



Forestry England

Creativitree Arts Pack



Contents

Creative arts projects

Tree form sketching	3
The Green Man	5
Woodland nest	7
Mandalas	9
Bark Portfolio	11
Larban dance - Woodland life cycle	13
Woodland soundscape	15
Filming Tree Tales	17
Tree Haiku	19
Picturesque landscape photography	21

Mini creativitrees

Symbol walk	23
Tree connections	23
Windows in the woods	23
Back to back	24
Sky pictures	24
Tree yoga	24
How it came to be	25
Tree architecture	25
The colour of feelings	25
In a tree's lifetime	26
Colour secrets	26
A vocabulary of colour	26



Tree form sketching

Sketching, shape and form, structure, texture

Form is an area or mass which defines an object within a space. Organic form is irregular and when sketching such forms we produce realistic or naturalistic images.

Our perception of form is affected by our viewpoint, the space around the object and the source and direction of light.

Right: *October Gold*, Franklin Carmichael, 1922



Creative task

Use the tree canopy shapes on the next page as a starting point for sketching the shape and form of trees.

Look for each tree shape as you walk, stopping at a close match but bear in mind it is unlikely for you to find an exact match.

Fill in the trunk shape and add branch structures and form. Even where the canopy is dense, observe closely, and lightly add these structures to your drawing.

How will you show the texture and characteristics of the trunk and branches, shadow and light?

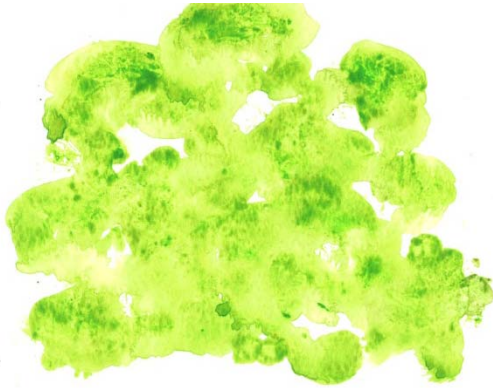
Now look around the tree and add any other natural features of interest in the arboretum environment to your sketch.

Artist connections

Arthur Lismer (1885-1969) was an English-Canadian painter, with an organic style. He was inspired by Barbizon and Post-Impressionist movements. Right: *Isles of Spruce*, 1922.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arthur_Lismer





The Green Man

Mythology, symbolism, historical, cultural, international, architecture



Carvings of the Green Man can be found in churches and other buildings all over the country. They usually show a man's face with leaves surrounding it or actually growing out of the mouth and nose (or even the eyes in some scary examples).

There were festivals to mark the coming of spring, with a man dressed completely in leaves and greenery parading through the streets. Recently this May tradition has been revived in Hastings.

The Green Man is a symbol that links humans to the rest of the natural world and they celebrate the all-important rebirth of nature in spring.

Creative task

Create your own Green Man or Green Woman using natural materials such as leaves, twigs, cones and other fallen items.

Think about the mood you want your creation to have. He or she could be joyful, mysterious, playful or threatening.

Take photographs as you go, to document your creative process. You could also make a drawing or painting of your finished art work, to use as inspiration for the future or to add to your portfolio.

Artist connections

Giuseppe Arcimboldo (1527 - 1593) - a sixteenth century artist who created faces made from fruit, flowers, leaves etc. This painting is called 'Winter'.



Before you come

Research the use of the Green Man image in architecture in Britain. What do the images all have in common? How do the images differ?

How do other cultures use similar imagery and which type of cultural places and events can you find these images? Are there different folklore or spiritual stories associated with these images?

After your visit - ideas

- Use the photographs of your green man or green woman sculpture to create one or more of the following:
 - A 3D clay tile - these can then be combined to create an architectural gallery
 - A monochrome lino print
 - A multi-coloured screen print
- Use texture to emphasize the qualities and characteristics of your green man or woman. Create a collage using torn paper, paint and other materials.
- Paint a woodland scene, using your green man or woman to create and illustrate a woodland tree spirit by blending the face into the form of a tree.

