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Art and Design Curriculum Intent

Year 8

At Key Stage 3, our Year 8 Art and Design curriculum is designed in line with the National Curriculum to inspire creativity, curiosity, and self-expression while developing practical artistic knowledge and skills. The curriculum is ambitious, inclusive, and accessible to all learners, providing opportunities for every pupil to succeed regardless of prior experience or ability.

The Art and Design curriculum actively encourages pupils to engage with and reflect upon the work of a wide range of artists, designers, and craftspeople from different cultures, backgrounds, and historical periods. Through exploring diverse artistic styles, techniques, and ideas, pupils are encouraged to "think like artists" and use these experiences to inspire and inform the development of their own creative work. The Year 8 projects give pupils the opportunity to build on the skills learnt in their year 7 formal elements project. Pupils will explore a range of materials, techniques and process as they carry out their Urban art and Day of the Dead projects. Pupils experiment with a variety of materials, techniques, and processes, building confidence, resilience, and independence as creative learners.

Art and Design is a subject that often reveals different strengths and talents in pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds and academic abilities. All pupils are encouraged to challenge themselves creatively, visually, orally, and through written reflection. Developing oracy skills is an important part of the curriculum, with pupils regularly discussing ideas, evaluating artwork, giving feedback, and explaining their creative decisions using subject-specific vocabulary.

A holistic approach is taken when assessing pupil achievement, with progress measured through technical skill, creativity, experimentation, presentation, and the ability to reflect critically on both their own work and the work of others. Through this approach, pupils develop confidence in communication, problem-solving, and creative thinking.

Our aim is for all pupils to build on the skills learnt in year 7 and to be ready to progress on to year 9 with confidence. We aim for all pupils to be equipped with the practical skills, knowledge, and creative mindset needed to progress successfully through KS3 and into future creative pathways at KS4 and beyond.

Term 1
Topic

Urban Art: Research, Meaning and Context

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

Art has long been used to communicate ideas, challenge authority and transform public spaces. Throughout history, artists have created work that celebrates communities, raises awareness of important issues and encourages people to think differently about the world around them. This enquiry introduces pupils to the diverse world of Urban Art, exploring how artists use public spaces to communicate powerful messages through imagery, symbolism and visual design.

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Building upon the formal elements and creative processes developed in Year 7, pupils investigate how artists such as Banksy, Keith Haring and Shepard Fairey have challenged traditional ideas about where art belongs and who it is for. Pupils begin to understand that art can be political, cultural and deeply personal, recognising that artists often create work to inspire discussion and social change.

The curriculum is ambitious for every learner. Pupils develop as increasingly independent artists who research, analyse and interpret the work of others before making informed artistic decisions of their own. They learn that successful artists combine technical skill with critical thinking, creativity and a clear understanding of purpose and audience.

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

The enquiry begins by introducing pupils to Urban Art as a powerful form of visual communication, encouraging them to recognise that art exists far beyond galleries and museums. Pupils develop substantive knowledge by exploring the origins and evolution of Urban Art, understanding how graffiti, murals, stencil work and street art have developed from forms of personal expression into internationally recognised artistic movements. Through retrieval activities and teacher modelling, pupils revisit the formal elements developed in Year 7 whilst recognising how line, colour, composition and typography continue to underpin increasingly sophisticated artistic practice.

Teacher demonstrations explicitly model drawing techniques, lettering, compositional planning and stencil design, enabling pupils to investigate the practical processes used by contemporary urban artists. Pupils explore specialist vocabulary including graffiti, typography, stencil, mural, composition, scale, perspective, visual communication, symbolism, positive space, negative space, layering and contrast, applying this language confidently through annotation, discussion and practical investigations. Attention then turns to investigating artists including Banksy, Shepard Fairey, Keith Haring and other influential urban artists, enabling pupils to develop substantive knowledge of how Urban Art communicates political ideas, social commentary and cultural identity. Through structured artist analysis, pupils investigate historical context, artistic style, techniques and intended messages, recognising that Urban Art often gives a voice to communities whilst challenging traditional ideas about where art belongs.

As the enquiry progresses, pupils increasingly develop disciplinary knowledge by working as artists themselves. Sketchbooks become working journals in which pupils record observations, investigate artists, experiment with lettering styles, composition and stencil techniques, annotate research, refine ideas and evaluate creative decisions. Practical investigations encourage pupils to explore scale, repetition, layering and visual impact whilst understanding that successful artists continually revisit and improve their work through experimentation and refinement.

Teacher modelling gradually becomes less directive as pupils develop greater independence when selecting imagery, colour palettes and compositional layouts. Structured critique, paired discussion and whole-class feedback strengthen pupils' oracy, enabling them to justify artistic choices using increasingly sophisticated subject-specific vocabulary whilst respectfully evaluating the work of others.

