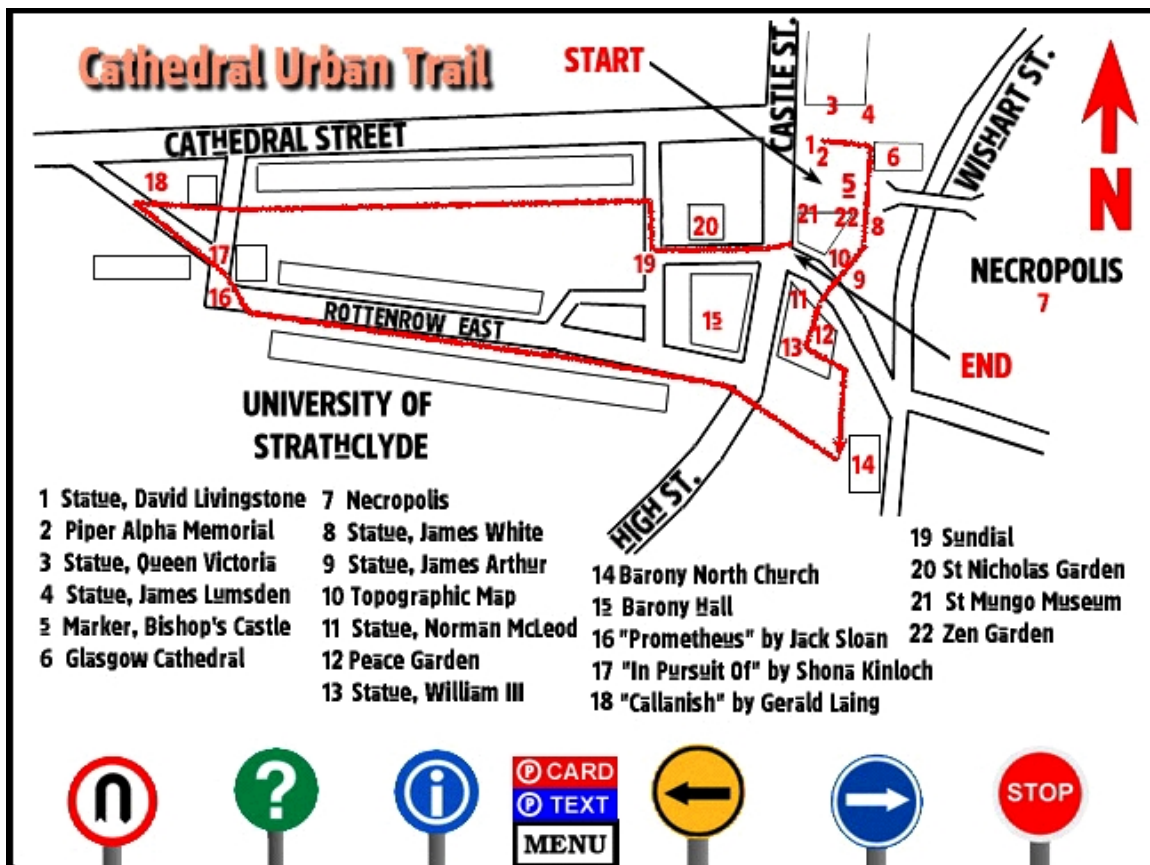


CATHEDRAL URBAN TRAIL: CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES Statues

Introduction

This activity can be carried out as a class project, to produce individual art works and studies, or it can be undertaken as small groups of pupils working together. The overall aim is to get young people thinking about the area that they live in. The activities can involve language (report writing and creative writing), Environmental studies, drama or art and design. The activity is aimed mainly at the 10 –14 age range (key stage 2), but could very easily be adapted for other ages. This map is from Scanning the City, a CD-Rom about public art in Glasgow – the idea is that young people can look at the public art using school computers then go and see the art for themselves.



