

# Box of Creative Art Supplies: Activity Ideas!

**As part of the Primary Arts In-Schools Touring programme, your school will have received a Box of Creative Art Supplies, containing a wide range of items that we hope will bring creativity to life in your classroom in many different ways.**

**The materials are for your school to use how you like! We suggest that they be used for the class/es that took part in the Primary Arts In-Schools Touring workshop and show for some extra creative activities, but if you prefer to use them differently or with a different group of pupils, please do.**

**View this  
resource online**



**A NEW  
DIRECTION**

**for  
Primary  
Arts**

**2025/26**

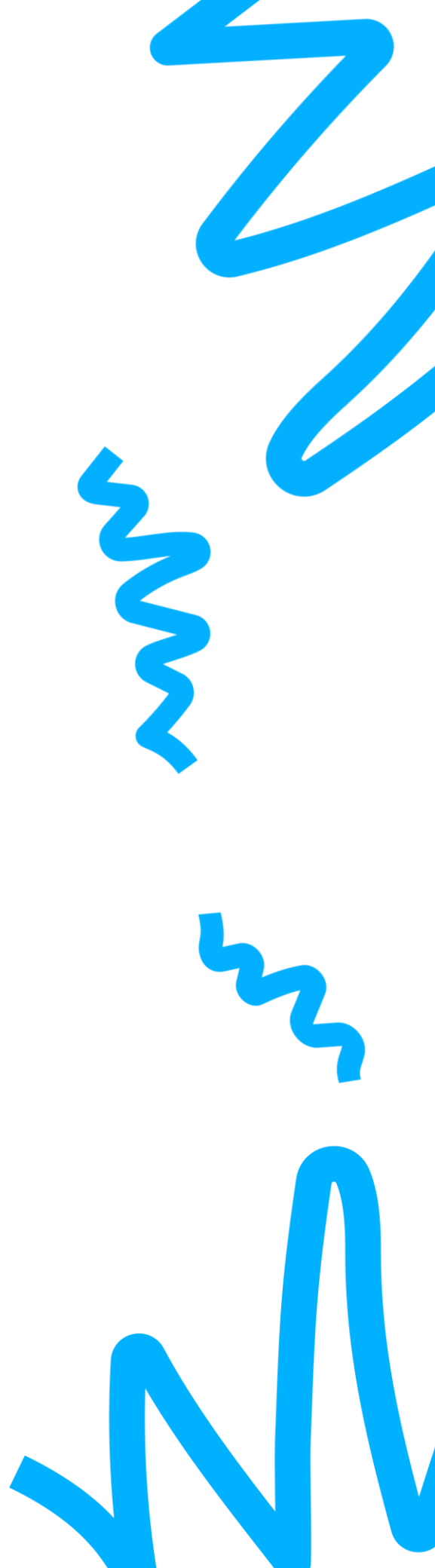
# Box of Creative Art Supplies: Activity Ideas!

In this resource, we have suggested some activities that you could do with these creative materials, which are based on the five themes below.

The five themes are linked to the 10 performances and workshops on offer this year:

- [I'm a Storyteller Explorer!](#)
- [I'm a Poet, And I Know It!](#)
- [I Can Move to the Music!](#)
- [See Me, Hear Me!](#)
- [I Play! I Persevere! I Puppeteer!](#)

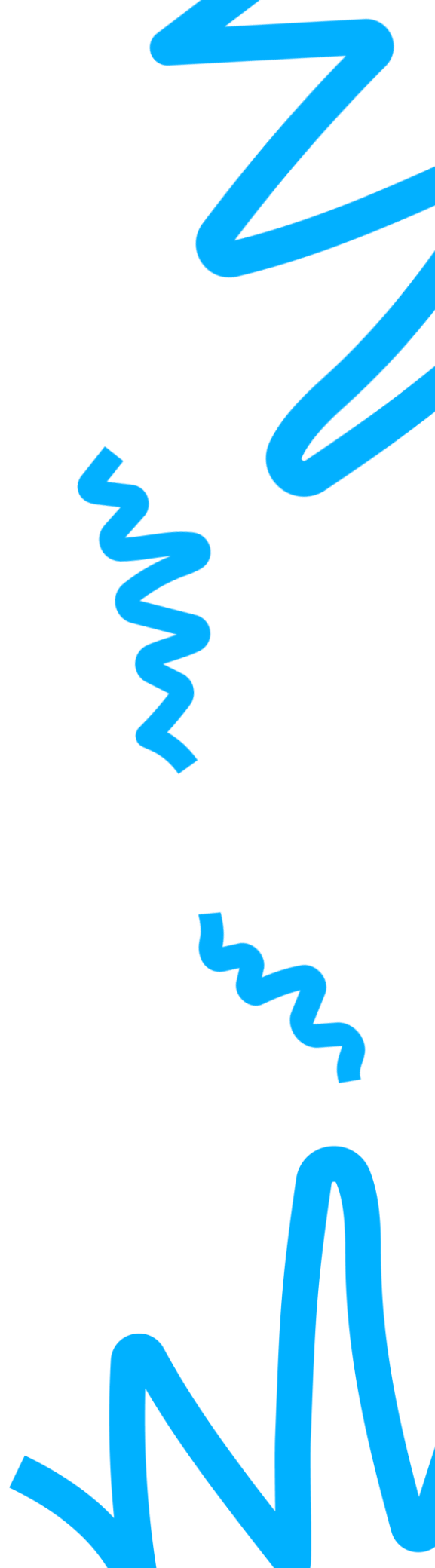
You should also have received a Brilliant Box of Books and book list which have been curated around these five themes.



