

Exploring A Midsummer Night's Dream: Creating a Forest Collage Part One

By [Rachel Thompson](#)



This series of six sessions explores Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream through art and is aimed at upper KS2 children (Years 5 and 6) although could be delivered to younger age groups with some simplification in terms of the use of text. The aim of the series is to introduce children to the work of Shakespeare in a fun and creative way.

In this third in a series of six resources on Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, we take a closer look at the primary setting of the play: The Forest. The session begins with

exploring paper and how it can be torn and cut to make shapes and form, before beginning to make a large scale collage of the forest using different papers and colours. The collage continues into session four where the magical symbol of moonlight is explored.

Go back to session two [here](#).

Session Three: Creating a Forest Collage

Warm up: Approx 20 minutes

Main Activity: 45 minutes - 1 hour

Materials Needed: Large roll or sheets of paper, assorted green or brown sugar and scrap papers/old art work, pencils, paints, brusho, brushes, glue, scissors.

Focus Theme/s: The Natural World

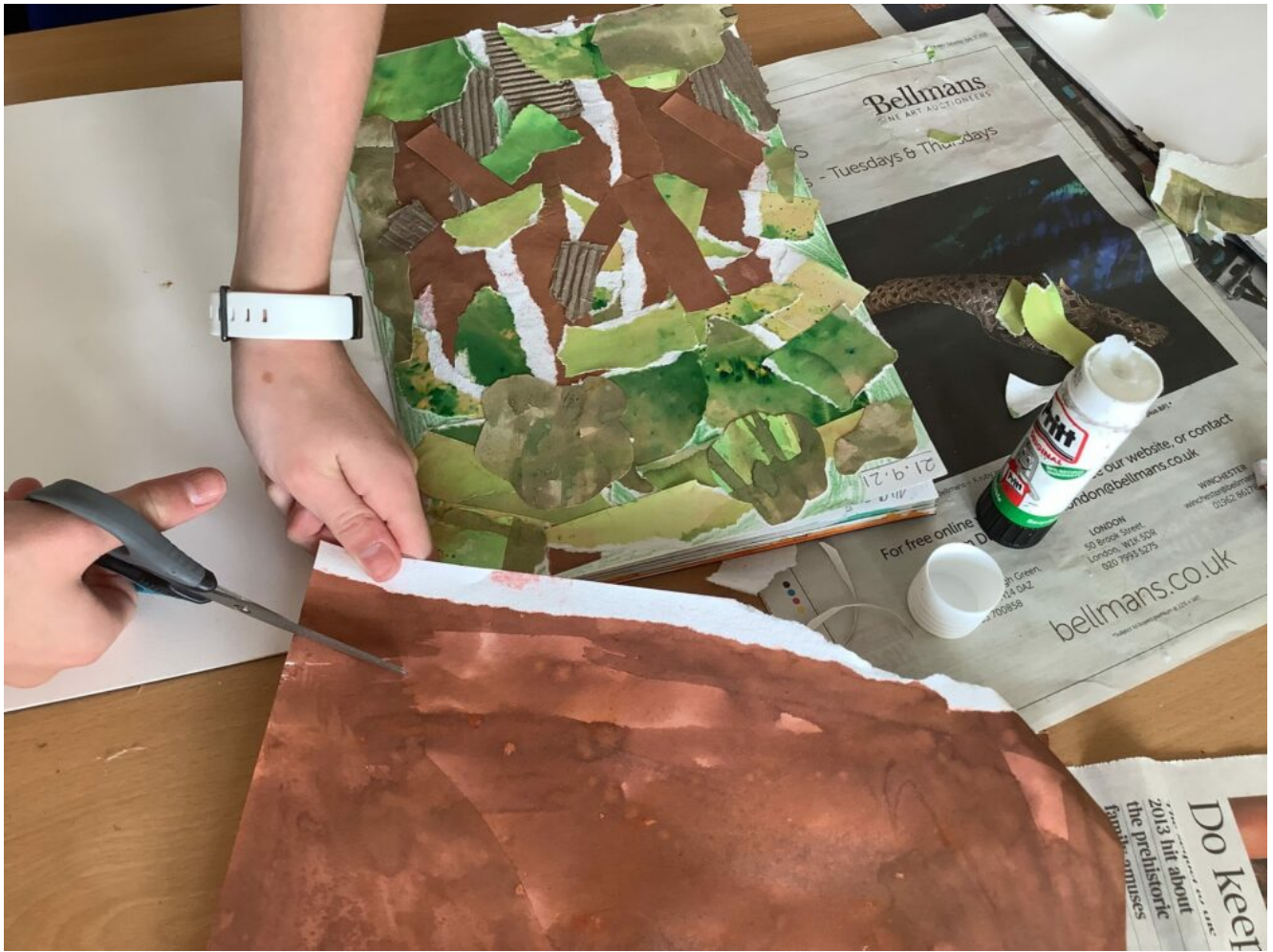
Time to Warm Up! Playing with Collage Papers.

