Art and Design Exam Themes

Welcome to The Fitzwilliam Museum, explore your art & design exam themes in the museum galleries. We have a diverse and fascinating collection that we match to your exam themes each year. So here’s a taster of the collection to get you creative and inspired.

Students are invited to use drawing in the galleries as part of their exam preparation and where permitted to record artworks and artefacts using photography (without flash). Please do help yourselves to the stools available and you may enjoy listening to music through headphones while you work. WiFi can be limited due to the nature of the museum building but most of the collection can be explored on-line and it is helpful for students to make a note of items accessions numbers, these are at the bottom of most labels for example: PD.966-1963

Collections Explorer

This is intended as a spring board for students to generate research ideas rather than an exhaustive list! Additional information may also be found using hyperlinks to the Fitzwilliam Collections online, to use this please click on the artists name to see further information and images.

We are pleased to offer help in the lead up to your exam and also offer a specialised programme SOURCE on:

Saturday 16 & 23 February and half term Tuesday 16 - Friday 22 February

Artist led studio sessions
Art history gallery tours
One-to-one discussions and Art research help.
Portfolio reviews and H.E courses and career advice

AQA
Cambridge International
EdExcel
Eduqas
Pablo Picasso, Cubist head [Portrait of Fernande], 1909. Oil on canvas. PD.13-1974 A good starting point to research the thinking behind Cubism. Gallery 11

Howard Hodgkin, Guest. 1972 Oil on board. The sheer expression of colour that expands beyond the canvas board onto the frame, questions the idea of boundaries, edges and the space art inhabits. Gallery 11

Exam theme:
GCSE
AQA : Abstract
Cambridge International: Pathways, merging forms
Edexcel: Reflection (portrait and expression)
Eduqas: Spaces, Playing with colour

A selection of 20th Century and contemporary artists who changed the way in which they represented the world around them by exploring new artistic styles; Cubism, post impressionism, modernism.

Artists often challenge the materials they choose to work with; this ceramic piece by Merete Rasmussen pushes the structure of clay to extremes. ‘Blue Twisted Form’ C.1-2012
While you are in this space take a look at the Women artist and designer display Gallery 27

Ben Nicholson, White Relief. 1957, oil on board. exploring the spatial qualities of low relief and by reducing the colour palette to white and grey Nicholson blurs the previously defined distinction between painting and sculpture PD28-1977

Gallery 11
Exam Theme:

GCSE
AQA: Messages, The elements
Cambridge International: Features in a landscape, taking a selfie
EdExcel: Reflection
Eduqas: conflict, close observation, coverings and clothing, movement

Ford Madox Brown, The Last of England, 1860. Oil on Canvas M.Add.3. Like many artists Ford Madox Brown asked his own circle of friends and family to model for him. Here we see his wife Emma accompanying him on his imagined journey that recalls a personal friend’s story of emigration. Gallery 4

Gwen John, The Convalescent. 1926 Oil on Canvas PD.24-1951. A gentle study that depicts a young woman reading a letter as she recovers from illness. A cup and teapot sit to her side, lending further thought about this quiet moment and stillness. Who is the letter from? What news does it bring to lift this young woman’s spirits? Gallery 1

Samuel Palmer, View of Lee North Devon, 1834. Oil on canvas. P.D 8-2003. The light glances in silver brilliance on the sea in contrast to the soft landscape bathed in golden light and grey shadows. A pastoral idyll? But look closer, who is that woman with her child gathering sticks? What is the story of those men at work bringing in the harvest while a shepherd is herding sheep along the lane? A first glance this is a seemingly unassuming painting but it perhaps offers a glimpse into rural hardship and poverty at a time of rural social unrest. Gallery 4
Exam Theme: GCSE
AQA: Messages, Texture
Edexcel: Reflections
Eduqas: Skeletons, Conflict, Symbolic objects

Salvator Rosa, Human Frailty, 1656. Oil on Canvas. *PD.53-1958*
*Gallery 7*

The Pashley Sarcophagus Roman
GR.1.1835
*Gallery 21*

Ancient Greek Grave marker
GR54-1850
*Gallery 21*

Armour and weapons
*Gallery 31*

Ancient Egyptian Coffin
E.1.1822
*Gallery 19 & 20*
Symbolic objects of human struggles recorded through commemorative artefacts such as this Anti-Slavery medallion (C.45-1962) made by the Josiah Wedgewood factory 1787 that reads ‘Am I not a man and a brother?’

**Gallery 27**

This bronze bust (M7-1933) is of Albert Einstein, theoretical physicist, who met the sculptor Jacob Epstein while living in the UK having escaped Nazi Germany during WWII.

**Gallery 1**

Dame Barbara Hepworth Minoan Head, 1972 Marble M11-2000

Are women more often the subject of art than the artist? The Fitzwilliam Museum has many art works by women artists, makers and designers. Take a closer look to find work by female artists such as Ethel Sands, Gwen John, ceramicists Janet Leach, Kate Malone and jewellers Nora Fok and Jane Adam. There is a display in **Gallery 27**

**Henry Moore** Hill Arches, Often working from the human figure or natural forms Moore created many drawings and small scale models in clay and plaster before these were scaled up and created in bronze, sited in the natural environment these sculptures take on a life of their own, echoing the landscape and our own physical histories.

**Museum front lawn, also from gallery 26**