# What's in the box?

## List of materials:

- **Glue Sticks**
- **PVA Glue**
- **White Card (A6)**
- **Black Card (A3)**
- **Coloured Card (A4 & A3)**
- **White Sugar Paper (A3)**
- **Coloured Sugar Paper (A4)**
- **Coloured Tissue Paper**
- **Paper Plates**
- **Lolly Sticks**
- **Masking Tape**
- **Double-Sided Tape**
- **Plain Matchboxes**
- **Stripy Pipe Cleaners**
- **Oil Pastels**
- **Modelling String**
- **Split Pins**
- **Clay (Mixed Colours)**
- **Air-Drying Clay (Terracotta)**
- **Coloured Cellophane**
- **Stick-on Wiggly Eyes**
- **Felt Tips**



# I'm a Storyteller Explorer!



## Introduction

In this activity, pupils will work in groups to create a museum collection for a new discovery – they will decide the story behind it, create objects for the collection, and decide how to display and describe them. This could be carried out in one lesson or across a series of lessons (including with homework).

### **This activity is best suited to KS2.**

To adapt for KS1 / SEND: Talk to the class about objects they like / would like to collect. You could go on a walk around the school and playground to find objects to collect, e.g. stones, feathers, etc. They could use these as inspiration to make objects out of clay.

**You might particularly like this activity if you worked with:** Emergency Exit Arts or Discover Children's Story Centre

**Creative Skills:** In this activity children are being imaginative by making connections and playing with possibilities, and being disciplined by developing techniques.

## What you will need:

### **From the box:**

#### **For the display boxes:**

Black card (A3 and some cut down to A4)  
White card (A6)  
String

#### **For their museum objects, lots of craft materials, including:**

Clay  
Paper  
Pens  
Oil Pastels  
Tape  
Lolly Sticks  
Pipe Cleaners

### **Other materials you will need:**

Pencils  
Scissors  
Tea / tea bags (for tea staining)  
Plastic trays (for containing the tea)  
Paper towels



# Activity Steps



## Warmer

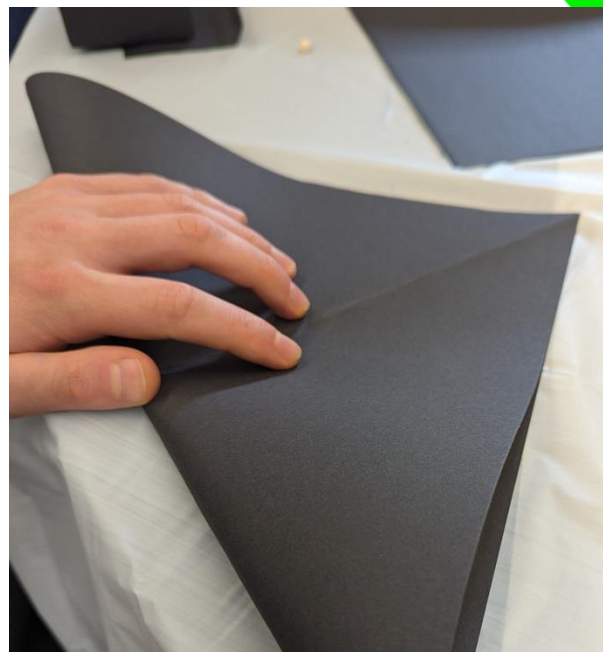
Read the book *We Dug Up the World*, by Alexandra Stewart and Kitty Harris (included in your Brilliant Box of Books) with your whole class. Select 1 or 2 double-page spreads to show to them. Ask your pupils what they think about the discoveries that were made. Which do they find most interesting? And why?

## Curating Your Museum

1. Ask your pupils to imagine that they are curators in a museum. They have been given some objects that tell a story that has never been told before! And it is their job to lay out the objects and create descriptions that help people to understand this amazing new discovery.

