• communicate and express their ideas to create a ‘fantastic creature’, using line, shape and texture, and a colour wash or shade
• explore and experiment with a variety of printing tools to create patterns and textures
• collaborate within a group to choose a ‘fantastic creature’ design for enlarging, and create a block-print using a variety of tools and techniques
• reflect on their work and that of others.

Exhibition

After the staff had received the two-day in-service training for printing, they were full of enthusiasm, more confident and eager to do the work with the pupils. We decided on the dates for the exhibition and I set an agenda for work to be completed. Then came the mammoth task of mounting and displaying every pupil’s unit of work. This is how we tackled it:
• Work was mounted to reflect the themes.
• Quotes made by the pupils were recorded, typed and printed.
• Photographs were taken of pupils at work.
• Key words were displayed.
• Large display books were used to display some of the pupils’ work (some parents volunteered to mount and display the work in the books).
• Display boards were borrowed from the County Council and a neighbouring school.

Advertising the exhibition

• Pupils in Year 2 designed invitations using PowerPoint. These were sent home to parents, families and friends.
• Pupils also used the Intranet to invite the school governors, advisors and schools within the cluster.
• We are very fortunate to have a governor whose work involves graphics and printing. He offered his services to print large posters to advertise the exhibition and catalogues to show examples of the pupils’ work and briefly explain the units of work. The posters and catalogues looked very professional and enhanced the overall look of the exhibition. I displayed the posters in various shops and amenities in the locality.
• A local newspaper was invited to take photographs of the exhibition. This resulted in a double-page colour spread.

Assessment of the learning outcomes

It was agreed by all that the exhibition had been a resounding success. Everyone had worked together and the morale of both pupils and staff was lifted. It was wonderful to see pupils using the skills learnt independently, after the event. I can honestly say that all pupils benefited.

Hundertwasser

Exploring the urban landscape

Anne and Peter Wilford are heads of art at, respectively, Queen’s College Preparatory School and Queen’s College in central London. After a visit to the Hundertwasser House in Vienna, they felt that pupils would relate very well to Friedensreich Hundertwasser’s exuberant use of imagery and colour, and set out to devise projects for Year 4 and Year 9 that would enhance pupils’ visual creativity and involve them in enjoyable studio practice.

The Austrian artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser was born in Vienna in 1928. He is an artist who rejected theory and dwelt in the world of the senses. He is known as the inventor of Transautomatism, which is a term given to the process by which unconscious images enter into juxtaposition with the world of visual reality. There is little logic in his art and objects are presented in striking combinations of colours and pattern. His original and vibrant images are the perfect catalyst for awakening and fueling the creative imaginations of children of all ages.

Year 4 project

After looking closely at a range of Hundertwasser’s imagery we discussed such elements of urban landscape as architectural structures, the use of green spaces, changing weather forms and systems, which could be incorporated into an organic whole. Pupils were asked to recall the layering of a street scene where, for instance, you may have a railing or wall, followed by a building with windows and doors, rooftops and chimneys that may be trailing smoke.

In the layer behind, there may be trees in parks and gardens and cloud formations circling the sun or moon. Pupils could create their own holistic landscape by starting on the outside edge of the paper and moving round the sheet, gradually adding on each layer and working towards the central space, which would contain the central sun or moon. (See example line drawing.) Once the images had been drawn in pencil, pupils were asked to go over their lines with a fine line pen. They were then reminded about Hundertwasser’s vibrant use of colour and asked to devise their own colour schemes using a mixture of felt
Homework 1: Use simple running stitch with bright embroidery threads or wool to form clouds, sun, rain, and so on. At this point, refer to the stitch-work collages of Tracey Emin. The finished pieces can be displayed individually or joined together into a class hanging.

Resources
Paper, pencils, fine line pens, felt tips, pencil crayons, gel pens, gold markers, images of artwork from the web (see below), calendars, postcards or books such as Hundertwasser by Harry Rand (Taschen).

Year 9
The Year 9 project was designed to last approximately six school weeks and would include six half-hour homeworks to support the development of the project. The aim of the project was to assist pupils in developing their visual sensibility and understanding of abstract form. The key visual elements covered by the project would be line/tone/shape and form/colour pattern. Through a variety of processes, pupils should gain an awareness of the transition of realistic form to abstract form, and would explore a complete visual process through design, drawing and painting, as well as experiencing the final outcomes in terms of manipulation of the language of creative media.

