

Module 3: Additional Teachers Notes: Sketching in the Gallery

These Teachers' Notes are for use with Tate Tools Module 3 – Sketching in the Gallery.

You can print out these Teachers' Notes to use alongside the PowerPoint. The PowerPoint will include a section with brief bullet points to remind you of the main activities and discussion elements for each slide.

Slide 1: Module 3: Sketching in the Gallery

Set up the PowerPoint to this title page to start the lesson.

Slide 2: Why sketch?

1. Discussion: Why sketch?

Discuss with the class some reasons they might use sketching to help them investigate art. Some ideas include:

- it helps to understand the work better
- it's a way to see the details of the work in a new way
- it's a way to figure out the artist's process
- sketching can help to investigate material, colour, texture, technique, treatment of the materials, etc.
- drawing isn't just for recording information about a work of art, it's also to spark creativity and stimulate thinking
- you can use your sketches for other schoolwork or personal work

Slide 3: How sketching works

1. Discussion: How sketching works

The students may have different views about sketching. It's useful to remind them of the following ideas:

- sketching is a very personal thing and you can make drawings for many different reasons
- it doesn't matter how many drawings you make during a sketching session – everyone has their own pace, so you can work on one drawing for a whole session or create many different sketches
- there are no 'good' or 'bad' sketches and sketching is not about making 'beautiful drawings' – your work doesn't necessarily have to represent the thing you're looking at
- if you don't think you can draw, don't worry – try a little sketching and you'll be surprised at what you can do

Since sketching is a highly personal and focused activity, it's best to allow students to take their own time and to intervene as little as possible while they are working. Let them know that you're available for questions and help, but allow them to direct their own sketching.

Slide 4: Before you visit

1. Discussion: What is a sketchbook for?

A sketchbook can be used for many different purposes. Discuss with the class what they might use sketchbooks for. Some possible answers include:

- a place to investigate art
- a place for drawing and writing
- a place for mind-mapping
- a tool for collecting ideas
- a visual diary
- a resource for research
- a place for the imagination
- a place to experiment
- a place to collect and stick in postcards, found objects, leaflets and other treasures
- a place for learning

2. Discussion: What kinds of materials can be used?

Discuss with the class what kinds of materials can be used with sketchbooks. If you have followed Tate Tools Module 2 (Visiting a Gallery), the class may remember that certain materials that might make a mess or could damage works of art are not allowed in galleries. Only the following materials can be used in the gallery:

- pencils and coloured pencils
- graphite sticks or charcoal pencils
- sketchbooks of any size and shape
- paper folded into handmade booklets
- backs of postcards, ticket stubs, today's newspaper, the back of a serviette, etc.

Of course, you can use many other materials – such as felt-tip pens, glue, scissors, charcoal sticks, pastels, paint, etc – in the classroom or at home!

Slide 5: When you arrive

1. Discussion: Getting the feel of the building

The class may already have completed Tate Tools Module 2 (Visiting a Gallery) so they may already have planned to look at certain works of art on a gallery visit. If so, discuss with the class what type of art they are going to see.

The gallery environment may affect the visit in several ways. Discuss the following points with the class:

- where will you sit?
- how will you make sure you are comfortable in the gallery?
- what rooms will you be visiting in the gallery?
- how might the works of art be arranged in the gallery? will this make a difference to how you work?

- who else might be in the gallery at the same time?

2. Activity: Choose a work of art to investigate

If the class has already decided what they will look at in the gallery, they may already know the names of some of the works of art they will see. Ask them to work in small groups to find the works of art on the Tate Collections web site, <http://www.tate.org.uk/collections>, and to discuss how they might work with their sketchbooks to draw or write notes about these works of art when they visit the gallery.

Slide 6: Noting down your thoughts

1. Discussion: How can we use sketchbooks?

There are many ways to use sketchbooks, including the following:

- make colour swatches (squares of colour) in your sketchbook showing the different colours that have been used in a work of art
- try to reproduce the types of lines (thick/thin, straight/curved, etc) used in a work of art
- experiment with textures or marks
- make notes about anything that interests you about the work of art you are looking at
- make notes about what details you notice most about the work of art you are looking at
- gather other materials that relate to your visit or to what you have seen, and put them in your sketchbook
- make notes or sketches for an idea or a project you'd like to work on later

2. Discussion: What kinds of questions can we ask?

When the students visit the gallery, there are many questions they can ask in order to investigate the art and the environment in which it is displayed. They can use their sketchbooks to draw or write notes about the art.