First though, they have to decide what the story is and what objects they have for the display. Is it a discovery from a person in history? Has a new animal been discovered? Or an alien? What sort of objects are there – letter (in a bottle), fossils, footprints, part of an alien spaceship? Ask them to discuss their ideas in groups (table groups would be ideal). They can be as imaginative as they like.

2. Ask the class to feed back some of their ideas for the story of their display and their objects as a whole class.
3. Give pupils some materials (clay, paper, pens, pencils, card) to start planning their display. Let them know that soon you will show them some techniques for making their letters and documents look old and methods for displaying their collections.

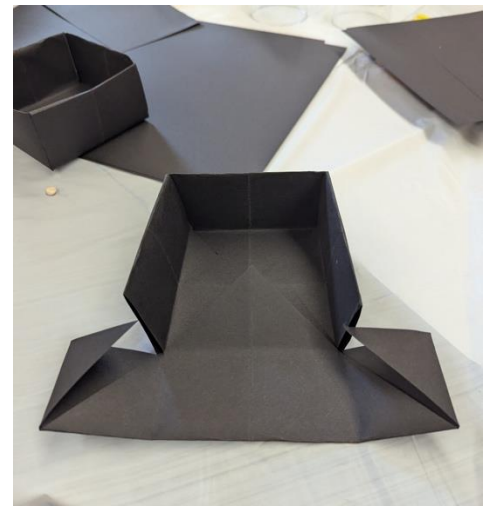
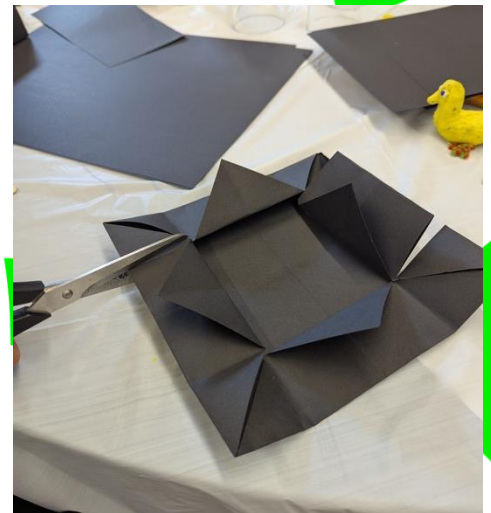
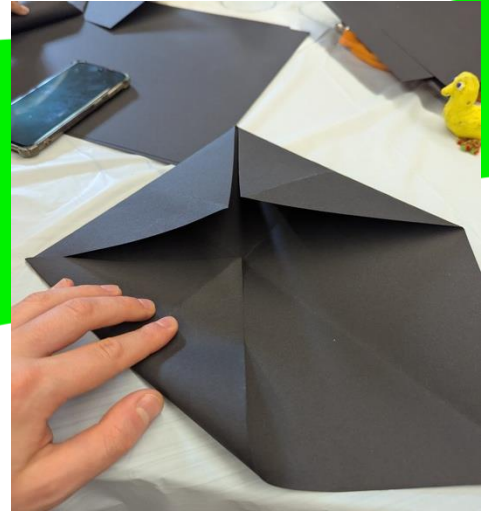


# Activity Steps



## Ageing and Preserving Your Displays

1. Create a little tea staining station with plastic trays filled with cooled tea. It is good to use hot water to release the colour of the tea, but this can be immediately cooled with cold water. Tea bags can be left in the trays for pupils to dab at pieces of paper. Ask your pupils to experiment with ageing their paper documents and letters, by dabbing at them with tea bags, soaking them in tea within the tray, and ripping and crumpling the paper for additional effect. Hang with pegs or lie the 'aged' paper on paper towels to dry.
2. You could also show your pupils [this clip with artist Lizzie Kendall from the National Archives](#) (7.55 – 12.00) on how to make a box to display their objects. You could give them A3 black card from the creative supplies or guillotine it in half to work with A4 like Lizzie in the clip. They can also use white card and string to make tags.



## Curation and Presentation

1. Once pupils have had a chance to try ageing paper and making displays, give them time to continue working on their objects and curating their displays. When they have finished, they can start to think about how they would like to present their collections.
2. Pupils present their work to the class (the public visiting the museum) – they might want to do a guided tour, or present specimens at the front of the class. Encourage them to get into character as the experts and museum curators.
3. Encourage the pupils in the audience to listen carefully and to ask questions about the objects.
4. Once everyone has presented, ask pupils to get into pairs and discuss which displays they found most interesting and why. Feed back ideas as a whole class.

## Reflection

- How did it feel to create your own museum display?
- Did it make you think any differently about museums and the collections that you can go and visit?
- Is there anything from this lesson that you would like to do more of or to learn more about?

# Go Further



## Turn Your Museum into a Story

- Pupils could write a story or a play based on the discoveries they created for their museum collection.