Take some scraps of paper, preferably a mixture of green and brown tones. You will also need some glue and scissors.

Using your sketchbook or some A3 cartridge paper as a background, experiment with ways to tear up pieces of the paper and create pattern and form on the paper.



Try not to think too much about making a 'picture' - this is more about finding patterns and paths as you work and following a creative instinct. Does a particular type of paper appeal to you? Do different papers tear in different ways? What happens when you layer them over each other and stick them down?



Now try using scissors to create more angular or precise shapes? Stick these shapes down on your paper and see what shapes you make.

Do you want to repeat patterns or do you want to make more fluid meandering shapes?

Spend about 15 minutes exploring collage in this way.





Starter Discussion:

In session three we'll be looking at the other main setting in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: The Forest, and how this contrasts with the setting of Athens.

The Forest at night creates a dark and confusing environment for some of the characters in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – but not all of them. Which characters do you think use the darkness and night to their advantage?

The woods are a place of mysterious happenings, and the fairies are right at home there. The world of nature is both a place of beauty and a place of danger. We grow our food with the help from natural elements, but these elements, or forces of nature, also have capacity to cause havoc and damage to our lives.

How do you think an Elizabethan production of *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream could portray the forest without the use of an elaborate sets, lighting, or sound?

Main Activity: Collaborative Forest Collage

NB for teachers: There are a few options on how to deliver this activity and this depends on practicalities in your own setting. You can either use a large roll of paper or a series of large A1 sheets of cartridge paper. You will need to stick the paper onto the wall or lay it out on the floor so everyone can access it. Alternatively, you could make an 'indoor forest' by each child tearing and creating a tree separately before sticking them up and around the room. These can then be added to and developed.

The slight disadvantage of this method is that there's no background to draw on so gaining that sense of perspective and 'what's beyond the trees' is more challenging.

You can either do this as a full class exercise or split the class into small groups depending on practical limits.

Because this activity is more large scale; it's been split over two sessions, with session 4 also being focused on the forest and how we can develop the effect of light and dark.

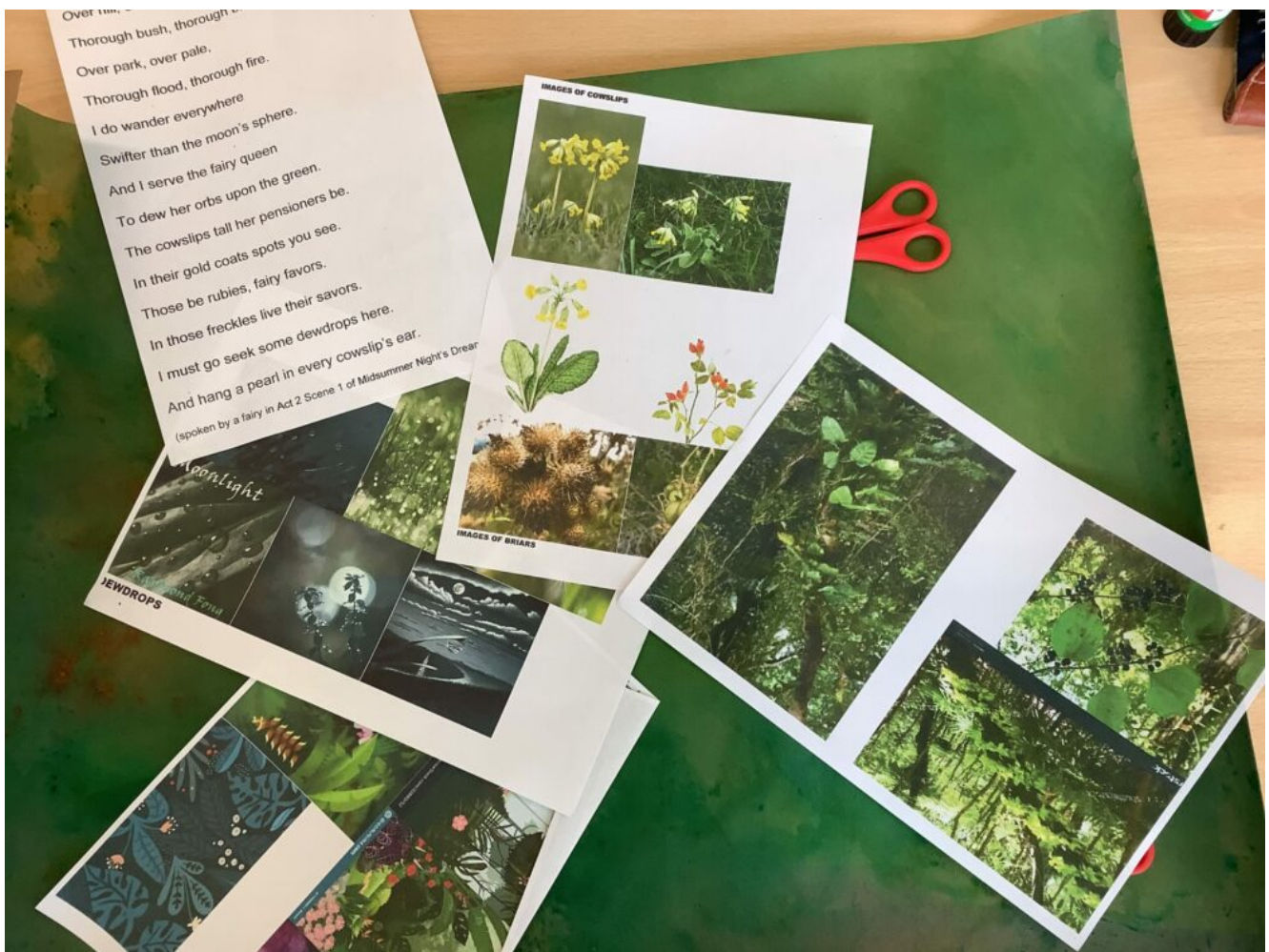
Together as a group, you're going to make your impression of the Forest in A Midsummer Night's Dream!