Week 1: Introduce Hundertwasser’s townscapes and discuss the transition of representational forms and structure into stylised imagery and pattern. Begin by looking closely and recording observational drawings of interior details on A4. Use line simple pattern to create forms and stylised imagery. Change form picture plane and depth of field to create a ‘flatter’ image.

Homework 2: Create drawn townscapes from a section of earlier collage and use pattern and vibrant colour for added emphasis. Include signs and lettering as optional details.

Weeks 3–6: Draw out A4 image on to A2 and go over outline with black marker. Start to paint in vibrant acrylic paints using metallic areas for emphasis, and so on. Continue to completion. At this point, examine finished painting and if outlines require it, reapply marker.

Homework 3 and 4: Two-week research project on the work of Hundertwasser, with an emphasis on pupils’ personal opinion of his work.

Homework 5: Take a portrait photograph from a magazine. Cut it in half, vertically down the centre, place on A4 paper and complete missing half of face in linear pattern and decorative shapes. Add vibrant colour and so on, perhaps extending hair to make a surreal face.

Homework 6: Complete a short evaluation of the project and your progress through it.

Extension activities
Opportunities arise at certain points in the projects to introduce pupils to the notion of abstract picture-making. By using this method to translate representational form into more abstract structures, pupils become more attuned to the knowledge and understanding of colour that they will acquire, you will economise on paint and storage space. The double primary system uses a cool and a warm version of each of the primary colours and white, to mix all of the secondary and tertiary colours. I recommend the following colours: for red, vermilion and crimson; for yellow, lemon yellow and ochre; for blue, brilliant blue and cyan or sky blue. (Because of the limitations of pigment in ready-mixed paints, I include turquiose as a secondary, but this is not strictly necessary.) You will also need white, but not black. Black tends to dominate and deaden colours. Mixing vermillion and turquoise or brilliant blue will result in a pretty dark purplish brown, which looks much warmer and richer than black.

Loren Fenwick describes an interesting colour-mixing painting project, which turns into group collage work. She also shares some outrageous tips for classroom management!

We know that when we ask our pupils what we get when we mix blue and yellow, they are all going to shout ‘GREEN!’ but how often do we actually give them the opportunity to do it? Painting involves huge amounts of preparation, a lot of mess and more than a little a chaos, and is followed by lots of strenuous cleaning and washing. Right? WRONG! It’s all a matter of having a system and training your pupils to use it, and you will find that they are very enthusiastic about it, because it means that they get to paint a lot more. Here are some outrageous ideas for taking the pain out of painting.

Don’t use mixing palettes!
They take ages to wash and encourage pupils to mix far more of a colour than they need. Use something that can be thrown away or put in the recycling at the end of the lesson, I find paper plates ideal, as their shape prevents spillage. This is not as expensive a solution as you might think. They can be bought quite cheaply in bulk and if you make it clear to your pupils that they will only get one per session painting (encouraging them to mix colours sparingly and use what they mix), and considering that you will not paint every lesson, you will use far fewer plates than you might think. You could also use offcuts of card, or even paper, provided it has a shiny surface to prevent it from soaking up the paint.

You need buy only eight colours of paint!
And you could put the savings you make towards investing in some paper plates! If you teach your pupils to mix their own colours by using the double primary system, then in addition to all the knowledge and understanding of colour that they will acquire, you will economise on paint and storage space. The double primary system uses a cool and a warm version of each of the primary colours and white, to mix all of the secondary and tertiary colours. I recommend the following colours: for red, vermilion and crimson; for yellow, lemon yellow and ochre; for blue, brilliant blue and cyan or sky blue. (Because of the limitations of pigment in ready-mixed paints, I include turquoise as a secondary, but this is not strictly necessary.) You will also need white, but not black. Black tends to dominate and deaden colours. Mixing vermilion and turquoise or brilliant blue will result in a pretty dark purplish brown, which looks much warmer and richer than black.