## Choose Your Own Adventure

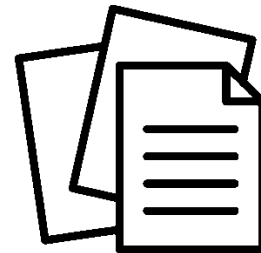
- As Storyteller Explorers your pupils might enjoy reading E.L. Norry's choose-your-own-adventure story 'You're the Boss' which features in 'Happy Here: 10 stories from Black British authors and illustrators' (included in your Brilliant Box of Books). This is best suited to Upper KS2.
- Read the story to the class. When you get to the point where they first have to decide what to do, ask the class to vote. Then, read the option that got the most votes.
- At the next point where they get to decide, again ask them to vote. However, this time instead of reading them the ending, ask pupils to write the next part of the story. Before they do this, as a class, you could recap some of the characters (Ash, Meera, Miss Peculiar, etc) and themes (gaming in class, inoculations, no mobile phones) that have come up in the story so far to help them write the next part.
- Once they have finished their stories, you could ask them to read the next part of the story themselves or read the options aloud to the class. Afterwards, ask them to discuss in pairs and feed back how it compares to their story and what they might do differently if they read it (or wrote it) again.

## Sensory Choose Your Own Adventure

- For SEND pupils, you could try 'Sharing Stories' a sensory choose-your-own adventure from A New Direction's [SEND: SLD Teaching for Creativity SEND Taster Cards](#).



# I'm a Poet, And I Know It!



## Introduction

In this activity, pupils will be introduced to the poet Joseph Coelho and his poem *If All the World Were Paper*. With this as inspiration, they will create their own paper creations and write poems about their own imagined paper worlds.

### **This activity is best suited to KS2.**

To adapt for KS1 / SEND: Listen to the poem and use paper to draw or build a paper world. To create the poems – bend, rustle, and scrunch up the paper to make different sounds. Together you could make a sound poem with actions, with someone calling out a word: fold, rustle, scrunch up and the pupils repeating the word and/or completing the action with their piece of paper.

**You might particularly like this activity if you worked with:** Arvon or The Poetry Society

**Creative Skills:** In this activity children are being collaborative by cooperating appropriately and being imaginative by making connections.

## What you will need:

### **From the box:**

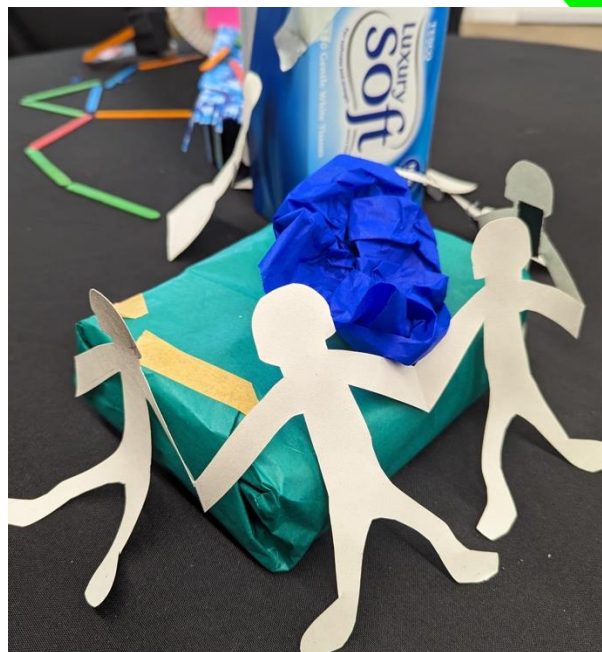
- Paper
- Card
- Glue
- Masking tape
- Double-sided tape
- Paper plates
- Coloured tissue paper
- Pens
- Oil Pastels
- Match boxes (for Go Further)

### **Other materials:**

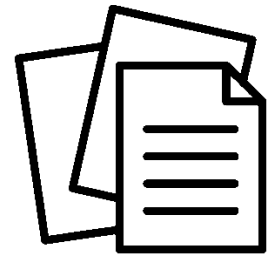
Print-outs of Joseph Coelho's poem, *If All the World Were Paper* (1 per pupil or pair)

### **Plus,**

- Toilet roll tubes
- Kitchen roll tubes
- Shoeboxes
- Cereal boxes
- Other cardboard boxes



# Activity Steps



## Listen to the Poem

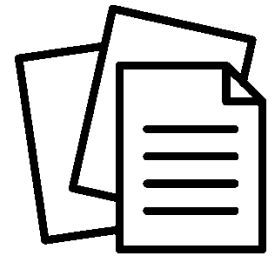
1. Listen to Joseph Coelho reading his poem, [If All The World Were Paper](#) (00.56), you can also listen to the intro at the start.
2. Ask the class for their initial thoughts about the poem. *What did you think of it? Did you like it? What did you like about it?*
3. Working in table groups, ask the class to imagine that the whole world was made of paper. Give them a large sheet of paper and ask them to write 'Paper World' in the middle. They are going to make a spider diagram.
4. Thinking about their families, their friends, animals, buildings, give them 2 minutes to write down as many things that would now be made of paper.
5. Then give them five more minutes to think about what it would look, feel and sound like: would their friends crinkle as they walk? Would the school sway and wobble in the wind?

