

Artist's Engagement with Archaeology in the Primary Curriculum: Notes on links to the curriculum

Art and Design

Purpose

Art, craft and design embody some of the highest forms of human creativity. A high-quality art and design education should engage, inspire and challenge pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to experiment, invent and create their own works of art, craft and design. As pupils progress, they should be able to think critically and develop a more rigorous understanding of art and design.

Aims

- *produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences*
- *become proficient in drawing, painting, sculpture and other art, craft and design techniques*

KS 2

- *to improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing, painting and sculpture with a range of materials [for example, pencil, charcoal, paint, clay]*

The activities on the worksheets designed by Kyle Kirkpatrick have been carefully designed to address the aims of exploring ideas and recording experiences. They involve drawing and sculpture with clay and so they enable the development of mastery in techniques for KS 2 children.

Numeracy and Maths

Using measuring instruments with accuracy in practical settings.

Developing understanding of dimensions of a three dimensional shape (i.e. 1 M X 1M X 1M test pit)

Literacy

This activity represents an opportunity for students to enhance both their vocabulary both in spoken and written forms. The language of archaeology and of art is specific and in many ways unique to its practice so words for tools such as mattock and trowel and test pit, finds, digs and so on all have a new meaning in this context. This is similarly true for vocabulary associated with drawing and painting.

Moreover, there are opportunities for creative writing here in the form of story writing inspired by the finds and the art made from them. Such an activity could involve reference work and research into the lives of the people whose items are discovered during the digs.

Geography

The Geography curriculum lays out the following:

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and natural and human environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world should help them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation and use of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the frameworks and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

These activities are intended to contribute to the geography curriculum, in particular with regard to developing an in depth understanding of locality and change over time. For example,

Place knowledge

- *understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country*

Our experience of digging in schools has shown us that this sort of activity does inspire curiosity and fascination and encourages making connections between what is taught in school and what children are naturally curious about (like the stones they find in their back gardens or when out walking the dog).

The dig can unearth artefacts that teach us about the diversity of human life as well as the processes of decay and the way the soil beneath our feet is formed and reformed over time. The recreations suggested in the art worksheets are aimed at further developing this knowledge of change over time and focus on these ideas, encouraging children's imaginative engagement with both the past and future dimensions of time. All of this contributes to an understanding of physical and human processes.

History

The Key Stage 2 curriculum lays out the following:

Pupils should continue to develop a chronologically secure knowledge and understanding of British, local and world history, establishing clear narratives within and across the periods they study. They should note connections, contrasts and trends over time and develop the appropriate use of historical terms. They should regularly address and sometimes devise historically valid questions about change, cause, similarity and difference, and significance. They should construct informed responses that involve thoughtful selection and organisation of relevant historical information. They should understand how our knowledge of the past is constructed from a range of sources.

Curriculum Resources Pathways Project

In planning to ensure the progression described above, through teaching the British, local and world history outlined below, teachers should combine overview and depth studies to help pupils understand both the long arc of development and the complexity of specific aspects of the content.

Here you could use the dig to introduce or develop a local study of the iron age, bronze age or stone age.

Through the dig many of the concepts above can be dealt with in a practical manner, so for example they can learn about how knowledge of the past is constructed, they can use appropriate vocabulary in a practical setting, and they can devise questions based on their finds that will develop their understanding of time lines, both at a local and a national or global level. For example, the discovery of an iron nail might lead to questions about when plastics became more widely used and so on.

Science

The activities described here are mostly useful for developing understanding of and familiarity with everyday materials and their properties for example,

- *identify and name a variety of everyday materials, including wood, plastic, glass, metal, water, and rock*

Grouping and classifying a variety of materials according to their properties and functions.

Processes of decay and rotting as processes of change over time