

LOWER PRIMARY
NARRATIVE

NARRATIVE

LOWER PRIMARY | TEACHER'S NOTES



CREATIVE THINKING AT ABERDEEN ART GALLERY

Welcome. This pack has been put together by our experienced learning team to help you explore the building and the collection with your pupils. Every artwork tells a story, giving an insight into a particular culture, society or time in history. Exploring the collection will encourage curiosity, imagination and problem solving.

About Aberdeen Art Gallery

The opening of Aberdeen Art Gallery on 7 July 1885 was made possible by financial contributions from local businessmen including granite and flour merchants, art collectors and civic-minded individuals. The people who paid for this building also donated many of the older paintings that you see on display today. They were philanthropists who wished to give something back to the community by establishing a public venue for the enjoyment and appreciation of art.

Before your visit

You may want to begin with a picture of Aberdeen Art Gallery and ask your learners to set some questions about the gallery and what they might see there.

This will help to de-mystify what an art gallery is, who it's there for and hopefully have them looking forward to their visit.

How to use the teacher's notes

In order to make these notes work for you, we have chosen artworks and activities that are age appropriate. Primary is divided in to Lower and Upper and Secondary is divided in to Junior and Senior phase.

This resource provides you with suggested activities and background information on selected artworks. There are six themes that will direct you to at least three gallery spaces, but you can of course look at more artworks along the way.

As these teacher's notes will be available to download from our website, some images of the artworks are copyright protected and cannot be included in the pack.

Visit our website at www.aagm.co.uk to see images of all the artworks featured in this pack as well as many others from the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums.

NARRATIVE

LOWER PRIMARY | TEACHER'S NOTES



THEME FOR THIS PACK: NARRATIVE

All art stems from a strong narrative. From the earliest drawings on cave walls to contemporary public art, the artist's motivation is to share their stories and experiences. This language of art is shown throughout our collection in many ways, some are easy to interpret while others require further exploration. The narrative embedded in an artist's work is the hook which draws the viewer in and creates a connection between the creator and the audience.

On arrival

Go to the welcome desk and staff there will tell you where to store your coats and bags.

They will also point out where the toilets and lifts are.

Our staff will provide you with any equipment you have booked in advance of your visit.

If you have booked our Learning Centre to use for a snack or lunch, please let our staff know. Eating and drinking in the gallery spaces is not allowed.

Around the Gallery

Explain to your learners that they must not touch any of the art on display (oily hands can damage artworks) unless a label invites them to touch.

You are welcome to sketch with pencils in the Art Gallery but please make sure your learners are creative on their paper only, not on any other surfaces!

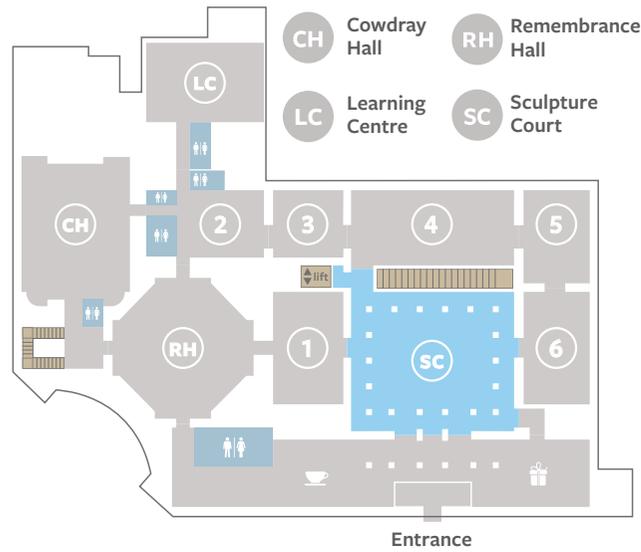
Please supervise your pupils appropriately at all times and ask them to be considerate of other visitors.

We really hope you enjoy your visit to Aberdeen Art Gallery and we welcome any feedback on how to improve the experience for others.