## Make a Paper World

1. Tell them they are now going to create a paper world. Give the class: paper, card, cardboard tubes, matchboxes, collected cardboard boxes, string, glue, pens, pencils, pastels and ask them in (table) groups to create their own paper world.
2. Tell them they will need to work together. They should look at the lists of things they wrote down and decide what they want to make and who will make what.
3. Have a walk around the classroom and look at everyone's paper worlds.



# Activity Steps

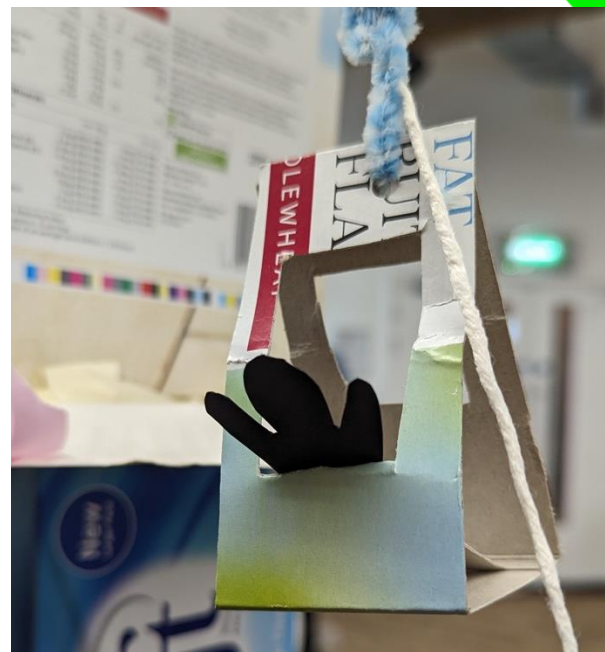


## Write Your Own Poem

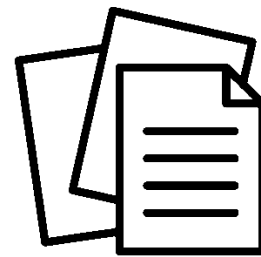
1. Tell the class you are going to listen again and notice the verbs that Joseph Coelho uses about the paper world. Before listening, do they remember what he said he would do with his gran? If not, listen up until 1.08 and elicit 'fold up' and then replay from the beginning.
2. Once they have finished listening, give them a copy of the poem written down and ask them to add as many of the verbs to their spider diagram as they can together: fold up, laminate, rip, shred, tear, re-bind, smooth out, place (in a zoetrope), stick, read, rustle, paperclip, draw, rub out, cover, recycle.
3. [Watch a BBC video of Joseph Coelho](#) showing how he used a spider diagram to make his poem.
4. Ask the class, to use the spider diagram and the paper world that they have made as inspiration for their own poem. Give them a few minutes to think of some initial sentences, using: 'If all the world were paper, I would...' Then share some sentences as a whole class.
5. Pupils continue their poems. Let them know they can use the line 'If all the world were...' but they do not have to. Encourage them to also think about what they are feeling. Joseph Coelho has said when he is feeling happy, writing about happy things makes him feel happier. And when he is angry, writing angry things makes him feel less angry.
6. Ask pupils to share their poem with the person next to them. If they do not want to read the whole poem, they could just share a few lines. Some pupils could then share their poems with the class.

## Reflection

- How did it feel to see poet Joseph Coelho talking about how he writes his poetry?
- How did it feel to make a world inspired by his poem?
- How did it feel to write your own poem?
- Is there anything from today that you would like to try again or do differently?



# Go Further



## Add to the Paper Worlds

- Ask your pupils to write their poems out on masking tape and add them to the paper worlds that they made together.

## Matchbox Poems

- Ask your pupils to reflect on these lines from Joseph Coelho's poem:

If all the world were paper  
I would fold up my gran  
and take her everywhere I go.

- Ask them to write out their poem, so that they can fold it up and fit it into a matchbox to take with them. This could be the poem they have already written or they could write a new poem.
- Decorate the matchbox. Think about how the outside could reflect what is on the inside. Do you want it to be inviting? Or for an angry poem, do you want to warn people to open the box with care or not at all?

