



Victoria Art Gallery



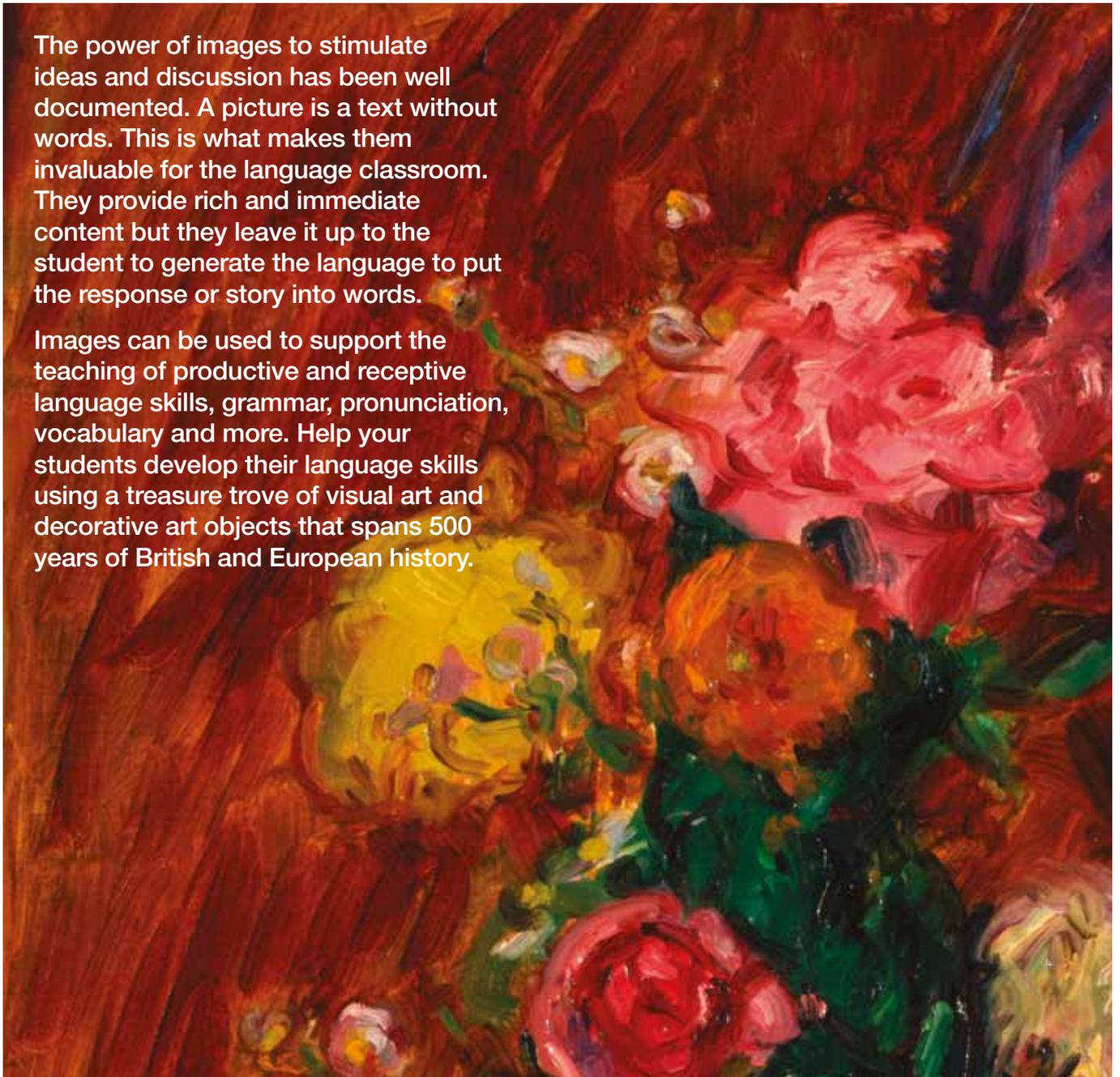
Teacher's Resource Pack

This learning activity has been created
by Languages United www.languagesunited.co.uk

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

The power of images to stimulate ideas and discussion has been well documented. A picture is a text without words. This is what makes them invaluable for the language classroom. They provide rich and immediate content but they leave it up to the student to generate the language to put the response or story into words.

Images can be used to support the teaching of productive and receptive language skills, grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and more. Help your students develop their language skills using a treasure trove of visual art and decorative art objects that spans 500 years of British and European history.



Aim of the international student resources

These resources aim to help teachers and activity group leaders plan a lively educational visit to the Victoria Art Gallery. It includes ideas to use in pre-visit, on site and follow-up activities.

The material is intended to be adaptable to language level. We suggest that you pick and choose from these activities, according to your topic, language focus, time available and your own students!

