

Landscapes in Irish Art

Primary Schools Resource Pack

Sinéad Hall

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hÉIREANN

Introduction

Shaping Ireland: Landscapes in Irish Art (13 April – 7 July 2019) was an exhibition exploring the relationship between people and the natural world. The show included the work of fifty artists, spanning 250 years, depicting views and environments from across the whole of the island of Ireland. This rich collection of historic and contemporary work provides the ideal stimulus for creative cross-curricular lesson plans devised by teacher Sinéad Hall.

This resource is designed to be used in the classroom, and takes key works from the exhibition as the starting point for imaginative workshops incorporating Geography, History, Science, Art and English. Looking and responding questions for each artwork underpin every lesson, and enable students to develop visual literacy and critical thinking skills. Lessons explore themes and environments from Boglands to the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme. Activities include growing plants from seed, writing a 'day in the life' of someone living in a Norman castle, and constructing a diorama. Each lesson includes a wealth of suggested follow-on activities and online resources, and the pack demonstrates how art and creativity can be embedded across the primary curriculum.

We want this resource to be used in classrooms across the country, taking the exhibition beyond the Gallery walls and continuing to inspire teachers and students after the show is packed away.

The themes explored are timely, relevant and interconnected and will provide students with a deeper understanding of the past, present and future of Irish landscapes.

Catherine O'Donnell

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About the Author

Sinéad Hall BA, PGD ED, CRS, MA ED is a classically-trained pianist, and passionate educator with nearly two decades of experience teaching in Irish and American classrooms. Sinéad has earned degrees in Music, Human Development, Gaelge, a Postgrad in Education, and a Masters in Leadership and Management.

She teaches 5th class in Ratoath SNS, is a Visual Arts tutor and a research supervisor for the Primary Masters of Education with Hibernia College.

Her passions include playing the piano, art, watersports, her two children, her Schnauzer dogs, good coffee and music. Sinéad is active in the community and in her free time can be found scouting, teaching in her art club and surfing.





Look & Respond

- \ What kind of art is this? Painting/photo?
- \ What do you see?
- \ What do think this picture/painting is of?
- \ Does this look like somewhere you've been before? Where?
- \ What are the main colours you see?
- \ Where do you think this is?
- \ Does this picture tell a story?
- \ What do you think the artist might have been thinking of when they created this piece of art?
- \ What do you think the theme of the piece of art is?
- \ What time of day or year is it? How do you know?
- \ What details can you see in the picture?
- \ What lines and shapes can you see?
- \ Why do you think the artist painted this particular scene?
- \ Does it look like it would be a nice place to visit? Why?



Paul Henry (1876–1958), The Bog Cutting, 1918

Collection of Antoinette and Patrick Murphy
© The Estate of Paul Henry / IVARO, Dublin 2019.
Photo © National Gallery of Ireland.
Photographer: James Fennell Photography

Amelia Stein (b. 1958), Hand Cut Bog, 2010

© Amelia Stein, RHA

Lesson Plan: Boglands

Geography: 1st-6th Class

Strand: Natural Environment

Strand Unit: The Local Natural Environment

Learning Objectives

The child should be enabled to:

- ✓ Look and respond to the two works of art
- ✓ Investigate and learn about the main natural features of bogland areas
- ✓ Be able to identify the different types of bog
- ✓ Develop an understanding of the ecosystem of a bog (plants and animals)
- ✓ Become aware of the ways in which people, animals and plants have exploited and/or altered these features

Resources required

- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Pencils
- ✓ Colours

Introduction

- ✓ Create a concept map based on the childrens' knowledge of bogland areas
- ✓ Look and respond to the artworks using the questions provided

Main Activity

- ✓ Investigate and research into bogs in Ireland (www.ipcc.ie)
- ✓ Fill in the concept map as the children find information
- ✓ In pairs design a brochure for visitors who wish to visit one of Ireland's' bogs

Conclusion & Assessment

- ✓ Finish concept map
- ✓ Present your Bog Brochure to the class and convince them to visit your bog
- ✓ Display of brochures

