

Nests: Materials, Tools Testing and Sketchbooks

By [Mandy Barrett](#) and [Jo Blaker](#).

In this first of a series of 3 posts, Teacher Mandy Barrett and Artist Jo Blaker journey on a project that considers the materials and structures of nests. In this first post the class were invited to use inventive and exploratory ways of making marks using a range of drawing tools and ink.

Click on the links to [post two: Observational Ink Drawing](#) and [post three: Nests with Dry and Wet Media](#).



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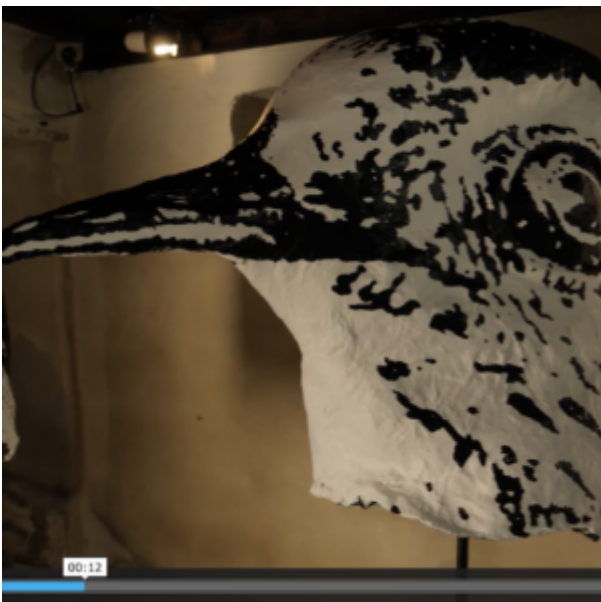
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Pathway: Sculpture, Structure,
Inventiveness & determination



[This is featured in the 'Sculpture, Structure, Inventiveness & Determination' pathway](#)

Talking Points: What can we learn from birds



Drawing source material: nests



Drawing Source Material: Egyptian Artefacts

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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Egyptian Artefacts

Use the film and imagery below to enable children to explore Egyptian artefacts. Try to create a sense of momentum – for example you might pause on an image or the video 4 times and ask the pupils to make a 1 minute, 2 minute, 3 minute and 4 minute drawing at each pause.

Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to qualities of the artefacts.

Try the same exercise using different materials, ie handwriting pen, ink and nib, pastel, watercolour...

Explore the collections of Rijksmuseum van Oudheden [here](#).

You can find lots of visual resources on [Google Arts and Culture about preserving Egypt's history](#).



Military Musicians Showing Nubian and Egyptian Styles, Nina de Garis Davies (1881–1965), New Kingdom, Dynasty 18, reign of Thutmose IV, ca. 1400–1390 B.C. From Egypt, Upper Egypt, Thebes, Sheikh Abd el-Qurna, Tomb of Tjeneny (TT 74) Tempera on paper, H. 44.5 × W. 93 cm (17 1/2 × 36 5/8 in.) Rogers Fund, 1931

Watch the clip with the volume off as you guide children's attention to parts of the paintings



Bronze statuette of Osiris, Late Dynastic-Hellenistic 664–31 B.C. Egyptian Medium: Bronze Dimensions: H. 4 1/2 in. (11.4 cm) The Cesnola Collection, 1874–76



Tomb Chapel of Raemkai: South Wall, Old Kingdom, Dynasty 5, ca. 2446–2389 B.C., From Egypt, Memphite Region, Saqqara, North of the Djoser pyramid complex, Mariette D3, Egyptian Antiquities Service/Quibell excavations, 1907–08, Limestone, paint, Rogers Fund, 1908



Take a virtual tour of the Tomb of Menna on [Google Arts and Culture](#)



Deconstructing Ancient Egyptian Stelae on [Google Arts and Culture](#)

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Pathway: working with shape and colour

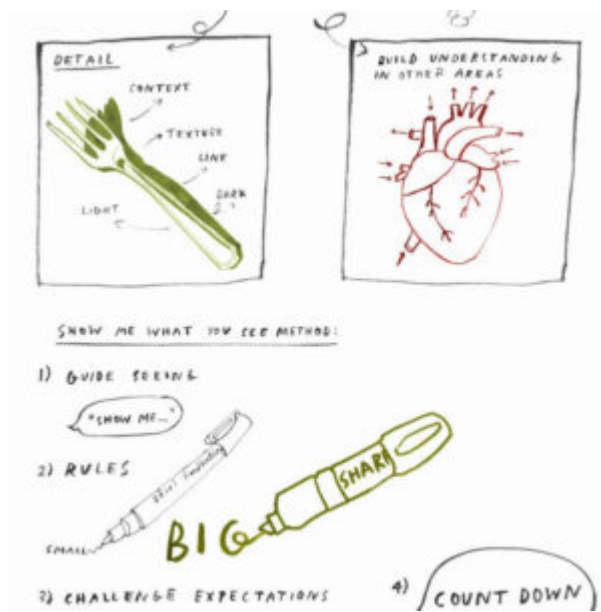


[This is featured in the 'Working with Shape and Colour' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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Drawing Source Material: Amazing Architectural Homes

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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Amazing Architectural Homes

Use this collection of films as source material for pupils exploring amazing architectural homes. In the first instance you might want to pause the videos at suitable points to enable the children to carefully look at the main forms and details. Try to create a sense of momentum – for example you might pause the video 4 times and ask the pupils to make a 1 minute, 2 minute, 3 minute and 4 minute drawing at each pause.

Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to features of the building.

When pupils are more experienced, you can also try getting them to make their drawings as the videos play – making quick gestural sketches.

You May Also Like...

Pathway: Architecture- Dream big or small?