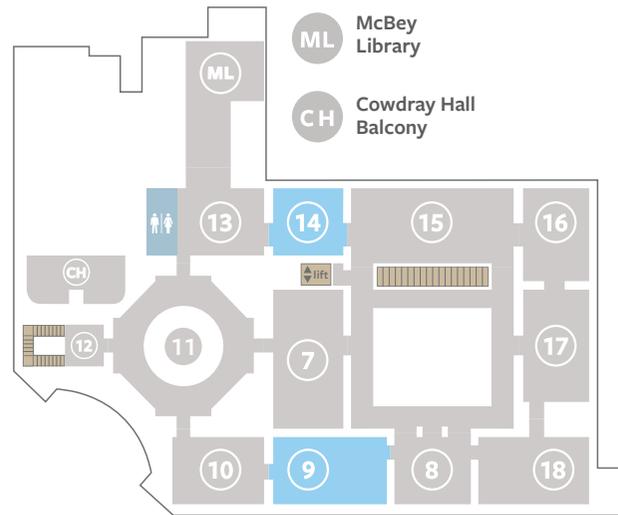
GETTING AROUND THE ART GALLERY



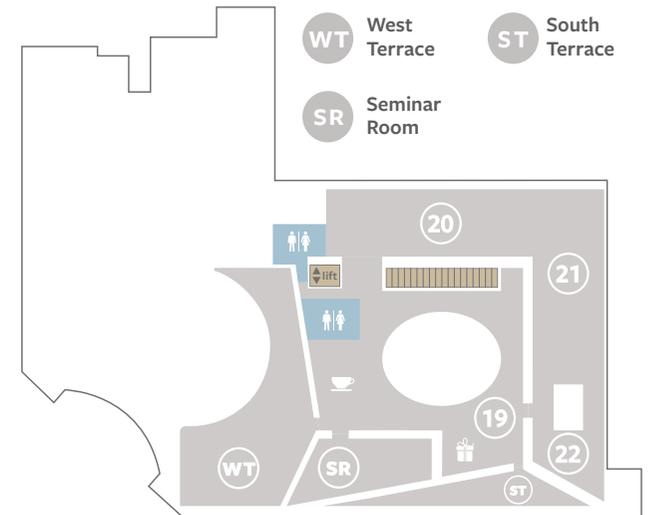
Ground Floor



First Floor



Second Floor



start here

14

Art of Empowerment

Settler Activity

Vienna at Night
Cecile Walton

The Tennis Party
Sir John Lavery

Anne Finlay
Dorothy Johnstone

9

Balmoral Phenomenon

Flood in the Highlands
Sir Edwin Landseer

SC

Sculpture Court

For You
Tracey Emin

end here

SETTLER ACTIVITY

Gallery 14: Art of Empowerment

This can be done when you bring your learners into this gallery space. Without giving any introduction to what they are going to see, lead them on a tour of the room, looking at all the artworks, but not stopping. When you return to your starting point ask if they know what the theme of the gallery is.

The purpose of this simple activity is to highlight female artists and to show how the artworks women create offer an insight into their lives, experiences and ideas.