Informal teacher observation before, during and after the activity focusing on:

- ✓ Responses to questions posed by the teacher about the stimulus
- ✓ Completion of the activity
- ✓ Confidence in presenting their brochure to the class
- ✓ Display of children's brochures

Further Activities

- ✓ **History:** The history of turf cutting in Ireland
Find out more about artefacts found in bogs
- ✓ **Literacy:** Read poem 'Bogland' by Seamus Heaney
Make points to argue for and against turf cutting (www.livescience.com)
- ✓ **Art:** Look and respond to bog-wood sculptures at www.irishbogwoodsculptures.com
- ✓ **Science:** Draw a bog food chain, create fact files for animals/plants found in a bog
Create or draw a habitat web to show the animals and plants in a bog ecosystem
Make a bog in a bottle (www.ipcc.ie)
- ✓ **Geography:** On a blank map of Ireland use two colours to show the locations of raised bogs and blanket bogs

Online Resources

- ✓ Irish Peatland Conservation Council, Bogs in the Classroom resources
<http://www.ipcc.ie/discover-and-learn/resources/>
- ✓ Videos and lesson plans teaching about the Burren, Co. Clare, a UNESCO Global Geopark
<https://www.scoilnet.ie/learning-path/ref/4632/>
- ✓ Irish Geography Lesson for Kids
<https://study.com/academy/lesson/irish-geography-lesson-for-kids.html>
- ✓ Turf Wars: Irish Fighting Ban on Peat Harvesting
<https://www.livescience.com/38498-ban-on-turf-cutting-peat.html>
- ✓ Information about Offaly's boglands
<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/primary-students/looking-at-places/offaly/aspects-of-offaly/boglands/>
- ✓ Bord na Móna, the history of the peat industry
<https://www.bordnamonalivinghistory.ie/>
- ✓ Blanket bog restoration in Ireland
<http://www.irishbogrestorationproject.ie/>



Look & Respond

- \ What do you think this is a painting of?
- \ Does this look like somewhere you've been before? Where?
- \ Where do you think this castle is? Why?
- \ What kind of day is it?
- \ What colours do you see?
- \ Who do you think lived here?
- \ Why do you think people wanted to live in castles?
- \ What do you think the castle is made of?
- \ Would this castle have had a roof?
- \ What do you think has happened to the castle? Why?
- \ What are the differences between this castle and your home?
- \ Which would you prefer to live in?
- \ What signs might tell us the age of the castle?
- \ Would you like to visit this castle? Why?

Mairead O'hEeocha (b. 1962), *Castle Ruin at Clonmacnoise*, 2011

Private Collection, Dublin. Courtesy the artist and mother's tankstation, Dublin | London

Lesson Plan: Houses & Homes

History: 1st-6th Class

Strand: Continuity and Change Over Time, Local Studies

Strand Unit: Homes and Houses, Buildings, Sites or Ruins in my Locality

Learning Objectives

The child should be enabled to:

- \ Look and respond to the selected painting
- \ Explore ancient buildings, historical sites and ruins
- \ Identify items of change and continuity in the line of development of homes and houses in Ireland
- \ Identify different types of houses in relation to different time periods in Ireland

Resources required

- \ Paper
- \ Pencils
- \ Colours

Introduction

- \ Fill in a KWL based on the childrens' knowledge of houses in the past
- \ Brainstorm all the types of buildings the children know
- \ Look and respond to the suggested painting Castle Ruin
- \ Compare and contrast the home in the painting to homes today

Main Activity

- \ Research about homes and settlements in the past - Norman Castle c.1200
- \ Compare and contrast what life would be like in this home compared to their home
- \ Write a day in the life of someone living in this home – what was life like then?
- \ Extension – design your own castle / cottage

Conclusion & Assessment

- \ Children read out their 'day in the life' writing for the class
- \ Revisit KWL charts and fill in what they have learned about homes in the past

Informal teacher observation before, during and after the activity focusing on:

- \ Responses to questions posed by the teacher about the stimulus
- \ Completion of the activity
- \ Confidence in using personal ideas
- \ Recounting the story of their own work
- \ Display of children's work

Further Activities

- \ **History:** Research life in Ireland during the Normans
- \ **Art:** Make a model castle using card
- \ **Geography:** Find where Clonmacnoise is in Ireland
Map the main castles in Ireland
- \ **Science:** Materials used to make homes
- \ **English:** Write 10 questions for a quiz on Castles in Ireland
- \ **Numeracy:** Calculate how long ago this castle was constructed

Online Resources

- \ Clonmacnoise Castle
<http://www.megalithicireland.com/Clonmacnoise%20Castle.html>
- \ Ask About Ireland Learning Zone
<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/>
- \ Irish Tourism, Must see attractions in Ireland
<https://www.irishtourism.com/must-see-attractions-in-ireland>



Look & Respond

- \ What is happening in this piece of art?
- \ What can you see?
- \ What do you think they are doing?
- \ Can you see an animal? What do you think it is doing?
- \ What type of day do you think it is?
- \ What time of year do you think it is? Why?
- \ What colours does the artist use to convey the time of year?
- \ Why do you think the artist painted this particular scene?
- \ What details can you see in the picture?
- \ Does this look like somewhere you've been before? Where?
- \ Does it look like it would be a nice place to visit? Why?
- \ Does it tell a story to you?
- \ Can you connect this piece of art to something? i.e. somewhere you've been.
- \ Does the piece of art remind you of anything that has happened to you?
- \ What title/name would you give this piece of art? Why?



Derek Hill (1916–2000), Paddy Óg Ploughing, 1960

© The Estate of Derek Hill

Lesson Plan: Plants

Science: Jnr Infants-5th Class

Strand: Living Things

Strand Unit: Plant and Animal Life

Learning Objectives

The child should be enabled to:

- \ Look and respond to the work of art
- \ Observe, identify and examine plants that grow in local habitats
- \ Investigate the factors that affect plant growth
- \ Plant and grow their own plant
- \ Predict and observe their plant growing
- \ Harvest and eat their plant

Resources required

- \ Seeds
- \ Pots
- \ Compost
- \ Water
- \ Worksheets or copies

Introduction

- \ Look and respond to the suggested painting using the questions provided
- \ Discuss what kinds of plants Paddy Óg might be planting in his field and why we need to grow plants
- \ Discuss and brainstorm with the children about what they know about plants and what they need to grow
- \ Discuss with the class the steps they will be taking to sow their own plants

Main Activity

Sowing Instructions:

- \ Put a handful of compost into your pot
- \ Bang it on the table a few times to help the compost lie nice and flat
- \ Sprinkle the cress seeds onto the compost or push your finger into the compost to make a hole for your pea or tomato seed and cover
- \ Water and leave it on a sunny windowsill indoors
- \ Check your pot every day to make sure the compost is moist
- \ If it's not, water it again (but be careful not to overwater it as the seeds might rot)

Conclusion & Assessment

- \ Record the steps followed to sow their plant
- \ Discuss with the class how they are going to mind their plant (checking on it each day and watering it when the soil looks quite dry)
- \ Children can draw a picture of what they think their grown plant will look like
- \ Create / begin a record sheet to record the progress of their plant
- \ To harvest cress, simply cut through the stems with scissors when they're about 5cm tall. Cress is very tasty in an egg sandwich or in a salad.
- \ To harvest the tomatoes – pick when they are red
- \ To harvest your peas – they will be ready after about 3 months, pinch them off the shoot

Informal teacher observation before, during and after the activity focusing on:

- \ Responses to questions posed by the teacher about the stimulus
- \ Completion of the activity
- \ Recounting the story of planting the seeds