Get the pupils to set up and clear away!
Organisation is key in any whole-class painting session, but it does not have to be complicated or difficult. Pupils should see clear up the paint, paper, brushes, etc., either because you have put them out in this area, or because you have given them personal access to them and know where they are kept. You will have your own systems in place, but the following system works a treat, the pupils love it because it puts them in charge, empowering them and allowing them to take ownership of their own learning, and you will love it because it is quick, easy and painless, allowing you to put your energy into your teaching instead of into mess-management. I invite you to try it.

This project took four sessions of an hour and ten minutes to complete – one for mixing the colour strips and three for the collage.

You will need:
One set of colours between four pupils, one water pot between four pupils, a paper plate, a brush and a piece of tissue or newspaper per pupil (for drying brushes after washing to prevent the paint from becoming runny mud), as well as paper to paint on. You may want each pupil to have a piece of newspaper to put their painting on, but I prefer to just wipe the painting with tissue. Once pupils have put on aprons or whatever protective clothing you use, they need to be arranged in groups of four. In my experience, this is the ideal number to have around one set of paints. Each pupil is given a job: 1. Get the paint and remove lids if there are any. 2. Get a paper plate and a piece of tissue/narrow for each pupil in the group. 3. Get fill a water pot and a piece of tissue/narrow for each pupil in the group. 4. Clean up the painting using a roll of paper and put their painting into the water pot. 5. Get a paintbrush and painting paper for each pupil in the group. This may seem complicated but I have done it with my youngest group, they have done it once or twice, it takes about three minutes: pupils come into the art room, get their aprons on and sit in groups of four. While they are waiting for...
everybody to be ready, they decide for themselves what number or letter they are going to be, and as soon as they are ready, you tell them what job each number is responsible for. As long as they know where everything is, it only takes moments for the whole lesson to be set up.

At the end of the lesson, everything is done in reverse. After the paintings have been put on the drying rack, each pupil is responsible for putting away whatever they got out. I provide a bowl of water for the dirty paintbrushes, which prevents a queue of pupils washing brushes, and if they have been left in water, it only takes me a moment to wash them all together. Each group is responsible for wiping their own table after it has been cleared of all painting equipment. Once pupils are used to this process, it takes about five minutes from the time pupils stop painting until the tables are clear and ready for the next lesson.

**Colour-mixing**

This lesson allows pupils to experiment with the wide range of primary colours that can be mixed using the double primary system. It is a good lesson to do while training pupils in the use of the double primary system and getting them used to your organisational process, because you can vary the number of colour strips they create according to the time available.

A little demonstration goes a long way, especially if this is the first time pupils are using the double primary system. Show pupils how to decide which secondary colour they are going to mix, and then pick up generous blobs of each of the primaries that they will need and place them around the edge of the paper plate. Remind them that the pots of primaries should be kept clean, by washing their brush and drying it on the tissue or newspaper before putting them into a new colour pot. Remind them that they have two or three of each primary colour at their disposal, as well as white. Show them how to mix a colour by choosing two of the primaries and combining them in the middle of the plate. Once a colour has been mixed, demonstrate painting a narrow strip of it onto the paper, before adding another colour to the original, thus altering it, and painting another strip of colour. Show them how the same mixed colour can be added to, to get a huge variety of secondary colours, without the need to mix a new colour on a new area. Encourage them to paint the whole strip of paper provided, with the same secondary colour in as many varieties as they can make using the primary colours and white. If there is time, they could paint a second strip, using different primaries, either by getting a new paper plate, or by swapping plates with someone else. (Paper plates are quite robust, and will take a lot of paint without disintegrating.)

If you are going to use the colour strips for collage, you will want strips of primary colours too. After pupils have painted a secondary colour strip, you might want to give them a tiny blob of black and challenge them to see how many shades of primary colours they can mix, using combinations of the double primaries combined with black or white. Warn them against using too much black, as it will dominate everything. I tend to give them a tiny spot and no more, so that they have to ration it.