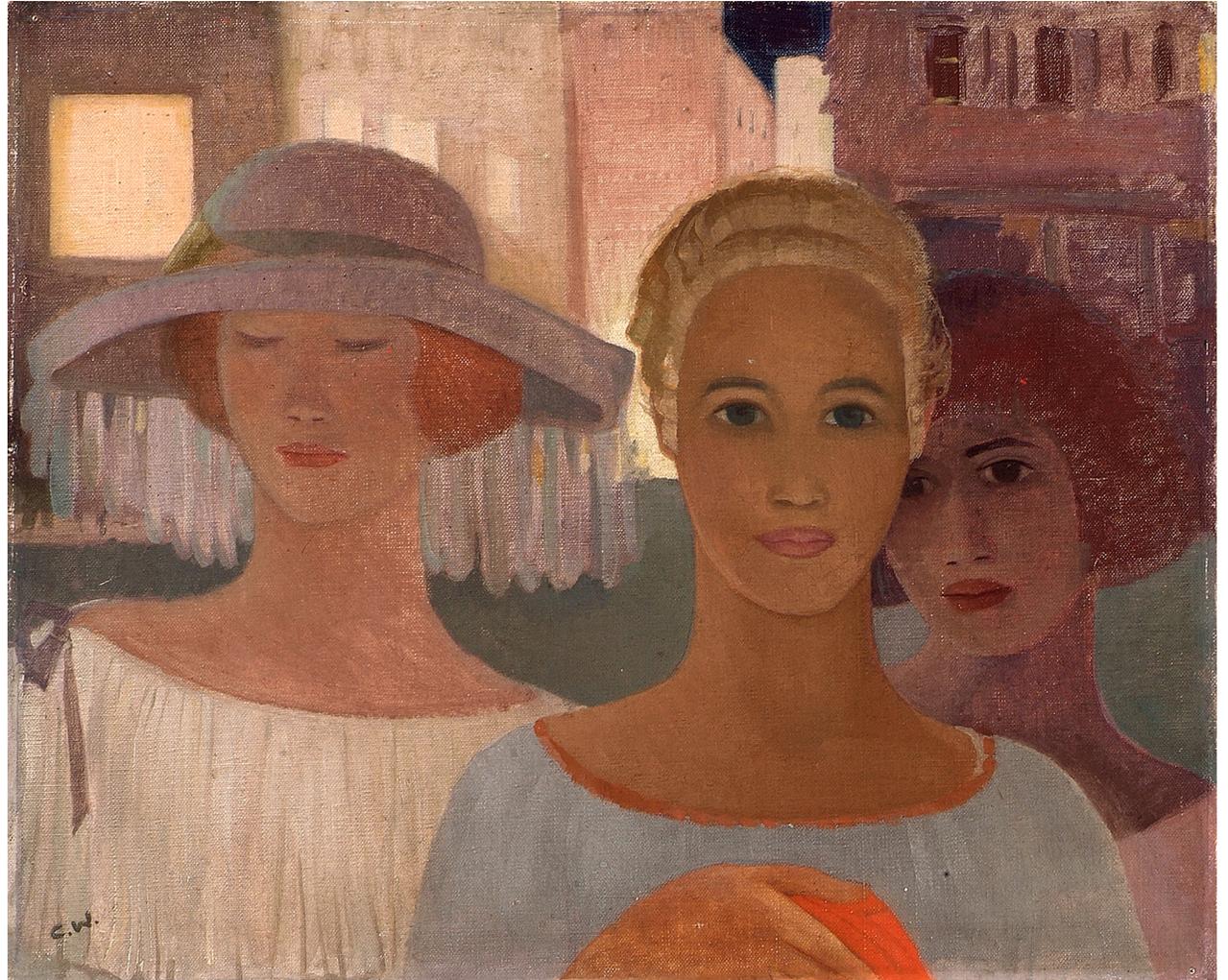
VIENNA AT NIGHT

Cecile Walton, 1923

Cecile Walton was an accomplished painter, sculptor and illustrator. Both of her parents were artists, and during her childhood she had the good fortune to be neighbours with the artists John Duncan (who taught her etching) and James Abbott McNeill Whistler.

As a young adult, Walton studied art in London, Edinburgh, Paris and Florence before settling in Scotland. A romance with the artist Eric Robertson and her friendship with the artist Dorothy Johnstone resulted in them exhibiting together at Edinburgh's New Gallery in 1913. After the First World War they joined together again and became the Edinburgh Group along with Mary Newberry.

In this painting the figure on the left is the artist Dorothy Johnstone. Walton and Johnstone had travelled together to Vienna in 1923 to attend a summer school for teachers. En route they were asked to take care of two war refugees who were to be re-united with their Hungarian father in Vienna. The other figures in the painting may be those girls. One of the young girls has a confident direct gaze, while the other girl is timidly standing behind her sister but is peering out with an interested look on her face.



THE TENNIS PARTY

Sir John Lavery, 1885

Gallery 14
Art of Empowerment



Born in Belfast in 1856, John Lavery had an unsettled childhood. Orphaned at the age of three he lived with various relatives in Ireland and Scotland before settling in Glasgow. Having funded evening classes at Haldane Academy of Art with a job working on photographic negatives, he decided to pursue a career as an artist. He turned the misfortune of his studio burning down into an opportunity to study in London and in Paris at the *Académie Julian*.

