

Teachers' Resource

Look Think Create: A Guide to the V&A South Kensington for Primary Teachers

Supporting the KS1 & 2 National Curriculum
for Art & Design and D&T with links across
the curriculum



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Introduction

The Victoria and Albert Museum (V&A) is the world's leading museum of art, design and performance. Its collection of 2.8 million objects spans over 5,000 years of human creativity. Each object has a different story to tell and can spark different questions about our connection to the world around us.

The collections are divided into broad themes including, Ceramics, Glass, Architecture, Theatre & Performance, Jewellery, Design 1900-Now, Silver, Paintings, Sculpture and Fashion. The V&A is also home to collections from around the world with galleries dedicated to Japan, China, South Asia, South East Asia, Korea and the Islamic Middle East located at our museum in South Kensington.

About this resource

This resource has been designed to inspire learning and creativity for Key Stages 1 & 2. Using objects as starting points for discussion and activities will help students develop their creativity, critical thinking and collaboration skills. Through the activities, students will learn how to nurture their creative ideas and respond to the work of others.

This resource includes advice on making the most of a self-guided visit, simple warm-up activities that can be used in any gallery or with any collection, and a set of object activity cards. The object activity cards link to key themes that support learning across the National Curriculum for Key Stages 1 & 2. Each card uses an object from the collection as a starting point to inspire discussion and spark ideas.

The information and activities make links to other areas across the Primary curriculum and provide opportunities for cross-curricular learning and topic-based work. You can use the resource in the classroom or to support a self-guided visit to the museum.

Each object activity card contains a short introduction to the object, which can be used by the teacher or group leader for context to help guide the students through the activities. The activities are divided into three sections – Look, Think, Create.

The themes included in the resource are:

- **Pattern - Shape & Form - Nature - Identity**
- **Designer/User - Our World - Storytelling**

Critical friends

This resource has been written with the support of the V&A Teachers' Collective and with Global Ceramics Resident, Jacqui Ramrayka. Jacqui's Residency forms part of the Adobe Creative Residency Programme at the V&A. A year long programme that supports artists to develop their practice through researching the V&A collections and connecting with our audiences. We would like to thank everyone for providing their time and expertise to the development of the resource.

The Adobe Creative Residency is supported by the Adobe Foundation.

National Curriculum links

Art & Design

Key Stage 1

- Use a range of materials creatively to design and make products
- Use drawing to develop and share their ideas, experiences and imagination
- Develop a wide range of art and design techniques using colour, pattern, texture, line, shape, form and space
- Learn about the work of a range of artists, craft makers and designers, describing the differences and similarities between different practices and disciplines, and making links to their own work

Key Stage 2

- Develop their techniques, including the control and use of materials, with creativity, experimentation and increasing awareness of the different kinds of art, craft and design
- Create sketchbooks to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas
- Improve their mastery of art and design techniques, including drawing
- Learn about great artists, architects and designers in history

Design & Technology

Key Stage 1

Design

- Generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through talking, drawing, templates, mock-ups and, where appropriate, information and communication technology

Evaluate

- Explore and evaluate a range of existing products
- Evaluate their ideas and products against design criteria

Key Stage 2

Design

- Generate, develop, model and communicate their ideas through discussion, annotated sketches and prototypes

Evaluate

- Investigate and analyse a range of existing products
- Evaluate their ideas and products against their own design criteria and consider the views of others to improve their work
- Understand how key events and individuals in design and technology have helped shape the world

Other areas covered by the activities include Literacy, Maths, Science and PSHE.

Look out for the cross-curricular links on each activity card.

Materials you will need

The activities have been devised deliberately so that they don't require many materials. We recommend bringing A4 or A3 paper, (preferably recycled) or sketchbooks, and pencils and coloured pencils. On some of the object activity cards, we have suggested some follow-up ideas for the classroom, which may require additional materials. Please refer to each card for further details.

