



**Laing Art Gallery:
Resources and
Activities Pack**

About this pack...

Thank you for your interest in visiting the Laing Art Gallery. During your visit we want you to be able to get the most out of your time here and engage with the artworks as easily as possible.

In this pack are some quick and simple suggested games, activities and techniques to use in the gallery spaces during a self-led visit. As their leader you will have to decide which are most suitable for your group, or you may wish to adapt some of these ideas to meet the requirements of your group.

We hope that you find this pack useful as a starting point to engage your group.

If you require any help from the learning team or have any queries about the available resources please feel free to contact us.

You Can Touch This

We have a number of artworks and interpretation materials around the gallery which you are permitted to touch. These materials assist with the engagement with some of the artworks. The trail includes a marble sculpture, stained glass relief, wood carving, bronze relief and a resin sculpture, all of which can be explored through touch.

We have a designated trail which guides you to these objects around the gallery called *You Can Touch This*. This trail is downloadable for use from the website.



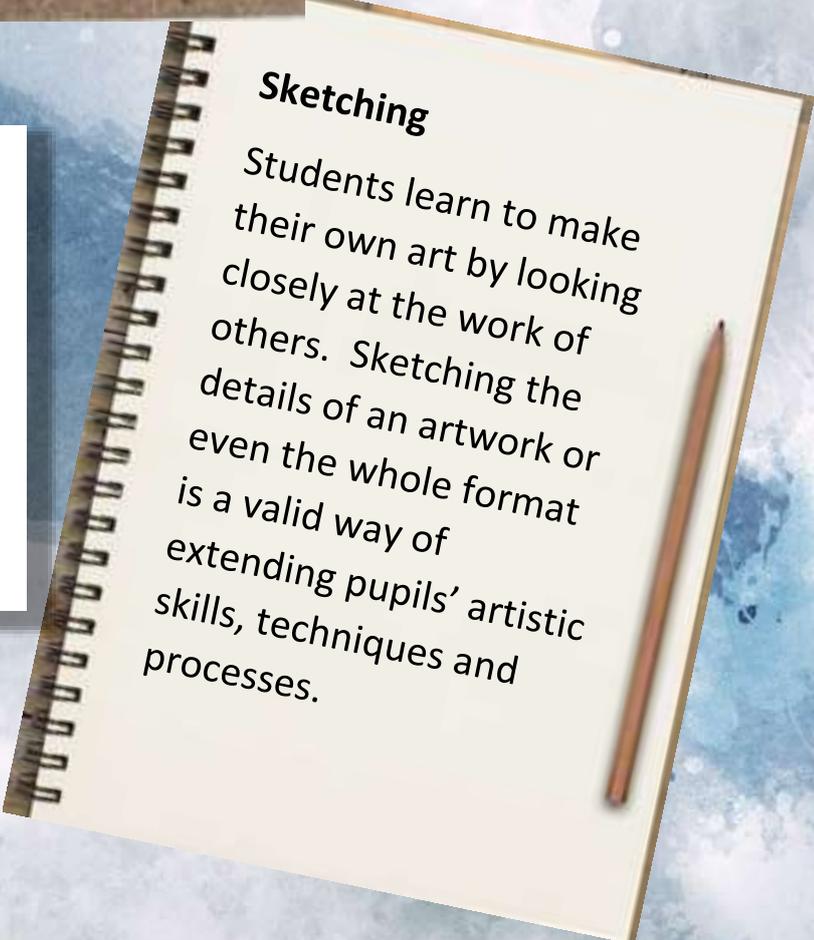
Looking at and discussing artworks...

A photograph of a brown cardboard viewfinder placed over a painting. The viewfinder is a simple rectangular frame made of cardboard, used to isolate a specific part of the artwork for closer inspection.

It can be useful to provide pupils with simple focusing devices such as **viewfinders**. These can be made from simple squares, rectangles or other shapes cut out of card. Use the viewfinder to isolate the most interesting parts of a painting.

Gallery labels

The information on labels and interpretation panels in the Gallery can be used to introduce pupils to the artworks and start them thinking about meaning and process. They are a useful starting point for discussion.