Begin by reading the following words spoken by a fairy in Act 2 Scene 1:

*'Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire.
I do wander everywhere
Swifter than the moon's sphere.
And I serve the fairy queen
To dew her orbs upon the green.
The cowslips tall her pensioners be.
In their gold coats spots you see.*

*Those be rubies, fairy favors.
In those freckles live their savors.
I must go seek some dewdrops here
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear'.*

What imagery does Shakespeare evoke here? Is the pace and rhythm fast or slow? What is the effect of this? Think about who is speaking the words and what being in nature, with all its 'rhythms', feels like.



The descriptions Shakespeare uses of the forest here, and elsewhere in the play, create images and enhances contrasts. It demonstrates that just like the human world, the natural world can be unbalanced, inharmonious – and even dangerous.

Make a list of all the natural forms mentioned in this verse. Do any of them contrast? What would you like to include in your collage?

To begin, you need to prepare some large backing paper onto which you will collage your forest. You could draw over the top of newsprint or old magazines with coloured pencils or pastels or working over large sheets of paper with water colour wash. Just be mindful not to make the paper too saturated with water as you will need it dry when you start collaging.



Try adding brushstrokes to create fluid movement with colour, adding to the 'other worldly' feel of the forest.



You could use some water spray bottles to apply watered down brusho.





Using the collage techniques you used in the warm up, begin shaping some trees, leaves, flowers and other natural forms out of different papers. It's a good idea to use the time while any background papers are drying.





Decide as a group if you will have different sized trees. Do they all look the same or do some have different shaped leaves.





Vary the papers as much as possible to create texture and contrast.





When we are in nature, we are surrounded by hundreds of creatures everywhere, and we can't see them. How can you show this in your collage? What is hiding behind the leaves?



Think about light and dark and how the forest might look different at night? Is part of your forest lit by the moon and another part showing the sun just rising? Discuss your ideas as a group. We will be looking at light and dark in more detail in session four.



Work over the top of the paper forms using felt tip pen. These can be used to create a detail through a variety of lines.











Move onto session four [here](#).

This is a sample of a resource created by UK Charity AccessArt. We have over 1500 resources to help develop and inspire your creative thinking, practice and teaching.

AccessArt welcomes artists, educators,

teachers and parents both in the UK and overseas.

We believe everyone has the right to be creative and by working together and sharing ideas we can enable everyone to reach their creative potential.

Collecting Colour in my Moodboard Book

What We Like About This Resource...