Tips for planning a successful self-guided visit to the V&A

Use the V&A's online resource Explore the Collections to research objects, note their location in the museum and to check if they're on display. With over seven miles of galleries to explore, if the specific object you would like to see isn't on display, you will hopefully be able to find alternatives to explore and enjoy.

If any of the objects in the resource are not on display on the day you plan to visit, you will find many other objects in the galleries to use as inspiration. The ones that we have selected have been chosen to represent each theme, but other objects can be used in their place, if necessary. Each card also suggests other galleries which are great for exploring the theme.

Explore the Collections:
collections.vam.ac.uk

Use our learning resources to plan pre-visit and follow-up work:
vam.ac.uk/info/teachers-resources-for-primary-schools

Plan your route throughout the museum by using our interactive map:
vam.ac.uk/features/digitalmap

Book one of our CPD events or Teacher Twilights to learn more about the V&A:
vam.ac.uk/whatson/programmes/schools

Please brief all accompanying staff and adults about the museum and what you will be doing there before you visit.

Tips for planning a visit for SEND groups

We recommend that SEND groups book one of our multi-sensory sessions.

To maximise the quality of your group's experience when visiting the museum, please get in touch to tell us about the needs of your group. We can assist in making suggestions about access and inclusion for your students. We can also offer ideas about suitable galleries and interactives to help bring your visit to life.

Contact our Schools Team for advice and ideas at: schools@vam.ac.uk

Booking Essentials

Ensure you book your self-guided visit in advance:
shorturl.at/EMX2

Health & Safety guidelines are provided to assist with your risk assessment.

Book a slot in our lunchroom for your class to eat their packed lunches. These are available in 30-minute slots and can be reserved at the point of booking. Lockers will be allocated on arrival.

We advise the following adult/child ratios:

0-2 years: one adult for every three children
2-3 years: one adult for every four children
4-8 years: one adult for every six children
9-12 years: one adult for every eight children
13-15 years: one adult for every ten children
16-18 years: one adult for every 15 children

For further information visit the Schools' pages on the website:
vam.ac.uk/info/schools

Warm-up activities

These activities have been devised to be done in any gallery and can be tailored to any theme you might be exploring with your group. They will help students look more closely at objects on display and feel more comfortable in the space to discover and create.

The activities will support students to develop critical thinking skills, communication and creativity.

1,2,3 draw!

1. Take your pencil for a walk! Imagine your pencil is going for a long stroll along a windy lane. Turn and twist your pencil all over your page until you have a beautiful looping doodle! Now take it for a walk with straight lines and sharp corners. Try pressing lightly in some places and more firmly in others. Can you cover your page with your pencil line?
2. Choose an object in the gallery or in your classroom. Put a piece of paper on your head and try to draw the object without taking the paper off!
3. Sit back-to-back with a partner. Decide which one of you will choose an object to describe. As they describe it the other partner will draw it. Now swap round and repeat.

V&A explorer

Want to explore the V&A and see some of the highlights on display? Use the object activity cards to create your own tour around some of the galleries. Turn it into a treasure hunt!

Create links between each of the objects we've chosen to take you on a tour of the museum, led by the children's ideas, questions and responses. Each group will come up with different ways of connecting the objects.

Visual journey

There are over seven miles of gallery at the V&A South Kensington! Create a visual journey of your visit by mark-making, annotating and drawing. Hunt for shapes, patterns, features and colours all around you to create a visual map of your day. Even the museum building has patterns and designs built into it. Keep your eyes peeled, look up, look down and all around! You will be amazed at what you find! Create a simple journal using an A4 piece of paper by following the steps below!

1. Fold the A4 page in half, lengthways
2. Fold the page in half again, but this time widthways
3. Fold it in half again, widthways
4. Open it out to reveal 8 boxes

Viewfinder

Experiment with creating viewfinders. How many different shaped viewfinders can you make with your hands? Can you use doorways, arches or windows in the museum building to frame what you are looking at? Use your viewfinder to look more closely at a detail of a particular object. Describe to a friend what you can see. Now have a go at sketching the details you have spotted.