## Make a Zoetrope

- You could also ask them to reflect on these lines from Joseph Coelho's poem:

If all the world were paper  
I would re-bind my grandfather  
smooth out the dog-ears to all of his stories,  
place his younger days in a zoetrope

- Explain that a zoetrope is a vintage toy that was originally developed in the 1830s that animates still images to make them look like they are moving.
- Watch and follow the steps in this [BBC video on how to make a zoetrope](#) in class.



# I Can Move to the Music!



## Introduction

Pupils will listen to three different tracks and create art from the music they hear. Creating drawings, devising dance moves, and developing fantastical characters and costume designs inspired by Mozart's The Magic Flute.

**This activity is suitable for Reception, KS1, KS2 and SEND.**

Some adaptations: Pupils may wish to focus on 'drawing' the music or creating their own dance moves. See the Go Further section for more ideas connected to this theme for SEND pupils.

**You might particularly like this activity if you worked with:** London Mozart Players, Mbilla Arts or SLiDE.

**Creative Skills:** In this activity children are being collaborative by cooperating appropriately, being imaginative by making connections and playing with possibilities.

## What you will need:

### From the box:

Paper  
Oils Pastels  
Pens  
Pencils

### Other materials you might need:

Pencils  
Rubbers  
Colouring pencils  
iPads and headphones (if available)



# Activity Steps

Let your class know that you will be listening and responding to some music.



## Track 1: West African Drum Music

1. Listen to some West African Drum Music and ask your class to draw what they hear. You could move your pencil in time to the music or draw a picture that comes into your head.
2. Show them work by the artist [Tom Phillips](#) who would often create his artworks while listening to music. He said his work was created as much by erasure as by creating lines.
3. Ask your class to listen again and encourage them to make new shapes using a rubber.
4. Share what they have made in groups – can they tell each other why they chose to draw or erase some of the shapes?

## Track 2: La Cumparsita

1. Listen to La Cumparsita. Again, ask your class to draw what they hear. Adding colour and using a rubber as well if they wish to.
2. Ask them to share their drawings in groups and discuss what they drew and what inspired them. Next, ask a few pupils to share with the whole class. Have they heard this track before? Does it remind them of anything?
3. (Note: If your class worked with SLIDE or if they like Strictly Come Dancing you might want let them know that this is one of their most popular tracks designed for the tango.)
4. Now, they are going to create their own dance for the music. Ask them to think about what they drew. How can they bring some of these ideas or the drawing's movement into their dance? As it is quite a long track, they can just create a dance from the start to 1.10.
5. Give the class about 5 minutes to create their dance. They will need to listen to the music as they practice. This can either be played for the whole class or if they have access to tablets and earphones, they could listen in their groups.
6. Play the music and ask the groups to perform to the class. After performing, ask pupils to feedback what they liked about other people's dances and why? Do they feel they made dances that looked like their drawings? Why / Why not?



# Activity Steps



## Track 3: The Magic Flute

1. Listen to Queen of the Night Aria, from Mozart's The Magic Flute. Again, ask your class to draw what they hear. Adding colour and using a rubber as well if they wish to.
2. Ask them to share their drawings in groups and discuss what they drew and what inspired them.
3. Explain that this music is from an opera by a famous composer called Mozart.  
(If they worked with London Mozart Players, do they remember who he is?)  
Elicit what an opera is: a type of classical music that includes singing, instruments and theatre. Don't show any images from the Magic Flute at this point but tell them that the story is about a journey or a quest and that it is a mix of comedy and fantasy.
4. Play the track again and while it is playing ask the class to imagine what sort of fantastical characters might be in the opera.
5. Feed back ideas as a whole class.
6. Ask pupils to design costumes that the opera singers might be wearing. They can work on these individually or in pairs.
7. Ask them to share their work in groups and a few pupils can then share their drawings and ideas with the whole class.
8. Show some online images from performances of the Magic Flute. Ask if there are any similarities or differences between these costumes and the ones they designed. Which costumes do they prefer?

## Reflection

1. How did it feel to 'draw' music?
2. How did it feel to create their own dance moves and costumes for an opera?
3. Is there anything from this lesson that they would like to do more of or to learn more about?



# Go Further

## Costume Design

- Ask your pupils to create costumes and props for their own version of the 'Magic Flute' from the designs that they drew. They could use and embellish a school dressing up box or bring in clothes from home to work with. If these options are not possible, they could make costumes for puppets (perhaps taking inspiration from the I Play! I Persevere! I Puppeteer! Resources. They could then present these to the class or put on a performance.

## Record and Mix Sounds

- If you have access to tablets that can be used to record and mix sounds, you might like this activity from [Tate Kids: Be a Sound Artist](#) which has been designed for SEND pupils.



# See Me, Hear Me!



## Introduction

In this activity, pupils will discover artists Yayoi Kusama and Yinke Shonibare and how they use shape, colour, and pattern to connect with the world. Before creating self-portraits, inspired by a series by Yinke Shonibare, that use colour, shape and pattern to represent themselves.