Before you start this project, look at the statues in the area surrounding your school. What are they like? How have they been designed and what is their main

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purpose? Do you think the designers made them especially for your area, or are they much the same as the statues you can see in any town or city?

Now look at this statue in the Cathedral area of Glasgow:



This statue, of Queen Victoria, is at the Royal Infirmary in the Cathedral area of Glasgow. It is above the side door of the Infirmary and was erected in 1915. She holds an orb in her left hand and a Royal Sceptre in her right. Victoria was Queen of Great Britain from 1837 – 1901 and there is another statue of her in Glasgow's George Square.



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David Livingstone, who lived from 1813 until 1873 was a famous Scottish explorer and missionary who travelled all over the African continent. He is most famous for discovering the Victoria Falls, a huge waterfall on the Zambesi River in 1855. This statue, by John Mossman (1817 – 1890) was erected in George Square in 1879 and moved to the Cathedral precinct in 1959.

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This is one of the friezes on the plinth beneath the statue showing Livingstone preaching in Africa and exploring in the jungle.

Does the area that you live in have a special identity of its own? What are the spaces like around and between buildings? How would the local area be changed if a new sculpture were added? What or who would you choose to give your local environment a unique appearance? One of the most recent sculptures in Glasgow is of Scotland's first 'First Minister' (Donald Dewar) – it is in front of the Concert Hall in Glasgow. This is an appropriate place for this sculpture as Donald Dewar was a great lover of the arts.



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Sometime statues are erected to unusual figures. For instance, in the west end of Glasgow there is a statue to a popular cartoon figure, Lobey Dosser. Bud Neil (1911 – 1970) became famous in Glasgow during the 1950s and 670s for his character 'Lobey Dosser', a cartoon strip serialised in the Evening Times for many years. This was the story of a Wild West sheriff from deepest Partick who seeks out the evil villain Rank Bajin on his trusty two-legged steed El Fideldo. The characters and the stories they featured in became firm favourites with the people of Glasgow. The sculpture is because it is of a fictional character, rather than a soldier, monarch or politician, this monument recalls the life and work of an artist, whose contribution to society was through his marvellous artworks.



Lobey Dosser and El Fideldo at Woodlands Road in Glasgow.

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In other cases, artists work on statues that are temporary. Teams of artists made the sculptures below one week, the public watched as the sculptures took shape in George Square in Glasgow – they were ‘exhibited’ for two weeks. The general theme was Gods and Goddesses and they were all made of sand.



Sand Sculpture in George Square, Glasgow 2001



Sand Sculpture in George Square, Glasgow 2001

How to go about this project:

Stage 1 (week 1)

This stage involves making a careful study of the local area. Conduct a small survey of any statues in your local area, why have the statues been put there? Who are the people they represent and why should they be remembered? Think about what these objects are for, make sketches, photographs and notes about what they look like. If there are no statues near you, the school area could be looked at as the place to put some new statues.

Things to do

- Make sketches
- Take photographs
- Conduct a survey- make written notes about buildings and street furniture, which objects or buildings stand out?

You can select objects or buildings either because you like them or you don't, but think about the reasons why.

- Try to do a little research about the place that you live and go to school in, what is its history and geography?

Stage 2 (week 2)

- Collect as much information as possible about your local area, it could be your route to school, a favourite place in your town or even the school playground, how could adding public art make it a more interesting place?
- Collect your drawings, photographs and notes together in the classroom.

Things to do

- Select the object or area you intend to work on and think about the reasons why.

Most buildings and objects in towns have functions, they are there to provide light and safety (street lamps), shelter (bus stops) or provide a service (library or school).

- Make some sketches or models of your first ideas for a piece of public art.

Remember to think about safety, a project for public statue that is sharp or is too big for the intended area will not be very successful!

Stage 3 (week 3)

This stage is when artists, designers, architects and planners often make changes to their first ideas, it is called a 'prototype'. Sometimes the first ideas need to be changed, because the scale is not right or the materials are wrong. When you work on this stage, try to keep an open mind about how your work will develop.