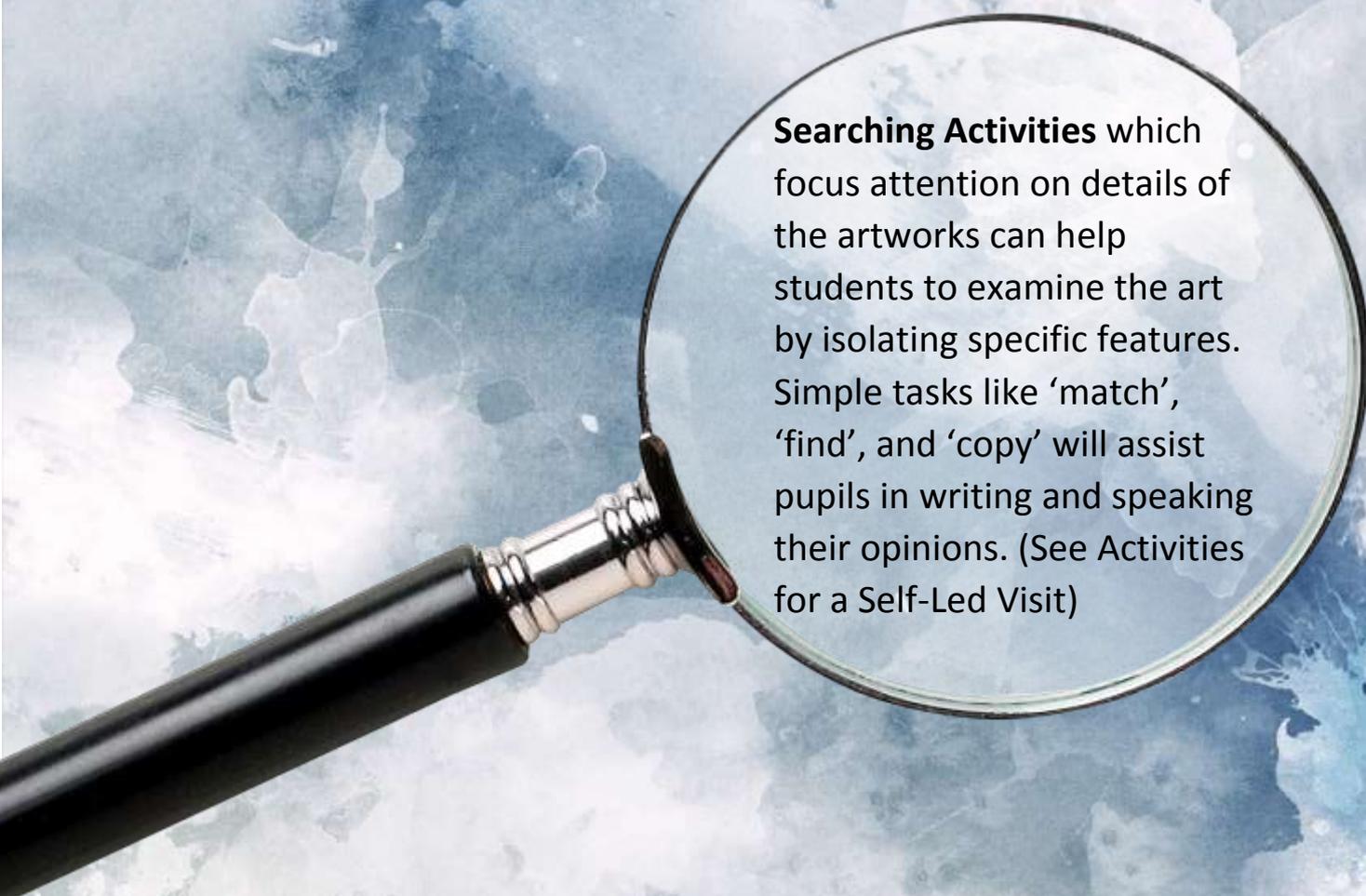
A photograph of a spiral-bound notebook with a pencil resting on it. The notebook is open, and the pencil is lying horizontally across the right page. The background is a light blue and white marbled pattern.

Sketching

Students learn to make their own art by looking closely at the work of others. Sketching the details of an artwork or even the whole format is a valid way of extending pupils' artistic skills, techniques and processes.

Using Themes

It is often useful to approach art thematically. Themes such as 'buildings', 'animals' or 'portraits' can be used to encourage comparison between the work of different artists and help students understand that there are many ways of seeing and responding to things.



