

Pop Art Outreach Project: Symbolic Sitters

About the project

Symbolic Sitters was an exciting one-year outreach programme funded by Arts & Business and The Lehman Brothers Foundation Europe. The project was linked to the *Pop Art Portraits* exhibition, which took place from 11 October 2007 to 20 January 2008 at the National Portrait Gallery in London. The project was launched in November 2007 at the Evelina Hospital School at Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital. Throughout 2008 the programme continued at Great Ormond Street Hospital School (January–February 2008), St Mary's Hospital School (March–May 2008) and University College London (UCLH) Hospital School (June–August 2008). The National Portrait Gallery delivered eight full-day workshops to Primary and Secondary students at each school.

During the 2008 programme students focused on how Pop artists approached portraiture in different ways, exploring ideas and responding imaginatively to the artworks from the exhibition and the Gallery's Collection. They worked with experienced photographers and artists and had the opportunity to experiment with a wide variety of materials and processes. This enabled them to communicate their ideas and create their own artwork via cross-curricular activities. Colour reproductions and canvas prints were used during the taught sessions.

The National Portrait Gallery's Learning and Access Team has prepared the Hospital Schools Toolkit and these Teachers' Notes with the intention that other hospital schools will use them.

This project was generously supported by:

Please note, a teachers' pack for secondary teachers is available to download from our site

www.npg.org.uk/popart/popart_visitteachers.htm

If you would like to find out more about the National Portrait Gallery visit the website at www.npg.org.uk

Or search the collection at www.npg.org.uk/live/collect.asp

What is Pop Art?

Pop art exploded on to the art scene in the 1950s and 60s. The world was changing and so were people's ideas about art. The movement was characterised by themes and techniques borrowed from popular culture, such as advertising, magazines and film posters. In celebrating everyday objects such as soup cans and comic strips, it gave the commonplace iconic status, breaking down the barriers between art and life. Pop Art blurred the boundaries of high and low art and was perceived as subversive. The growing popular fascination with media celebrities meant that film stars, pop musicians, astronauts and comic-strip characters all commanded attention, and, in some cases, hero-worship. Such instantly recognisable imagery was a vital source for Pop artists. Artists adopted the same bright colours and graphic design style that were used in popular culture to create bold artworks.

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Learning objectives for Primary and Secondary students

This project has been designed to meet the Art & Design, Literacy, PSHE and Citizenship curriculum for Primary and Secondary students.

The objectives for the project are:

- To give students a greater understanding of Pop Art in order for them to make creative responses to the artworks from the exhibition.
- To investigate a range of materials and processes, including drawing, collage and photography.
- To develop students' confidence, enjoyment and understanding of portraiture and the National Portrait Gallery's Collection.
- To develop students' visual literacy skills.
- For students to learn new skills while working in collaboration with artists.

Symbolic Sitters Lesson Plans

These teacher notes contain a lesson plan for each activity taking place during the project. National Curriculum links and QCA Schemes of Work for both Primary and Secondary students have been included at the end of this document. Each section is clearly colour-coded to differentiate between age groups – Primary: Green; Secondary: Blue. These different levels have been incorporated into the same notes, enabling teachers to choose from a selection of activities appropriate to each student's ability. Due to the diversity of students in hospital schools these sessions will also meet the requirements of SEN and EAL groups. Separate activity sheets have been developed to enable students who are unable to participate on the day to take part in the project.

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POP ART PORTRAITS: TEACHERS' NOTES

The four lesson plans were repeated over the eight-day programme in each hospital school. Please see the lesson plan sheets for full details:

Lesson Plan 1: Introduction to Pop Art, Symbolic Sitters

Lesson Plan 2: Pop Art profiles

Lesson Plan 3: Pop Art self-portrait diorama

Lesson Plan 4: Pop Art photographic self-portraits

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National Curriculum links and QCA Schemes of Work

Curriculum links:

These activities are particularly relevant to the following National Curriculum units:

Primary Key Stage 1 & 2

Art & Design

Unit 1A: Self-portrait

Unit 2A: Picture this!

Unit 4A: Viewpoints

Literacy

En1: Speaking and listening

Links with National Literacy Strategy: Framework for teaching, year 1 and 2 vocabulary extension, where children learn new words from shared experiences and learn about stories.

PSHE

Knowledge, skills and understanding: Developing confidence, responsible behaviour and communication skills.

Citizenship

Unit 01: Taking part – developing skills of communication and participation.

Secondary Key Stage 3

Art & Design

Unit 7A: Self-image

Unit 8A: Objects and viewpoints

Unit 8C: Shared view

Literacy

En1: Speaking and listening

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National
Portrait
Gallery

National Curriculum links and QCA Schemes of Work

PSHE

Knowledge, skills and understanding: Developing confidence, responsible behaviour and communication skills.

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