

Curious Creatures – Frans Post & Brazil

Ask an Expert tour – People and Colonialism

Teachers' Notes

Session duration	1 hour
Summary	A guided tour of <i>Curious Creatures</i> delivered by Megan Atkinson and Dr Sarah Wilson. Five art works by Frans Post will be used to introduce and discuss issues related to colonialism and the effects of humans on a foreign environment. Comparisons will be made between issues raised by the exhibition and contemporary concerns. Themes discussed include; animals in captivity, fantasy vs reality, humans and industry, colonialism and slavery, colonialism and the impact on local culture.
Year groups suitable for	Post-Primary (discussion to be tailored to the age of the group)
Session itinerary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Frans Post and 17th-century Dutch art • Introduction to the Dutch presence in Brazil • Detailed examination of selected works from the exhibition • Each art work will be used to discuss a particular theme <p>Themes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Food and industry • Slavery and colonialism • Irish history
Objectives	The workshop aims to leave students with a clear understanding of the role of artists in a colonial environment. To encourage them to view 17 th -century artworks as relevant objects around which contemporary issues can be discussed. And to encourage students to use judgement regarding context when looking at source material. Furthermore it aims to give students an understanding of the impact of history on the present day.
Themes explored	The main theme of this workshop is people's impact on a "non-native/foreign" environment.
Methods	The workshop is structured as a guided tour. Students will be provided with an opportunity to respond and discussion will be encouraged at each art work.
Curriculum links	<p>Visual Art: Critical & language, Drawing, Visual culture & appreciation, AEDP, and Media.</p> <p>1.1 Analyse their work, or that of another, using appropriate vocabulary and knowledge</p>

- 1.2 Respond to an artwork using critical and visual language
- 1.3 Critique an artwork using critical and visual language
- 1.4 Demonstrate how they use drawing to observe, record and analyse the human figure and the world around them
- 1.5 Interpret the world and communicate ideas through visual means
- 1.6 Use drawings to communicate their personal outlook or understanding
- 1.7 Examine the method of a number of artists and the artwork they created
- 1.8 Discuss examples of historical and contemporary visual art
- 1.9 Debate the value that they and society place on an artwork
- 1.10 Identify the use of art elements and design principles within an artwork
- 1.13 Identify media which are used to create artwork
- 1.15 Critique the choice of media in their own or other's artwork

Environmental and Social Studies (ESS)

- Using Information Sources- drawings (illustrations, cartoons, etc); artefacts (buildings, archaeological finds, memorabilia, etc)
- Colonialism and its effects
- Land ownership in Brazil and its impact on the global environment

Geography: Geographical Skills and Sustainability

- Visuals: Reading and interpreting a variety of relevant visual stimuli
- Students consider the balance between economic, environmental and social systems necessary for meeting the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future.
- Students recognise how their decisions and actions impact on local and global sustainability.
- Students critically reflect on current concepts and practices in relation to sustainability
- Students develop knowledge, skills, behaviours, and values to live sustainably

History: Recognising key change, Applying historical thinking, Developing historical consciousness, Working with evidence, Acquiring the "big picture", and The history of Europe and the wider world

- Important related concepts, including, for example, nationalism, sovereignty, power, authority, ethnicity, conquest, colonisation and identity
- Impact of settlement and land ownership on ideas of identity
- Connections between people, events and places in the past
- Application of research skills
- Ideas around democracy, human rights, equality, peace and justice

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of historical empathy in exploring people in the past <p>Students should also be able to:</p> <p>1.1 develop a sense of historical empathy by viewing people, issues and events encountered in their study of the past in their historical context</p> <p>1.6 debate the usefulness and limitations of different types of primary and secondary sources of historical evidence, such as written, visual, aural, oral and tactile evidence; and appreciate the contribution of archaeology and new technology to historical enquiry</p> <p>1.8 investigate a repository of historical evidence such as a museum, library, heritage centre, digital or other archive or exhibition</p> <p>1.11 make connections and comparisons between people, issues and events in different places and historical eras</p> <p>3.2 evaluate the impact of conquest and colonisation on people, with particular reference to Portuguese and Spanish exploration</p>
<p>Learning outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of Frans Post, the role of artists in 17th-century Dutch colonialism, and importance of sketching in artistic practice • Knowledge of practical sketching techniques/mark making • Improved verbal communication skills • Critical thinking skills • Relate contemporary issues to historical ones
<p>Background information to share with students before your visit</p>	<p>If possible, it would be helpful to show students a map so they have a sense of where the Dutch Republic and Brazil are in relation to each other and the rest of the world. The below website on French and Dutch colonialism includes a helpful map of the Dutch West India Company trade routes.</p> <p>http://sites.jmu.edu/migrationflows/dutch-and-french-colonization-in-brazil/</p>
<p>Before your visit - activity</p>	<p>Famine Memorial. A visit to the Famine Memorial by Rowan Gillespie on Custom House Quay.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is one piece in Gillespie’s Famine Trilogy. Other pieces are located in Tasmania and Toronto. This work provides an opportunity explore the effect of colonialism on Ireland, subsequent Irish emigration, and the role of art. • Suggested discussion topics: What is the goal of this piece? Is the goal to document or provoke an emotional response? How does the medium/technique facilitate this goal? • This activity links to the history, art and geography curriculums. • Please see the artist’s website for imagery. <p>https://rowangillespie.net/famine/</p>

After your visit**Documenting by Sketching.**

- Ask students to make a number of sketches of an environment local to them (eg. school, park/garden, home etc...). Their goal is to identify and document objects/features that they believe best encapsulates that environment.
- Follow up with a group discussion - Do they think these sketches accurately represent the environment? How do others perceive the representation of the environment?
- This activity will help hone critical observation skills and facilitate an exploration of sketching techniques.
- This activity links to the art curriculum.