**This activity is suitable for KS1, KS2 and SEND.**

Some adaptations: Pupils may wish to focus on drawing using dots, shapes, and colour over thinking about patterns and representation.

**You might particularly like this activity if you worked with:** Clowns Without Borders, LAs theatre, Mbilla Arts or SLiDE.

**Creative Skills:** In this activity children are being inquisitive by wondering and questioning, and being imaginative by making connections and playing with possibilities.

## What you will need:

### From the box:

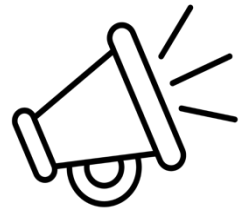
Paper  
Card  
Oil Pastels  
Pens  
Coloured card  
Tissue paper

### Other materials you could collect in advance:

Pencils  
Colouring pencils  
Magazines for the collage (if available)  
Other patterned paper (if available)  
2L plastic bottles (for Go Further)



# Activity Steps



## Yayoi Kusama: Princess of Polka Dots

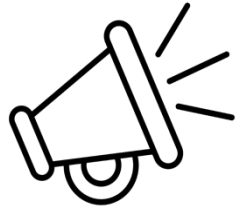
1. Show the class some work by the artist Yayoi Kusama. Explain that Yayoi Kusama is an artist known as the 'Princess of Polka Dots'.
2. Give each pupil a sheet of paper and some colour pens. Ask them to make their own picture inspired by Yayoi Kusama's dots. They can use small dots, big dots, different colour dots, can they fill the page with dots?
3. Ask them to share the work in groups. How do they feel looking at their picture and each other's pictures?
4. Share that Yayoi Kusama's dots make her feel more connected to the world. She sees herself as a single dot and everyone in the world as a dot connected to another dot. ([You could show them the Tate Kids animation about her.](#))  
Ask the class: *how does her work make you feel?*

## Yinke Shonibare: Citizen of the World

1. [Watch the Tate Kids animation about Yinke Shonibare.](#) At the end, ask the class to talk in pairs about what they learnt about Yinke Shonibare and then share back ideas as a class.
2. Yinke Shonibare is interested in patterns and fabric because they can tell stories about our history and who we are.
3. On a piece of paper, ask your pupils to draw different words, shapes and patterns that they like or that represent them. They might want to include patterns from traditional clothing (like tartan or kente), flags, colours worn by their favourite sports teams, or they may prefer to create patterns of their own.
4. Ask them to share with a partner what they have drawn.
5. Show the class images from the [series](#) of self-portraits made by [Yinka Shonibare 'Self Portrait \(after Warhol\)', 2013](#). What do they notice about them?  
You might also want to show some of his other work from this gallery which shows his striking use of colour and pattern.



# Activity Steps



## Make your own self-portrait

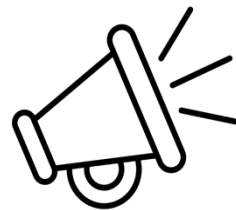
1. Create your own self-portrait inspired by the ones by Yinke Shonibare using the colours, words, shapes, and patterns that represent you.
2. Once they have finished, ask pupils to work in pairs to show each other their portraits and discuss what colours, words, shapes, and patterns they chose to use and why. Then, come together as a whole class to showcase some of these images and ideas.
3. You may wish to put all of the portraits together as a portrait that represents your whole class.

## Reflection

1. How did you feel making a self-portrait using colour, shape, and pattern?
2. Do you think it is important to find new ways to express and represent yourself?
3. Is there anything from this lesson that you would like to learn more about or do more of?



# Go Further



## Portrait of History

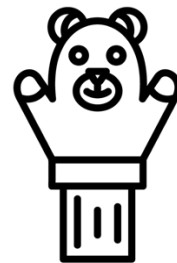
- Create your own portraits of amazing people from the present day and history who have dared to be different.
- Look at portraits from the National Portrait Gallery of: [Malala Yousafzai \(Girls' Education Activist and Nobel Prize Winner\)](#), [Ellie Simmonds \(Paralympian\)](#), and [Claudia Jones \(Mother of the Notting Hill Carnival\)](#).
- Or at the National Maritime Museum's [Black Georgian History Cards](#) featuring nine important figures from the Georgian period.
- Choose one person. How do you want to represent them? Think about the things that they have achieved and what they represent. How can you include some of these aspects of who they are into the portrait?