"It's really nice to see that although Rachel Parker works quite digitally, her process from the beginning is very tactile. Rachels books act as a really great source of inspiration, helping to break down the creative blocks that we all get from time to time. Having a sketchbook dedicated to colour means that as well as working with colours that you already love, you can test new colour palettes and see colours from a new perspective. I especially love how Rachel picks up

on the different tones in colours by looking at the way light hits it in order build her colour palette around those supporting tones as well as big statement colours.” – Tobi, AccessArt

You Might Also Like...

Pathway: Brave Colour



Exciting Colour



Make Repeat Patterns



Which Artists: Rachel Parker



Collecting Colour

What We Like About This Resource...

"It's great to see how a simple exercise such as colour collecting, which can be done in a classroom setting, is also used in a professional capacity. This gives the activity a clear context and purpose. It's nice to see Rachel's decisions being made in real time, it demonstrates how artists are constantly reflecting on and self evaluating their own decisions. Rachel also shows us that she sometimes gets colour palettes from photos that she's taken herself, this is really exciting because it demonstrates how the artists experience is central to their work. Students will be able to bring their own experience and personality to this activity by having complete control over what their colour moodboard becomes."

– Tobi, AccessArt

See This Resource Is Used in Schools...





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Exciting Colour



Make Repeat Patterns



Which Artists: Rachel Parker



How Colour Collection Inspires My Work

What We Like About This Resource...

“Rachel’s work is so vibrant and full of joy, it’s really exciting to see how she starts to form creative ideas around colour. Rachel highlights the importance of colour trends but also gives herself the opportunity to create her own trends which adds a level of playfulness and personality to her colour exploration. Seeing her colour books translate into fabric demonstrates a real clarity

in her decision making process.” – Tobi, AccessArt.

You Might Also Like...

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Which Artists: Rachel Parker



Making 2d & 3d Fashion

Designs with Painted and Decorated Paper

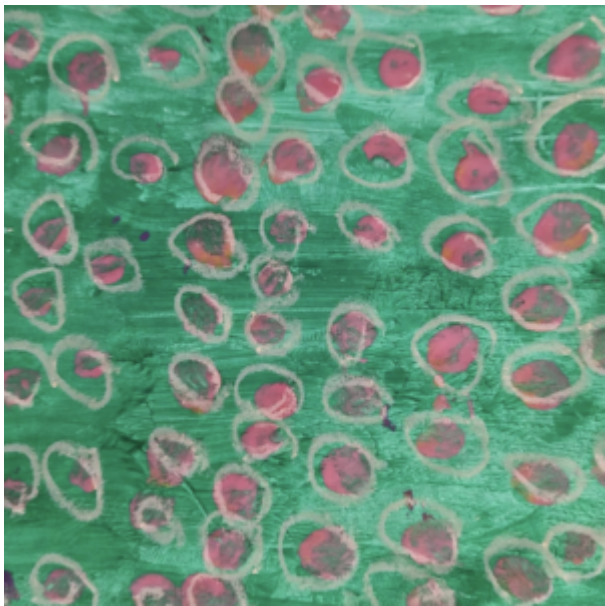
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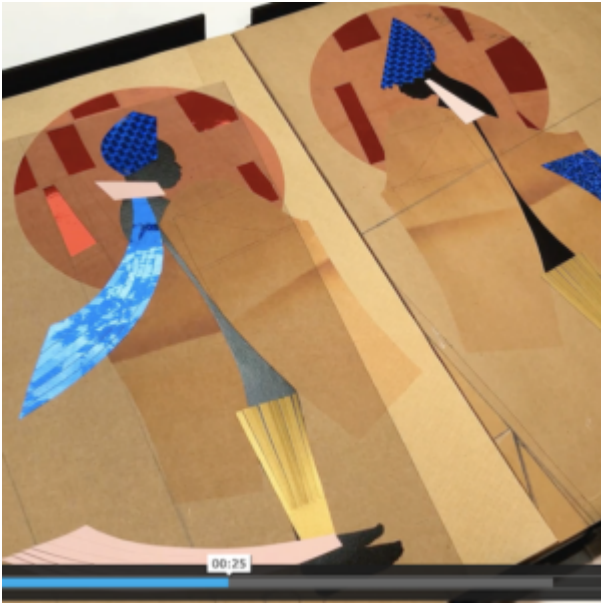
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This is featured in the 'Fashion Design' pathway