Further Activities

- \ **Art:** Leaf rubbings, origami flowers, still life drawings
- \ **History:** The history of agriculture and farming in Ireland
- \ **Music:** Discuss flowers as inspiration for music – 'Edelweiss' and 'Waltz of the Flowers'
- \ **SPHE:** Farming in developing countries – Irish Aid
- \ **Geography:** Farming in different climates – desert etc. Plants from around the world
- \ **Science:** Climate change and the effects on farming and the environment
The food pyramid, healthy foods
- \ **English:** Paddy Óg – a day in the life
- \ **Maths:** Measurements – predicting and measuring their plant as it grows

Online Resources

- \ AgriKids farm safety resources: <http://www.agrikids.ie/learn-more.php>
- \ The Innocent Big Grow: <https://innocentbiggrow.com/>
- \ The Innocent Big Grow Teacher's Resource Pack
<https://innocentbiggrow.com/public/dist/docs/teachers-resource-pack.pdf>
- \ The Garden Shop seeds
<https://www.thegardenshop.ie/seeds/flowers/seeds-2/>
- \ Ask About Ireland, Food and Farming resources
<http://askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/primary-students/3rd-+-4thclass/geography/food-and-farming/>
- \ Irish Aid, 5th and 6th Class Environment Lessons
<https://www.irishaid.ie/teaching-and-learning/primary/primary-resources/primarylessonplan/5th-and-6th-class-environment-lessons/>



Look & Respond

- \ What does this painting show? / What can you see?
- \ Where do you think this is/in what country? Why do you think that?
- \ Are there buildings in the painting? What are they?
- \ When do you think the painting was painted? Are there any clues to tell you this?
- \ What colours has the artist chosen? Why do you think they did this?
- \ What time of day or year is it? How do you know?
- \ What lines and shapes can you see?
- \ Why do you think the artist painted this particular scene?
- \ What details can you see in the picture?
- \ Does this look like somewhere you've been before? Where?
- \ Does it look like it would be a nice place to visit? Why?
- \ What materials will you use in your work?

Paul Henry (1876-1958), A Connemara Village, 1930-33

© The Estate of Paul Henry/IVARO, Dublin 2019



Lesson Plan: Nature

Art: 1st-6th Class

Strand: Making Art

Strand Unit: Construction

Learning Objectives

The child should be enabled to:

- \ Look and respond to the work of art
- \ Identify and discuss colour, texture and content of the painting
- \ Make a diorama in response to the painting
- \ Discuss and assess their diorama

Resources required

- \ Cardboard boxes
- \ Material
- \ Glue
- \ Paper
- \ Card
- \ Cotton wool or pillow filling
- \ Felt
- \ Crepe paper
- \ Matchsticks or straws
- \ Sand
- \ Other items the children can bring in

Introduction

- \ Look and respond to the painting using the questions provided
- \ Discuss how the children will create a diorama
- \ Explore what materials they will need
- \ Discuss ideas for making the mountains, clouds, lake, cottages, etc.

Main Activity

- \ Provide a supply of construction tools and materials
- \ Provide a variety of papers that might be drawn on
- \ Each child will create their own diorama in a shoe box or similar
- \ Encourage each child to add detail, colour, decoration

Conclusion & Assessment

- \ Children display their work
 - \ Observe and discuss their work
 - \ Artists' chair
- Informal teacher observation before, during and after the activity focusing on:
- \ Responses to questions posed by the teacher about the stimulus
 - \ Discussion of progress of work using a variety of questions that suit each effort
 - \ Completion of the diorama
 - \ Recounting how they created their own work
 - \ Display of children's work

Further Activities

- \ **English:** Write a poem about this scene
- \ **History:** Homes in the past
- \ **Geography:** Natural environments, mountains, lakes of Ireland
Boglands
- \ **Science:** The weather, clouds and rainfall
- \ **Art:** Colour and tone, mixing colour
Make a montage / paint / chalk drawing of the scene
- \ **Maths:** Distance and perspective

Online Resources

- \ The Irish Story, Paul Henry in Achill
<http://www.theirishstory.com/2010/11/05/paul-henry-in-achill/#.XKdP0ZhKizc>
- \ AchillTourism.com, A brief history of Achill
<https://achilltourism.com/history/>