Cheese or chocolate?

Find a space big enough for your group to move from side to side. Show the group an imaginary dividing line in the middle of the space. Call out contrasting options, asking students to choose either side of the line. Start with fun or silly examples, like cheese or chocolate, books or TV. Then, introduce themes linked to art or design such as stripes or spots; plastic or wood; rough or smooth; round or square; natural or manmade; recycled or new. Ask some of the students why they have chosen their side. Once you have done this a few times, end on a particular theme you would like the students to explore further. Students can then go on a hunt around the gallery to find objects under the category they have chosen.

PATTERN



About this object

This Nigerian 2018 World Cup football shirt was designed by Matthew Wolff for Nike. The design is based on the colour of the Nigerian flag and the team's name – the Super Eagles.

Taking its inspiration from contemporary Naija (Nigerian) culture, the bold patterns and graphics break from more traditional football kits, which often feature a crest and one or two solid colours.

When Nike first revealed the kit in February 2018, ahead of the World Cup that summer, there were three million pre-orders for

the shirts. On the day the kit went on sale, hundreds of fans lined up outside of Nike's flagship store on Oxford Street and the collection sold out within hours from the store, and in three minutes online.



Find out more about this object:
shorturl.at/jSVZO



Locate the object in the museum:
shorturl.at/boCFK

Look

Have a close look at the pattern on the football shirt. Now choose three words to describe it.

The name of the Nigerian team is the Super Eagles. *Can you spot anything in the design that makes you think of a bird?*

Think

How would you describe the style or design of the pattern?

Why do you think the design is made up of only three colours?

Create

For this you will need:

1 x A3 paper per student

3 to 4 x different coloured pencils per student

This activity uses a process of mark-making and drawing to design and build up your own pattern inspired by objects from the V&A's collections or objects you can see in your classroom.

Collect shapes, lines and patterns that you like around the gallery or room you are in. To start, choose an object, or detail from an object, and sketch an outline on your piece of paper. Repeat this with three or four more objects. Draw the outlines, shapes or patterns in a big bold way, using different colours for each outline, aiming to cover your page. You may like to repeat your shapes over your page. The lines can overlap and merge. Highlight some of your shapes by colouring them in. Now decide where or how you could use your pattern.

Explore the theme of pattern further in the collections

You will find incredible examples of patterns all over the V&A's collections. We recommend the following galleries:

Design 1900-Now, rooms 74 & 76

Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art, room 42

Fashion, room 40

Cross-curricular links

Maths

Geometry: position and direction

- Order and arrange combinations of mathematical objects in patterns and sequences.

SHAPE & FORM



Flower Pyramid, ca. 1695, 'Greek A' Factory,
Metalen Pot Factory, Delft
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

Over 300 years ago in the court of William III and Mary II, there was a huge craze for exotic flowers. To cater for this, the ingenious potters at Delft produced huge pyramids of stacking flower holders. Normally produced in pairs, they were highly decorative additions to palaces and country houses, with or without their flowers.

This vase is one of a pair. Each one consists of a base supported by four royal lions with a globe in their paws. Above are nine tiers of square flower holders with a spout on every

corner and a finial (the piece at the very top) in the shape of a female head and torso. Each tier could be filled with water, and flowers would be placed in every spout. Even the finial has holes in the top of the head intended for more flowers!



Find out more about this object:
shorturl.at/celHX



Locate the object in the museum:
shorturl.at/cuzFS

Look

Look at the detail and shape of this unusual object. Use your finger to trace around the outline of the object. Follow all the loops and twists around the outside.

What shapes can you spot?

Can you spot any animals or people hiding in the design?

How many tiers or levels are there? Count them all the way to the top!

Think

What do you think this strange object has been used for?

Can you guess what material it is made from? Now that you know what it is for, why do you think it is made from this material?