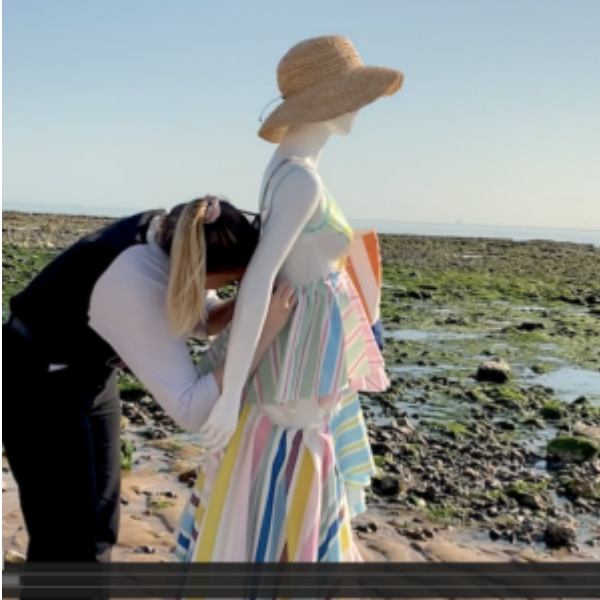
Talking Points: Hormazd Narielwalla



Talking Points: Tatyana Antoun



Talking Points: Alice Fox



Talking Points: Pyer Moss



Talking Points: Rahul Mishra



A Visual Poetry Zine with Monotype

Use monoprint, paint and collage to create zines inspired by poetry.

Paint Your Corner Shop

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Talking Points: Claes Oldenburg



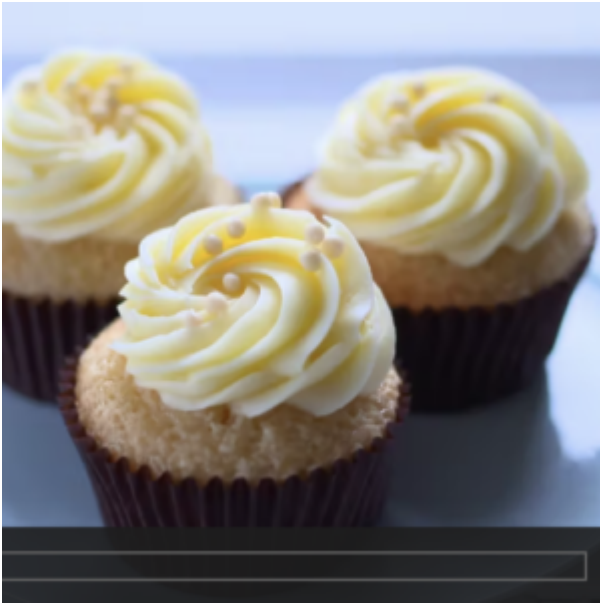
Talking Points: Nicole Dyer



Talking Points: Lucia Hierro



Drawing source material: Food



Making Sculptural Birds

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You May Also Like...

Pathway: Making Birds



[Featured in the 'Making Birds' pathway](#)

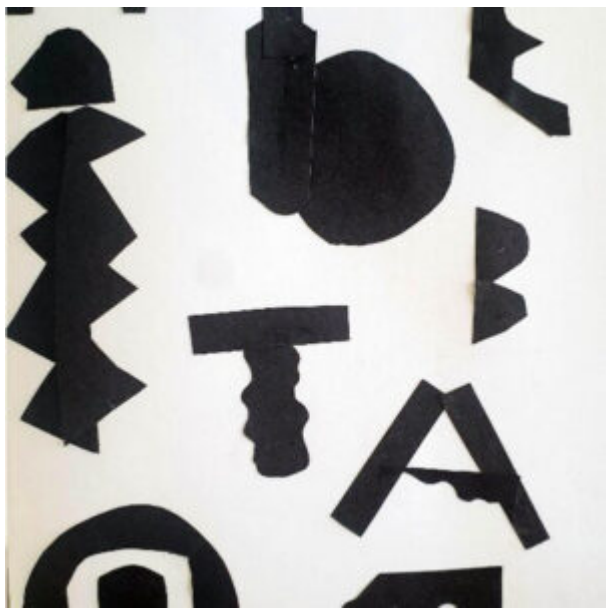
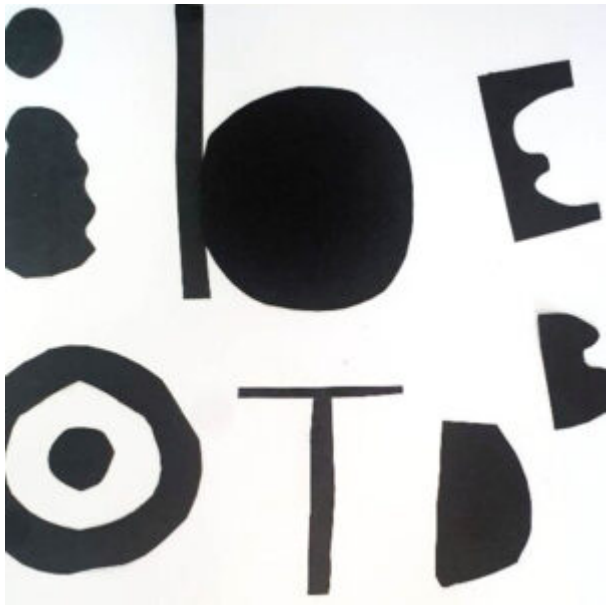
Talking Points: Inspired by Birds



Cut Out Typography

See This Resource Used In Schools...