**Using the colour strips**

Collage is a very exciting way of using all the wonderful strips of colour that your pupils will have produced by the end of this lesson – far more interesting than most papers that can be bought, and much more satisfying than trawling through magazines for scraps of the desired colour. Although pupils could do this activity individually, working on smaller collages, I have found it very interesting to allow them to work collaboratively, in groups of four or five.
Once the topic had been chosen, I was fascinated by the group dynamics involved, but if you resist the urge to organise and impose democracy, you may just as well rely on the dynamics that are available. This was particularly the case here, as there was no need to organise the participants into groups to carry out this activity. They were encouraged to listen to each other and to come to a consensus on the final decision. For this activity, I allowed the pupils to decide which one was the best and that each member draw a guitar and then they drew the initial design. One group made a very simple design, plotting out the basic shapes. This is much easier than filling in the spaces between them. They then had to democratically decide what to do with the shapes before filling in the rest of the shape. Even if the area to be covered is large, it is better to use smaller uniform scraps rather than sticking down large chunks of colour.

At this point I must say something about the glue: Glue sticks are convenient but they do not stick paper very securely, and bits will start falling off before the project is finished. It is much better to use a good-quality glue, like Berol Marvin Medium, in small pots with glue spreaders. The pupils can either apply the glue to the scraps, or to a small area of base paper before covering it with scraps. (If you put the glue on the base paper, encourage them to use it sparingly and only apply as much as they can cover before it dries.) We discussed working in layers, first covering the whole design by filling in the basic shapes, before adding details on top of the basic shapes. This is much easier than sticking down fussy details and then trying to fill in the spaces between them.

Pupils discovered for themselves that it is more effective to have some tearing paper while other stick, rather than each pupil tearing and sticking as they go. They also regulated among themselves who would do what, naturally taking turns and sharing responsibilities. I found it very interesting to observe the groups deciding who would draw the initial design. One group made each member draw a guitar and then they decided which one was the best and that pupil drew the big one; in another group, one pupil said, “I can draw a really good boat because my dad has a boat and I have drawn it loads of times.” They let him get on with it.

Once the background and base areas have been covered, smaller details can be stuck on top. These do not need to be small scraps. Individual pupils can create people or birds or fish, or whatever is appropriate to their picture, and add it to the design. It could be suggested that groups include something from each individual to encourage involvement, but this will probably happen spontaneously. Be aware of the group dynamics and try to ensure that even the least confident pupil is involved, but if you resist the urge to organise and impose democracy, you may be pleasantly surprised by how the pupils organise themselves and how sensitive they can be to the needs and strengths of everyone in the group.

‘The pupils were very impressed with what they had achieved, and aware that the whole is definitely worth more than the sum of the parts.’

Although the RC scheme of work did ask for opinions and reflections from the children, most of the opportunities for this were in the form of writing, rather than a spoken or visual model. Just as RE is significant in the life of the young people within this school, so does art play an important role. The children were not only exposed to different artists (within this scheme it was Marc Chagall), but were also allowed the freedom to express themselves through the medium of art. They looked at the way paintings were done and the effects they had created. They were taught how to hold their brush, made figures using plasticine, carved wooden candles, planted their Lenten promises, put their hand prints on flower pots, drew on to acetate and expressed through drawing what they thought God’s love looked like.

Key aims of the project
• to express personal opinions in a variety of ways
• to develop thinking skills
• to encourage emotional literacy.

Learning objectives: Art
• to explore colour-mixing
• to develop interpretation of personal thinking and reflection skills through art
• to develop creative use of a variety of mediums to express ideas
• to produce art that is based on personal reflection
• to use the work of artists to enhance children’s knowledge of art
• to use the work of Marc Chagall as a stimulus to thinking skills.
Conclusion

The implications of this research project have been many, yet mainly it has provided opportunities for the development of skills related to emotional literacy and personal reflection. It has also provided a fantastic method for assessing AT2 (Attainment Target 2, Learning from Religion) in RE.

The project has also shown that the art activities allow the children to reflect on their personal belief systems and develop thinking skills. They expressed this through a method that was not leading them towards the ‘right’ answer, nor did they need an assortment of language skills to express their innermost thoughts (skills that many young children and learners of English as an Additional Language may not have).

The art activities gave the children the opportunity to express freely their innermost thoughts and personal creativity.