Throughout the enquiry, pupils continually apply the disciplinary processes of observing, recording, investigating, analysing, experimenting, refining, presenting and evaluating, recognising that artistic development is an iterative process requiring resilience, creativity and thoughtful reflection.

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The enquiry concludes with pupils producing an ambitious Urban Art outcome that demonstrates confident understanding of artistic conventions, visual communication and contemporary creative practice. By synthesising artist research, practical experimentation and reflective evaluation, pupils begin to understand how artists communicate powerful messages through public art whilst developing increasing independence in their own creative practice.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge

What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Pupils begin this enquiry with a secure understanding of the formal elements of line, colour and tone, alongside experience of abstraction, mixed media and creative experimentation developed throughout Year 7. They understand that artists deliberately manipulate visual elements to communicate ideas and have developed confidence in analysing artwork, evaluating creative decisions and refining outcomes through constructive feedback.

Pupils also recognise that successful artistic practice involves research, experimentation and reflection, providing a strong foundation for increasingly independent artistic enquiry.

Pitch Up

How will we challenge ourselves?

This enquiry represents an important progression from developing technical artistic skills towards understanding art as a powerful form of communication and social commentary. Pupils move beyond studying artistic techniques in isolation and begin analysing how artists communicate ideas, influence audiences and respond to contemporary issues. Through increasingly independent research and investigation, pupils develop confidence in selecting appropriate techniques, imagery and symbolism to communicate purposeful artistic messages.

The enquiry prepares pupils for the practical Urban Art project in Terms 2 and 3, where they will apply their research to produce increasingly personal artistic responses inspired by contemporary Urban Artists. More broadly, pupils continue developing the independence, analytical thinking and creative confidence that underpin success throughout Key Stage 3 and provide strong foundations for GCSE Art and Design.

Wider Framework

How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This enquiry supports the National Curriculum for Art and Design by enabling pupils to:

- produce creative work informed by research, experimentation and personal development
- develop increasingly sophisticated analytical and evaluative skills
- investigate the work of influential artists from different cultures and historical periods
- communicate ideas confidently through visual language
- develop independence as reflective and informed creative practitioners.

Curriculum Hinterland

What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

Urban Art reflects changing societies, technologies and cultures. Pupils investigate how public art has evolved from ancient murals to contemporary street art, recognising how artists have continually used public spaces to communicate political messages, celebrate communities and challenge social conventions.

By studying internationally recognised artists alongside examples of local public art, pupils appreciate that artistic expression can influence everyday environments whilst encouraging debate about identity, ownership, freedom of expression and the role of creativity within modern society.

Authentic connections

How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

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Through this enquiry, pupils develop spiritual understanding by exploring how artists express identity, beliefs and personal experiences through visual communication, recognising that creativity provides powerful opportunities for self-expression and reflection. Social understanding is strengthened through investigating how Urban Art reflects communities, responds to social issues and encourages public discussion. Pupils collaborate through critique and discussion whilst appreciating that artistic viewpoints can differ significantly.

Moral understanding develops through considering the ethical questions surrounding graffiti, public art, ownership, censorship and freedom of expression. Pupils evaluate differing viewpoints and recognise the responsibilities associated with creating artwork within shared public spaces. Cultural understanding is enhanced through studying Urban Artists from different countries and cultural backgrounds, enabling pupils to appreciate how artistic expression reflects historical events, cultural identity and contemporary society.

The enquiry supports the development of British Values, particularly individual liberty through freedom of artistic expression, mutual respect by valuing diverse viewpoints, and the rule of law through considering the legal and ethical differences between commissioned public art and illegal graffiti. There are strong cross-curricular links with History through political protest and historical context, Citizenship through rights, responsibilities and public spaces, English through annotation, analysis and persuasive communication, and Media Studies through symbolism, branding and visual communication.

Throughout the enquiry, pupils develop important personal attributes including curiosity, independence, resilience, critical thinking and reflective practice, recognising that artists continually question, investigate and refine their ideas before creating successful outcomes. The enquiry explicitly develops the Skills Builder competencies of Creativity, by generating original responses to artistic stimuli; Speaking, through presenting and justifying artistic interpretations; and Problem Solving, through analysing how visual techniques communicate increasingly sophisticated ideas.

The enquiry introduces pupils to careers where visual communication, branding and public engagement are fundamental, including graphic designer, mural artist, illustrator, creative director, advertising designer, exhibition designer, community arts practitioner, visual communicator and curator. Pupils recognise that the ability to communicate ideas visually, research critically and understand audiences is highly valued across creative and commercial industries.

Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	**Assessment** *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*
• Sketchbooks • Artist reference materials • Banksy, Keith Haring and Shepard Fairey case studies • Visualiser • Digital research resources • Graffiti and typography references • Drawing media • Annotation guides	**Baseline Assessment:** Retrieval activities and an initial design task assess pupils' understanding of the formal elements, composition and visual communication developed during Year 7. **Mid-Point Assessment:** An assessed artist investigation and practical design study demonstrate pupils' understanding of Urban Art techniques, annotation and creative experimentation. **End of Enquiry Assessment:** Pupils produce a sustained Urban Art outcome that demonstrates confident composition, artist influence and increasingly independent creative decision-making.

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• Teacher demonstrations • Subject-specific vocabulary displays • www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study • www.nationalgallery.org.uk • www.tate.org.uk • www.npg.org.uk • www.vangoghmuseum.nl/nl • www.turnercontemporary.org	**40% Substantive Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: • the origins and development of Urban Art • the work of Banksy, Shepard Fairey, Keith Haring and other contemporary artists • typography, graffiti styles and stencil techniques • symbolism and visual communication • composition, scale and perspective • specialist vocabulary including mural, stencil, typography, layering, contrast, symbolism and composition. **60% Disciplinary Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate their ability to: • investigate artists using specialist vocabulary • record observations and ideas within sketchbooks • experiment with lettering, composition and stencil techniques • refine creative ideas through annotation and feedback • evaluate artistic decisions confidently • produce increasingly personal and technically accomplished outcomes.

Terms 2 and 3
Topic

Urban Art: Developing Personal Responses

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

Artists use visual language to communicate powerful messages, challenge perceptions and represent the communities around them. This enquiry builds upon pupils' understanding of Urban Art by moving from research and analysis towards increasingly independent creative practice. Pupils apply the knowledge gained through studying influential Urban Artists to develop their own personal responses, recognising that successful artistic outcomes combine technical skill with originality, purpose and thoughtful communication.

Through experimentation with mixed media, colour, typography and composition, pupils explore how artistic techniques can influence the way messages are interpreted. They learn that artists continually develop, adapt and refine their work, using experimentation as an essential part of the creative process rather than expecting immediate success.

The curriculum is ambitious for every learner. Pupils increasingly develop as confident creative practitioners who select techniques purposefully, justify artistic decisions and communicate increasingly sophisticated ideas through their own artistic outcomes.

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Zoom In

What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Building upon their understanding of Urban Art, pupils now move beyond replication towards developing increasingly personal artistic responses. The enquiry encourages pupils to recognise that artists communicate ideas by selecting techniques, imagery and symbolism that reflect their own experiences, opinions and creative intentions. Pupils continue developing substantive knowledge through exploring how Urban Art responds to themes including identity, community, social justice and contemporary culture.

Teacher demonstrations explicitly model increasingly advanced techniques including layering, large-scale composition, image transfer, stencil refinement, mixed media and colour planning, encouraging pupils to make increasingly independent artistic decisions. Specialist vocabulary including identity, narrative, symbolism, juxtaposition, focal point, visual hierarchy, harmony, emphasis, refinement and audience is explicitly taught and revisited throughout practical investigations, annotation and discussion.

Attention then turns to analysing how artists develop ideas over time. Rather than viewing finished outcomes alone, pupils investigate sketchbooks, preparatory studies and developmental work, recognising that successful artists continually record, experiment, refine and evaluate before producing final pieces. Gallery collections, artist interviews and digital resources strengthen pupils' understanding of authentic creative practice beyond the classroom.

As the enquiry progresses, pupils increasingly strengthen disciplinary knowledge by generating original ideas, selecting appropriate techniques, evaluating experimentation and refining their work through continual reflection. Sketchbooks become increasingly sophisticated working documents, recording research, practical trials, annotation, compositional planning and written evaluation. Pupils justify artistic choices using specialist vocabulary whilst demonstrating resilience through iterative improvement.

Teacher support gradually reduces throughout the enquiry, encouraging pupils to assume greater ownership of their creative process. Structured peer critique and classroom discussion continue developing pupils' confidence in communicating artistic ideas through increasingly mature oracy and reflective practice.

The enquiry concludes with pupils producing a substantial personal Urban Art outcome that communicates an individual message inspired by their research and experimentation. By synthesising substantive understanding with increasingly sophisticated disciplinary processes, pupils begin working with the independence expected of young artists preparing for the final stages of Key Stage 3.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge

What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Pupils begin this enquiry with a secure understanding of Urban Art, its historical development and the work of influential artists including Banksy, Keith Haring and Shepard Fairey. They understand how artists communicate meaning through symbolism, colour, typography and composition, and have developed confidence in researching, analysing and evaluating artistic work.