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Pathway: Typography and Maps

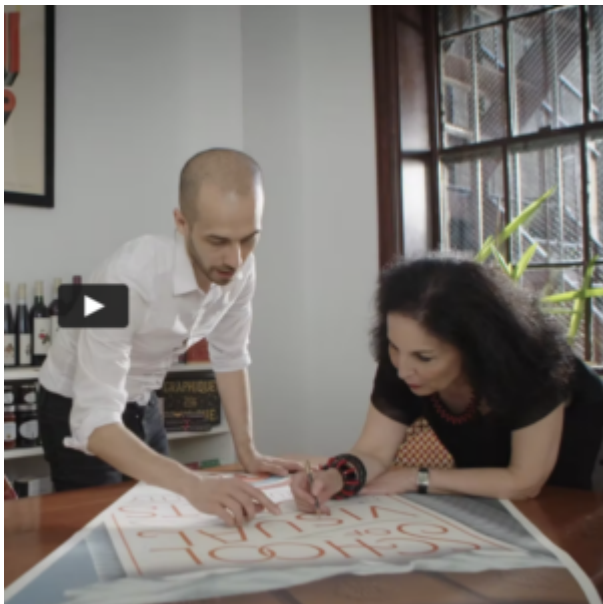


[This is featured in the 'Typography and Maps' pathway](#)

Talking Points: What is typography?



Talking Points: Louise Fili



Which Artists: Tatyana Antoun

What We Like About This Resource...

“The research phase of a creative project can be presented in many different ways, and can even be an art form in itself. Here, Tatyana demonstrates how her sketchbooks became a medium through which she expressed her thoughts, refined her ideas and explored materials. We believe sketchbooks to be a powerful tool for children to take ownership of their ideas and travel on their own creative journey, without necessarily knowing the destination. Take a look at our [sketchbook journey](#) for more sketchbook inspiration” – Rachel, AccessArt.

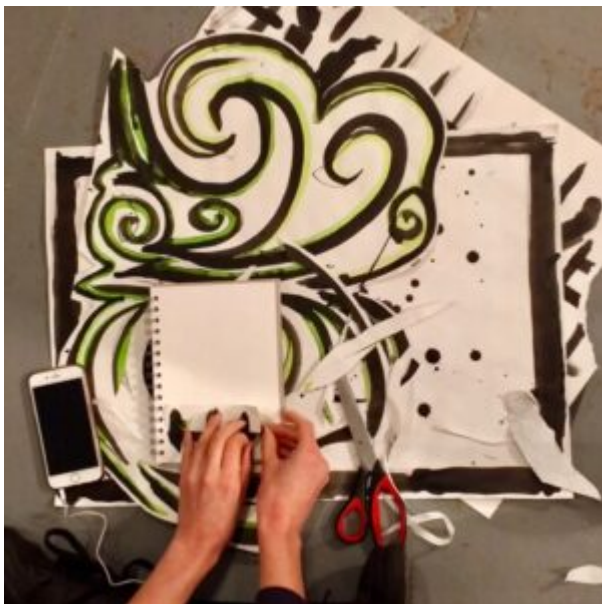
You Might Also Like...



[Sketchbooks and Thinking Skills](#)



Sketchbooks for Designers – an Introduction for Children



Using Sketchbooks to Take Ownership of Ideas

Creating Repeat Patterns With Rachel Parker

What We Like About This Resource...

“This is a great activity for really tuning into colour and shape. The process is ultimately quite a refined one (ie making a pattern balanced and repeated ‘correctly’) – but there’s plenty of scope for exploring pattern in a more experiential way prior to the refinement page. Try one of the recommended resources below to introduce pattern and begin with some open ended activities to build skill and confidence.” – Andrea, AccessArt

You Might Also Like...