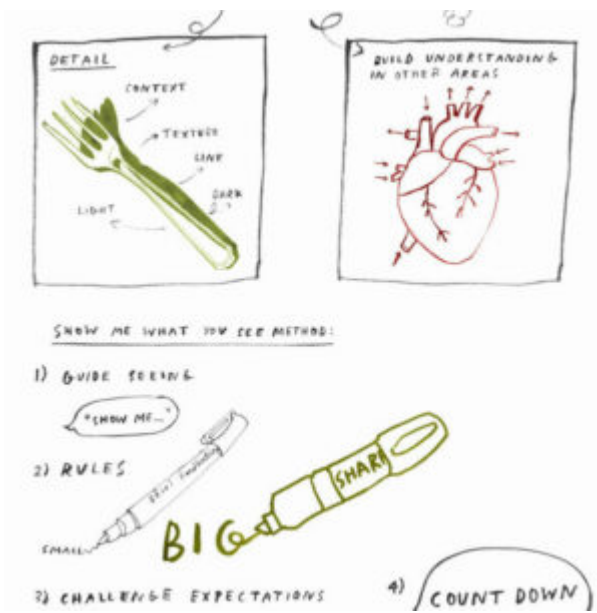
[This is featured in the 'Architecture: Dream Big or Small?' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



Find out how pupils can respond to artists work in sketchbooks

Show me what you see



Enable close looking and drawing with this exercise

Drawing Source Material: Oceans

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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Oceans and Seas

Use the film below as source material to enable the children to draw things living in the ocean.

You can either choose to stop the video, and draw from a collection of paused images, or you can also choose to ask the children to work from the moving image.

Find drawing exercises below to help your drawing exploration.

Drawing Exercises

1. Have the children draw in a quiet room, with the video on the whiteboard.
2. Stop the video at a chosen frame and use your voice to direct their drawing. Choose words which relate to the imagery, for example you might decide to focus their attention on vertical lines, so you might choose words like: line, growth, upward, downward, fall... or you might choose to attract their attention to the energy of a wave or the curve of an animals back. Think carefully about the words you use – they don't have to be used in sentences – you can speak lists.
3. Each sketchbook response might take just 3 to 5 minutes, then move on to another still. Create a sense of momentum.

Direct pupils to use a chosen medium. You might like to start with soft pencil or handwriting pen.

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Pathway: Stick Transformation project

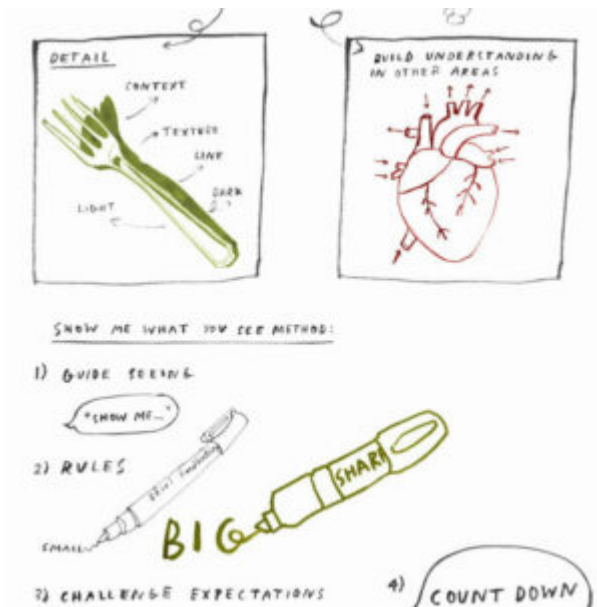


[This is featured in the 'Stick Transformation Project' pathway](#)

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Drawing Source Material: Food

A collection of imagery and sources which

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Food

Use the film below to enable children to explore drawing food. Try to create a sense of momentum – for example you might pause the video 4 times and ask the pupils to make a 1 minute, 2 minute, 3 minute and 4 minute drawing at each pause.

Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to qualities of the food.

Try the same exercise using different materials, ie handwriting pen, ink and nib, pastel, watercolour...

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Pathway: Festival Feasts

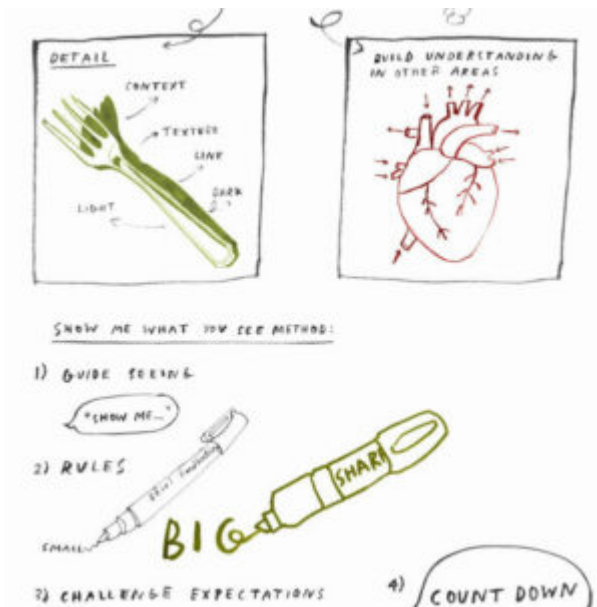


[This is featured in the 'Festival Feasts' pathway](#)

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Drawing Source Material: Wild Flowers

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Wild Flowers

Use this collection of films as source material

for pupils exploring wild flowers. In the first instance you might want to pause the videos at suitable points to enable the children to carefully look at the main forms and details. Try to create a sense of momentum – for example you might pause the video 4 times and ask the pupils to make a 1 minute, 2 minute, 3 minute and 4 minute drawing at each pause.

Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to features of the flowers.

When pupils are more experienced, you can also try getting them to make their drawings as the videos play – making quick gestural sketches.

Drawing Exercises

1. Have the children draw in a quiet room, with the video on the whiteboard.
2. Stop the video at a chosen frame and use your voice to direct their drawing. Choose words which relate to the imagery, for example you might decide to focus their attention on vertical lines, so you might choose words like: line, growth, upward, downward, fall... or you might choose to attract their attention to the energy of a wave or the curve of a plants stem. Think carefully about the words you use – they don't have to be used in sentences – you can speak lists.

Each sketchbook response might take just 3 to

3. 5 minutes, then move on to another still. Create a sense of momentum.
4. Direct pupils to use a chosen medium. You might like to start with soft pencil or handwriting pen.

This Source Material Features in...