Pitch Up

How will we challenge ourselves?

This enquiry develops pupils from researchers into independent artists. By applying their understanding of Urban Art through increasingly personal creative responses, pupils develop confidence in selecting appropriate techniques, refining ideas and communicating meaningful messages through visual language. They become increasingly reflective practitioners who justify artistic decisions using both technical knowledge and creative intention.

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Pupils also bring forward the technical understanding of line, colour, tone, abstraction and mixed media developed throughout Year 7, enabling them to make increasingly informed artistic decisions.	The enquiry prepares pupils for the Year 8 Day of the Dead project by strengthening their independence, experimentation and confidence in communicating culture, identity and symbolism through art. More broadly, pupils continue developing the habits of successful artists that underpin progression throughout Key Stage 3 and into GCSE Art and Design.
Wider Framework *How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?*	**Curriculum Hinterland** *What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?*
This enquiry supports the National Curriculum for Art and Design by enabling pupils to: • produce creative work informed by research and personal development • become increasingly proficient in selecting and combining artistic media • communicate ideas through purposeful visual language • evaluate and refine artwork using increasingly sophisticated artistic vocabulary • develop confidence as independent and reflective creative practitioners.	Urban Art continues to evolve alongside modern society, technology and visual culture. Pupils explore how artists use public spaces, murals, digital media and community projects to communicate messages that influence local communities and global audiences alike. By creating their own Urban Art responses, pupils recognise that visual communication plays an increasingly important role in shaping opinions, promoting social change and encouraging public engagement within contemporary society.
Authentic connections *How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?*	
Through this enquiry, pupils develop spiritual understanding by expressing personal beliefs, interests and experiences through increasingly independent artistic outcomes, recognising creativity as an important means of communicating identity and individual perspective. Social understanding is strengthened through collaborative discussion, peer critique and evaluating how artwork communicates with different audiences. Pupils recognise that visual communication has the power to unite communities, celebrate diversity and encourage public dialogue. Moral understanding develops through considering how artists communicate messages responsibly and ethically, recognising that imagery and symbolism can influence attitudes, opinions and behaviour. Cultural understanding is enhanced through exploring how Urban Art reflects the experiences, traditions and identities of different communities across the world, enabling pupils to appreciate the diversity of contemporary artistic practice. The enquiry supports the development of British Values, particularly individual liberty through creative expression, mutual respect by valuing different viewpoints and artistic responses, and democracy through recognising that public art can provide a platform for diverse voices and opinions. There are strong cross-curricular links with English through persuasive communication, Citizenship through community engagement and public responsibility, Media Studies through branding, symbolism and audience, and Design Technology through visual communication and design thinking.	

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Throughout the enquiry, pupils develop important personal attributes including independence, resilience, creativity, adaptability and reflective practice, recognising that successful artists continually experiment, evaluate and improve their work. The enquiry explicitly develops the Skills Builder competencies of Creativity, as pupils generate original artistic responses; Problem Solving, through selecting appropriate materials and techniques; and Leadership, by sharing ideas and modelling successful approaches during critique.

The enquiry introduces pupils to careers where creative communication and visual storytelling are essential, including concept artist, mural artist, illustrator, graphic designer, brand designer, creative director, animator, digital artist and advertising creative. Pupils recognise that the ability to develop original ideas, solve problems creatively and communicate visually is highly valued across both creative and commercial industries.

Resources
What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?

- Sketchbooks
- Oil pastels
- Watercolours
- Acrylic paints
- Mixed-media materials
- Stencil resources
- Typography references
- Artist reference materials
- Visualiser
- Teacher demonstrations
- Subject-specific vocabulary displays
- www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study
- www.nationalgallery.org.uk
- www.tate.org.uk
- www.npg.org.uk
- www.vangoghmuseum.nl/nl

Assessment
How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?

Baseline Assessment: Retrieval activities and sketchbook review assess pupils' understanding of Urban Art techniques and artist research from the previous enquiry.
Mid-Point Assessment: An assessed design development demonstrates pupils' ability to experiment, refine ideas and communicate personal intentions through annotation and practical investigation.
End of Enquiry Assessment: Pupils produce a sustained personal Urban Art outcome demonstrating independence, refinement and increasingly confident artistic decision-making.

40% Substantive Knowledge
Pupils demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:

- Urban Art as an artistic movement
- the work of influential Urban Artists
- symbolism, typography and visual communication
- ethical and social issues surrounding public art
- key artistic vocabulary associated with Urban Art.