Pathway: Exploring pattern



[This is featured in the 'Exploring Pattern' pathway](#)

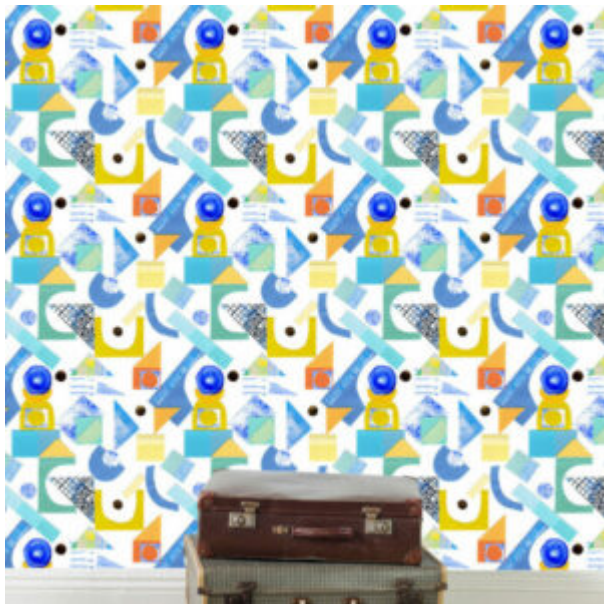
Talking points: Andy Gilmore



talking points: Louise Despont



Inspired by Rachel Parker



Teachers Explore Pattern, Shape and Texture



Block Printing Repeat Patterns



Collage Streets

What We Like About This Resource...

“This project provides a real opportunity for children to engage with a range of different processes to produce truly individual final results. Jan Miller is an experienced teacher and connects her projects well with learning outcomes. In this case, children are encouraged to have a loose approach and to make their own creative decisions – which is such a valuable part of any child (or adults!) creative education”. – *Rachel, AccessArt*

You Might Also Like...

Painted Houses



One Line Street

What We Like About This Resource...

“This project links poignant subject matter with meaningful art processes and local history. What we learn about the re purposing of materials, (in this case spent ammunition) re affirms how we can use what is around us as a starting point to making and creating. You could extend or adapt this project by looking at broken pottery, re purposing that into new sculptures that link with Roman or other local historical cultures” – *Rachel, AccessArt*

You May Also Like...



[Henry Moore's Shelter Drawings](#)



Remembrance Day Soldiers



For Remembrance Day

Creativity Medals

See the Resource Used in Schools...





What We Like About This Resource...

“The sentiment behind this resource idea is lovely and it provides an opportunity to really develop some fine motor skills as well as independence of approach. Taking ownership of the medal design means the sense of achievement is heightened beyond the children just being given one. You can

really imagine the positive energy that would surround this activity within a classroom, with each child working on a shared project but embarking on their own creative journey.” – *Rachel, AccessArt*

You May Also Like...

Pathway: Playful Making

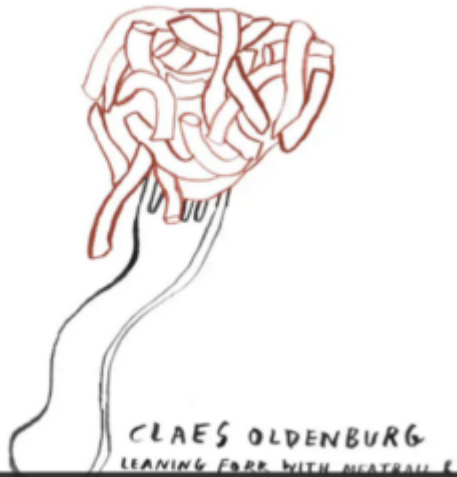


[Featured in the 'Playful Making' pathway](#)

Talking Points: Introduction to sculpture

Sculpture.mp4

1



Clay Art Medals



Talking Points: Nnena Kalu



Talking Points: Linda BELL



Which Artists: Cas Holmes

What We Like About This Resource...

“The sense of journey and feeling of movement is such an interesting part of Cas’ textile work here. We love how location and place is communicated through the variety of fluid and meandering textile marks used. Cas’ Romani background as well as early experience living in Japan make for a rich cultural backdrop to her work. The themes here could be explored in the classroom by asking children to use memories of places they’ve visited to produce a creative response using fabrics and mixed media” – *Rachel, AccessArt*

You Might Also Like...



[Draw Your Home](#)



Working With and In the Landscape



Landscape Sculptures

Which Artists: Nathan Ward

Volcano Painting inspired by Frank Bowling

See This Resource Used In Schools...

















What We Like About This Resource...