Questions about the display:

- which work interests you the most?
- is there a link between the works of art displayed in the room you are in?
- how are the works displayed?
- how does this room differ from another room in the gallery?

Questions about a specific work of art:

- what is your first reaction to the work of art?
- what do you notice most about the work of art?
- how does this work of art relate to work you are doing in your class?

Slide 7: A sketching session

1. Watch video: A sketching session

With the class, watch this video interview with artist Claire Toogood, who is sketching a work in a gallery. In voice over, Claire describes how she prepared for the session, the tools she uses, and why she chose this artwork.

Slide 8: Making an annotated drawing

1. Discussion: What is an annotated drawing?

Questions to ask:

- what does annotation mean?
- why annotate?

An annotated drawing is one where you are thinking about what you are looking at and writing notes about it as well as sketching. It might be useful to make annotated drawings because they combine writing and drawing, which helps you to think more intensely and constructively and to organise your thoughts.

An annotated drawing also helps to show how your mind is working when you are looking at a work of art. Sometimes you might have ideas that can't be captured in drawings, so it's useful to annotate or write notes in order to remember things.

This slide shows the painting Seated Figure by Francis Bacon, plus a sketch of the work created by an artist working at Tate. Roll over the sketch with the mouse to reveal the annotations shown on the sketch page. Discuss with the class the ways that the annotations help to show what the person making the sketch was thinking.

2. How to make an annotated drawing

These are some basic steps in making an annotated drawing:

- look at the caption on the wall beside the work of art and write down the name of the artist, the title of the painting and the date
- make a simple outline of the work of art you have chosen, thinking about the importance of each area to the whole as you work
- mark arrows pointing to the areas that caught your attention and write down why
- note down your thoughts and observations
- read the text of the caption on the wall near the work of art and decide whether or not you agree with what it says – you may want to use information from it on your drawing

Look at the mouse-over annotations for the sketch of Seated Figure again with the class to show how the person making the sketch has followed all of these steps.

If desired, print out the image of the painting for the students to sketch and annotate.

Slide 9: Looking at portraits

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when looking at portraits?

Questions to ask:

- how is the sitter dressed?
- are there clues that tell you when the work of art was made?
- what is the background?
- how do you think the sitter is feeling?
- what is the surface of the work of art like (rough/smooth, etc)?
- how similar or different is it from any self-portrait you have made?

2. Activity: Portrait sketching

This slide shows four portraits by different artists. You can print any of these images for the students to sketch and annotate, using the questions above for inspiration.

In order to find out what is distinctive about a work of art, it helps to compare and contrast it with another work. Students can sketch two of these portraits in order to compare them. They can do the sketches side by side in their sketchbooks, leaving a space at the foot of each page so that they can write notes about the similarities and differences between the two chosen portraits.

Slide 10: Looking at sculpture

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when looking at sculpture?

Questions to ask:

- what do you think it might be about?
- how do you think it was made?
- what is it made of?
- is it big or small?
- what kinds of shapes and textures make up the sculpture?
- how would this sculpture look in a different material, size, or colour?
- is there a front and a back?
- are you meant to look at it from different angles?

2. Activity: Sketching sculpture

This slide shows a 360-degree view of Henry Moore's sculpture Recumbent Figure. You can move the sculpture around to choose different views to sketch. Ask the students to make six drawings, each from a different angle. Ask them not to use separate pieces of paper – instead, they can make one drawing on top of another until they have built up a trace of the sculpture's form.

The class can also do a variation of this 'drawing in the round' activity if you are visiting a gallery. Find a sculpture with enough space for your class to sit all the way around it. Each student starts drawing the sculpture from where they are sitting. After two minutes, the students stay in the same position but pass their sketchbooks to the person on the right, so they draw on someone else's original drawing. This continues for four moves round the circle. Then the class can compare drawings done from various viewpoints, and can discuss how they felt about making group drawings.

Slide 11: Looking at landscapes

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when looking at landscapes?

Questions to ask:

- what is the mood of the landscape? how would you feel if you were there?
- why do you think the artist made it?
- in what way is the sky important in the landscape you are looking at?
- how has the artist created the sensation of light?
- what objects can you see in the landscape?