60% Disciplinary Knowledge
Pupils demonstrate their ability to:

- research and analyse artists independently
- record observations and develop ideas effectively

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• www.turnercontemporary.org	• justify artistic decisions using specialist vocabulary • evaluate artistic techniques and intentions • refine research and developmental work following feedback • communicate increasingly sophisticated artistic ideas through written and visual responses.

Term 4
Topic

Day of the Dead: Culture, Identity and Symbolism

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

Art is often used to preserve traditions, celebrate identity and communicate the beliefs of different cultures. This enquiry introduces pupils to the rich artistic traditions of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), exploring how art can celebrate life, honour memory and express cultural identity through symbolism, colour and decorative design.

Building upon the independence and analytical skills developed through the Urban Art enquiry, pupils investigate how artists communicate meaning through cultural symbols, pattern and portraiture. They explore the work of influential artists including Frida Kahlo and contemporary Mexican artists, recognising how personal identity, heritage and lived experience influence artistic practice.

The curriculum is ambitious for every learner. Pupils develop as culturally informed artists who appreciate the importance of artistic traditions whilst confidently interpreting symbolism, analysing visual language and making increasingly thoughtful artistic decisions inspired by different cultures.

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

The enquiry begins by introducing pupils to the rich cultural traditions of Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead), enabling them to understand how art reflects identity, remembrance and cultural heritage. Pupils develop substantive knowledge by exploring the historical origins of the celebration, recognising its roots within Mexican traditions and understanding how symbolism, colour and imagery communicate powerful cultural meanings. Through retrieval activities and teacher modelling, pupils revisit the formal elements developed throughout Years 7 and 8 whilst recognising how artists combine these elements to communicate identity and celebration.

Teacher demonstrations explicitly model observational drawing, decorative pattern work, symmetrical design and the construction of traditional sugar skull imagery, allowing pupils to investigate how artists carefully combine line, shape, colour and pattern within highly decorative compositions. Pupils develop specialist vocabulary including symbolism, symmetry, pattern, motif, iconography, composition, cultural heritage, celebration, remembrance, repetition, positive space and negative space, applying this language confidently through annotation, discussion and practical investigation.

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Attention then turns to investigating the work of artists including José Guadalupe Posada and other contemporary artists inspired by Día de los Muertos. Pupils develop substantive knowledge of how artists celebrate cultural identity through visual imagery whilst recognising how traditions evolve across time and continue influencing contemporary art and design. Through structured artist analysis, pupils investigate artistic style, historical context and creative intention, strengthening their understanding of how symbolism communicates meaning.

As the enquiry progresses, pupils increasingly develop disciplinary knowledge by working as artists themselves. Sketchbooks continue to function as working journals in which pupils record observations, investigate artists, experiment with pattern, composition and decorative techniques, annotate research, refine ideas and evaluate creative decisions. Practical investigations encourage experimentation with colour, repeated motifs and symbolic imagery whilst reinforcing that successful artistic practice develops through continual refinement.

Teacher modelling gradually reduces as pupils become increasingly independent in selecting imagery, colours and decorative motifs to communicate thoughtful artistic responses. Structured discussion and critique strengthen pupils' oracy, encouraging them to explain the significance of cultural symbols, justify artistic decisions and respectfully compare the work of different artists using increasingly sophisticated subject-specific vocabulary.

Throughout the enquiry, pupils continually apply the disciplinary processes of observing, recording, investigating, analysing, experimenting, refining, presenting and evaluating, recognising that artists develop meaningful outcomes through thoughtful enquiry and purposeful experimentation rather than simply copying existing designs.

The enquiry concludes with pupils producing an ambitious decorative sugar skull design inspired by Mexican artistic traditions. By synthesising artist research, practical investigation and reflective evaluation, pupils demonstrate increasingly mature understanding of cultural symbolism whilst continuing to develop the confidence and independence expected of young artists approaching the final stages of Key Stage 3.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge *What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?*	**Pitch Up** *How will we challenge ourselves?*
Pupils begin this enquiry with experience of researching artists, analysing visual communication and developing increasingly independent artistic responses. They understand how artists communicate meaning through colour, composition and symbolism and have developed confidence in refining work through experimentation and evaluation. Pupils also bring forward secure knowledge of the formal elements developed throughout Year 7, enabling them to make increasingly purposeful artistic decisions inspired by cultural traditions.	This enquiry broadens pupils' understanding of art beyond personal expression by exploring how artistic traditions preserve cultural identity, beliefs and collective memory. Through investigating symbolism and cultural representation, pupils become increasingly confident in analysing how artists communicate complex ideas through visual language whilst developing greater cultural awareness and empathy. The enquiry prepares pupils for the practical Day of the Dead Printmaking project in Terms 5 and 6, where they will apply their understanding of symbolism, composition and pattern to produce increasingly sophisticated mixed-media and printmaking outcomes. More broadly, pupils continue developing the research, analysis and creative independence required throughout Key Stage 3 and into GCSE Art and Design.