Pathway: Cloth, thread, paint



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

Pathway: Flora and Fauna

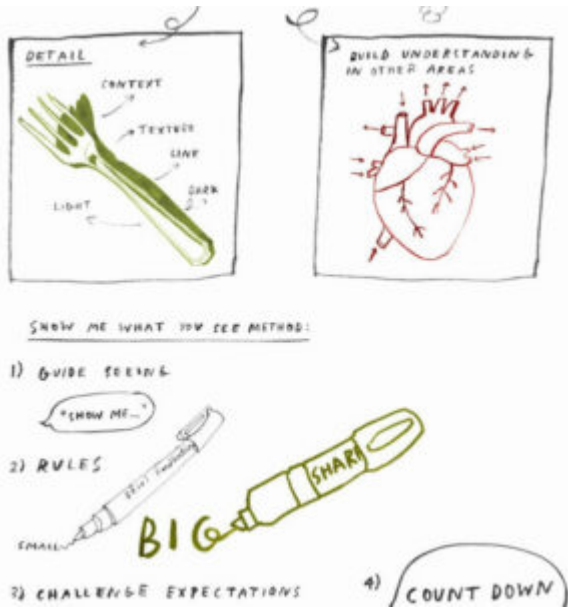


[This is featured in the 'Flora and Fauna' pathway](#)

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Drawing Source Material: Insects

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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Insects

Use this collection of films as source material for pupils exploring insects. In the first instance you might want to pause the videos at suitable points to enable the children to carefully look at the main forms and details. Try to create a sense of momentum – for example you might pause the video 4 times and ask the pupils to make a 1 minute, 2 minute, 3 minute and 4 minute drawing at each pause.

Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to features of the insect.

When pupils are more experienced, you can also try

getting them to make their drawings as the videos play – making quick gestural sketches.

Drawing Exercises

1. Have the children draw in a quiet room, with the video on the whiteboard.
2. Stop the video at a chosen frame and use your voice to direct their drawing. Choose words which relate to the imagery, for example you might decide to focus their attention on vertical lines, so you might choose words like: line, growth, upward, downward, fall... or you might choose to attract their attention to the energy of a wave or the curve of an animals back. Think carefully about the words you use – they don't have to be used in sentences – you can speak lists.
3. Each sketchbook response might take just 3 to 5 minutes, then move on to another still. Create a sense of momentum.
4. Direct pupils to use a chosen medium. You might like to start with soft pencil or handwriting pen.

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Pathway: Flora and Fauna

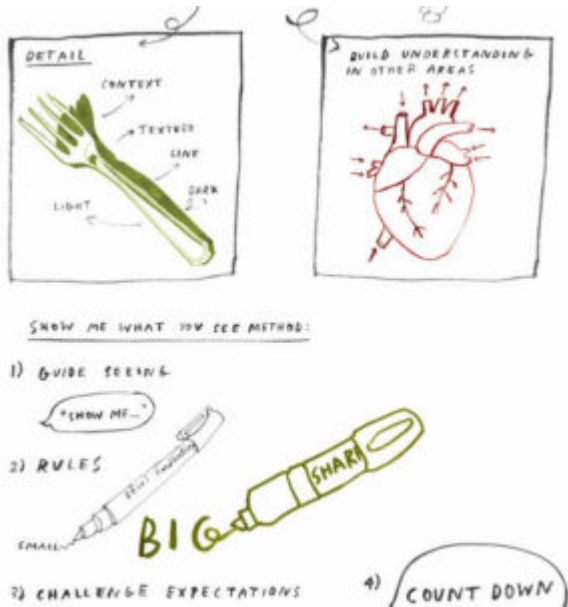


This is featured in the 'Flora and Fauna' pathway

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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Talking Points: Making Drawings With Your Whole Body – Molly Haslund

How can artists help us see and use spaces in new ways?

Molly Haslund's work is inspired by everyday objects, places, and environments. She uses action and [performance](#) to mix the ordinary with the unexpected, [change spaces](#), and make people think about how and why we use them.

Watch the video below and discuss why she draws these circles and the impact they might have in a

space you use yourself.

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The Circle Project by Molly Haslund

Teacher's Notes

"Molly Haslund ventures out into the city wearing grey: a grey suit, grey socks and grey shoes so that she blends in with the tarmac and the pavement. She carries a huge pair of compasses much taller than herself. She stops somewhere and starts drawing a white circle on the ground. She completes the first circle and then moves the pair

of compasses and starts drawing a new circle that overlaps the first one. She draws a third circle and stands in her grey shoes in the middle of the circle for a moment before snapping the pair of compasses together and moving on.”

<https://www.mollyhaslund.com/circles-2013-2>

“... The focus is on the physical action, on the movement of the circles, and the patterns emerging and disappearing again – and of course the effect grows with the number of participants. on the other hand, if you want to draw alone, you can just withdraw a little from the rest. A bit like on the dance floor.” [Molly Haslund](#)

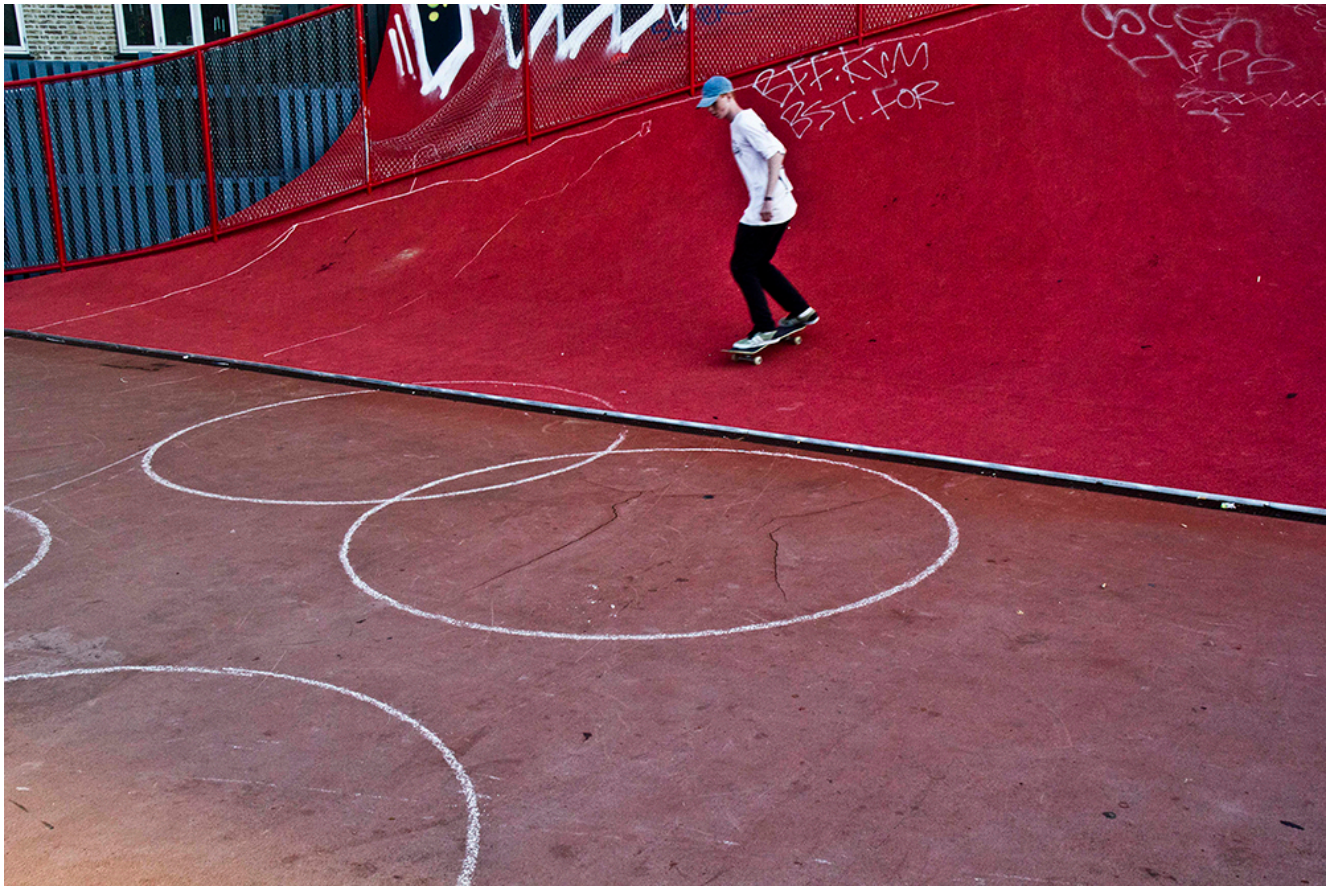
Watch the video with the pupils, and look at the images below. Find questions to prompt discussion at the end of this resource.



