

7 & 8 Year Olds Explore MonoPrinting & Oil Painting

By Jan Miller

This resource is part of a collection called [Teaching Art to Year Three](#).

Here Jan Miller shares an activity using two processes in a single 1.5 hr lesson which developed drawing and printing skills together with an introduction to oil painting, with outstanding results.



• Context

The focus was Penelope with the Suitors, 1509 by

Pintoricchio, displayed in the National Gallery, London. Participants developed an understanding of figures and poses, acknowledging that drawing people is not such a daunting task; irregular and distorted drawings add to the interest. Knowledge of Formal Elements are developed such as line width, shape, tone, composition as well as cropping, overlapping, negative space, size and limited colour.

Features of the painting include:

- Penelope at her weaving frame, with her maid in her best dress.
- Suitors trying to impress Penelope in their finest clothes, disguise and striking poses.
- Symbols included a cat, wool, bird, weaving shuttle, animals, weaving frame, bow & boat etc.
- The project began by discussing each of the characters and what clues they could find to describe them. Children analysed how the artist used space in the painting and questioned why he overlapped features and created tension created by cropping. The children thought the colour was quite dull and so wasn't an important consideration - they thought they could eliminate colour from their work and use just one rich colour.

• **Aims of the Project**

The children decided on their aims for the work:

- Modern people, including themselves, would feature in their work – inspired by the reflection of gallery visitors in the glass frame, viewing the

painting.

- Include modern faces and hands only, avoiding bodies or modern costume.
- Focus on key figures and eliminate background distraction.
- Explore sizes and cropping and drawing from different perspectives.
- Use blue background to create mysterious night sky effect to make the figures float around in space or in a dream.

▪ **Who are the sessions aimed at?**

Who is the session aimed at?

The sessions were run with children aged 8.

The resource could be used with children aged 7 to 11 (older KS 1 children and KS 2 children).

▪ **Which areas of exploration are covered?**

Which areas of exploration are covered?

- Drawing and mark-making
- Drawing from observation and imagination
- Mono-printing
- Working large scale
- Oil painting
- Mixed -media.
- Explore scale, composition, negative space & cropping.
- Create a group composition using selected mages.
- Appreciation of historic art.
- Using established art to inspire own work.

▪ **How much time is needed?**

How much time is needed?

The session was 1.5 hours with preparation time.

Older children could easily spend more time using smaller brushes or more detail in the mono-printing. Younger children might benefit from two one-hour sessions.

The session below was with the whole class. A helper was beneficial as the children rotated around two activities and because of using white spirit. If managed well, and adequate preparation, there should be no children waiting for a resource or process.

▪ **Extension Ideas**

The project could be extended:

- More small portraits could be produced so children could be more selective, considering the quality of line, pressure and amount of ink used.
- More washes of colour could be added inside the shapes.
- More painted shapes could be added to the background as another layer, as the oil paint, if damp or dry, takes a second layer of any paint well.

▪ **Variation**

Variation

- The children developed an understanding of process, working spontaneously and with pace. If you follow the sessions you will cover all the areas of exploration listed.
- If time is limited, you can easily work on a smaller scale (I have mono-printed on A3-sized floor tiles or used inexpensive plastic table mats). The inked boards can be stacked and used at a later session.
- The children could spend time planning in an earlier session by cutting and collaging photocopied elements from the painting to create new compositions to inspire their designs.
- Children could work in pairs, each making one of the print methods, then bringing them together.
- If you would prefer, use acrylic or poster paint or even oil pastels or crayons for the background.
- A historic painting worked well, but any painting could be used as stimulus.
- The amount of preparation could be increased. If you are working with a smaller group, the time needed will remain the same.
- Collage could be added to the final design from magazines, wallpaper or photographs.
- White mono-printed ink drawings could be added by simply inking up thin paper laying it on and drawing through.

▪ **Materials, Equipment & Preparation**

Materials and Equipment-

- Inspiring 'Old Master' painting
- Safety goggle/aprons for those working with oil paint
- Prussian blue oil paint, old flat hog hair brushes
- Blue oil pastel
- Black/Red block printing ink, rollers

- A2 paper
- A4 photocopy paper
- PVA
- Old tiles/plastic placemats/table tops
- Sharp pencils or biros
- Newspaper

Preparation-

Ink up surfaces and tiles. Although children enjoy the energetic rolling of ink, check the amount of ink and that all edges are inked- (easily removed ink by layering newspaper and rubbing to remove excess).