Can you work out how many spouts there are in this flower pyramid?

Create

Combine different shapes that you see around the gallery, or in your classroom, to create your own version of a flower pyramid. Look around the gallery or room you are in and choose three or four differently shaped objects. You could choose some that are similar in size or a range of different sizes from large to small. Draw the outline of each of the objects you have chosen. Now arrange them one on top of the other to create a towering vase! Imagine how and where you would place the flowers.

Explore the theme of shape and form further in the collections

There are beautiful shapes and forms to explore throughout the V&A collections. We particularly recommend the following galleries or collections:

Contemporary ceramics, room 141

Contemporary glass, room 129

Cast Courts, rooms 46a & 46b

(please note that classes must be split into groups of ten to visit the Cast Courts)

Cross-curricular links

Maths

Geometry: properties of shapes

- Recognise and name common 2-D and 3-D shapes. For example, rectangles (including squares), circles and triangles (2-D shapes) and cuboids (including cubes), pyramids and spheres (3-D shapes)

NATURE



Bowl, 1550–1555, Unknown, Iznik
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

This is one of a series of large, hemispherical basins on a high foot that are among the most impressive examples of pottery from the Islamic world. The basin is over 450 years old. It was made in Iznik, a small town in north-west Türkiye. The monumental size of the basin is unusual, and it seems that vessels of this type were made for export to Italy. There they were filled with water and used to cool fruit and wine during meals.

Despite its large scale, the basin illustrates the accomplished potting and well-planned decoration for which the products of the Iznik kilns were admired.

The white background of this basin is painted in four colours - blue, turquoise, sage green and purple. A stylised leaf and rosette pattern flows around the foot of the basin. The walls of the basin, inside and out, have been decorated with vases filled with tulips, carnations and roses

arranged in rows between small cypress trees. The rose is at the top in the centre, there are two carnations either side underneath and two tulips on either side underneath the roses.



Find out more about this object: shorturl.at/vIT56



Locate the object in the museum: shorturl.at/gzIYZ

Look

What can you see in the pattern on this bowl?

How many different types of flowers, trees or leaves can you see?

How many different colours have been used to decorate the bowl?

Think

There are three different types of flowers on the bowl – roses, tulips and carnations. See if you can work out which one is which.

What do you think this bowl would have been used for?

Why do you think the basin has been decorated with flowers and things from nature?

Create

You will need: **1x sheet of A4 or A3 paper and a pencil per student.**

You can find things from nature decorating objects all over the Jameel Gallery and the collection of Islamic art and design. You are going to go on a nature trail to see how many you can spot! For this trail, you will need to divide your paper into six squares. Look at the bowl and sketch the three different flowers, a tulip, a carnation and a rose, into their own square. Then sketch the cypress tree and the leaves into two of the three remaining squares. Now go on a hunt to tally up how many of each you can spot on different objects. You have one blank square which you can use to sketch other things from nature that you may also find along the way! As you are on your trail, imagine the fragrant smells of the flowers and fruit trees all around you and the sounds of birds and animals

Explore the theme of nature further in the collections

Discover things inspired by nature throughout the V&A collections. We particularly recommend the following galleries or collections:

China, room 44

Britain, room 125

Cross-curricular links

Science

Plants

- Identify and name a variety of common wild and garden plants, including deciduous and evergreen trees
- Identify and describe the basic structure of a variety of common flowering plants, including trees

IDENTITY



Akuaba chair, designed by Huren Marsh, London, United Kingdom, 1985, beechwood and rosewood veneer © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

This chair bridges cultural traditions. The circular shape of this chair's backrest is inspired by the face of a Ghanaian *Akuaba* doll, while the seat and legs make reference to early 20th-century European design.

Jamaican-born Huren Marsh designed the chair while studying furniture and product design in London. Influenced by African artefacts he saw in the Museum of Mankind in London (later reunited with the collections at the British Museum), Marsh wanted to create furniture that went beyond the contemporary European style he was being taught at university.