Circles, Molly Haslund, 2015, New York, Peekskill Project #6, Hudson Valley MOCA, Photo by Joe Orangias



Circles (2013), Molly Haslund, Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde, Denmark, Photo by Matilde Haaning



Circles, Molly Haslund, 2014, Art Week, Superkilen, Copenhagen, Denmark, Photo by Matilde Haaning



Circles, Molly Haslund, 2014, Art Week, Superkilen, Copenhagen, Denmark, Photo by Matilde Haaning

Questions to Ask Children

How would you feel if you came across these circles in your street or playground, without knowing who had made them or why? What would you do? Would they change the way you move?

How do you think Molly, the artist, chooses where to make her circles?

How could you make similar circles in your playground, using chalk tied to sticks?

How would the circles you make join up with the

circles your friends make?

What would other pupils in your school think if they discovered your circles? What do you think they would do?

What other shapes could you make with your body in the playground? Would you need tools?

If music played would you make different shapes? How would the shapes be different?

This Talking Points Is Used In...

Pathway: Spirals

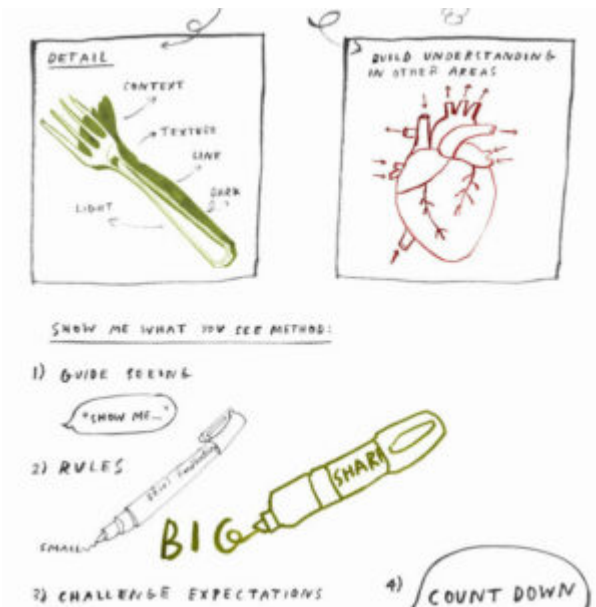


[This is featured in the 'Spirals' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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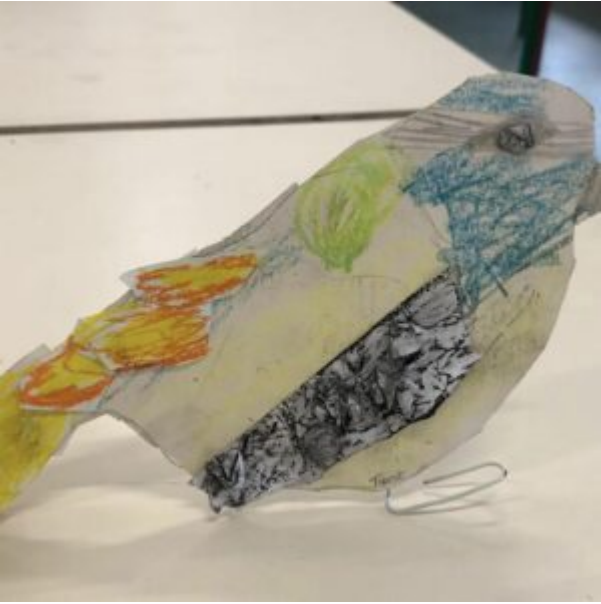


Making Sculptural Birds

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Schools...













You May Also Like...

Pathway: Making Birds



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

Talking Points: Inspired by Birds



Drawing Source Material: Exploring Architecture

A collection of embedded google maps at chosen locations to help you explore architecture through drawing and discussion.

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Navigate around the building to explore.

