

Sketchbook Exercise Ideas: Starting with Magazine Imagery

These sketchbook exercise ideas were inspired by the working practices of [Jonathon Ford](#) and **Madelaine Murphy**. Both artists, working independently of each other, use imagery from magazines, books, news papers and pamphlets to help trigger thought processes and create imagery in their sketchbooks.

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Overview

This workshop activity is a great way to generate content quickly, and so give pupils something which they can both reflect on and feel confident about. But just because the imagery comes relatively quickly, doesn't mean it is meaningless. The element of personal choice is crucial to this activity. As pupils make choices about which kinds of imagery they want to select or collect, they are beginning to think about their likes, dislikes and personal preferences. As pupils sort the imagery, they begin to make decisions about presentation, context and meaning, and as they then work in to the imagery, and make it their own, they begin to experience what it is like to think laterally, to manipulate (a crucial skill), to invent (and re-invent), and to take responsibility for the way something is then seen, and the new meanings it presents.

When to use this activity

This activity can be used in a variety of ways:

- to start off a new project - to generate images quickly and effectively
- to help pupils gain confidence in what their sketchbooks can look like, and to help them realise they have got something to say
- as a stand alone sketchbook exercise or icebreaker
- as a tool to help pupils begin to *think around* a certain theme or project
- when someone reaches a sticky point and they need a gentle shove or breath of fresh air!

How to use this activity

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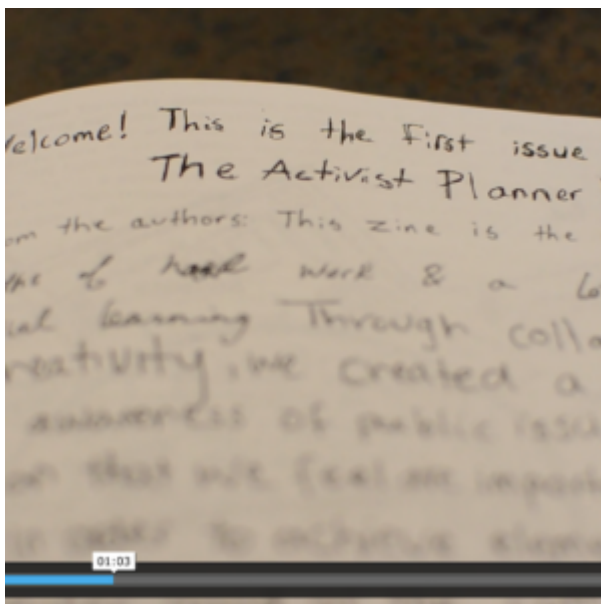
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Sketchbook Teaching Tips

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Jonathan Ford shares his sketchbook pages. See from initial sketchbook pages to finished sculpture.

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Artist Debbie Greenaway shares some of her sketchbook pages and inspires us with the processes which help her find inspiration all around.

Rob Gill – Illustrators Sketchbooks

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Animator Gemma Longbottom shares her sketchbook.

Isabella Whitworth – A Textile Sketchbook Ideas

Isabella Whitworth – textile artist, shares her sketchbooks and sketchbook approach with us.

Sketchbook Ideas for Primary Schools – A Shared Sketchbook Inspired by Words

This activity can be used to enable pupils to work independently to create pages which are then tied together to create a beautiful, eclectic shared sketchbook. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

Sketchbooks for Designers – An Introduction for Children

This module explores how sketchbooks can be a vital tool in any design process – whatever pupils are designing. Includes a module for pupils and teachers notes. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

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Illustrator Yumi Okudo shares an exercise which can help students explore concepts of scale and composition. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

10 x Creative Sketchbook Exercises

10 simple ideas for generating sketchbook content. Suitable for use by adults or children. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

Sketchbooks and Thinking Skills

This module is about helping to develop thinking skills in children and to widen and deepen their understanding of their own learning. Children are encouraged to ask themselves questions throughout the sketchbook process. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

Sketchbook Warm-Up by Jo Blaker

An ice breaker sketchbook exercise shared by Jo Blaker – perfect for use in school. [Full AccessArt Members Only](#)

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Artist Emma Davies shares some of her sketchbook pages and her sketch book processes

Simple Stapled Sketchbook

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Creative practitioners share what it is that makes them keep coming back to their sketchbooks.