

Image to Text

Teachers Notes

SLIDES



Image to Text uses Adolphe Valette's *Under Windsor Bridge* to model a series of activities that help students make personal and creative connections with an artwork. It explores setting, character and narrative to encourage the generation of ideas, resulting in compelling pieces of writing. Teachers can work through the whole presentation over five to six lessons or select specific elements to meet their students and timetabling requirements.

This presentation can be used on an interactive whiteboard or projector screen and includes examples of Year 9 students' responses from Tarporley High School.

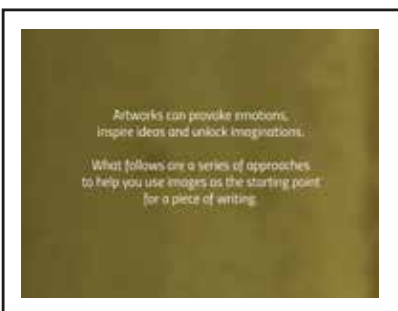


Take time to Look

Do we really look carefully? Young people live in a fast paced visual world; these techniques slow the process down and allow them to really see what is there.

Using the formal elements in art means this activity can be applied to any image and allows students to engage carefully without being asked to form an initial opinion. It helps reveal details or areas that are not at the forefront or initially obvious.

This is an individual activity and the class should be encouraged to look in silence. Give the class one minute to look through each formal element.



Formal elements



Line Find a line in the painting and follow it; where has it taken you? Repeat two or three times starting at different areas of the artwork

Light and dark Half close your eyes, take in and notice the light and dark areas. Start with the large areas and move into the smaller areas

Colour Moving around the artwork clockwise notice all the different hues of grey. What other colours can be seen amongst them?

Encourage the class to feedback what they have noticed, this will help others see things that they may not have seen.



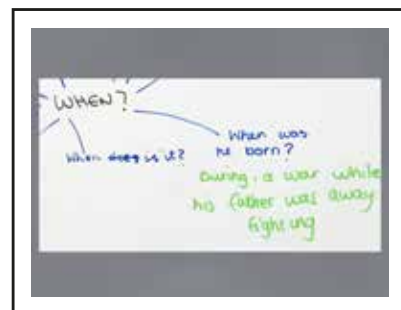
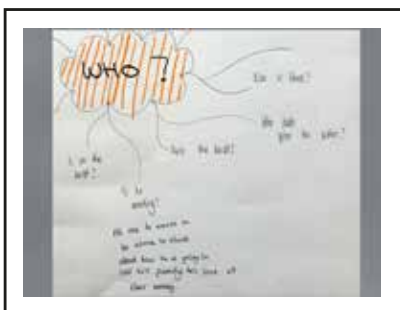
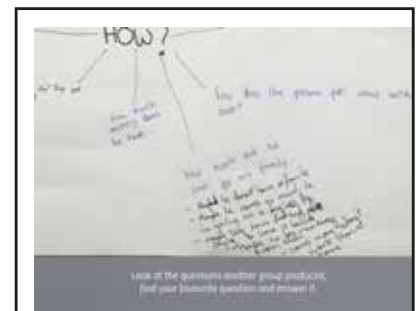
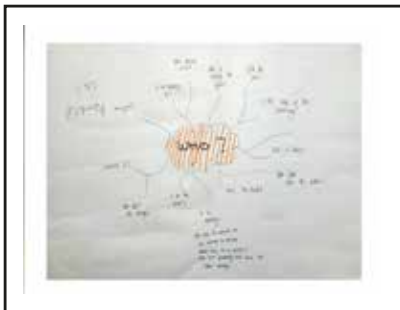


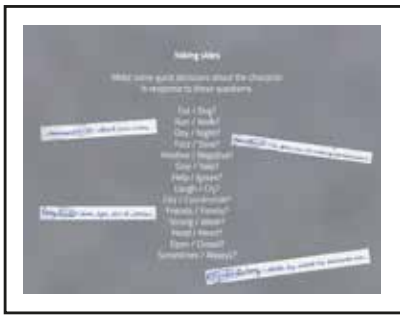
Asking questions of the artwork

Asking questions without having to come up with answers can free the imagination, the fear of having to come up with an answer can limit what may be asked. Working as a group and focusing on creating as many questions as possible forces us to work harder, share ideas and come up with increasingly more detailed/unusual responses.

Divide the class into five groups, provide them with A2 sheets of paper with either **Who?** **What?** **Why?** **When?** or **How?** and a marker pen. Give them 5 minutes to construct as many questions as they can think of.

Ask the groups to move their sheets to another group. Each group then has to find their favourite question and come up with an answer for it. Sheets can be moved around, allowing all groups to respond to each question.





Character building

Getting to know a character before writing about them produces a more satisfying experience and outcome. The following activities help students read artworks with sympathetic understanding allowing them to make sense of the exterior portrayal of an individual and their deeper internal landscape.

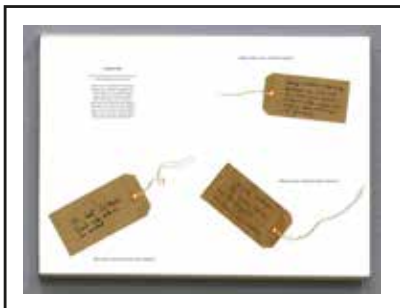


Taking sides

Produce the questions onto individual cards, make five sets.