‘When you light a candle Jesus is, like — in it!’ Chloe

‘Red, like an Easter egg wrapper that looks like a tombstone. Yellow the sun on Easter Sunday. Green is green grass.’ Lucy

‘It is the wind. It’s a gust of wind. It [The Holy Spirit] feels like a gust of wind.’ Iben

As the art responses to a religious theme or question were more honest, the children were not only becoming more reflective and insightful, but the teachers were also able to gather evidence of AT2, which for RE can be a difficult target to prove.

‘Well I done a cloud and a sun popping out because I didn’t want to draw fire and the sun is very bright as well and I drew a hand and finger ’cause I think the Holy Spirit touches us. And I’ve done a heart because the Holy Spirit is Jesus and it’s nearly the same thing because it love us.’ Lucy

The pieces of work and, when necessary, the verbal responses, demonstrated that the children had achieved the skills required for a specific level of attainment within the RE framework.

Art is vital within a child’s learning experience of the world around him or her, and exposing them to the work of artists such as Marc Chagall was a fantastic and enlightening one, which in our opinion helped children develop knowledge and skills to express themselves. The paintings we selected from him contained floating candles and surreal representations of dream-like states. I will always remember one child who, when we started this research, wanted to wash his fingers as he had got paint on them; at the end of the project, he said to me, ‘Look at me Miss, I’m a real artist as my hands are full of paint.’

The future

It is hoped that in the near future Anita and Maggie will put what they have learned about the natural relationship between art and RE into a teacher’s pack, with resources and planning ideas that focus on the key aims of this project. For further information about the pack or our research, please contact us:

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Art into words

Using a gallery to support literacy in KS1

Introduction
As an early-career gallery educator, my knowledge of the Primary Literacy Framework had been limited to online and text-based research when planning a literacy loans box resource. Now that the Primary Framework for Literacy and Mathematics allows more freedom, teachers are being encouraged to embed literacy and mathematics across all subjects and bring creativity into the curriculum. I have been able to work with a teacher, through Watch this Space, to devise a literacy and art-focused session for KS1, Level 2, pupils at Gallery Oldham, with follow-up work in the classroom.

Pupil Learning Objectives
• to observe and evaluate literacy-hour lessons and cross-curricular approaches
• to work alongside the teacher and children to gain insight into literacy skills and abilities in Y2
• to negotiate, plan and deliver appropriate literacy activities within a gallery setting
• to use techniques in the gallery to enhance pupils’ speaking and listening
• to evaluate the appropriateness of planned literacy activities, pupils’ understanding of artwork and their experience of the project

My aims for the project
• to extend pupils’ speaking, listening and writing skills through responding to and making visual art

Presentation
Lindsey Milnes participated in Watch this Space in 2007. She spent three days observing a teacher in school, attended three days’ training, and then planned a project to deliver elements of the KS1 literacy and art curriculums through a gallery visit.

Observations
Every day, pupils engage in building their speaking, listening, writing and reading skills. After recording a number of techniques used to teach literacy in the classroom, I started to plan the gallery session. At initial meetings with Julie, I had suggested using the artwork on display to inspire poetry-writing. Although the class had not yet encountered poetry-writing, we agreed on this activity, and Julie introduced the class to it before the gallery visit took place.

Exhibition
Sandy Brown’s brightly coloured sculptural ceramics exhibition Ritual: The Still Point and the Dance at Gallery Oldham provided the stimulus. However, the activities created were generic, so that the techniques used could be applied to any exhibition.

Aim of the gallery session
To extend speaking, listening and writing skills through a range of creative activities that would enable the children to make personal written, spoken and modelled responses to contemporary sculpture.

Activities
The exhibition of large, dynamic, brightly coloured sculptural ceramics provided a striking and fertile stimulus for the children. The activities were carefully chosen to include working individually, in pairs, in small groups and as a class, with opportunities to communicate with teachers, other adults and classmates.

Back at school
Children recounted what they had accomplished on the visit through a formal written account (often a requirement of KS1 assessment tests). This also served as the project evaluation exit point. They also completed their clay models.

Learning outcomes
At the start, many of the pupils did not know, or could not write down or describe, what they thought sculpture was. But at the end of the session, all pupils offered words to describe the sculptures and had listened carefully to each other’s descriptions, in order to make drawings of them. Some of the descriptions also appeared in the formal written accounts, showing that recently acquired vocabulary such as ‘exciting’ was being reused and embedded.

