

THE FITZWILLIAM MUSEUM

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Do- It- Yourself Ourselves Key Stage 1

This is one of our range of DIY resources, which aim to provide you with what you need to teach your pupils in the galleries. We hope that the following teaching ideas include some which are suitable for your needs. As we do not know your pupils, or the specific aims of your visit, these ideas may need adapting, but we hope they will act as a springboard. Each idea includes signpost sequences all of which point to pupil interaction with the exhibits, *example prompt questions written in italics*, and information. Many are followed by suggested extension ideas that can take place in the galleries. 'Into Action' sheets, which are linked to these teaching ideas, are available for pupils to use in the galleries.

Aims of the Ourselves session

- To help pupils understand that there are many ways in which we all look different – hair, eyes, size, shape of mouth, etc, and that's how we recognise each other.
- To help pupils understand that the clothes people wear, and the things that they have with them in their portraits tell us something about them too.
- To demonstrate that artists can do a very difficult thing which is to show how we think and feel on the inside, by being very careful about how they show the outside.

Galleries used in this session

Galleries 1,2 and 3

Teaching Idea - What Can Clothes Tell You?



To show how costume can dominate a portrait and give you clues about the identity and status of its wearer.

Approximate timing: 10 minutes

Location: Gallery 3

Elizabeth Vernon,
Countess of Southampton (b. 1573) c. 1603
Anonymous painter

PD.6-1984

Seat the children carefully, check they can all see the whole picture, especially the top.

Let's think about clothes. Can you think of different sorts of people who wear special clothes to do their jobs?

Police, fire service, nurses, soldiers, etc

Let's have a careful look at what this woman is wearing, what can you see?

Long dress, odd shape, white silk, pearls, crown, fur lined cloak, white silk shoes, white stockings, ruff etc. If necessary help the children to observe more closely, ask them to examine parts of the painting.

What can you tell me about her feet?

Is vocabulary extension needed to help them verbalize their observations?

Look at her collar, do we wear collars like that now? ... She called it a ruff.

Listing their observations is useful for developing the discussion. The children can now move on from observation to deduction prompted by questions like:

What can all these things you have noticed tell us about this woman. Is she wearing modern clothes, the sort your mum wears? So when do you think she was alive? Would it have been easy for this woman to work in those clothes? Why not? So what sort of person is she?

The children will think she is a queen - fair enough - the clues in the painting all point to that conclusion. She was actually a countess dressed in her robes for the coronation of James I.

Teaching Idea - What Makes Me Me

To introduce the concept of personal identity

Approximate timing: 10 minutes

Location: In the middle of Gallery 3 on the carpet

I want to start today by asking you to look at me. Encourage the children to look and think about you – what you are wearing and the bits of you that they can see. Establish what it is about you that makes them recognise you – is it your name, your clothes, your elbows or your face?

Do I look different to all of you? The children can feed back all sorts of differences! *Do you all look the same? No?* Ask two volunteers to stand up and compare one aspect of their appearance, e.g. hair (short/long, fair/dark, straight/curly, tied up/hanging loose) to show how different we all are. Lead on to how artists paint people and how they show all those differences.

Teaching Idea - How Can You Paint a Feeling?

To show that a portrait is about depicting the internal qualities as well as the external appearance of a person.

Approximate timing: 15 minutes

Location: Gallery 2

Mrs Robinson, 1870

George Richmond (1809-1896)

Museum Number: I204

Introduce the idea of how we feel emotions on the inside, but can show them on the outside. Ask for two volunteers. Whisper an emotion to them (angry, sad, overjoyed, scared) and ask them to make a facial expression to show this – the rest of the class have to guess what it is.

What about this woman, how is she feeling?

Encourage the children to observe her wistful expression, black dress – mourning, rings – sending us the message that she is married, or was married ..., cameo brooch – perhaps of her dead husband, not being able to concentrate on her book, looking up – what is she thinking?

Teaching Idea- Its All In The Pose



PDJ10-1955

Shows the importance of pose and the relationship between people in a group portrait. There is an accompanying gallery activity called "Make Your Own Group Pose"

Approximate time: 10 minutes

Location: Gallery 2

The Braddyll Family, 1789

Sir Joshua Reynolds, 1723 - 1792

Sometimes a portrait has more than one person in it. What sort of group of people have we got in this picture? Family. How do we know? Get children to look carefully at the faces and who looks like who. Do the people in your family look alike. Work out different members of the family: mother (Jane), father (Wilson) and child (Thomas). They may think Thomas is a girl because of the long hair. *What do their clothes tell you?* Explain that this picture is from a long time ago and fashion was different then.

Who is the most important person in this family? Man

Tell me why you think that? because of his height in the painting, his confident pose, the way he stares out of the painting making eye contact with everyone, the red colour of his jacket - all these are deliberate devices or tricks used by the artist to make us look at Wilson first.

Look at the way the Dad is standing and what he is wearing. Who else looks like him?

Son (Thomas) looks like father in dress and pose - Wilson's heir.

Are they a rich family? How can you tell? - clothes, garden, urn, etc.

Is anyone getting a cuddle in this picture? No? The dog on Jane's lap is the only living thing being touched in this picture. Perhaps its there in the middle of the picture to represent the love in the family.

EVERYTHING in the picture tells you something.

Extension Idea for *Its All In The Pose*- Make Your Own Group Pose

A drama activity to explore pose and composition

Approximate timing: 10 minutes

Divide class into groups – each group to be given a pre-written card which gives :

- a) Type of group
- b) What they are doing together

For example:

You are a group of friends, at a birthday party, watching the party boy or girl blowing out the candles on the cake. Or

You are a five-a-side football team and you have just won the league. You are posing for a press photo with your trophy.

For five minutes, each group, with their helper, will need to work on their composition, thinking of pose and expression, and imagine that someone presses the pause button on the remote control and then they FREEZE.

Bring the class back together and get each group to act out their group pose in turn. The rest of the class work out the answers from the pose, facial expression, gestures, etc. – just like the painted portraits.

Teaching Idea - Self Portraits

To explore how to show something of yourself in a portrait.

Approximate timing: 10 minutes

Location: Gallery 1

Self-Portrait, 1939

Stanley Spencer, 1891 - 1959

Museum No: 2506

Can you tell what job this person had? Artist - paintbrush, palette.

So who do you think painted this portrait? Maybe another artist. Perhaps he painted it himself.

How would he be able to see himself to paint the portrait? Using a mirror. We know Spencer was right-handed and he is shown as left-handed, which shows he used a mirror.

Do you think he looks smart or scruffy? He looks quite smart, in his collar and tie, although his hair is a bit ruffled. Point out how the unmade bed in the background spoils the smart image.

Does he look friendly? Not really. Talk about how his facial expression shows his character.

What things would you have in your self-portrait? Open this up to the class. Ask them what clothes they would wear - school uniform, home clothes, football kit. What would they have in their hands? What would they have in the background? Just their head and shoulders or full length? Smiley face, cross face?

This teaching idea can be extended by the 'Be A Portrait Painter For A Day' Into Action sheet.

Resources for Ourselves

The following 'Into Action' sheets are available from the Education Department:

The Fancy Dress Party

Be A Portrait Painter For A Day

The Interview

The following Factsheets are available from the Education Department:

Joshua Reynolds: The Bradyll Family

Hans Eworth: Mary Tudor

Anon: Elizabeth Vernon

Jacob Epstein: Albert Einstein

Self Portrait: Stanley Spencer

Further information about many exhibits is available on our new website, Pharos –

www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/pharos