



Unit 2C: Can buildings speak?

Exploring Bursledon Windmill using digital photographs

This resource has been developed to enable KS1 pupils to use the windmill and its surrounding buildings as the stimulus for the development of artwork using photographs, photocopying, digital media, collage and colour.

This work will familiarise pupils with photography and photomontage. They will begin to develop an understanding of scale and perspective in buildings.

Pupils will begin to ask questions and evaluate their own work. They may also become familiar with David Hockney and other photomontage artists, using them as a stimulus for their own work.

Preparation

A visit should be booked in advance. This means you can prepare the children for things to look for and record, as well as how they are expected to behave. Up to 40 pupils may be comfortably accommodated on site. Fire, safety and evacuation procedures determine that no more than 15 people are allowed in the windmill at any one time – in fact about 10 at a time is more comfortable. It is necessary to take helpers with you so pupils can be supervised in small groups. About 90 minutes should be allowed for a class visit. There is a single flush toilet in the barn.

Pre-visit Activity

Discuss different ways of recording things visually: sketching, painting, photographing, writing words, recording spoken words.

Look at the photomontage work of artists like David Hockney to introduce this style of work – these websites may help:

www.saltsmill.org.uk/gallery.htm

www.cutandpaste.info/

Create a word bank with different categories: textures, sounds, smells etc. Let each pupil take a copy of each word bank list with them to use during their visit.

At the Windmill

The whole group is introduced to the site with a 10 minute film, shown inside the barn. The group is then split into 3 smaller groups, two recording the buildings from outside, whilst the third is guided around the mill.

Key Stage 1 Art & Design (5 –7 year olds) Can buildings speak?

Activity 1a: recording the farmyard buildings.

Ask your group to record the buildings visited by taking a series of photographs with a digital or SLR camera. Take pictures of the whole building from different angles, as well as recording details of the windows, doors, brickwork, roof tiles, signs and any other significant features. These include the oak beams of the barn, and the staddle stones of the granary.

Use wax crayons and paper to rub and record textures (also for 1b and 1c).

Use the word banks to record smells, sounds, textures and so on (also for 1b and 1c).

Activity 1b: recording the unique features of our windmill itself.

Bursledon windmill is a 5-storey high tower mill with canvas sails, and has a wide wooden reefing stage. The site also has a pond, and old millstones set into the grounds. The mill has a boat-shaped cap and large chainwheel mounted on top of the tower.

Activity 1c: a guided visit inside the mill.

A good opportunity to take close-up details of some of the features of the mill.

After the Visit

Activity 2: choosing images.

Before undertaking activity, download the images from the digital camera and/or get film developed.

Show your pupils the developed pictures. Discuss them and draw their attention to any features that are interesting, significant, unusual or important and discuss why they are so. Do they agree?

Encourage pupils to show the wax rubbings they did in the corresponding areas and to discuss what words from the word bank they attributed. Does looking at a photo encourage them to choose a different word? How does a photo differ from seeing something in front of you?

Ask your pupils to look for shapes – rectangles, triangles etc. they can see in the pictures.

Having found out which images they think will provide a good overall record of the building, enlarge photographs (or parts of), using a photocopier, onto fairly thick paper or card. This extends the range of media that can be used to colourise it.

Activity 3: a touch of colour.

Ask your pupils to add colours to enhance part of the image, but not to colour them in - for example brickwork, windows, signs, doors, roofs and sails. This can be done by using ink, paint, felt-tip, pen, charcoal or pencil. Cut these parts out.

Activity 4: creating an image.

Collect together all the pieces you have and lay them out, overlapping slightly when necessary. At this stage, do not glue them. These images are not to recreate the original photograph, but to build up a representation in the form of a photo collage. Encourage your pupils to express their feelings about the building, which they can either write or word-process and add to the photo collage. When they are happy with the composition, stick it down.

Pupils could make a second collage using just the outline of the windmill and a range of textured materials like corrugated paper, bubble wrap etc. to portray texture. They may choose to annotate their work with word labels.

Choose a word from the word bank and write it in large letters, then cover the letters with a material that the word describes e.g. rough might be a tweed-like material, lumpy might be bubble wrap or corduroy.

Plenary

Remind children of the processes involved in making their photo collage and what they have learnt. Encourage the children to evaluate their work by asking them about the things they like about their composition and if they would change any aspect.

At home

Children could explain to someone at home the processes involved in making the photo collage.