Home to a collection that includes more than 1,500 decorative art treasures including a display of British oil paintings from 17th century to the present day with works by Thomas Gainsborough, Thomas Jones Barker and Walter Sickert, the Victoria Art Gallery team regularly changes the displays to showcase and share the collection. Other items on display include sculptures, glassware, ceramics and decorative artistic objects.

With this in mind, the language learning resources have been designed in a more generic manner to allow students to respond to what naturally stimulates their interest.

Pre-visit activity

This activity can be used to focus on any particular exhibit of your choice.

[Click through links to existing ArtyFacts pages](#) included in schools resources

1. Write the title of your chosen exhibit on the board and ask your students if they can tell you what it is and what they know about it.
2. Show students an image of the exhibit.
3. Tell your students that you are going to ask them to draw a picture. Ask everyone to have a pen or pencil and a piece of blank paper ready.
4. Tell everyone to put down their pens (no drawing yet!) and then give the following instructions:
“I want you to draw a picture of a visitor in the Victoria Art Gallery, Bath. He or she is pointing to the ... and speaking to a guide. The ... is in a glass case in the foreground of the picture/in an ornate frame on the wall etc. The visitor and the guide are in the background. The visitor is on the left hand side and the guide is on the right hand side. There are two large speech bubbles: One coming out of the visitor’s mouth and another coming out of the guide’s mouth.”
5. Before students draw their pictures, ask them to repeat the instructions back to you (there is lots of useful language here) or you could ask them to write the instructions down.
6. Each student draws their picture – one drawing per person. Tell them not to write anything in the speech bubbles at this stage. The drawings don’t have to be masterpieces.
7. After letting everyone compare their artwork, ask students to suggest what the visitor and guide are saying to each other. Note the speech bubbles should still be left blank at this stage.
8. Tell the students that the visitor is asking a question. Elicit a few possibilities and write them on the board. Help with grammar and language as you go. Some example questions:
 - Why is the picture called ...
 - How long has it been in this museum?
 - How did the museum acquire it?
 - What do we know about the artist?
 - What do we know about the person/people/landscape in the picture?
 - Is there a story behind the picture/sculpture/object?
 - What does it represent?
What does it mean?
What do you think it meant to the owner?
 - How much is it worth?
Is it valuable?



9. Draw a cloud on the board that contains information such as the following, used for a discussion about Daisy Fairy by Peter Blake.



10. Use the answers in the cloud to elicit more possible questions that the visitor might ask. Each time a question is successfully constructed, cross the answer off the board and add the question.

e.g **Q:** Who painted it?
A: Peter Blake

Q: Why did he paint it?
A: For an exhibition at the Tate Gallery.

Q: When did he paint it?
A: In 1981

etc...

11. Split your class into two groups, A and B.
12. Bring students' attention back to their drawings. Tell them that you are going to dictate the captions for the speech bubbles. Dictate the following:

For Group A only – to be written in the visitor's speech bubble:
"Can you tell me how old this painting is?"

For Group A only – to be written in the guide's speech bubble:
"Yes, it's 37 years and 11 weeks old."

For Group B only – to be written in the visitor's speech bubble:
"How can you be so exact?"

For Group B only – to be written in the guide's speech bubble:
"Well, it was 37 years old when I started working here and that was 11 weeks ago."

(Acknowledgement: this activity has been adapted from a lesson by Jamie Keddie on lessonstream.org)

Follow up

Take a look at a lesson plan for portraits, landscapes or narrative art.

Lesson plan

Portraits

We all make judgements and assessments about people every day, just by looking at them.

Begin with the following opening questions:

- Have any of you ever had your portrait made? (Remind students of ID cards, passports, photographs, etc.)
- What are some of the things you thought about before your portrait was made? (Consider clothing, facial expression, background, etc.)
- What did it feel like to have your portrait made?
- Do you like to show off that portrait, or do you keep it hidden?



Next, review the following vocabulary. Display one of the images you will use to inspire discussion so the entire class can view it or congregate your group around a suitable artwork at the gallery.

Vocabulary

Portrait	Sitter	Facial expression	
Gesture	Posture	Setting	
Attire	Props	Commission	Artist

At the Victoria Art Gallery

Ask the students to choose a portrait and consider these questions. The language production could be a written piece, a podcast or a short video.

Discussion questions

- What is the first thing you notice about this person? What can we discover about this person just by looking at his or her portrait?
- What does the facial expression tell us about him or her? What does the facial expression tell us about how the person is feeling at the moment, or what the artist wants to suggest the person is feeling? His or her posture? His or her gestures?
- What can we say about the person's identity by looking at clothes and background details? How about his or her attire? The setting? The props he or she is holding?
- Do you think he or she works? What does he or she do? What kind of life does this person lead? Are there any clues in the picture?
- Would you like to meet this person? Why or why not?
- What do you think the sitter wanted his or her portrait to communicate?
- What do you see that makes you say that?