Putting small amounts of oil paint out, small amount of white spirit in labelled glass jar (with hazard label).

Rip out some faces from newspaper, to avoid distraction of other newspaper images. I had some small plastic mirrors available for self-portraits to be reflected in the design.

▪ **Where might the sessions be used?**

Where might the sessions might be used?

- Classrooms (as part of art lessons or 1-off workshop)
- After school art club or AG&T group.
- Community groups (i.e. Scouts and Guides)
- Gallery, Museum or Art Organisation workshops

▪ **Tips!**

Tips-

- Have activities on different tables and encourage

- the children to rotate.
- Avoid having a demonstration already completed as they may feel they need to imitate it.
 - Have wet wipes for hands.
 - Newspaper on oil painting table.
 - Oil paint on paper plate/greaseproof paper/foil cake case.
 - Old jam jars with white spirit so doesn't tip over when brushes in.
 - Goggles can be made from acetate shapes- hole punched sides with shearing elastic.
 - Ask parents to donate old tiles.
 - Small amount of printing ink goes a long way.
 - A4 dark blue carbon paper is inexpensive and can be masking taped together to give a mono-print effect.
 - A portable folding drying rack is perfect to dry overnight.
 - If no old table tops, tiles, mats, plastic sheet from picture frames or off-cuts of Formica boards would be ideal. Don't be afraid to ink the actual table - water based ink easily wipes off, and the children love helping.

Part 1 Drawing and printing in sketchbooks

The session began by me giving verbal descriptions of the painting we were studying (see above) and with the children making initial pencil drawings in sketchbooks in response to my descriptions, without any visual clues.



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**Drawing with Scissors: Screen
Printing Workshop in 3**

Stages, Inspired by Matisse

Painting a Bluebell Forest in Cyan, Magenta and Process Yellow on a Large Scale

In this project young teenagers were given the opportunity to paint on a larger scale; to explore working big whilst immersing themselves in colour. We were all inspired by the spring!

Students transformed the room into a bluebell forest in cyan, magenta and process yellow Scolaquip acrylic paint. By Sheila Ceccarelli

How to Make Beautiful, Liquid Drawings Inspired by Degas

This resource looks at drawings by the French artist, Edgar Degas (1834-1917), and how to enable the production of beautiful, 'inky drawings' in the classroom. This resource was created in collaboration with AccessArt and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Making Monotypes Inspired by Degas

This resource shares how Edgar Degas made his 'inky drawings,' or monotypes, and how the process of mono-printing can be further explored in the classroom – In collaboration with the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Primal Painting

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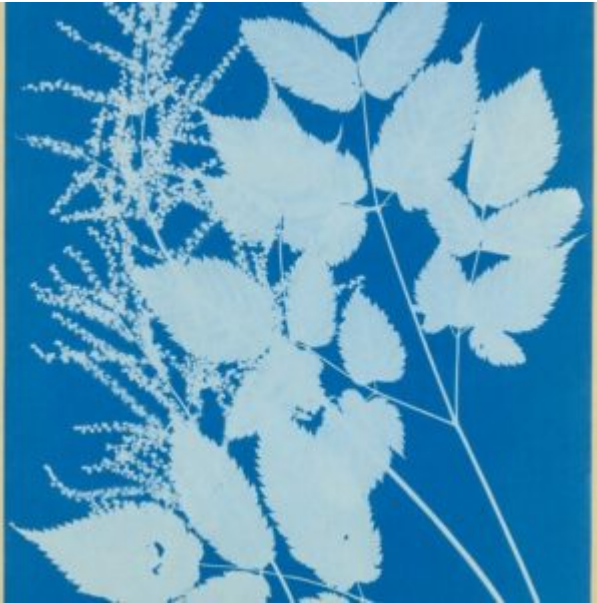
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Talking Points: Frances Hatch