Weblinks

<https://spiritofthegreenman.co.uk>

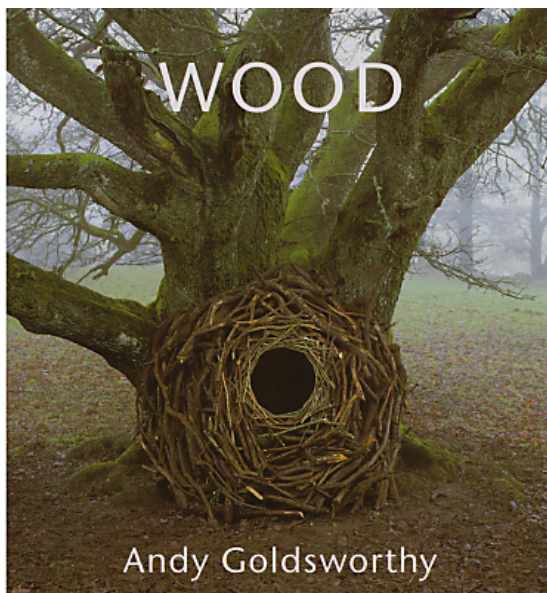
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Green_Man- includes section on the Green Man, outside of Europe

<https://www.ancient-origins.net/myths-legends/unraveling-nature-and-identity-green-man-002620>

Activity created by Pauline Thomas, Westonbirt volunteer

Woodland nest

Land art, sensory, symbolism, natural, ephemeral, movement



Land art uses natural materials and the landscape as a source of inspiration and a medium from which to produce work in two and three dimensions.

This work is often ephemeral, lasting only a day, changing through time and the variation in weather and seasons.

Westonbirt offers a rich environment in which to explore and create land art using natural materials to be found on the woodland floor and amongst the trees.

Creative task

Make a natural container or shape which takes on the form of a nest, made from twigs, leaves, petals, seeds, cones, mole hill soil, or any other natural material than can be collected from the woodland floor.

Consider where you will build your nest or container: on the floor, against a tree, or in the branches.

Create a sense of movement within your sculpture, for example the contents could overflow and spread out from the container or nest, along or down to the ground.

Record the process of making your land art through photography or film, capturing a sense of process, your observations and mood experienced whilst creating your work.

Artist connections

Andy Goldsworthy (born 1956) makes sculptures in the landscape using materials of nature immediately to hand and the chance conditions of place, time, weather and season. Image above 'The bird nest'

Creativtree Arts pack, Westonbirt National Arboretum



Before you come

Research land art or earth art, and look for inspiration from a wide range of land artists including Andy Goldsworthy.

Consider natural ways to fix and 'glue', using only the material fallen on the floor. You can use mole hill soil and water mixed, or sometimes just water will temporarily stick leaves or petals together. Pine needles are good for pinning leaves and petals together.

After your visit

View photographs and film showing the creation of your land art at Westonbirt. In a group, discuss your responses and thoughts about the mood, feelings, or atmosphere you've created. How did this develop over time?

Use clay, textiles, magazine paper or recycled materials to substitute the natural materials your land art is made from, to recreate the sculpture. Think about colour, shape, form, patterns, atmosphere, movement etc.

Use paint - watercolour, poster or acrylic - applying them in different ways, with brushes, palette knives, sticks, sponges and fingers to recreate a 2D painting of your land art.

Weblinks

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Land_art

<https://www.theartstory.org/artist-goldsworthy-andy.htm>

<http://bit.ly/landartinspiration>

Activity created by Irené Colman, Westonbirt volunteer, and Susan Castle

Mandala

Symbolism, religion, historical, spiritual, mindful



www.attentionworksheets.com www.orientacionandujar.es

Mandala, literally meaning 'circle', is a spiritual symbol in Hinduism and Buddhism. Inspired by nature's symmetrical motifs, they are used as a tool for reducing anxiety.

A mandala made with natural materials celebrates the beauty of nature; its transience represents a moment in time.

Creative task

Use natural materials to make a mandala on the woodland floor. Either create your own individual mandala or work in a group of 3 or 4 to create a group mandala that displays the colours, shapes and patterns each of you associated with harmony and calmness.

Limit your choice of materials to five things to create your 'circle' of harmony.

Photograph the process of creating a mandala, and make a record of how your mood changes as you make it.

Look at and discuss the different mandalas created by your school. How does each celebrate nature or represent harmony and calmness?

Artist connection

Jamie Locke creates hand-carved mandalas on wood, metal, leather and glass.

Watch her at work: <http://www.jamielockeart.com/video/>

Before you come

Research the representation of the mandala in different religious faiths.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mandala>

After your visit

Silently view photographs or film of the creation of the mandalas made during your visit. Write down up to five words which describe the mood, feelings and responses they give to you.

Compare your choice of words with friends and discuss why a mandala gives you these responses.

Use these words to create a poem about your personal response to nature in a moment of time.