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Wider Framework
How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This enquiry supports the National Curriculum for Art and Design by enabling pupils to:

- investigate art from different cultures and historical traditions
- develop increasingly sophisticated analytical and evaluative skills
- communicate ideas through visual symbolism
- deepen understanding of artists, traditions and cultural identity
- develop confidence as reflective and culturally informed creative practitioners.

Curriculum Hinterland
What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

The study of Day of the Dead enables pupils to appreciate how art preserves traditions and communicates cultural identity across generations. Pupils investigate how Mexican artistic traditions combine Indigenous beliefs with later cultural influences to create one of the world's most recognisable artistic celebrations.

By comparing these traditions with commemorative practices from Britain and other cultures, pupils recognise that art often reflects shared human experiences whilst celebrating the diversity of global cultures and identities.

Authentic connections
How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

Through this enquiry, pupils develop spiritual understanding by exploring how different cultures use art to celebrate life, remember loved ones and express beliefs about memory, identity and community. Social understanding is strengthened through investigating how artistic traditions bring families and communities together, encouraging pupils to appreciate the importance of shared cultural experiences and respectful dialogue. Moral understanding develops through considering the importance of representing cultures accurately and respectfully, recognising that artists have a responsibility to celebrate diversity without reinforcing stereotypes or misconceptions. Cultural understanding is at the heart of the enquiry. Pupils investigate Mexican artistic traditions whilst comparing them with cultural celebrations from Britain and across the world, developing appreciation for the richness and diversity of global artistic heritage.

The enquiry supports the development of British Values, particularly mutual respect and tolerance through valuing different beliefs, traditions and cultural identities, alongside individual liberty by recognising the importance of expressing identity through creative practice. There are strong cross-curricular links with History through cultural traditions and historical influences, Religious Education through beliefs surrounding remembrance and life after death, English through interpretation and analysis, and Modern Foreign Languages through exploring Mexican culture and language.

Throughout the enquiry, pupils develop important personal attributes including empathy, curiosity, respect, creativity and reflective practice, recognising that understanding different cultures enriches both artistic practice and personal development. The enquiry explicitly develops the Skills Builder competencies of Listening, by engaging thoughtfully with different perspectives and cultural traditions; Speaking, through discussing and presenting artistic interpretations; and Creativity, by interpreting symbolism in original ways.

The enquiry introduces pupils to careers where cultural understanding and visual storytelling are important, including museum curator, exhibition designer, illustrator, cultural heritage officer, art educator, costume designer, community artist, museum educator and festival designer. Pupils recognise that creativity combined with cultural awareness is highly valued across the arts, education and heritage sectors.

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Resources *What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?*	Assessment *How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?*
• Sketchbooks • Artist reference materials • Frida Kahlo case studies • Contemporary Mexican artist references • Day of the Dead artefacts and imagery • Coloured pencils • Watercolours • Fine liners • Visualiser • Teacher demonstrations • Subject-specific vocabulary displays • www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study • www.nationalgallery.org.uk • www.tate.org.uk • www.npg.org.uk • www.vangoghmuseum.nl/nl • www.turnercontemporary.org	**Baseline Assessment:** Retrieval activities and an observational drawing assess pupils' understanding of pattern, composition and the formal elements developed during previous enquiries. **Mid-Point Assessment:** An assessed artist investigation and decorative design study demonstrate pupils' understanding of symbolism, cultural traditions and practical experimentation. **End of Enquiry Assessment:** Pupils produce a sustained Day of the Dead design that demonstrates confident application of symbolism, decorative pattern and increasingly independent creative decision-making. **40% Substantive Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: • the origins and traditions of Día de los Muertos • Mexican cultural heritage and symbolism • the work of José Guadalupe Posada and contemporary artists • decorative pattern, symmetry and composition • specialist vocabulary including symbolism, motif, iconography, remembrance, symmetry, repetition and cultural identity. **60% Disciplinary Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate their ability to: • investigate artists and cultural traditions • record observations through drawing and annotation • experiment with decorative techniques and composition • refine creative ideas through evaluation and feedback • communicate artistic understanding using specialist vocabulary • produce increasingly personal and technically accomplished outcomes.

Terms 5 and 6
Topic

Day of the Dead: Printmaking and Personal Outcomes

Big Picture
What are the main ideas and big questions in this topic?