Because of their lack of prior knowledge and experience, the pupils had encountered some difficulty in describing the sculpture in the gallery session in terms of texture and shape. However, being able to handle specific pieces in the exhibition and making their own models assisted here, contributing to the following descriptive words offered by the class, which I collected in the gallery session: tall, like a spoon, colourful, like a key, stripy, spotty, with wavy stripes, pumpkin-shaped, round, patterned, 3D, like a number eight, rough, twirly, multi-coloured, like a snake, it bends and turns.

Having been introduced to an acrostic poem by their teacher in advance, the children enthusiastically offered ways of using their descriptions to form a poem, SCULPTURE, some offering words, others short descriptive sentences. The pupils clearly enjoyed having the freedom to make suggestions, with no right or wrong answers and without having to write them down. They read or spoke the poem out loud, both during the gallery session and when recounting the visit back in the classroom the following day.

The Still Point and the Dance
Sandy Brown’s exhibition
Ritual: The Still Point and the Dance
Gallery Oldham
Children’s art work
Poetry writing
Using a gallery to support literacy in KS1

Gallery educator Lindsey Milnes and Watch this Space programme coordinator Penny Jones describe how a gallery visit can support literacy learning for Key Stage 1, Level 2, pupils, through participation in Watch this Space.

Watch this Space is an England-wide professional development programme for teachers, artists and gallery educators, managed by engage, the national association for gallery education. It funds teachers and gallery educators to gain first-hand experience of each other’s work, through gallery placements and project-development opportunities that build and sustain gallery-school relationships. Every partnership involves a gallery visit by pupils and builds capacity in art galleries to deliver school education programmes negotiated with teachers across the curriculum. In 2007–8, 23 non-visiting teachers worked with 12 galleries, and 18 early-career gallery educators and artists were placed with teachers experienced in working with galleries.

Lindsey Milnes participated in Watch this Space in 2007. She spent three days observing a teacher in school, attended three days’ training, and then planned a project to deliver elements of the KS1 literacy and art curriculums through a gallery visit.
a school visit to a gallery is important in reviewing their current literacy objectives prior to putting them to use. I have also recognised that the Literacy Framework for Literacy, and can be further developed at KS1, Level 2, in the generic classroom. The large-format poem framework, the learning that the literacy activities were transferred further in the whole-class work. The session! Pupils will always be excited by the gallery environment, the making activity, or even the journey there on the coach, but will engage equally with the required literacy objectives when these are planned seamlessly into the visit. Since participating in WTS 4, Lindsey has delivered gallery and arts development workshops for schools and young people and is now Education Development Officer at Gallery Oldham. She has also graduated with an MA in Heritage Studies from Salford University. After four annual rounds of Watch this Space, engage has published a handbook for teachers, artists and gallery educators wishing to work in partnership. It contains contributions from a gallery director, Ofsted, teacher-training providers and leading gallery education practitioners, as well as four case studies of gallery school partnerships.

**Class acrostic poem**

Sculpture is art
Cylinder shapes
Up to the sky
Large and long
Patterns, spots and zig zags
Twirling and twisting
Under arms hooped
Round like pumpkins

Exciting!

I had planned for the children to write individual acrostic poems and to describe the sculptures with their bodies through movement, but these were abandoned owing to lack of time. However, I would include these as part of a generic session plan.

**Impact of Watch this Space 4**

For the school: The project enriched the literacy curriculum and offered an abundance of stimulus, which effectively assisted pupils in shaping texts both in the class poem and the evaluative written recount. The pupils engaged excitedly with the literacy tasks in the gallery and were encouraged and praised by their teacher. The setting and first-hand engagement with the sculpture brought the speaking and writing to life and allowed closely assisted small group interaction and whole-class work. The session demonstrated that with careful planning a practical art activity could be fitted neatly with literacy objectives. Initially, I had been worried that the quick pace of activities might result in children getting confused, with insufficient time to embed the words and vocabulary learned and recited in the session. But through their writing down the outcome in the classroom. The large format printed poem was a particularly well-received resource and was used after the visit. The teacher voiced her approval of the poetry-writing, along with a positive, mature approach be incorporated into lesson planning.