The idea is to think quickly and make snap judgements about the figure in the painting. Encourage your students to make an 'either/or' decision, not a both.

In their groups, students are given a pack of 'Take sides' cards. They have to work together to find answers to these questions. They may find that they make a decision on the character's age etc which is fine, but this is not essential. The group sort through the cards to quickly make decisions about their character.



Character traits

Produce the questions onto individual cards, make 5 sets.

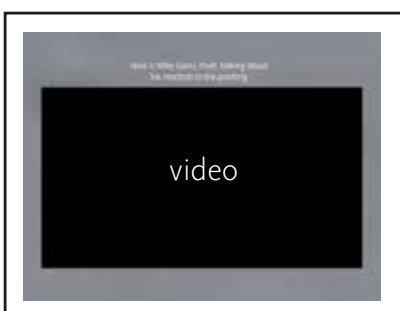
Give each group a pack of 'Trait' cards, ask them to read each one. Individually they select the five questions that they are most interested in developing for their character and discard the others. They have to write a response to their five questions.



Personalisation

The closer you look at an artwork and the longer you spend time considering, the more nuanced personal connections can become, perhaps evoking memories of situations, emotions, personalities or events that you as an individual have experienced.

Students need to be encouraged to believe what they think is important and VALID – their reactions to and opinions about an image are worthy of being written down and will result in a stronger more interesting outcome. Encourage them to make notes as they respond to the questions.



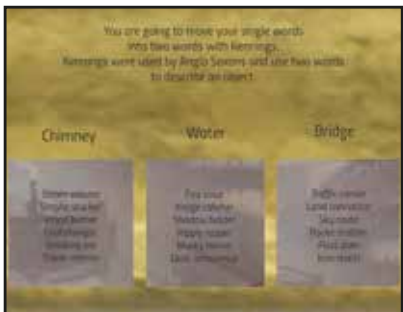
Form

This section offers a step by step process to get your students writing and move their initial ideas into a fully formed piece of prose. The intention is to break down the fear of the blank page and provide starters, structures or perspectives to get things rolling.



Word Splurge

Each student is given a blank piece of paper which they have to fill with single words in response to the image. Allow individuals to feedback and others to record words they want to include on their sheets. Ask everyone to choose just one word to reflect their idea of the image.



Kenning

Kenning is an Anglo Saxon description of an object using two words. Ask students to work out which object these original Anglo Saxon kennings describe.

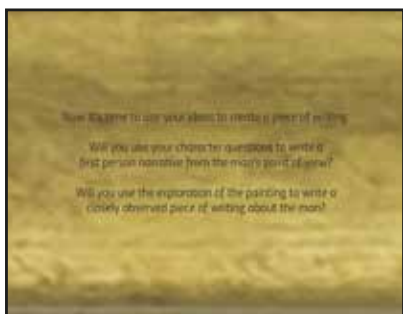
Earth candle – Sun Seal field – Sea

Using the objects in the image and the words already captured ask your students to create as many kennings as they can for the image in a ten minute timeframe. This will help students to create simple metaphorical language.



Hiaku

This is intended to move from two words into seventeen syllables. Building from their favourite kennings gives the students a solid base to work from.



Creative piece of writing

Art works and Literature share a number of similarities in terms of construction. Understanding this can help your students form decisions when producing extended pieces of writing.

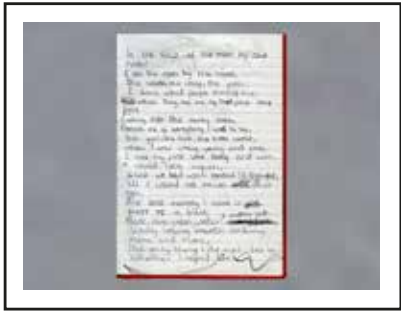
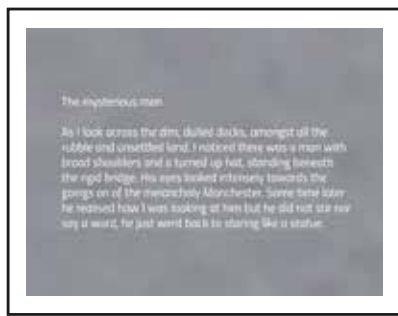
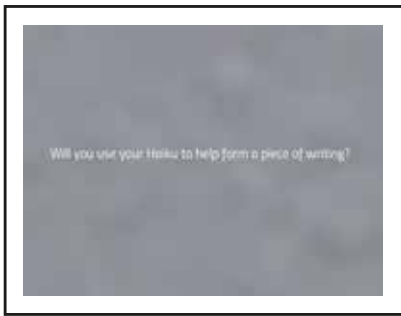
Encourage your students to consider the narrative point of view: Are they close up suggesting involvement? This lends itself well to first person narrative.

Mid-distance suggests less intimate involvement and can be used through second person narrative.

A long shot suggests detachment, as does a third person narrative.

The artwork can also be viewed as one moment in a story, where this moment is placed, beginning, middle or end, will have a major bearing on possible outcomes.





This resource has been produced as part of the Max Reinhardt Literacy Awards (MRLA) in 2014-15. MRLA is a pilot programme developed by engage, the National Association for Gallery Education, and the National Association of Writers in Education (NAWE) to enable galleries, art museums and visual arts venues to support a dedicated programme of creative writing and literacy work with schools. The Awards are funded by the Max Reinhardt Charitable Trust.

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