Printmaking has enabled artists to share ideas, celebrate culture and communicate visual stories for centuries. This enquiry builds upon pupils' understanding of Mexican art and symbolism by introducing printmaking as a creative process through which artists develop repeated imagery, layered compositions and visually

striking designs. Pupils explore how traditional and contemporary artists use printmaking to preserve cultural traditions whilst creating bold and expressive artistic outcomes.

Drawing upon the knowledge and technical skills developed throughout Year 8, pupils combine observational drawing, symbolism, composition and colour to produce increasingly sophisticated print-based artwork inspired by Día de los Muertos. They investigate how artists including Sylvia Ji and Beatriz Milhazes reinterpret traditional themes through contemporary artistic techniques, recognising that artistic traditions continually evolve whilst remaining rooted in cultural identity.

The curriculum is ambitious for every learner. Pupils become increasingly independent creative practitioners who confidently select techniques, evaluate artistic decisions and synthesise their learning to produce thoughtful, technically accomplished and culturally informed artistic outcomes.

Zoom In
What knowledge, skills and key vocabulary will we learn step by step?

Building upon their understanding of Mexican culture and symbolism, pupils now explore printmaking as a creative process through which artists reproduce, refine and communicate visual ideas. Pupils develop substantive knowledge by investigating how relief printing, repeated imagery and surface design have been used throughout history to communicate artistic, political and cultural messages. They recognise that printmaking combines technical precision with creative experimentation, allowing artists to produce multiple original works whilst continually refining their designs.

Teacher demonstrations explicitly model relief printing techniques, safe tool handling, inking, registration and printing processes before pupils apply these techniques independently through increasingly ambitious practical investigations. Specialist vocabulary including relief printing, lino print, registration, edition, block, carving, positive and negative space, transfer, texture, impression and repetition is explicitly introduced and continually revisited through practical activities, annotation and evaluation.

Attention then turns to analysing artists who use printmaking within their creative practice, enabling pupils to develop substantive knowledge of how traditional printing techniques continue influencing contemporary illustration, graphic design and fine art. Pupils investigate preparatory studies, developmental work and finished prints, recognising that artists continually test, modify and refine their ideas before producing successful outcomes.

As the enquiry progresses, pupils strengthen disciplinary knowledge through recording designs, experimenting with carving techniques, evaluating print quality and refining compositions following each printed impression. Sketchbooks document research, design development, practical experimentation, annotation and reflective evaluation, demonstrating how artistic ideas evolve through continual modification and improvement.

Teacher guidance becomes increasingly facilitative rather than directive, encouraging pupils to solve practical challenges independently, evaluate technical successes and modify designs to improve clarity, composition and visual impact. Structured peer critique and classroom discussion continue strengthening pupils' oracy, enabling them to articulate creative decisions confidently whilst evaluating both technical quality and artistic effectiveness.

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Throughout the enquiry, pupils consolidate the disciplinary processes that have underpinned every enquiry throughout Years 7 and 8: observing, recording, investigating, analysing, experimenting, refining, presenting and evaluating. They increasingly recognise that these transferable habits define successful artistic practice regardless of medium or technique.

The enquiry concludes with pupils producing a carefully refined printed outcome that combines cultural understanding, technical skill and increasingly independent artistic decision-making. By synthesising artist research, practical experimentation and reflective evaluation, pupils demonstrate the maturity, resilience and creative confidence required to progress into the increasingly independent and conceptually challenging enquiries encountered in Year 9.

Pre-Requisite Knowledge

What have we already learned that will help us with this topic?

Pupils begin this enquiry with a secure understanding of Mexican artistic traditions, symbolism and cultural identity developed during the previous enquiry. They have developed confidence in researching artists, analysing artwork and creating increasingly independent responses informed by observation, experimentation and evaluation.

Pupils also draw upon the technical understanding of line, colour, tone, abstraction and mixed media developed throughout Years 7 and 8, enabling them to combine artistic techniques with increasing confidence and purpose.

Pitch Up

How will we challenge ourselves?

This enquiry represents the culmination of Year 8, requiring pupils to synthesise the technical skills, cultural understanding and creative independence developed throughout the year. By applying printmaking techniques within a culturally informed artistic project, pupils become increasingly confident in selecting media, refining outcomes and communicating sophisticated ideas through visual language.

The enquiry prepares pupils for Year 9 by establishing greater independence in planning, experimenting and evaluating artistic work whilst introducing specialist techniques that underpin future study at Key Stage 3 and GCSE Art and Design. Pupils leave Year 8 with an increasingly mature understanding that artistic success relies upon research, experimentation, technical control and thoughtful communication.