- Draw from different angles and perspectives
- Invite children to make drawings of different timed length: 10 minutes, 5 minutes, 2 minutes.
- Try various challenges:
 - Make a drawing in one continuous line.
 - Make a drawing using only straight lines.
 - Make a drawing using different line weights.
 - Make a drawing using charcoal, pen, ink and nib etc

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Pathway: Be an architect

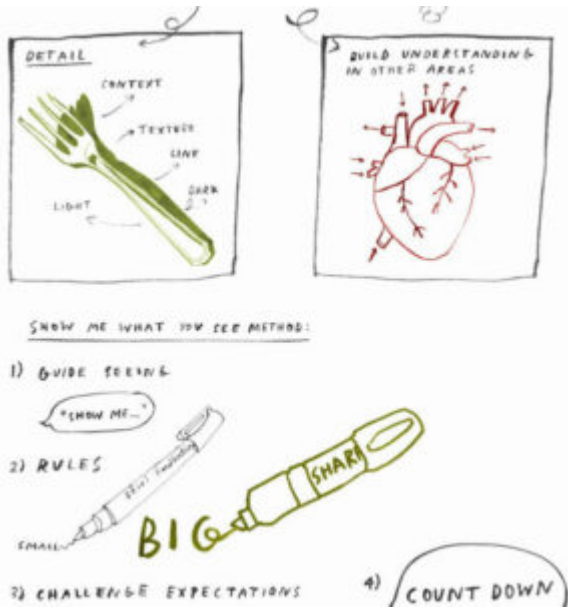


This is featured in the 'Be an Architect' pathway

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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Drawing Source Material: Drone Footage

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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Drone Footage Over Urban Landscape

Use the film below as source material to enable an exploration of drawing architecture and urban landscapes. You can also try to find drone footage of your own environment, or that of areas relating to projects you are covering in school.

Pause the footage at points which catch your eye and invite the children to make timed drawings – 15 minutes, 10 minutes, 5 minutes, 2 minutes or 1 minute.

Vary the drawing materials you use and work in sketchbooks or sheets of paper of different sizes and textures. You may also like to make multiple line drawings over one page – each with a

different colour or line weight, to describe different pause points in the same film to capture a moving landscape.

Bergen, Norway

London

La Sagrada Familia, Barcelona

This Source Material Features in...

Pathway: Cloth, thread, paint



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

Pathway: Mixed Media Land and city scapes



[This is featured in the 'Mixed Media Land and City Scapes' pathway](#)

Pathway: Be an architect

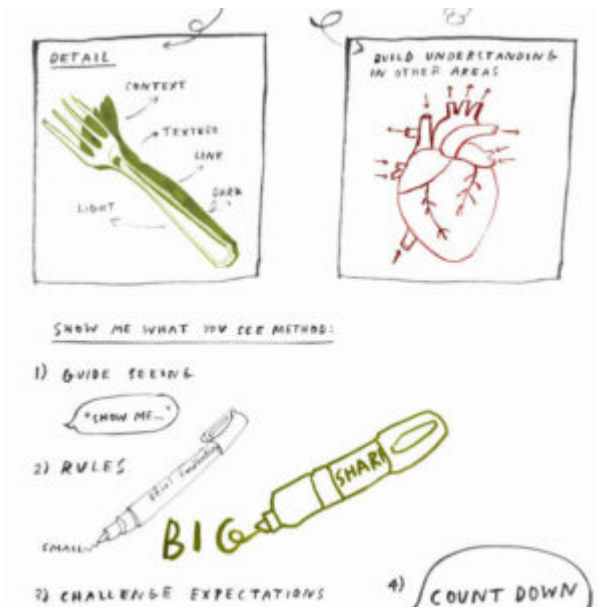


[This is featured in the 'Be an Architect' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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Drawing Source Material: The Natural World

A collection of imagery and sources which you can use to prompt drawing in schools and community groups.

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The Natural World

Use the film below as source material to enable

the children to draw the natural world.

You can either choose to stop the video, and draw from a collection of paused images, or you can also choose to ask the children to work from the moving image.

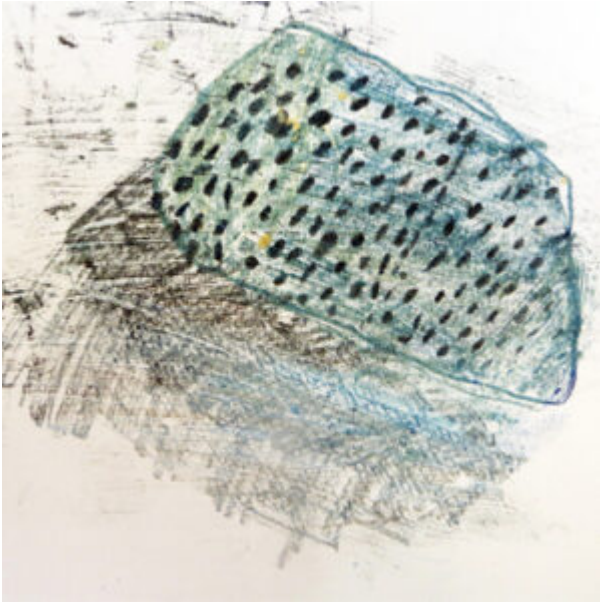
Find drawing exercises below to help your drawing exploration.

Drawing Exercises

1. Have the children draw in a quiet room, with the video on the whiteboard.
2. Stop the video at a chosen frame and use your voice to direct their drawing. Choose words which relate to the imagery, for example you might decide to focus their attention on vertical lines, so you might choose words like: line, growth, upward, downward, fall... or you might choose to attract their attention to the energy of a wave or the curve of an animals back. Think carefully about the words you use – they don't have to be used in sentences – you can speak lists.
3. Each sketchbook response might take just 3 to 5 minutes, then move on to another still. Create a sense of momentum.
4. Direct pupils to use a chosen medium. You might like to start with soft pencil or handwriting pen.

You May Also Like...

Pathway: Exploring the world through mono print



[This is featured in the 'Exploring The World Through Mono print' pathway](#)

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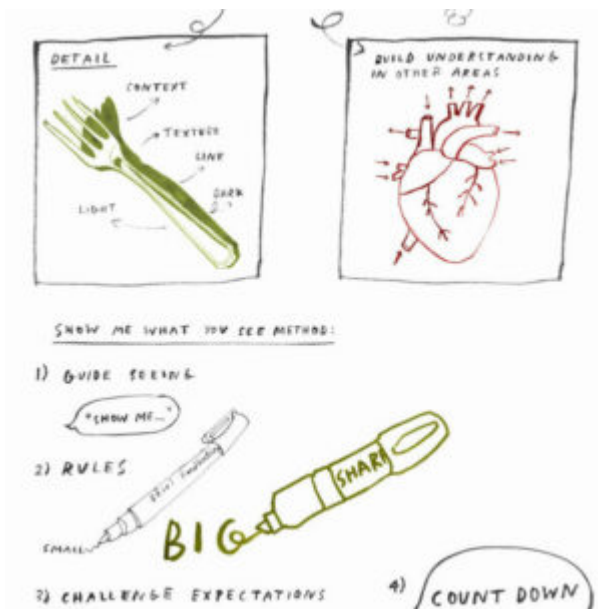


Pathway: Making Animated Drawings



This is featured in the 'Making Animated Drawings' pathway

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Drawing Source Material: Birds

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Birds

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Encourage close and slow looking by talking as they draw – use your voice to attract their attention to features of the bird.