When Lavery returned from France in the early 1880s he became associated with the group of artists called the Glasgow Boys. They were an informal association of 20 artists, with the main figures being William York MacGregor, Joseph Crawhall and George Henry. They were interested in rural realism, French-inspired tonal and compositional techniques - and challenging the Edinburgh dominated art scene.

Lawn tennis became popular in the 1870s amongst the upper classes. In 1885 (the year Aberdeen Art Gallery opened) Lavery visited the home of a friend in Glasgow where a tennis court had been set up and was inspired to paint a few different versions of the tennis match. The choice of subject matter and Lavery's naturalistic portrayal were considered avant garde for the time. During his time in France Lavery met and became an admirer of the naturalistic style of the painter Jules Bastien-Lepage. He gave practical advice to Lavery on capturing figures in movement and looking at the central couple playing tennis, it is obvious Lavery put this good advice into practice.



In contrast to the apparent spontaneity of this scene, the characters are all carefully placed in terms of age and social standing. In the foreground we have the young girl under the care of her governess, looking on as the couples of marriageable age are playing mixed doubles tennis - or is it the game of love? At the far side, the older people who have moved beyond such games are seated and wear darker, less fashionable clothing.

ANNE FINLAY

Dorothy Johnstone, 1920

Dorothy Johnstone was a Scottish artist who excelled in painting landscapes and portraits, especially of children, that showed off her relaxed and informal style.

Born in Edinburgh in 1892, her father was a landscape painter and he encouraged her creativity. At the age of 16 she entered Edinburgh College of Art (ECA), and showed so much potential that when she graduated four years later, she was given the use of a studio at the college and had her first work exhibited at the Royal Scottish Academy. Only two years later she became a member of staff at ECA.

Johnstone became a regular visitor to the town of Kirkcudbright in Galloway, where she would paint with other, mainly female, artists, such as Jessie M King, as part of the Kirkcudbright School. A few years later in 1919, along with Mary Newberry and Cecile Walton she joined the reformed Edinburgh Group, which was a collection of gifted and progressive artists associated with ECA. Johnstone exhibited with both the Edinburgh Group and her friend Cecile in the early 1920s.

Anne Finlay was an artist and a good friend of Johnstone's when they both attended ECA. She was also a member of the Kirkcudbright School and there are many drawings and paintings of her among Johnstone's work. The vibrant colour of Anne's dress, coupled with the intense red of the blanket that she is sitting on, draws her reclining figure forward from the muted background. If you look closely you can see the pattern of Anne's dress is made up of small red or pink birds. Here is a perfect example of

a post-war modern woman, with her short hair and bare shoulders. However, women were still bound by certain legal restrictions, so when Johnstone married fellow artist David Sutherland in 1924 she had to give up her beloved teaching job at ECA. She continued to exhibit her artwork at the RSA to which she was elected an associate in 1962.



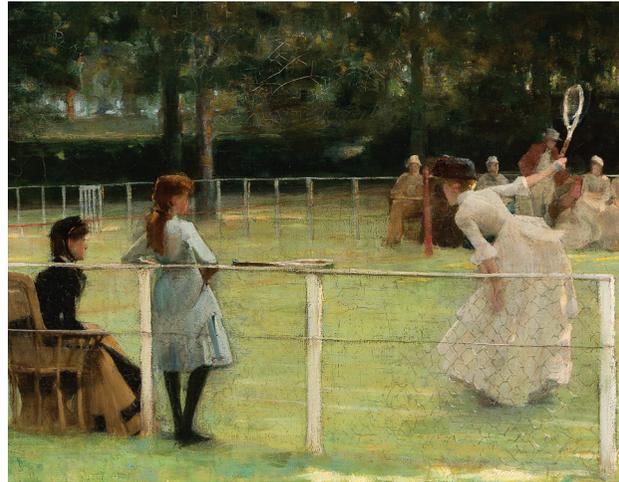
GALLERY 14 ACTIVITIES

Organise your class into three groups. Give them a time limit of five minutes and ask them to discuss the questions for each of the three highlighted artworks. After five minutes change the groups around and repeat the process until each group has discussed all three artworks.



