

Arts – Visual: “Picturing Place”

Level 1-4

Lesson Description

How do we see “our place”?

First, define place for the class: is it the school, street, area, town? It can be any of these – or all, shared amongst the students. Importantly, it is compact (“local”) enough for students to acknowledge it as where they live.

The lesson then encourages students to express the place visually. Not by painting the town (or school, etc) – but by painting (or drawing in what ever medium is appropriate to the class and its skill levels) an image that tells a stranger what the student wants to say about their place.

It is cramped, crowded, spacious, bright, dark, dominated by one landmark (silo, church spire, shopping mall, intersection), crowded with red roofs, cars or trucks or fences?

Illustrate Your Place.

In order to focus the invention, the “illustration” is for a specific and functional use: it might be for a poster, or a postage stamp, or the cover of a book.

It should answer the question “what’s in a name?” by saying to the viewer “when you hear the name of our school/street/town this is what you should expect”.

Lesson Aim and Objectives

The exercise will firstly encourage students to think about where they are as a place – rather than as places being elsewhere, where other things happen. And, of course, beyond that, to thinking of what imagery best summarises what the place means to them.

The emphasis on the individual judgement of what best represents the place reduces the premium on competence as a draftsman.

Materials Needed

Art materials and work space as available.