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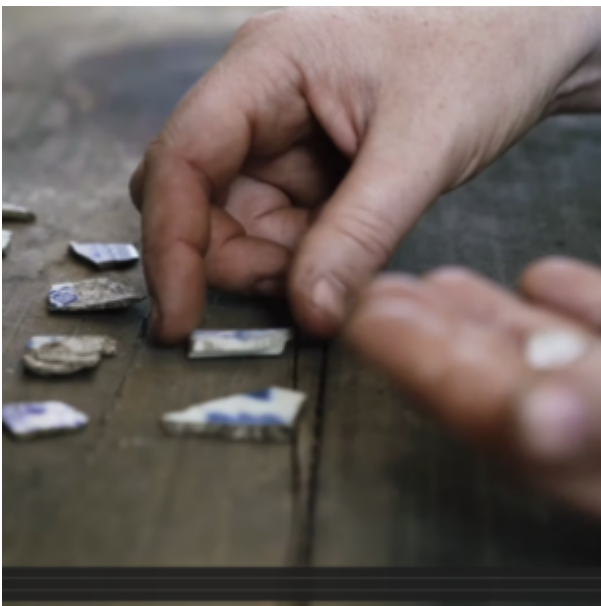
Talking Points: What is a cyanotype



Talking Points: Cave Art



Talking Points: Artists as explorers and collectors



Sculpture from Sculpture

Inspired by sculptures by Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Jacob Epstein and looking at 'inside' and 'outside' shapes, students created their own constructions with help of artist Anne-Louise Quinton.

From Bones and Body to Structure

and Form – by Melissa Pierce Murray

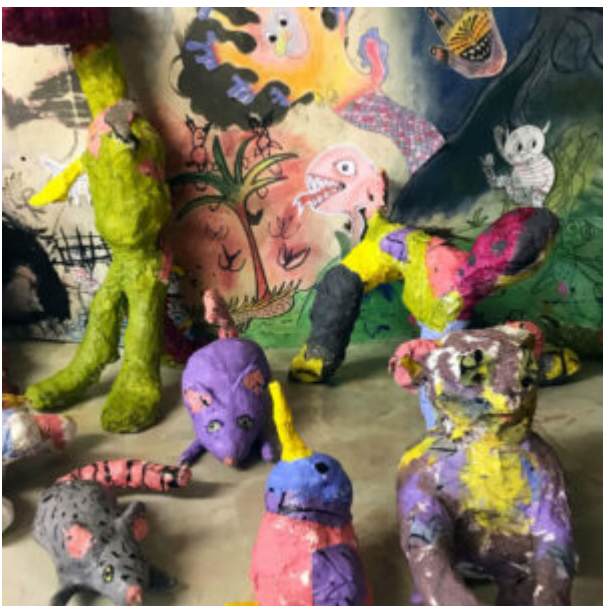
Artist Melissa Pierce Murray worked with teenagers from AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class on a series of workshops which physically explored drawing and sculptural responses to form, forces and anatomy.

Sensing Form:
Using Feel to

Manipulate Clay with Linda Green

**Making Sculptural
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(Session 2 & 3)**

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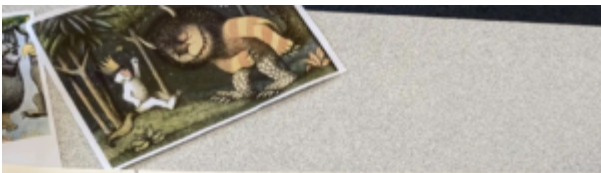
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**Roseate
Mixed
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**Spoonbill
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Beginning with Bones

In a workshop led by artist Melissa Pierce Murray, teenagers make observational drawings of a 1/4 life size model of a skeleton to understand the structure of the human body. Students looked at how artists used armatures, including Alberto Giacometti and Henri Matisse.

Dancing Bones

Inspired by real anatomical drawings of human, ape, cat, lion, horse and dog skeletons, teenagers build 'life size' and 'oversize' collages of 'dancing

skeletons' – This workshop was led by
artist Melissa Pierce Murray

**Animating Old
Books**

**The AccessArt
Village and How a
Small Idea can be**

Big

Sheila Ceccarelli from AccessArt leads year nine students from Frances Bardsley Academy for Girls on a collective drawing and collage experience exploring the #AccessArtVillage in BRG Brentwood Road Gallery. Students absorb this stunning collection of sewn houses and inspired by thread and stitches, make their own creative responses.

Day of the Dead Skulls

This workshop combined students' studies of the skull with ideas borrowed from the Mexican traditions for Dia de

Muertos – The Day of the Dead.