Discussion points for *Vienna at Night*

- How old do you think the young girls are?
- What do you think the girls might be feeling? Do they look like they are enjoying themselves? Remember they are refugees from the First World War.
- What words would you use to describe the colours in this painting?



Discussion points for *The Tennis Party*

- How many people can you count in this painting?
- Look at the clothes the tennis players are wearing. Would you prefer to wear modern sportswear or this type of clothing?
- Can you spot where the older spectators are sitting?



Discussion points for *Anne Finlay*

- When do you think this painting was made – 20, 40, 80 or 100 years ago?
- Do you think that the sitter is looking comfortable? Explain to the learners how long a sitter would have to pose for a portrait.
- Let your group know that the artist who created this artwork is one of the women featured in *Vienna at Night*.



Now go to **Gallery 9: Balmoral Phenomenon**.

When moving between galleries ask your learners to look out for other examples of narrative artworks, such as sculptures, photographs, prints and drawings.

FLOOD IN THE HIGHLANDS

Sir Edwin Landseer, 1860

Gallery 9
Balmoral Phenomenon



Born in London in 1802, the son of engraver John Landseer, Edwin was a child prodigy, who by the age of 13 had exhibited artworks at the Royal Academy. He would go on to become one of the most popular and well-known artists working in Britain during the first half of the 19th century. Landseer's art appealed to a wide range of people, with reproductions of his works found in middle class homes. He also maintained profitable relations with the aristocracy, most notably with Queen Victoria.

This painting was inspired by a real event, a sudden flash flood that devastated the valleys at the foot of the Cairngorms and Monadhliath Mountains in August 1829. Under a swirling sky full of storm clouds, a family of innkeepers have retreated to the roof of their property to escape the raging water as it sweeps away struggling animals. Incident upon incident is piled in a pyramidal arrangement to convey the fear and confusion of the villagers as the waters rise beneath them. The amount of detail in the painting is immense, from the bulging eyes of the bull to the family of ducks swimming by.

Landseer was keen to promote the Scottishness of his work to gain the favour of Queen Victoria. If you look closely you can see flashes of tartan and a salvaged set of bagpipes. When he stayed at a cottage in Glenfeshie, and Victoria and Albert were in residence at Balmoral, Landseer became a frequent visitor, instructing the Queen and Prince Albert in drawing and etching.



Activity for *Flood in the Highlands*

There are so many points of interest in this large painting. Ask your learners what they are instantly drawn to – is it the terrified family clinging together on the roof or is it the animals that are struggling against the elements to survive?



Now go to the **Sculpture Court** When moving between galleries ask your learners to look out for other examples of narrative artworks, such as sculptures, photographs, prints and drawings.

FOR YOU

Tracey Emin, 2004

Tracey Emin is one of the most well-known and successful British artists of her generation. She emerged in the late 1980s as part of the Young British Artists group and became noted for provocative and controversial pieces. Working across a range of media including painting, drawing, video, needlework and sculpture, her work is candid and intimate.

Born in London in 1963 to parents of British Romani and Turkish Cypriot descent, Emin studied at Maidstone College of Art and the Royal College of Art, London. In 1993 she opened a shop with fellow artist Sarah Lucas, to sell their artwork, and had her first solo show at White Cube, a contemporary art gallery in London. In 1995 she came to the public's attention with her work, *Everyone I Have Ever Slept With 1963-1995*, a tent with the appliquéd names of everyone she had ever slept with, including pets and friends. This was followed up in 1998 by her equally controversial Turner Prize-nominated, *My Bed*.