Find out more about this object:
shorturl.at/gjklq



Locate the object in the museum:
shorturl.at/gjns3

Look

This chair has been inspired by a doll from Ghana called an *Akuaba* doll. *Do any parts of the chair make you think of a doll?*

What different shapes can you spot?

What material is it made from?

Think

The designer of this chair wanted to show different aspects of his heritage in his design. *Why do you think that might have been important to him?*

Think about a special object that you have at home that says something about who you are. *Why is it important to you? What does it say about you?*

Create

Think of different and important aspects of who you are and use this as inspiration to design a piece of furniture. It could be inspired by the things you like to do in your free time, your friends and family, your school, your favourite colours, toys or sports team.

Explore the theme of identity further in the collections

Sculpture, rooms 21-24

Britain, rooms 52-58 & 118-125

Fashion, room 40

Asia galleries, rooms 41-45

Cross-curricular links

PSHE

Ourselves, growing and changing:

- To recognise what makes us special
- To recognise the ways in which we are all unique
- To identify what they are good at, what they like and dislike
- About personal identity; what contributes to who we are (e.g. ethnicity, family, gender, faith, culture, hobbies, likes/dislikes)

DESIGNER/ USER



MwangaBora lamp, designed by Evans Wadongo,
Kenya, 2012 © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

Evans Wadongo designed this solar-charging lamp for Kenyan communities without electricity. He developed it to replace widely used kerosene lanterns, which are costly to run and give off toxic fumes that cause health problems. Made from locally sourced scrap metal and off-the-shelf electronic parts, Wadongo kept the design simple to encourage people to use it every day, rather than to save it for special occasions.

The success of the lamp lies in the fact that the designer has considered the needs of the user and placed them firmly at the centre of the design solution. Identifying the specific requirements of the user enables designers to make informed decisions, which results in design ideas that can really make a difference.



Find out more
about this object:
shorturl.at/ntuy4



Locate the object
in the museum:
shorturl.at/sxT49



Watch this film
about the lamp:
bit.ly/3t7q1AJ

Look

Look closely at this object.
What do you think it is?

*What materials do you think
it is made from?*

*Do you think it would be cheap or
expensive to make? Why?*

*How do you think it is powered?
Are there any clues on the outside
of the object?*

Think

Where do sources of light come from?

*When might you need a light that is
powered without electricity?*

*Do you think solar energy is a good
way of making light? If so, why?*

*Do you think this object would be easy
to use?*

Create

The Mwangabora Lamp was designed by Evans Wadongo in Kenya, Africa. Evans thought very carefully about a specific problem that needed to be solved, lack of access to a regular supply of electricity, and the needs of the people who would be using his design.

Your challenge now is to think like a designer. Take the Adapt Challenge and get designing for a range of interesting users!

Adapt Challenge

Can you adapt an object to suit a unique user?

1. Pick a user
2. Describe your user
3. Choose your object
4. Re-design your object to suit your user
5. Explain your design to a friend and get their feedback

User: Batman / Lego Person / Duck / Snake / Mouse / Elephant / Dinosaur / Ghost

Object: Cup / Spoon / Phone / Bike / Toothbrush / Chair / Pencil / Bag

Explore more about design further in the collections

Design 1900-Now, rooms 74 & 76

Furniture, rooms 133 & 135

Cross-curricular links

Science

Light

- Recognise that they need light in order to see things and that dark is the absence of light
- Notice that light is reflected from surfaces
- Recognise that shadows are formed when the light from a light source is blocked by an opaque object

OUR PLANET



Fukusa (Gift Cover), 1800–1850, Unknown, Kyoto
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

The presentation of gifts has always been an important social ritual in Japan. Gifts are given at significant times of the year, such as New Year, or for special events, such as weddings. Gifts were traditionally placed in a box on a tray, over which a textile cover, called a *fukusa*, was placed. Certain symbols, animals or legends were chosen to decorate the *fukusa*, depending on the occasion. After being suitably admired, the cover was then returned to the person who had given the gift.