Look & Respond

- What do you think of when you first look at this piece of art?
- Is there something you like/dislike about it?
- What does this painting show? What can you see?
- What do you think is happening?
- Does it tell a story?
- What do you think the artist might have been thinking of when he created this piece of art?
- Who is in the painting? How many people can you see?
- What do you think they are doing?
- What can you tell about them from the picture?
- Who do you think the man with the walking stick is? Why?
- What else can you see in the painting?
- Are there buildings in the painting? What are they?
- What do you think the theme of the piece of art is?
- Why do you think the artist chose this scene?
- Where do you think this is/in what country? Why?
- When do you think the painting was painted? Are there any clues to tell you this?
- What details can you see in the picture?
- Why do you think they chose these colours?
- Do they create a mood in the picture?
- What title/name would you give this piece of art? Why?
- Look at the title the artist has given it. Do you think this is a good title? Why?

Seán Keating (1889–1977), Night's Candles are Burnt Out, 1929

Collection Gallery Oldham

© The Estate of Sean Keating / IVARO, Dublin 2019.

Photo © National Gallery of Ireland.

Lesson Plan: Innovation

English: Jnr Infants-6th Class

Strand: Competence and Confidence in using Language

Strand Unit: Developing Competence and Confidence in using Oral Language

Learning Objectives

The child should be enabled to:

- \ Look and respond to the work of art using the questions provided
- \ Identify and discuss the context of the painting
- \ Communicate ideas and opinions about the painting content
- \ Explore and develop ideas and concepts through talk, directed discussion and writing
- \ Explore the introduction of electricity to Ireland and how this would change the lives of people in Ireland
- \ Create a poster advertising electricity
- \ Discuss and present their advertisement poster

Resources required

- \ Paper
- \ Pencils
- \ Colours

Introduction

- \ Look and respond to the painting using the questions provided
- \ Discuss with the class what they think is happening
- \ Discuss the introduction of the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme and the effects this had on Irish life

Main Activity

- \ In pairs or small groups design and draw up a poster advertising electricity to the people of Ireland
- \ Include why the buyer should move to using electricity and how it would improve their lives
- \ Include a heading, catchy tag line, a company name, what the buyer will receive, how much it will cost

Conclusion & Assessment

- \ Children present their posters to the class
 - \ Class have the opportunity to question the presenters about their product
 - \ Posters displayed for all to see and read
- Informal teacher observation before, during and after the activity focusing on:
- \ Responses to questions posed by the teacher about the stimulus
 - \ Completion of the activity
 - \ Confidence in using personal ideas
 - \ Recounting the story of their own work
 - \ Display of children's work

Further Activities

- \ **Science:** Renewable energy (www.seai.ie)
Create a simple closed circuit light
Forces - explore damming systems, design your own dam
- \ **History:** The history of the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme, what life was like before electricity
Clothes in the 1920s, transport in the 1920s
- \ **English:** Write a dialogue of what the people in the picture are saying
- \ **Drama:** Dramatise the scene
- \ **Art:** Use of colour (browns and red) and texture in their clothes and in the stone
- \ **Maths:** Measurements, weight, space

Online Resources

- \ Artifa, Night Candles are Burnt Out: <https://artifa.wordpress.com/2012/08/09/night-candles-are-burntout-sean-keating-5/>
- \ The Irish Times, Turning the infant State electric <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/turning-the-infant-state-electric-1.1138242>
- \ Keating, Siemens & the Shannon Scheme <https://www.historyireland.com/20th-century-contemporary-history/keating-siemens-the-shannon-scheme/>
- \ Wikipedia, Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shannon_hydroelectric_scheme
- \ Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland, for Teachers: <https://www.seai.ie/teaching-sustainability/primary-school/resources-for-teachers/>
- \ Ask About Ireland, Eco Detectives, environmental and climate change investigations for primary schools <http://askaboutireland.ie/learning-zone/primary-students/infants/environment/teachers-resources-eco-de/index.xml>