Searching Activities which focus attention on details of the artworks can help students to examine the art by isolating specific features. Simple tasks like 'match', 'find', and 'copy' will assist pupils in writing and speaking their opinions. (See Activities for a Self-Led Visit)

Engaging your group with an artwork...

What do you actually say to a group when standing in front of an artwork?

By discussing as well as looking at an artwork, students develop their perception and language skills. Students should be encouraged to:

- Describe
- Question
- Discuss
- Debate

Discussion strategies

- Engage children in preliminary discussion amongst themselves in pairs and sub-groups before trying to generate class discussion and feedback. Group discussion ensures talk is not dominated by the teacher or the most articulate pupils in the class.
- Questioning should be open-ended to encourage a personal response beyond 'like' or 'dislike'.
- Simple comparison exercises between artworks can facilitate discussion, and helps pupils become aware of subtleties of form colour and surface.
- Remember, very few questions have only one correct answer!

Questioning . . .

Using questions to begin discussions or spark off enquiries are a great way of getting students to explore their own interests within artworks. Below are some example questions that you could use. Some of the questions can be challenging for younger or less able students, therefore we suggest that you take some time to consider which are most appropriate for the ability levels within your group.

- ❖ What shapes can you see in the painting/object?
- ❖ Are there recurring shapes, lines, rhythms, forms?

- What colours can you see?
- Does one colour stand out? Why?
- Are the colours hot or cold?
- Primary or secondary colours?
- Why has the artist chosen these colours?
- Do you think colour is important to the artwork?

- What scale/size is the artwork? Small or large scale?
- Would the artwork have the same effect if it was a lot smaller or a lot bigger than its actual size?
- Is there a lot of detail or is the artwork loose and free? What effect does this create?

- If you could touch this artwork what would it feel like?
- Does the texture remind you of anything else?
- Does the texture represent an emotion or feeling?

- When, where and by who was the art work made?
- Does this art work link to anything you have learnt in history?
- How would people in the past have viewed this art work?
- Does the art work relate to any other subject you do at school? Music, drama, maths, geography? (See Cross-Curricular Links)
- How would the art work look in a different setting?

- Does the artwork remind you of anything you have seen before?
- Does the artwork make you think of work by another artist?
- Is the artwork traditional or modern?
- Is it realistic, can you recognise what is represented straight away? Or is it 'abstract'?

- Is the artwork trying to communicate a message? Is it a story?
- Are there any symbols/objects that you might recognise or that might give clues as to what is going on in the artwork?
- What is the title? Does it confirm your thoughts or did it change the meaning of the artwork?

- What word could you use to describe your first reaction to this artwork?
- How does it make you feel? Why does it make you feel this way?
- Does the work remind you of something that you know from your own life?
- Why does it remind you of that?
- How are your answers different/similar from others in the group?

Cross Curricular...

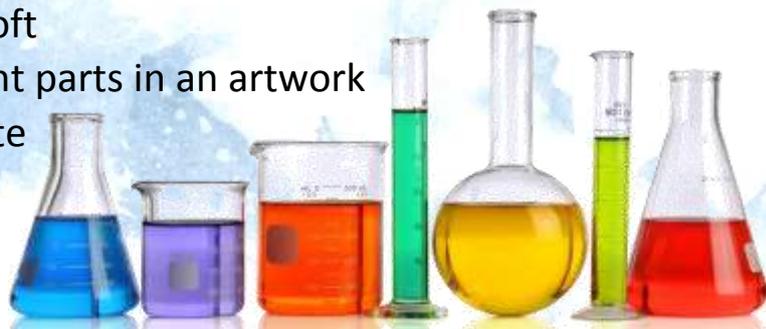


Music

- Listen to the music of composers contemporary to the artist
- Create an artwork in response to a piece of music
- Create a musical score written in the form of images

Science

- List the different materials in an artwork. Sort into a table based on their properties e.g. reflective, hard, soft
- Draw and label the different body/plant parts in an artwork
- **ICT opportunity:** Use software to create diagrams and tables



Art & Design

- Provide children with write descriptions of 4 characters and their relationship to one another (e.g. Mr Laing is tall, dark and thin and he is very bossy). Draw the characters thinking about position and body language.
- In pairs one pupil describes the key features of an artwork. The partner, who is not allowed to see the work, makes a drawing in response to the description.
- In small groups spend time looking at the exhibition. Then ask the children to choose five artworks to go in their own exhibition identifying similarities between the works.