Find out more about this object:
shorturl.at/eqrN



Locate the object in the museum:
shorturl.at/bjY19

Look

What do you think this object is made from? Why do you think it is made from that material?

What images can you see on the object?

Can you describe what you think is happening in the scene?

Think

This object is a *fukusa*, a special piece of fabric used to cover gifts. Think of a time that you have been given a gift. *What was the wrapping like? How did it feel when you were unwrapping the gift?*

*How is this *fukusa* gift covering different from wrapping paper?*

*Why do you think the *fukusa* might be better for the environment than wrapping paper?*

Create

Caring for our planet and making the right environmental choices is important for the preservation of nature and protecting the world for future generations. We can learn from objects and traditions which can inspire new ways of caring for the environment. Design your own *fukusa* or gift covering inspired by objects that you can see around you in the gallery.

Follow-up classroom activity:
Try using natural materials and printing with natural objects (eg. seeds, fruit, leaves) to make the *fukusa* or gift covering that you designed at the museum.

Explore the theme of the planet and sustainability further in the collections

Design 1900-Now, rooms 74 & 76

Furniture, rooms 133 & 135

Cross-curricular links

Science

Uses of everyday materials

- Identify and compare the suitability of a variety of everyday materials, including wood, metal, plastic, glass, brick, rock, paper and cardboard for particular uses

STORYTELLER



Robe, 1730–1750, Unknown, China
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

About this object

Dragon robes show the significance of maintaining the Heaven-Earth balance. Yellow is the colour of Earth and was used by royalty. Designs on the robe include mountains, water and curling waves, as well as dragons flying in the sky among clouds. The emperor was represented by the five-clawed dragon.

Chinese dragons do not breathe fire. Folk tales say that dragons spend the winter on earth, and then rise into heaven and cause the first rainfall of spring.

Therefore, as with many objects dragons are shown traditionally with water or clouds. From the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), ordinary people were forbidden to use dragon decorations and designs, and only the emperor was permitted to have things with a five-clawed dragon as decoration.

Men in the imperial family wore dragon robes on festive occasions. The name comes from the large dragons central to their design, though the robes also feature other auspicious symbols.

This robe was made between 1730-1750. Three blue dragons appear on both the front and the back, while two more on the shoulders. They are shown pursuing flaming pearls, bats, clouds, stems of flowers, and seven of the eight Buddhist emblems. Amid the waves at the bottom of the robe are stems of flowers, the heart of some of them being the yin-yang symbol.

In Chinese mythology, as well as the dragon representing imperial power, they are also associated with good luck and prosperity.



Find out more about this object:
shorturl.at/kADMO



Locate the object in the museum:
shorturl.at/bux26

Look

Let your eye travel all over the surface of the robe. *What different animals, creatures and details can you see?*

What colours can you see in the robe?

Can you spot any dragons? How many claws do they have? If they have five, that means they represent the Emperor.

Think

Who do you think would have worn this robe?

When or where do you think it would have been worn?

Do you know what any of the animals or symbols on the robe might mean?

Create

This robe is telling a story through the symbols included in its design. Can you create a story about the dragon or any of the other animals you can see on the robe?

Imagine the robe could talk. What would it say? Work in pairs with one person pretending to be the robe and the other person asking the robe questions.

Explore more about storytelling and stories further in the collections

Theatre & Performance, rooms 103-106

Europe, rooms 1-7

Sculpture, rooms 21-24

Britain, rooms 52-58 & 118-125

Cross-curricular links

Literacy

Spoken language

- Use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas

Writing / Composition

- Saying out loud what they are going to write about
- Composing a sentence orally before writing it
- Sequencing sentences to form short narratives
- Re-reading what they have written to check that it makes sense