With clay or lino create a mandala. Use different tools to create shape and texture. You could highlight your design with different coloured paint.

Weblinks

<http://www.mandalasforthesoul.com/>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sand_mandala

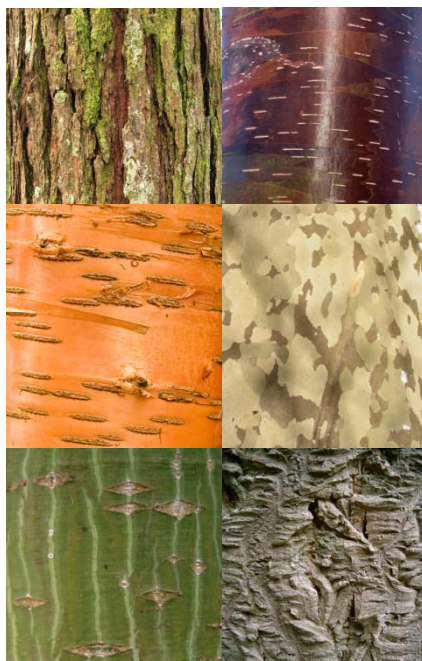
Gallery

Please send us photos of your mandalas to create a student gallery. Meanwhile visit <http://bit.ly/mandala-inspiration> to view other natural mandala creations.

Activity created by Irené Colman, Westonbirt volunteer

Bark Portfolio

Texture, pattern, depth, shadow, light, colour



The bark of a tree is similar in many ways to our own skin. As well as being essential for the survival of the tree itself, a whole array of other species take advantage of it - living on it and in it.

Bark is the outer layer of the tree which in older trees may be split and furrowed. The bark thickens every year.

The thickness differs in various trees. Trees growing in the shade usually have thin bark, whereas those in the sun often have thick bark which helps protect them from the sun.

In some trees the bark remains permanently on the tree (oak), in others it peels off in scales or strips.

Creative task

Create a portfolio of the diversity of tree barks you come across during your visit to use as inspiration for later work. You could:

- Use wax crayons, charcoal or pencils to make rubbings or sketches
- Make imprints of the bark texture using air-drying clay
- Photograph the amazing colours, patterns, and textures
- Use paint or pastels to colour match and record your observations

Artist connections

Myrtle Pizzey is an artist from Somerset. She works from abstract responses to colour, shape, space, and form to arrive at realistic images. After making observational drawings working in pastel, charcoal, or graphite Myrtle transfers the image to lino, ready to print.

<http://myrtlepizzey.co.uk/>



Before you come

Research the work of a range of artists who feature bark within their work. Discover how they gain inspiration and make observations to inform their work. You might like to consider:

Myrtle Pizzey - <http://myrtlepizzey.co.uk/>

Wendy Milner - <http://www.wendymilner.co.uk/gallery2.htm>

David Hockney - <http://www.davidhockney.co/works/paintings/10s>

After your visit - ideas

- Make a bark booklet featuring your observations of texture, pattern and colour
- Create a collage featuring tree bark using torn paper and paint
- Use your clay imprints to create realistic sculptures, for example tree bark ceramics - watch Curt Hammerly's YouTube video: <http://bit.ly/MakingTreeBarkCeramics>

Visit <https://www.kathypallieclayart.com/> for other amazing tree bark ceramics.



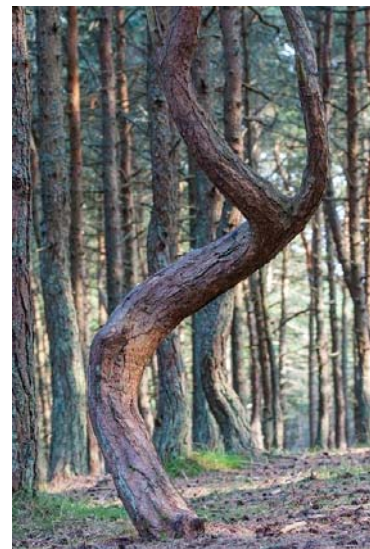
Activity created by Pam Cowler, illustrated by Pauline Thomas, Westonbirt volunteers

Laban Dance - Woodland cycle

Gaining inspiration from the natural environment, creativity, sequence, movement, co-operation, development, evaluation

Creative task

Use the inspiration of the natural environment of the arboretum, and the life cycle of trees from seed to maturity, and final decay, to inspire a dance sequence which portrays this cycle.



Before you begin

Looking around you, suggest any words that describe movement. Consider how seeds are dispersed, how leaves move, how blossoms develop. Think about how trees grow, move and decline.