## Ship in a Bottle

- Find out about [Yinke Shonibare's work 'Nelson's Ship in a Bottle'](#) which is on permanent display outside the National Maritime Museum. The first video tells the story behind the art installation which is one of the most photographed artworks in London. Your pupils might also like to watch the second video which gives a quick overview on the history of ships in bottles and how they are work.
- The ship's 37 patterned sails reference Indonesian batik designs, which were mass-produced by Dutch traders and sold in West Africa. Despite their complex history, these textiles are now associated with African dress and identity. For Shonibare, the work celebrates multiculturalism: *"It's a celebration of London's immense ethnic wealth, giving expression to and honouring the many cultures and ethnicities that are still breathing precious wind into the sails of the United Kingdom."*
- After learning about 'Nelson's Ship in a Bottle', your pupils could use the shapes, patterns and words that they used for their self-portraits and develop them further to decorate sails for their own ship in a bottle. You can use tips on this page [SuperSimple](#), for your pupils to create their own ships from lolly sticks and paper and a cheat's method of cutting into a large plastic bottle to insert the ship.



# I Play, I Persevere, I Puppeteer!



## Introduction

In this activity, pupils will use light to create shadows and different colours. They will then create moving shadow puppets for a short performance.

### **This activity is best suited to KS2.**

To adapt for KS1 / SEND: Focus on the light play and making simple shadow puppets using both card and their own hands.

**You might particularly like this activity if you worked with:** Groundswell Arts, LASTheatre, Clowns Without Borders or SLiDE.

**Creative Skills:** In this activity children are being collaborative by cooperating appropriately, being disciplined by crafting and improving and being persistent by sticking with difficulty.

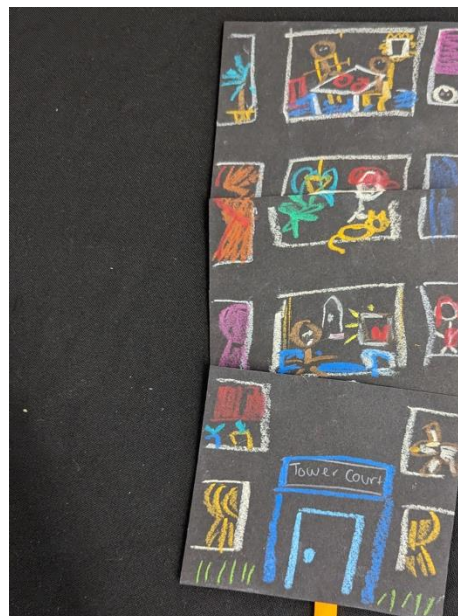
## What you will need:

### **From the box:**

- Black card
- White card
- Tape
- Pastels
- Pens
- Lolly sticks
- Coloured tissue paper
- Coloured cellophane
- Split pins

### **Other materials you could collect in advance:**

- Torches or lamps
- Scissors
- Hole punch (if available)
- Blu-tack



# Activity Steps



## Light Play

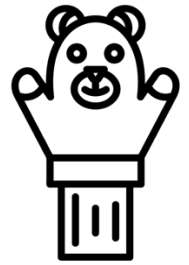
1. Give pupils some materials to work with: black card, white card, coloured tissue paper, coloured cellophane, pipe cleaners, lolly sticks, scissors, hole punch, and torch or lamp. Dim the lights in the room and ask them to play with shining the light through the different materials onto the white card. How many different shapes and colours can they make?
2. Ask a few pupils to share as a whole class the different outcomes that they got.

## Puppet Perseverance

1. [Show this clip from the BBC about making shadow puppets](#) – ask: what materials did they use to make them? Which ones do you have in the classroom? Elicit: they used black card and some thinner material like coloured tissue paper to create colours in the shadows, split pins to create movement, sticks to hold them.
2. Give each group a few additional materials: tape, a hole punch or blu-tack (this is good as a backing for making holes in card with a pencil without hurting fingers or damaging the table). Ask the class to work in groups to create puppets for a puppet show – they can make moving characters or scenery like mountains or the sun. Ask them to think for five minutes about what they might like to include in their puppet show and decide who will make what. If making complex puppets, perhaps they can work in pairs.
3. Remind them that this is a challenge and that the puppeteers they watched will spend a long time making and perfecting their puppets. They may need to have a few attempts before they are happy with the results.
4. In groups, put the puppets together and try to create a story.



# Activity Steps



## Showtime!

1. Ask some of the groups to present their puppet show to the class. Alternatively, they could show their puppets and then have some separate practice time and then later perform their shows.

## Reflection

1. How did it feel to make your own shadow puppets?
2. How did it feel taking your time to improve your puppets?
3. Is there anything from this lesson that you would like to do more of or to learn more about?

## Go Further

- If pupils would like to take their puppet-making further, they could watch this [step-by-step film from the National Theatre](#).



## About A New Direction

A New Direction is an award-winning charity (1126216) working to enhance the capacity and agency of children and young people in London to own their creativity, shape culture, and achieve their creative potential.

Primary Arts is supported by The City of London Corporation City Educational Trust Fund (29084), a City of London Corporation charity. We are extremely grateful to them for their support.

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