Literacy

- Children list as many symbols as they can see then construct sentences in which words are substituted with symbols
- Write a story/poem based on what you can see in the painting
- Write a short play, based on one of the artworks in the gallery, introducing more characters and imagining what might happen next
- **ICT opportunity:** Use word processing to develop stories and create pictures.

Geography

- Using a painting of a local scene from a different era and discussing how it has changed over time, and the consequences of this change – the effects of modern technology or increased population on a landscape
- Consider the effects of public art (e.g. The Blue Carpet, outside to the entrance of The Laing) has on a surrounding area
- Using a contemporary painting of a local scene and imagining how it would once have looked.



History

- Compare the life of a Victorian artist with a contemporary artist or make comparisons with modern life/materials
- Focus on clothing or furnishings in a painting to form a basis of a discussion e.g. about the development of shoes throughout history



$$y = \sum_{i=0}^{10} x_i$$

Numeracy

- Make a grid over the picture and ask children to plot coordinates to locate objects e.g. identify 2D and 3D shapes.
- How long ago was the picture painted? How old was the artist when he painted it?
- **ICT opportunity:** Use software to create repeating patterns

Activities & games for a self-led visit...

What colour?

One pupil names a colour that they can see in the artwork, and describes where in the painting they can see it. The other pupils then take turns to find another object in the painting of the same colour until they run out of ideas. Try a different colour.

Pupils could then go on to create a painting or collage only using tones of one colour.

How many words?

Pupils take it in turns to use one word to describe a certain artwork, as soon as someone says a word which has already been said or takes longer than 5 seconds to think of a new word they are out of the game.

Can you find it?

Using the sensory packs (available from the learning team on request) pupils explore the gallery to find a similar object/ animal/ texture/ smell/ sound in an artwork. Pupils then sketch their favourite part of the artwork that they find and tell another pupil about their drawing.

Roll of the dice!

Roll the large dice and play the included game (Large dice are available from the learning team on request – there is a 'Letter' dice depicting letters of the alphabet or a 'Surface' dice depicting words you might use to describe an artwork)

Artwork in the Hot-Seat

In small groups, pupils chose an artwork to focus on. One pupil from each group then becomes an object or character in the artwork; while the other pupils ask questions (e.g. what are you? How long did you have to pose for the artist? Do you like being displayed in an art gallery? How old are you? What are your hobbies?). Pupils could go on to create an imaginative storyboard based on the object or character e.g. 'a day in the life of a table'

Useful terms . . .

Abstraction - A stylistic process where an artist uses patterns of shapes and colours to depict what is seen rather than a realistic likeness

Realism - When an artist draws, paints or sculpts an object as close to reality and as accurately as possible

Collage - An image made up of pieces of different materials (e.g. coloured papers, fabric etc.) pasted together

Complementary colours - Colours which are opposite each other on the colour wheel (red/green, purple/yellow, blue/orange) and which work harmoniously together in a picture

Figurative - Depicting a person or people

Graphics - A combination of text, illustration and layout in one design

Lino-print - A print taken off the raised, inked-up surface of a piece of linoleum

Mixed-media - A combination of different materials (e.g. pastel with paint)

Modelling - Sculpting a three-dimensional form or creating the illusion of a 3D form in drawing through use of tone

Pattern-repeat - A design in which the same motif is repeated continuously, often linking together to form a larger pattern

Primary colours - The three colours (red, yellow and blue) from which all other colours can be produced by mixing in varying proportions

Secondary colours - The three colours produced by combining any two of the primary colours (orange, purple and green)

Tertiary colours - The colours produced by mixing secondary and primary colours which are adjacent on the colour wheel

Textural - Describing various surface effects

Three-dimensional - An object existing in space which has height, width, depth

Two-dimensional - A flat object or artwork such as a painting or drawing, which has only height and width, and cannot be viewed from all angles

Address:

**New Bridge Street, Newcastle upon Tyne,
NE1 8AG**

**Telephone: (Learning Team direct dial)
0191 278 1939**

Email:

learning@laingartgallery.org.uk

Website:

www.laingartgallery.org.uk/learning