Remember that the movement of plants is not always possible to see in a moment, but takes place slowly over time

Taught sequence

Teacher to teach a sequence which includes:

- Rising and falling (trees growing and declining)
- Twisting (shape of trunks / branches)
- Swaying (movement in the wind)
- Travelling (seeds / leaves being blown along the ground / pollen dispersal)
- Spreading and narrowing

Ensure all students know and can perform the taught sequence before giving the development tasks

Development tasks

Working in groups of 3-5, students can choose from the following:

- Perform the sequence in any order you wish but ensure you include all movements. You can repeat movements more than once.
- Decide on the timing of each movement (fast or slow, or blended movement)



- Choose a group shape to start and finish
- Decide on the quality of the movement - is it light or strong, does this change through the sequence?
- Add stillness to the sequence

Sharing evaluation

Once each group has performed their completed sequence, share thoughts about these and other points:

- Did you see both strong and light movements?
- Was the stillness section effective and why?
- What group shapes did you see?

After your visit

Discuss the dance sequence and the developments made by the students.

Introduce the theme of climate change, discussing the importance of trees:

- they reduce the rate of climate change by reducing levels carbon dioxide from the air during photosynthesis
- they store carbon in the wood for the tree's lifetime, keeping it out of the atmosphere
- they reduce the impact of severe flooding events

Now consider the impact climate change has on the trees themselves:

- Can trees adapt quickly enough to the changing conditions?
- Can seeds disperse far enough to keep up with changing conditions?
- How can trees cope with new pests and diseases arriving with the changing climate

How will your discussions about trees and climate change alter the dance sequence?

Develop the taught sequence with your ideas, ending on a positive action.

Artist inspiration

Fighting Climate Change with Dance, K T Nelson KQED, YouTube

Activity created by Irené Colman, Westonbirt volunteer, in collaboration with Alysoun Tomkins

Woodland Soundscape

Sound, rhythm, representing feelings, percussion, soundtrack, composing



The woodland is a symphony of both natural sounds and the activities of people. Looking at different trees, wildlife and places can evoke feelings that can be represented through sound. Many composers have used their experiences in the natural world as inspiration for their work.

Creative task

Build a creative, rhythmic soundscape of your experiences at the arboretum. As you walk take photos of inspiring sights and make sound recordings. Consider which order you would like to arrange the photos to create a narrative.

Create a sound track to accompany each scene in your narrative. For the sound track to work you will need to consider carefully how each photograph makes you feel.

- What do you think about when looking at different trees?
- How does it make you feel?
- Does it make you remember specific moments or people?
- Is there a common thought or mood linking all the photos or will you move from one idea to another as if you are walking around taking in each sight?

Use natural fallen materials, experiment with the sounds they can make, and create and perform a rhythmic soundtrack of musical phrases to accompany your photos.

Featured musician

David Oliver, percussionist, performs and records creative pieces at different outdoor venues using a wide range of instruments from around the world. He's known for his expressive soundtracks on BBC and National Geographic programmes. Listen to one of his pieces here where he plays in Stockhill Woods in Priddy, Somerset.



[African percussion sounds in the forest at Priddy, Somerset](#)

Before you come

Watch the videos of David Oliver performing and discuss the feelings it generates. What images does it create in your mind?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMOKTB1P1us>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sxTvzoKDgl4>

Select from the suggested listening below. How has the composer represented trees within their music?

Create a vocabulary of sound words linked to the woodland environment - this is something you can add to after your visit

After your visit - ideas

- Use your photo sequence and perform your woodland soundscapes. With these ideas, compose a suite of instrumental pieces
- Write poems or song lyrics to perform over your rhythmic soundscape
- Create a sound picture about the Arboretum. Upload your recordings onto your computer and then create samples which you can use in your composition
- Build a song writing project, using the visit to the arboretum, your sound recordings and rhythmic soundscapes as inspiration. Yanomamo, a musical about conserving the Amazon Tropical Rainforest (music by Peter Rose words by Anne Conlon) is an excellent resource for composing songs

Suggested listening

- Glazunov - "The Forest" Orchestral Fantasy (Part I)
- Stevie Wonder Album "A Journey through the Secret Life of plants"
- "Tree" 5 mins 45 - starts quietly and reflectively with natural sounds in the background. Gradually builds to a powerful ending
- Crowded house "English trees"
- Sibelius - Five Piano Pieces Op.75: 1. When the Rowan Blossoms, 2. The Solitary Pine, 3. The Aspen, 4. The Birch, 5. The Spruce
- 'Woodland Sketches Op.51' by Edward MacDowell

Activity created by Alison Henderson, Westonbirt volunteer

Filming Tree Tales

Setting the scene, landscape, building atmosphere, background, sequence



So many of our traditional fairy tales and popular stories are set in the forest, from Little Red Riding Hood, the Forbidden Forest in Harry Potter, or Shakespeare's 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'.