**Publications**

[www.engage.org](http://www.engage.org)

**Watch this Space:** Galleries and schools in partnership

£6.50 plus P&P

**The Watch this Space Toolkit**

£7.50 plus P&P

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**Book reviews**

**Faith in Art**

Valerie Evans
Published by Folens at £16.99

The Belair World of Display series adopts a cross-curricular approach to the primary curriculum through art, design and display. Books in the series are designed to create a starting point for the primary school teacher wishing to combine several subjects in an effective and original way. The Faith in Art publication reviewed here is aimed at teachers of pupils aged 5 to 11. It contains six colourful chapters that explore the major religions of the world: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Each chapter contains relevant paintings, stories or prayers. Themes within each chapter cover the different aspects of each faith—beliefs, places of worship, stories, prayers and paintings, and festivals and ceremonies. Each theme includes background information to act as a stimulus before beginning the suggested creative activity. A resource list and step-by-step instructions for making the display or activity are given. The themes are suitable across the primary age groups.

The creative activities and the resulting displays are impressive but most teachers would feel it necessary to supplement the information given as starting points, for example by providing artefacts to handle or larger visual displays on an interactive whiteboard. Teachers would also have to decide whether the activities were suitable for the age group they were teaching and whether the content fitted with their particular stage of the Religious Education syllabus. However, the book is attractive and easy to use, with many creative ideas and activities with which most children would engage enthusiastically and which could easily be incorporated into lesson planning. Reviewed by Headteacher Helen Barnard

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**Lives of the Great Artists**

Charlie Ayres
Published by Thames and Hudson 2008 ISBN 978-0-500-23853-0

£9.99

Lives of the Great Artists is an original, interesting book. It is especially good for those children whose interest is beginning to extend further into who the artist was and what their motivation may have been. Its lavishly rich picture format is accompanied by highly informative text that extends both knowledge and understanding of the individual artist. The “Did You Know” and “Why Don’t You” sections are great additions that personalise the learning. The web addresses and internet links extend it further into aspects of interactive learning. Charlie Ayres has included a wide range of artists within the book, so the focus is not solely modern. It is also a positive feature that the artists listed are varied in nationality and style of painting, although a large proportion of the work listed is portrait. The biographical timeline at the front of the book is very useful as is the glossary and artist chronology, and the free poster you can send away for.

This book would provide a valuable starting point for any work about any of the artists listed within its glossy pages. It would certainly be accessible to KS3 and with a positive, mature approach be highly useful to any KS2 child. As The Death of Marat, the foetal drawings of Da Vinci or the large scale David may trigger some interesting questions if the teacher was not prepared.

www.livesofthegreatartists.com

Reviewed by Amanda Flinton Barkston

Ash Catholic Primary School
Review of the Folens Religious Education series

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**Teacher Books**

Comprehensive lesson plans are linked well to the colourful and attractive images in the Big Book. The content is based on the QCA Schemes of Work. However, for those teachers following an alternative Religious Education syllabus, the Folens scheme provides a useful resource to dip in and out of when appropriate. Lesson plans are differentiated for higher and lower achievers. Plans also include good open-ended questions that require children to relate lesson content to their own experience of life. Some of the questions would allow higher achievers to develop their thinking skills too. Ideas are suggested for imaginative cross-curricular links, including PSHE. The photocopiable resources are somewhat limited, in that the activities involved are ring-fenced in their extent. The prompts given for pupils to experiment with independent research using the internet were more exciting.

Reviewed by staff of Dr South's CE Primary School

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CREATING A SENSE OF BELONGING

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**Religious Education 2 Teacher Resource Book**

The Fo...
The National Schools Art Foundation is committed to promoting art within schools, to recognise those who inspire and the children who participate. Not only do we help schools produce greeting cards, postcards and calendars, your school is entered into our national schools art competition. The winning school wins an all expenses trip for teacher(s) and pupil to be the first to unveil their work exhibited at a prestigious London art gallery, £1000 for your school, a framed certificate of achievement plus local and national press coverage.

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