Other suggested activities

- Have students pose like the sitter and describe how it makes them feel.
- Bring in props, such as a hat, cane, or fan, and have students discuss how using the props makes them feel (“realia” activity).
- Students could write a monologue from the perspective of the the sitter while his/her portrait was being made.
- Put students in pairs and script a dialogue between the artist and the sitter, to be presented to the class



Lesson Plan

Landscapes

Landscapes are an opportunity to encourage students to think about all the senses. It's amazing how all our senses come alive when we immerse ourselves in a visual image and feel like we are actually there.

Ask students to close their eyes and think about an outdoor space that means something to them. It can be a place they have visited, their home or a place they have visited in the UK. Ask them to think of all the details they can remember about a typical day at this place, such as the weather, what was nearby, who they were with, what they were doing, etc. Ask them to “freeze frame” that image in their mind's eye.

Introduce the vocabulary list for looking at landscapes.



Vocabulary

Landscape	Cityscape	Seascape	
Point of view	Foreground	Middle ground	Background

Ask students to describe their meaningful place using the new words from the vocabulary list.

Ask students to recreate this place from their imaginations. What does it look like? What is in the foreground? Middle ground? Background? From what point of view are they seeing their landscape?

Tell students that they are now going to focus on a landscape. Explain that sometimes artists choose to make images of real places and sometimes they choose imaginary places.

At the Victoria Art Gallery

Ask the students to choose a landscape and consider these questions. The language production could be a written piece, a podcast or a short video.

If you were in this picture, what would you...?

- Hear?
- Smell?
- Feel?
- What clothing would you like to be wearing?
- What would you have with you?
- Who would you take with you to this place?
- Where would you like to be in the picture?
- If you were standing in that spot, what is the first thing you would notice about this place?
- Do you think this place is real or imaginary? Why or why not?

Give students time to work on their answers.

When students have completed the questions, ask them to share their responses.

Lesson Plan

Narrative Art

Narrative works allow students to act as detectives.

Explain to students that not all narrative art illustrates a well-known story. Sometimes artists create their own stories or tell stories about people in their lives.

Tell students that they are going to look at an image that depicts a story.



Separate students into groups of four.

Ask one student to be the recorder, and one the reporter. The others in the group will be the detectives.

Explain that as a group they need to figure out what is going on in this story and make up an ending for it. The detective should come up with a list of five questions he or she would ask the artist to learn more about the story. The recorder should take notes on the discussion among the group members. The reporter will present the group's findings to the class.

At the Victoria Art Gallery

Ask the students to choose a piece of narrative art and consider these questions. The language production could be a written piece, a podcast or a short video.

General questions about narrative art

- What do you think is happening in the work of art?
- What do you see that makes you say that?
- Who do you think is the main character of the story?
- Do you recognise any of the characters? If so, how?
- What can we say about these characters?
- Describe the setting.
- What time of day is it?
- What season is it?
- Where does this scene take place?
- What do you think happened ten minutes before this scene?
- What do you think will happen ten minutes later?

Give groups enough time to complete this activity.

Ask reporters to present their findings to the class, including the questions they would ask of the artist and the ending of the story that their group created.

Vocabulary

Myth	Storyteller	Character	Setting
Plot	Mortal	God/goddess	

Post-visit Activities

There are a number of suggestions for activities to follow up on your visit to the Victoria Art Gallery.

- If you didn't have time to review the student's responses to the works of art, a follow up lesson would enable presentations of student responses to the works of art that they chose to look at in detail. This could either take the form of editing written submissions or videos in groups or a presentation by each group of their finished pieces of work.
- Alternatively the students could participate in a ranking discussion. Using language of preference and negotiation language, ask the students to choose three works of art for the school reception area, giving reasons and have a class vote.
- Use the visit as a springboard to create a piece of writing or storytelling. Invite students to choose a character from a painting or sculpture and write a mini-biography or story about that character.
- Encourage students to compare two pieces of art that they saw during their visit with similar subjects, practising comparatives and adjectives. If necessary they could do follow-up research on the Victoria Art Gallery website to find out more facts about their chosen subjects.
- Practise exam style tasks and write a review of the visit. If your students are working towards their First Certificate they could write an article for a student newspaper.
- Use an application such as FlipGrid to do a 'talking heads' style video review of the gallery visit. Students are usually very conscientious when it comes to curating their online presence and take a great deal of care over language production when the whole class will see the result.

As with the pre-visit and gallery resources, these have been designed to be very generic so that you can adapt them for your students.