“We love how this activity provides an opportunity to explore a well known Artist’s work, through focussing on their materials and techniques. The children looked at Frank Bowling’s work before creating their own individual responses that retained individual ownership – something we advocate as part of a rich and balanced visual arts education. It was also great to see how a professional artist visited the school to further enhance the children’s experience.” – *Rachel, AccessArt*

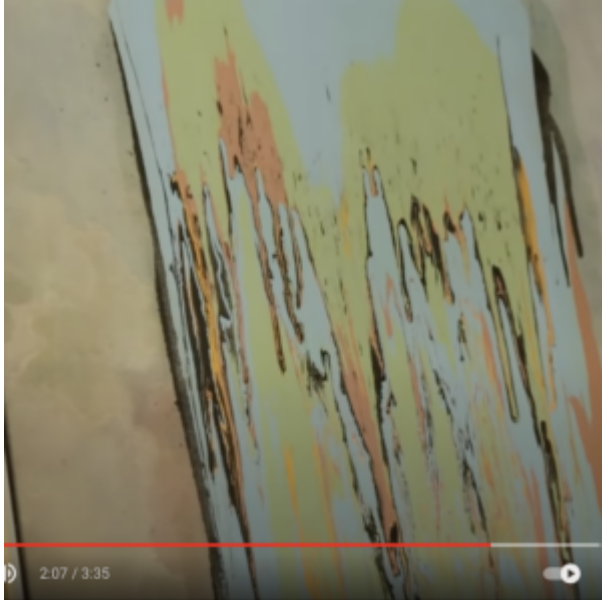
You May Also Like...

Pathway: Cloth, thread, paint



[This is featured in the 'Cloth, Thread, Paint' pathway](#)

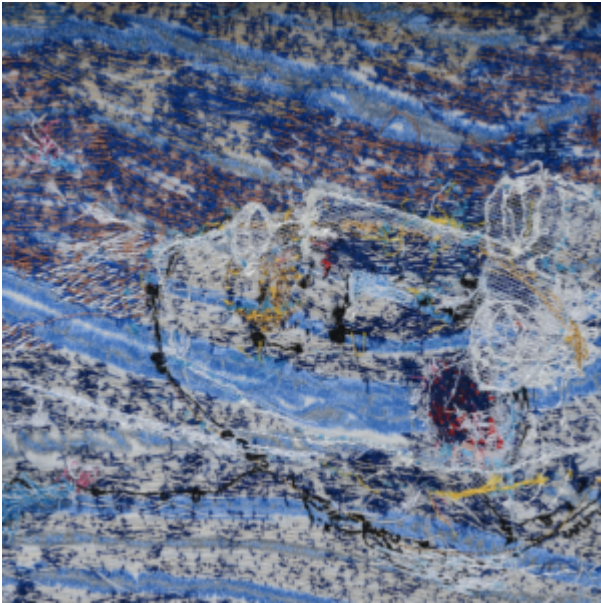
Talking Points: Frank Bowling



Talking Points: Hannah Rae



Talking Points: Alice Kettle



The Art Of Zines

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Pathway: Print & Activism

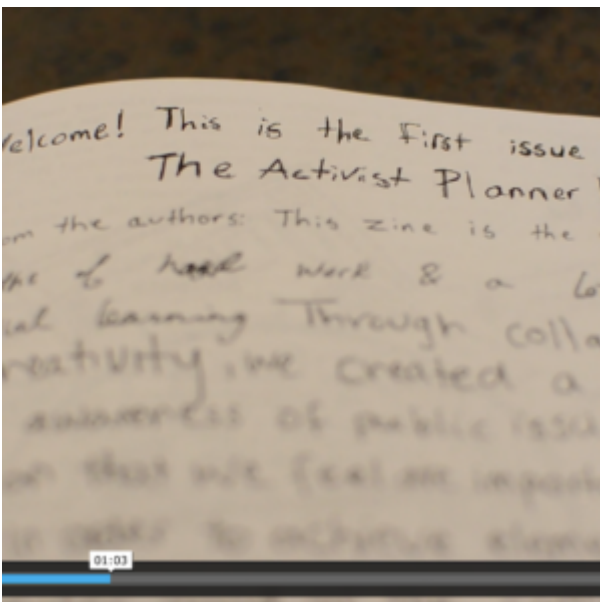


[This is featured in the 'Print & Activism' pathway](#)

Talking Points: Luba Lukova



Talking Points: What is a Zine?



Making Large Scale, Screenprinted, Collaged, Co-Created Campaign Posters!



Making an Artist's Book



Book Artists



Lino Printing Inspired by Gestural Drawings

Redesigning Food Packaging

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Pathway: 2D Drawing to 3D Making



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Talking Points: Packaging Design



What is Typography