Things to do

- Develop your model or picture of the public art work, all the time thinking about where it is to be situated (keep looking at your sketches, photographs and drawings)
- Start your drawing, painting or model using paint, drawing materials, card, clay or Mod Roc
- Make any changes as you go along, remember things like safety, scale and the Scottish weather! It does not matter if your model is made of cardboard, you can paint it to look like metal or stone.
- Clay and plasticene are good materials to make your own sculptures with. Once you have chosen a subject, try to model it and show clearly the special features of the individual.

Stage 4 (week 4)

This is the last stage of the project, by now you will have collected a lot of information about your local area its buildings, statues, history and geography. This will probably include a folder of sketches, photographs, notes, perhaps articles from local newspapers and books.

You should also have completed your model for the statue. The final stage is to look at what you have designed and present the finished work to your classmates and teacher. You should also think about what you would do differently if you were to carry out the project again.

Things to do

- Finish your model, drawing or painting
- Complete your notes, remember that artists designers or architects have to present their ideas and often use a short explanation along with the models or proposals

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- Write a short report on why you think your artwork would be a good addition to the local area. In your report include comments on
- Why did you choose to erect a statue of a particular person, what did you think worth remembering about them?
- How the real artwork would be made and what it would be made from (stone, metal?).
- What would you change if you were doing the project again?

Further projects might include:

- A design idea for a statue to commemorate a famous local person or even a past pupil from your school
- How would you like to see your school, design your own and include portraits of people you think are important today, will you use traditional sculpture or will you use new technologies such as the computer to make different images projected each day?
- In history lessons you might have learned about the Greeks and Romans who often made statues of the Gods and famous leaders, who are the people you would like to like to remember, your friends, classmates or family?
- Use a digital camera to take pictures and then use computer software like Photoshop to make a collages of the pictures

Across the curriculum

English/ language

- Writing about public art and personal responses to the urban environment-creative writing
- Descriptive writing on statues, their history and subjects
- Surveys and interviews, with peers, family on aspects of public art
- Word banks, vocabulary and new terminology
- Writing to artists, designers or architects

Mathematics

- Looking, shape, form and scale

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- Surveys and compilation of data, how many items of public art, mapping positions and locations

Art and Design

- Using new materials and media
- Evaluating and appreciating - their own work and that of other artists
- Designing, making and problem solving
- Survey, cultural mapping of a selected area
- Study of historical and cultural influences on artists

Science

- Study of scale, volume and weight
- Study of the properties of materials, for instance the effect of weather on different materials – stone, metal etc
- Contrasts of natural and built structures

Religious and Moral Education

- Surveys and notes, drawings and photographs) of public art with a religious theme (sand sculptures in George Square for instance)

Modern Languages

- Surveys and word banks, non Scottish artists role in public art in the city
- Increasing role of culture in tourism
- Signs and symbols graphic communication usage in areas where many languages are spoken e.g. airports and railway stations

Social Subjects

- Historical significance of much commemorative public art
- Survey and investigation of subjects of many figurative sculptures
- Social significance of certain works, e.g. the Piper Alpha memorial in Cathedral Precinct
- Cultural shifts – what is the significance to Glasgow's changing population of many Edwardian and Victorian commemorative statues?
- David Livingstone, Lord Roberts?
- More recent work such as George Wylie's Straw locomotive or Andy Scott's Heavy Horse both draw on Glasgow's industrial past.

Technology

- Using computer software (Photoshop) or hardware (digital cameras) to research and document work and processes
- Making scale models
- Working with new materials and construction techniques

Suppliers of art materials

Art Mediums Ltd,
Block E Unit 1,
Glenwood Business Park,
Glenwood Place,
Castlemilk,
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G45 9UH
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Fax: 0141 630 9394
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