When pupils are more experienced, you can also try getting them to make their drawings as the videos play – making quick gestural sketches.

You May Also Like...

Pathway: Making Birds

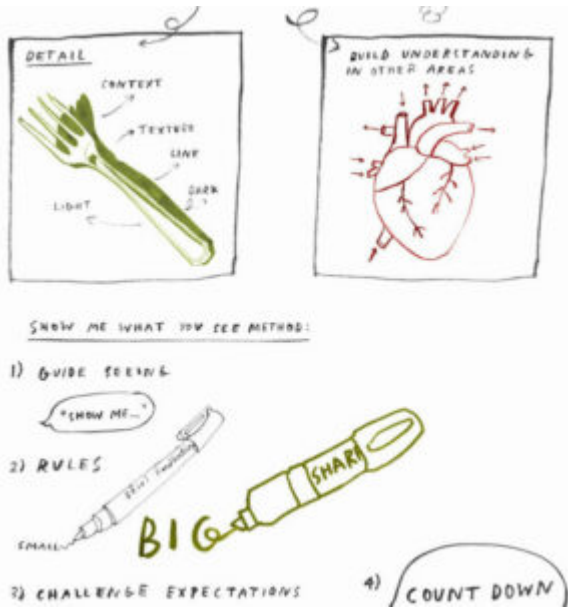


[This is featured in the 'Making Birds' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



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Talking Points: Paul Klee

How can abstract artwork help us use our imagination?

Paul Klee was one of the most influential artists of the 20th century, celebrated for his distinctive abstract and childlike style. His work was deeply influenced by poetry, colour theory, and music, as well as by major artistic movements such as Surrealism, Cubism, and Expressionism.

Explore his paintings using the sources below, then discuss the questions provided.

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Watercolour Paintings by Paul Klee

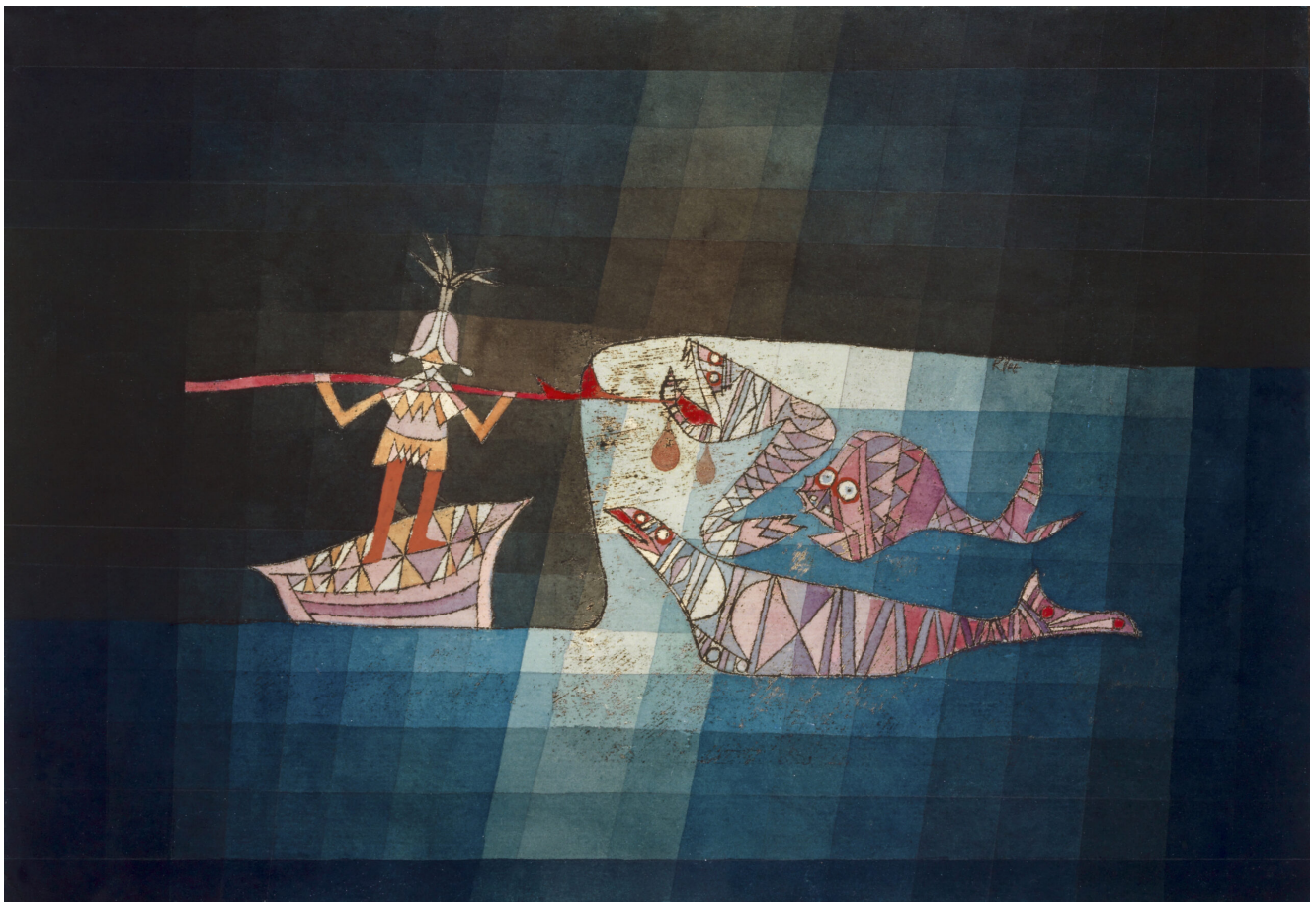
Klee was born in 1879 in Switzerland. When he was 35 he visited Tunisia in Africa, where his experience of the light and colours of the landscapes and architecture helped awaken his interest in colour.

He became less interested in painting exactly what he saw and in fact from 1915 onwards he never again worked from a model. Instead, he became interested in painting the colours around him, letting them detach themselves from the objects the colours were on. In this way his work moved towards Abstraction.

He became interested in creating fantastical worlds, full of symbols, shapes, colour and line.

He took his inspiration from the world around him, and his imaginative response to the world, and also from poetry, music and literature.

