

**Curious Creatures – Frans Post & Brazil**  
**Looking and Responding Drawing Workshop**  
Teachers' Notes: Post-Primary

<b>Session duration</b>	2 hours
<b>Summary</b>	<p>In this workshop students will produce a creative field guide as a way of exploring an artist, exhibition and curation. They will develop their knowledge of Frans Post's life and process, research, drawing, and observation skills, as well as working from original artworks and taxidermied animals. The workshop is focused to aid the students in the junior cert. and leaving cert. curriculum by encouraging drawing from life, creative interpretation, and honing in on critical observation.</p> <p>This exhibition is a multimedia installation including drawing, painting, taxidermied animals, and sound installation. It is an opportunity for students to explore alternative curation methods.</p>
<b>Year groups suitable for</b>	1st-6th year
<b>Session itinerary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Introduction</li> <li>● Research for field guide</li> <li>● Observational drawing</li> <li>● Collaborative research</li> <li>● Creative interpretation</li> <li>● Reflection and evaluation</li> </ul>
<b>Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Make drawings from original artworks and specimens.</li> <li>● Develop research skills which will be helpful in exams.</li> <li>● Work collaboratively to share and develop ideas.</li> <li>● Make a creative response to the artworks.</li> <li>● Experience a multimedia installation of artwork.</li> </ul>
<b>Themes explored</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Frans Post; life, context, and process</li> <li>● Drawing as research</li> <li>● Curation methods</li> </ul>
<b>Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● These themes will be explored through discussion and research. The field guide will provide a structure to the students exploring the exhibition in a self-guided manner.</li> <li>● Use observational drawing and writing to collect information about their chosen artworks and animals.</li> <li>● Work collaboratively to share their research findings.</li> <li>● Use creativity to respond to information gathered, artworks, and exhibition.</li> </ul>

<b>Curriculum links</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Observational drawing</li> <li>● Research</li> <li>● Gathering source material</li> <li>● Creative composition</li> <li>● Methods of curation</li> </ul>
<b>Learning outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Knowledge and understanding of Frans Post, Brazilian animals, observational research, and curation.</li> <li>● Skills in observational drawing, research, collaboration, creative interpretation.</li> <li>● Enjoyment and creativity through exploring the exhibition via the field guide method and thinking of a creative response.</li> </ul>
<b>Before your visit – background information</b>	<p><b>Frans Post</b> was a Dutch artist born in Haarlem, 1612. His brother Pieter Post was a highly acclaimed Dutch Architect, who probably had an influence on his career and decision to travel to Brazil in 1636. We have not much information about Post’s training other than his talents were enough to get him the opportunity to record the Brazilian landscapes on Johan Maurits’ mission in Brazil. When Post returned to Holland he produced fantastical landscape paintings of Brazil. The paintings were usually from his imagination comprised of plants and animals he had seen there. His attention to detail and imagery brought him fame.</p> <p><b>Johan Maurits</b> was appointed Governor of Dutch Brazil in 1636. He was very interested in enlightening the people back in Holland and brought with him a number of artists, cartographers, scientists, and naturalists to study and record what they saw. In his home in Brazil he had a Menagerie which is a kind of zoo where animals are displayed in captivity. It was here that Post probably sketched the Brazilian animals.</p> <p><b>Dutch Colonial Brazil:</b> The Dutch had colonised a part of Brazil. The rest had been colonised by the Portuguese. Nowadays colonisation is of course seen as morally wrong, that is to say these people, supported and financed by their countries' rulers went to places such as Brazil thinking and believing they were superior to the people who already lived there. The people who already lived there included Tupí and Tarariu (Tarairiu) people. The Dutch exploited these people, destroying their lives by taking them as slaves and using their land in order to make lots of money.</p> <p><b>Sugar Plantations:</b> Maurits’ main goal in Brazil was to increase sugar production and exportation. He built many sugar plantations where sugar was grown, treated, and refined to sell around the world. To make these plantations forests were destroyed to grow sugar crops, meaning many animals lost their habitats and became endangered.</p>

	<p>Maurits also exploited enslaved people from Africa, who were forced to work on the sugar plantations. These people were treated badly and many died from being overworked.</p> <p><b>Glossary Below</b></p>
<p><b>Before your visit</b> – suggested activities</p>	<p><b>Research</b>  Look at the Gallery’s website and discuss expectations of the exhibition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What information is give? What images are used? What do you think the themes of the exhibition will be?</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning outcomes:</i> look at what attitudes and values might be reflected in the artworks, curation, and exhibition.  <i>Curriculum links:</i> Engaging with an aspect of the art appreciation question; advertising, information, and expectations vs reality.</p> <p><b>Still life</b>  Create a natural still-life composition including shells, wood, leaves, feathers, and fruit/vegetables.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw the objects as accurately as possible. Think about what information one can get from a drawing: colour, size, shape, and texture.</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning outcomes:</i> developing observational drawing skills and starting students to think about observational research.  <i>Curriculum links:</i> observational drawing is a key part of both junior cert. and Leaving cert. curriculum.</p>
<p><b>After your visit</b> – suggested activities</p>	<p><b>Design a poster</b>  Consider the important ethical themes of the exhibition: animal rights, environmental issues, and colonialism and create a poster.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use drawings from exhibition to create images for the poster. Think about message, lettering, images.</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning Outcomes:</i> Using skills developed in workshop; Developing social awareness of themes in exhibition.  <i>Curriculum links:</i> Links with the poster construction project of the Leaving Cert. curriculum.</p> <p><b>Curate an exhibition</b>  Use the classes drawings to curate a mini exhibition of drawings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think about themes, how you will arrange the drawings, pattern.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there anything else you could put in? i.e lights, sound, text panels.</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning outcomes:</i> understanding of exhibition techniques, using skills developed during workshop.</p> <p><i>Curriculum links:</i> practical exploration of curation, creative curation methods.</p> <p><b>Make a menagerie</b></p> <p>Create a class menagerie with all the drawings created during the workshop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use a box or cork board to construct.</li> <li>• Cut the drawings out and arrange them on a background.</li> <li>• When arranging them think of pattern, colour, imaginative scenes, are there some still life objects you could include?</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning outcomes:</i> understanding of a menagerie and display methods, using skills in drawing and practical construction.</p> <p><i>Curriculum links:</i> exploring curation methods, constructing a still-life arrangement.</p>
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### Glossary for exhibition

Word	Meaning
Field Guide	It is a book used to identify animals and plants in the wild based on their physical characteristics.
Artist	A person who creates paintings or drawings as a profession or hobby.
Curator	A person who selects artworks for an exhibition and decides how they are displayed in the room.
Chronological Hang	Artworks being arranged in order of their occurrence.
Thematic Hang	Artworks being arranged into groups of similar images, mediums, content.
Sound Installation	Noise, music, or spoken word that is played out loud on speakers in a room or open space.

Decal	A design, image, or text made to be transferred to another object. Generally used for text panels in exhibitions.
Taxidermy	A process of preparing, stuffing, and mounting the skins of dead animals with lifelike effect.
Menagerie	A collection of wild animals kept in captivity for exhibition.
Works on Paper	Artwork which has been made on paper. Typically drawing, watercolour, or gouache. These works are highly sensitive to light.
Graphite	Is a form of carbon usually found in pencils. There is the ordinary graphite pencil surrounded by wood or there are also solid graphite pencils. The graphite can be boiled to create different hardness creating different shades in drawing.
Gouache	A very opaque kind of watercolour which gives a flat chalky effect when dry. Generally used by illustrators.
Inscriptions	Something written on stone, wood, or paper. Typically written as a record of something.