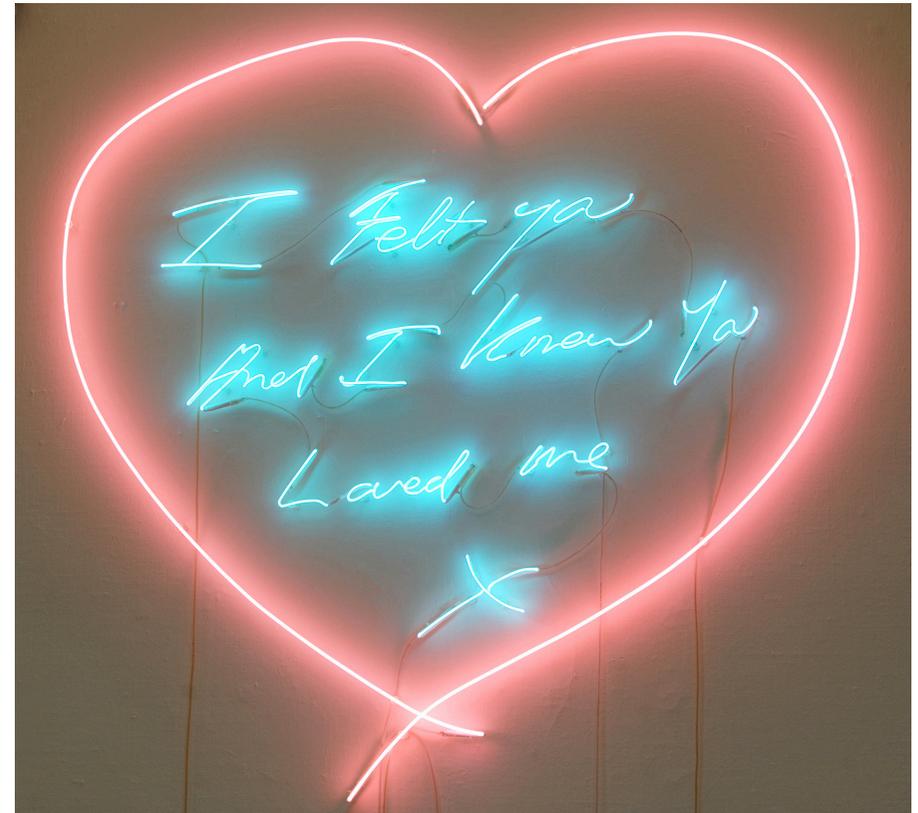
As Emin has matured the art establishment has embraced and rewarded her. In 2007 Emin became the second British female artist to represent the country at the celebrated Venice Biennale. In 2011 she was appointed Professor of Drawing at the Royal Academy - the second woman to hold the post since the Academy was founded in 1768. In 2011 she was appointed Professor of Drawing at the Royal

Academy, one of only two female professors since the Academy was founded in 1768.

For You is a hand-blown neon sign, a pink heart containing the words "I felt you and I knew you loved me" written in blue. Neon is generally associated with the advertising business and has connotations of seediness, which is in direct contrast to the message exploring love and sensuality. The heart is a warm pink, but the writing is in an icy blue colour. This piece is very much a continuation of Emin's autobiographical art works which illuminate her own experiences and emotions.

Activity for *For You*

Ask your learners to think of someone or something they love. Then ask them to consider the different ways we can visibly express that emotion.



EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Complete back at school



“I can create a range of visual information through observing and recording from my experience across the curriculum.”

EXA 0-04a / EXA 1-04a

i have something to say...

All the artworks your learners will have seen are telling stories in very different ways. Ask your learners to think of a story they want to tell and ask them to write it down. It shouldn't be long - three or four lines is fine. They should then create an artwork that depicts or represents their story.



Vienna at Night, Cecile Walton, 1923 All rights reserved, Bridgeman Images

The Tennis Party, Sir John Lavery, 1885

Anne Finlay, Dorothy Johnstone, 1920 Artist © Permission by Courtesy of: Dr D. A. Sutherland and Lady J. E. Sutherland

Flood in the Highlands, Sir Edwin Landseer, 1860

For You, Tracey Emin, 2004 All rights reserved, DACS



Aberdeen Art Gallery | Schoolhill | Aberdeen AB10 1FQ | tel. 03000 200 293 | www.aagm.co.uk