Sometimes his work was serious and meditative, other times it was full of humour. He also loved the sounds of words and phrases and the titles of works were often very important to Klee.



Battle scene from the funny and fantastic opera "The Seafarers" (1923). Painting by Paul Klee. Original from the Kunstmuseum Basel Museum

Questions to Ask Children

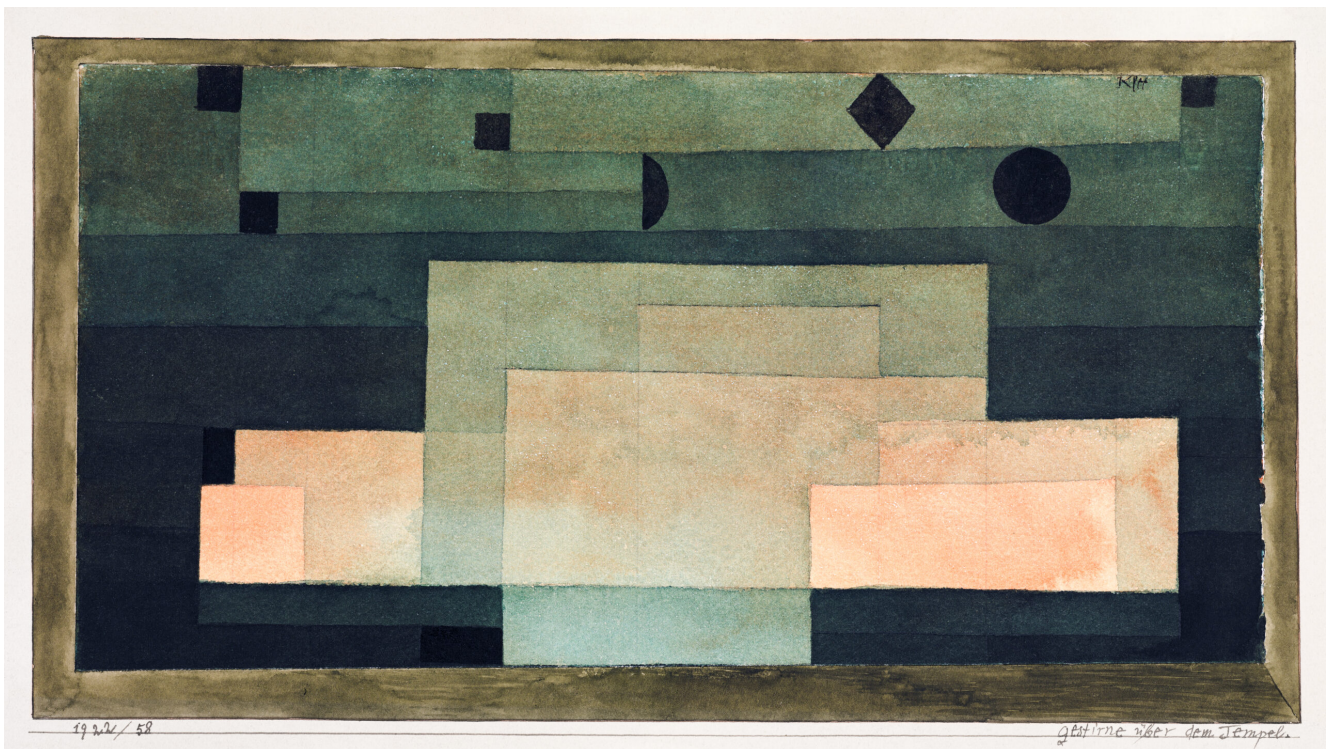
Describe what you see.

What do you think is happening?

How does the title change the painting?

Why do you think Klee painted in blocks of colour?

How does the painting make you feel?



The Firmament Above the Temple (1922) by Paul Klee. Original from The MET Museum

Questions to Ask Children

Describe what you see.

Can you see the landscape and the sky? How has

Klee painted them?

How does the painting make you feel?