Wider Framework

How does this learning connect to future topics and bigger goals?

This enquiry supports the National Curriculum for Art and Design by enabling pupils to:

- produce creative work through increasingly independent investigation and experimentation
- become proficient in specialist printmaking and mixed-media techniques
- analyse and evaluate artwork using increasingly sophisticated artistic vocabulary
- develop knowledge of artists from different cultures and artistic traditions
- build confidence as reflective, technically skilled and culturally informed creative practitioners.

Curriculum Hinterland

What wider knowledge will deepen our understanding of this topic?

Printmaking has played a significant role throughout art history, enabling artists to reproduce imagery, communicate ideas and make art accessible to wider audiences. Pupils explore how traditional printmaking techniques continue to influence contemporary illustration, graphic design, fashion, advertising and digital media.

By studying contemporary Mexican artists alongside historical printmaking traditions, pupils appreciate how artists continually reinterpret cultural heritage through new materials, technologies and creative approaches whilst preserving important traditions for future generations.

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Authentic connections

How does this topic connect to real life, careers, other subjects and important values?

Through this enquiry, pupils develop spiritual understanding by creating artwork that celebrates identity, memory and cultural traditions, recognising that artistic processes can communicate deeply personal and collective experiences. Social understanding is strengthened through collaborative critique, shared practical experiences and discussions surrounding cultural appreciation. Pupils learn to celebrate different artistic approaches whilst recognising the importance of respectful collaboration and constructive feedback. Moral understanding develops as pupils consider the responsibilities involved in representing cultural traditions authentically and respectfully. They reflect upon the importance of acknowledging artistic influences whilst developing original creative responses. Cultural understanding remains central to the enquiry. Pupils deepen their appreciation of Mexican artistic traditions whilst recognising how printmaking has enabled cultures across the world to preserve stories, traditions and artistic heritage throughout history.

The enquiry supports the development of British Values, particularly mutual respect and tolerance through appreciating cultural diversity, alongside individual liberty by encouraging increasingly independent artistic expression informed by research and understanding. There are strong cross-curricular links with History through the development of printmaking, Religious Education through cultural traditions and remembrance, Design Technology through production processes, and Media Studies through visual communication, reproduction and audience.

Throughout the enquiry, pupils develop important personal attributes including precision, perseverance, independence, creativity and reflective practice, recognising that successful printmaking requires careful planning, resilience and continual refinement. The enquiry explicitly develops the Skills Builder competencies of Problem Solving, by refining printing techniques and overcoming technical challenges; Leadership, through supporting peers during practical processes and sharing successful techniques; and Creativity, through producing increasingly original and technically sophisticated artistic outcomes.

The enquiry introduces pupils to careers where printmaking, visual communication and surface design are fundamental, including printmaker, textile designer, surface pattern designer, illustrator, packaging designer, wallpaper designer, fashion designer, museum conservator and fine artist. Pupils recognise that specialist making techniques combined with creative thinking remain highly valued across both traditional crafts and contemporary creative industries.

Resources

What books, websites, videos and materials will support our learning?

- Sketchbooks
- Printing blocks or lino/foam printing materials
- Printing inks and rollers
- Acrylic paints
- Mixed-media resources
- Specialist printmaking equipment
- Artist reference materials

Assessment

How will we show what we know, remember and can apply?

Baseline Assessment: Retrieval activities and an initial print design assess pupils' understanding of symbolism, composition and design development from the previous enquiry.
Mid-Point Assessment: An assessed printmaking investigation demonstrates pupils' understanding of relief printing techniques, experimentation and refinement.

• Sylvia Ji and Beatriz Milhazes case studies • Visualiser • Teacher demonstrations • Subject-specific vocabulary displays • www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-art-and-design-programmes-of-study • www.nationalgallery.org.uk • www.tate.org.uk • www.npg.org.uk • www.vangoghmuseum.nl/nl • www.turnercontemporary.org	**End of Enquiry Assessment:** Pupils produce a sustained printed outcome demonstrating confident technical control, thoughtful refinement and increasingly independent artistic practice. **40% Substantive Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate knowledge and understanding of: • relief printmaking processes • printmaking tools, materials and techniques • the role of printmaking within historical and contemporary art • design development and repeated imagery • specialist vocabulary including registration, relief printing, edition, carving, impression, transfer and texture. **60% Disciplinary Knowledge** Pupils demonstrate their ability to: • investigate artists and printmaking techniques • develop and record original designs • experiment confidently with relief printing processes • refine practical outcomes through repeated evaluation • communicate artistic intentions using specialist vocabulary • produce increasingly independent and technically accomplished printed outcomes.