Trees and forests can create magical settings, or dark scary places and add to the story, building atmosphere. Film producers have used these environments as a backdrop to many films.

The lighting, weather, time of day, angle of shot, composition, and natural background sounds will all impact on the successful building of mood to accompany the narrative.

Creative task

Before you visit, prepare a series of drama scenes that tells a tale set in the woodland. See 'Before you come' section for ideas.

On the day:

- Look for locations to film each scene in your play.
- Think about the atmosphere you wish to create - the light and shadows, density of planting, open spaces, colours and background will all impact on the effect.
- Think about how each person enters and exits the scene,
- How will you use the landscape and trees to help tell the story
- Consider the lighting as you film - are you using the sunlight to film in silhouette or to light up your characters and action

Important points:

- You will need to avoid filming other visitors, you do not have their permission.
- Please treat the trees with respect

Before you come

Choosing the right landscape or environment as a set for your film is a key consideration - the landscape itself can add to or tell part of the story. Take the time to research and plan these two aspects before you visit:

(i) Select a story, or write your own play, set in a woodland or forest

- Harry Potter - the forbidden forest
- Lord of the Rings - Fangorn Forest, home to Treebeard and the Ents
- Shakespeare: A Midsummer Night's Dream

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/41RbVi62ZxV9LcysSIHPvg3/six-magical-forests-we-love-from-children-s-books>

(ii) Watch a variety of excerpts from films or TV dramas to explore how landscapes have been used in films, taking on a starring role. For example,

- Capability Brown designed landscapes - used in nearly every Jane Austen adaptation
- Sycamore Gap on Hadrian's Wall - Robin Hood, Prince of Thieves
- Puzzle Wood - many films including Star Wars
- Three Bears Caves in Fforest Fawr near Cardiff

<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/for-film-and-tv-lovers>

After your visit - ideas

Edit your films to present them to the rest of your class.

Consider making a soundtrack to add atmosphere or to link the different scenes together.

Have a 'Film Festival' where you watch each other's films and give constructive critiques about them.

Tree Haiku

Poem, senses, vocabulary, syllables, pattern, structure and form, nature

A haiku is a brief poem that records the essence of a moment of revelation into the nature of the world. It uses simple, direct language.



After it flew
feeling the butterfly
still on my finger
...Nelle Fertig

They vary in length between 6 and 15 syllables, with the average being around 12 and with 17 syllables as an upper limit.

The arrangement of words should depend on the needs of the poem, rather than a specific number of syllables in each line.

All haiku have two images laid out over two or three lines, with a moment of insight when poet and reader unite in understanding.

Creative task

Create a haiku that shares a moment of your experience in the natural world of the arboretum. First you will need to spend some time using your senses and collect ideas and inspiration. Even though haiku are sort poems, you will need to choose the words carefully, a few words to communicate the moment.

- Take time to find a special place or tree - what are you drawn to? Sit quietly and jot down all that you notice, hear, touch, and smell
- Lead a friend to your chosen place. Ask them to close their eyes before you get there so that they can explore through touch, sound and scent, describing to you what they experience
- Go back to your place on your own, and pick just one moment of your experience.
- Think about how your moment can be split into two images and start to choose words and phrases for each image to create your poem

Featured haiku poet

Matsuo Basho (1644-1694) wrote around 1,000 haiku through his lifetime, travelling around Japan. He gave up his life as a teacher in the city to wander the countryside to gain inspiration for his poems.

The most famous haiku is written by Basho:
The old pond-
a frog jumps in,
sound of water.

<https://www.masterpiece-of-japanese-culture.com/literatures-and-poems/haiku/matsuo-basho/famous-haiku-poems-matsuo-basho>



Before you come

Research haiku, exploring different poets at different times in history, including contemporary haiku.

Find a haiku poet who inspires you. What is it about their haiku that you like or connect with?