Temple Gardens (1920) by Paul Klee. Original from The MET Museum

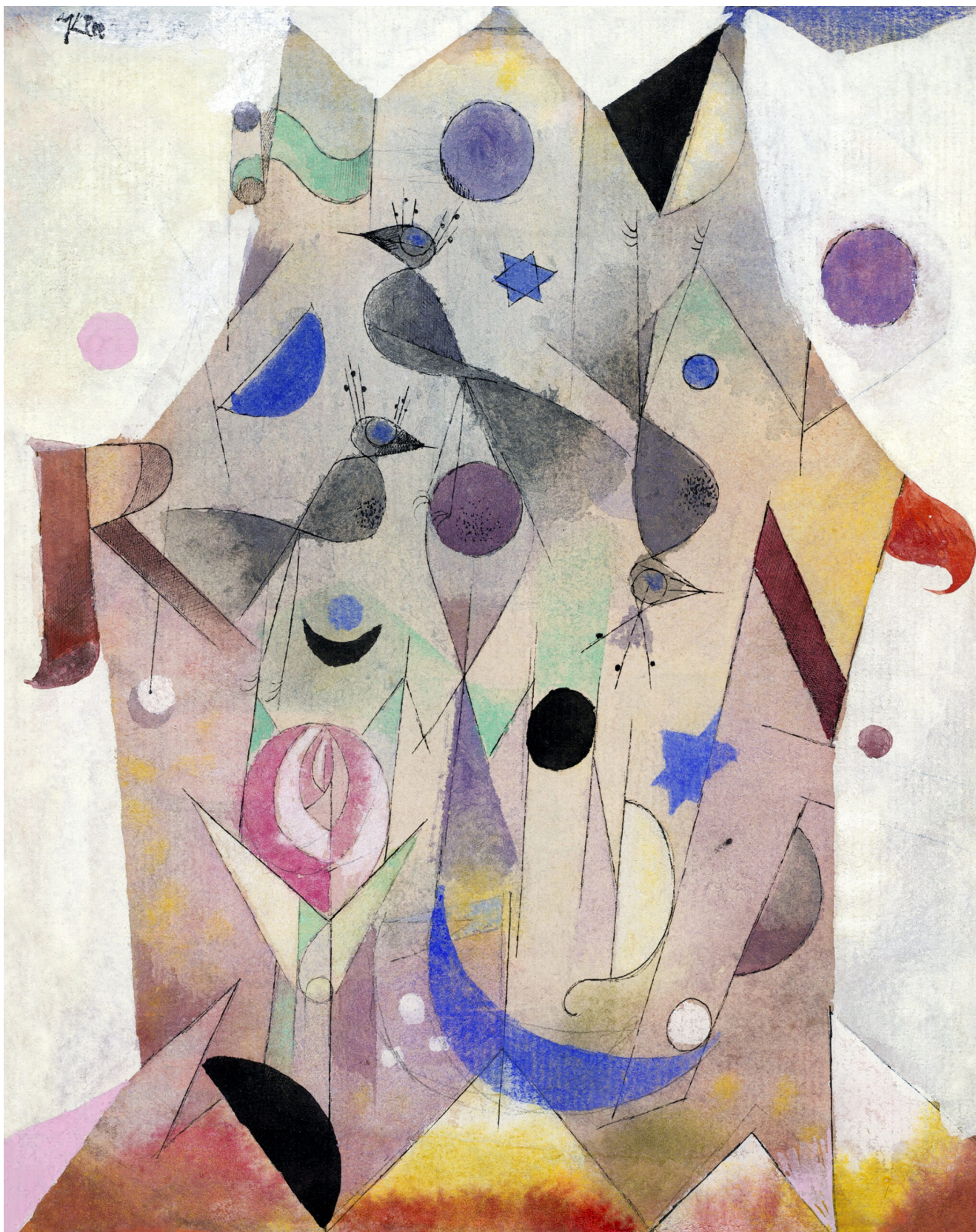
Questions to Ask Children

Describe what you see.

How does this landscape make you feel?

If you were there, in the painting, how would you feel?

Tell me about the colours. Why do you think Klee choose these colours?



Persian Nightingales (1917) by Paul Klee. Original

portrait painting from The Art Institute of Chicago.

Questions to Ask Children

Describe what you see.

What materials do you think Klee used?

Can you see two letters?

The R and the N stand for Rose and Nightingale. Can you spot the rose and the Nightingales in the painting?

How does this painting make you feel?

How do you think the painter felt when he painted it?

Watch this animation of one of Klee's paintings.

Questions to Ask Children

How do you feel watching the animation?

What kind of world has Klee/the animator created?

If you could animate one of the paintings above, how would you bring it to life? What would you make it do?

In this video, Klee's paintings are shown alongside music.

Questions to Ask Children

How does the music change the way you look at the paintings?

Do you think Klee would have liked this video (remember Klee made his paintings at a time when there were very few films).

This Talking Points Is Used In...

Pathway: Exploring Watercolour

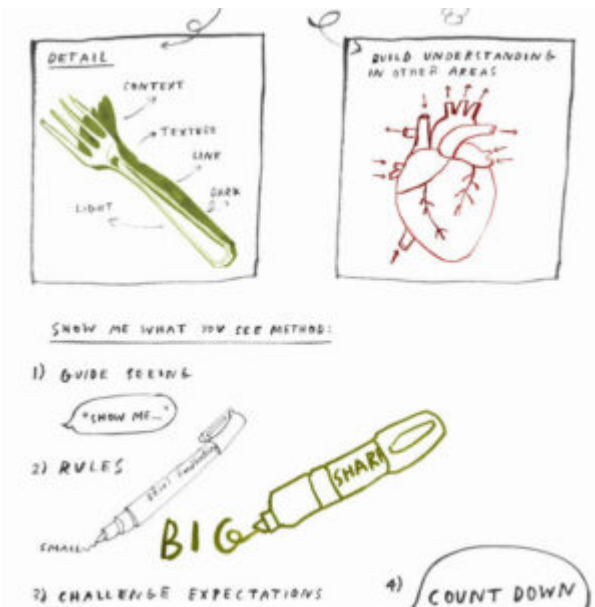


[Featured in the 'Exploring Watercolour' pathway](#)

using sketchbooks to make visual notes



Show me what you see



The AccessArt Drawing Journey for Primary Children: Aims

and Intent

What Is A Drawing Tool?

**What Is The Purpose of
Drawing?**

What Is Drawing?

Remembrance Day Peg Soldiers

What We Like About This Resource...

“It’s great to see a different approach to thinking about remembrance day. These peg soldiers are a refreshing alternative to artwork inspired by poppies. The processes involved encourage children to focus on fine motor skills: wrapping embroidery thread around the peg and creating

small detailed clothes and helmets. These dolls look particularly effective when standing as a collection and would make a poignant alternative to a standard display board” – Rachel, AccessArt

**See This Resource
Used In Schools...**





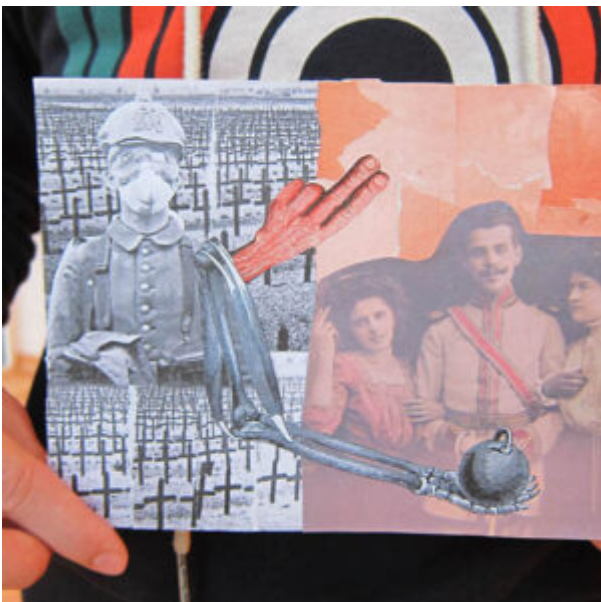
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An Exploration of Paul Nash



For Remembrance Day



World War 1 Mail Art

DrawAble: My Tiger Sketchbook by Inbal Leitner

What We Like About This Resource...

“This resource is a lovely example of how words and text can generate ideas, which can

then be transferred to paper. Working in this way with children is a great way for them to engage with literature – and to have an individual response. Try reading poems out loud to a class and ask them to list all the images that spring to mind before exploring those images through drawing”. – *Rachel, AccessArt*

**See This Resource
Used In Schools**



You May Also Like...

Pathway: Telling Stories through drawing and making



This is featured in the 'Drawing Stories Through Drawing and Making' pathway

Rosie Hurley: Esio Trot



Poetry and Printmaking



Found Poetry



Crazy

like a rose in blood

ew up climbing

the tower