2. Activity: Landscape sketching

This slide shows two landscapes by different artists. You can print these images for the students to sketch and annotate, using the questions above for inspiration.

Making a simple outline drawing of the main shapes in the work of art can help students see how it is laid out. Using different media can help capture cloud and sky effects, and drawing close-ups of trees and foliage can help explore smaller details.

When sketching, students can try to use materials that capture the same feeling of the work of art, or they could do the opposite and use materials that are very different from what the artist used in order to contrast as much as possible.

3. Other activities

Some other suggestions for activities about landscapes are the following:

- make viewfinders by cutting a square centimetre out of a small piece of card, and hold the viewfinder with its hole close to your eye while looking at a landscape – this will help isolate details and focus your attention
- explore the local landscape/urban environment
- take some photographs or videos around the school
- draw the landscape around the school

Slide 12: Looking at narrative paintings

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when looking at narrative paintings?

Questions to ask:

- what do you think is the main story told by the work of art?
- what has just happened? what might happen next?
- how many people can you see? what are they doing? how are they important to the story?
- how do the details provide clues to the story?
- if you changed some of the details how would the story change?
- which detail would you choose to sketch, and why?
- do you like detailed paintings? is your own work very detailed?

2. Activity: Sketching narrative paintings

This slide shows the painting *The Doctor* by Sir Luke Fildes. If desired, print out the image of the painting for the students to sketch and annotate, using the questions above for inspiration.

The class might also want to write a story about the painting, or they could discuss a story that they are all familiar with and then make a drawing about it. The students could then exchange sketches to see how each person's interpretation of the story is different.

Slide 13: Looking at abstract art

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when exploring abstract art?

Questions to ask:

- how many shapes and forms are in the work of art?
- how many colours are there?
- how does the artist combine these?
- how might you combine them differently?
- how would this work of art look in a different material, size or colour?

2. Activity: Sketching abstract art

This slide shows the painting *White Relief* by Ben Nicholson, plus a sketch of the work created by an artist working at Tate. Roll over the sketch with the mouse to reveal the annotations shown on the sketch page.

If desired, print out the image of the painting for the students to sketch and annotate, using the questions above for inspiration. In order to explore the work of art further, students can first make a very precise sketch of the geometric shapes that make up the work, then play at jumbling them around. They can also cut out shapes in coloured paper and move them around on the page.

Slide 14: Looking at installations

1. Discussion: What questions can we ask when looking at installations?

Questions to ask:

- what materials have been used by the artist?
- what has the artist done to the materials?
- how is the installation arranged?
- how does the installation use the space (light, sound, architecture, human interaction)?
- what is your relationship to it?

2. Activity: Sketching installations

This slide shows the work of art *Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View* by Cornelia Parker. The class can discuss the following questions:

- what objects can you see?

- what objects do you think have been used?
- have they been found or bought?
- what might have happened to them?

To explore one concept of installation art further, students can shade a page with charcoal, then use a rubber to erase parts to show the interaction of light and shadow in the room.

Slide 15: Useful tips

1. Ways of looking at and thinking about art

You may already have completed Tate Tools Module 1 (Looking At and Thinking About Art) with your class, so they may have had experience in the ways they can explore art. These four questions provide a brief overview of the ways of looking at any work of art:

- what is my first reaction to the artwork? (visual, sensory, emotional, memory/experience, value/opinion)
- what is it made of? (colour, processes, composition, surface and texture, shapes and pattern, scale, space, marks, materials and meaning)
- what is it about? (title, theme, narrative, content and ideas, people, interpretation)
- when was it made? (by whom, for whom, where for, history, style, context)

2. Tips for sketching

Discuss the following tips with the class:

- try not to erase or cross things out – a sketchbook is intended to help develop your skills, so if you feel you've made a mistake, write a note beside it explaining where you think you have gone wrong so you and your teacher can follow your thought processes
- vary your style and approach – sketchbooks are for experimenting, so do things differently, like making ten small drawings on a page or collecting souvenirs like tickets and postcards to glue in later
- don't limit your impressions to visual ones – instead, think about your other senses and ask yourself questions about the sounds and smells in the room

Slide 16: Your sketches

On this summary slide, you can add scans of the students' sketches. Better still, why not display your students' work in the classroom?