After your visit - ideas

- Illustrate your haiku. Just as the haiku uses simple language to record your moment in nature, illustrate with line drawings, or simple shapes and limited colours - you want your illustration to complement your poem, not to overwhelm it
- Create a class haiku book, filled with the experiences of your visit to the arboretum
- Send you haiku to learning.westonbirt@forestryengland.uk so that we can share in your experiences too. We'd like to share your haiku with our visitors in our e-newsletter or at the Learning Centre

Landscape photography

Picturesque, composition, framing, macro, perspective, back-lighting



The creator of Westonbirt Arboretum, Robert Holford, planted his trees in an artistic design to create a picturesque landscape. He 'painted' his landscape with trees so that each view makes an interesting, beautiful picture.

There are three picturesque principles involved:

- Variety - of colours, shapes, textures, and forms
- Connection - transition from space to space, blended skylines
- Intricacy - creating curiosity and surprise through curved paths and planting that hides and then reveals interesting trees as you walk



Creative task

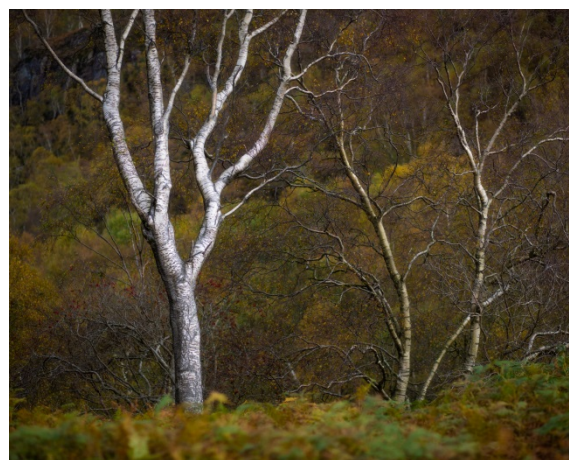
Photograph the picturesque landscape, through a sequence of scenes and images that captures all three principles - variety, connection and intricacy. You might like to try these ideas:

- Look for variety - select one of the art elements as a focus to your image
- Find a place where a tree drapes across the path - use the path as a line to take you through the scene
- At tree avenues, take both symmetrical and asymmetrical images, explore how trees stack behind each other or open up aspects depending on where you stand
- Photograph an interesting skyline from an open space
- Show how individual trees in large open spaces are like stepping stones from one place to another
- Find an interesting tree framed by a dark evergreen background
- Take a series of scenes as you walk around a curved path, revealing an interesting tree
- Use the branches of a tree in the foreground as a window to frame a distant view

Featured photographer

Thomas Heaton is currently one of the most popular UK landscape photographers. From the age of 16, he has enjoyed the challenge of capturing the feelings he experiences in nature through his photographs.

<https://thomasheaton.co.uk/gallery/>



Before you come

Research picturesque landscape principles including the work of Gilpin.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Picturesque>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gilpin_\(priest\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Gilpin_(priest))

Find out more about the history of the arboretum, its creator Robert Holford and how he designed his landscape aesthetically.

<https://www.forestryengland.uk/westonbirt/history>

Explore the work of landscape photographers, observe how they composed their images, and identify key features that inspire you.

<https://www.lpoty.co.uk/> - landscape photography of the year

After your visit - ideas

- Create a photo journal of your journey through the picturesque landscape
- Create a photo montage of the picturesque landscape
- Combine each photographer's images into three sections, to show the three design principles of the picturesque landscape
- Choose one photo from each photographer to create an exhibition of images about the picturesque landscape at Westonbirt

Mini creativitrees

Symbol walk

- Walk on a short journey that ends where you started.
- As you walk draw the shape of your route, and note any sounds, shapes, patterns, scents, textures or feelings.
- Add abstract symbols along your journey route to represent the things you noticed and any feelings you had.



Tree connections

- Hold your palm in front of you and draw on the main palm lines. You could use a stick dipped in wet mud to draw with!
- Now look around you for the same line pattern in the branches of a tree, the tiny twigs, bark, roots or other parts of the plant.
- This is your tree connection.
- Record your unique palm pattern and the tree that you link with.



Windows in the woods

Robert Holford planted his picturesque landscape at Westonbirt Arboretum to create curiosity, variety, beauty and intricacy.

One way to view his artistic design is to find a natural window to peer through.

- Find a natural window in the branches of a tree or the spaces created between the trees.
- Draw the window and the view you can see.





Back to back

- Without showing your partner, pick up a natural object that has fallen onto the woodland floor.
- Stand back to back with your partner and describe your object carefully, without telling them what it is.
- Your partner will draw as you tell them about the shape, pattern, texture and size of your object.
- How well did you describe the object?
- Now swap over.



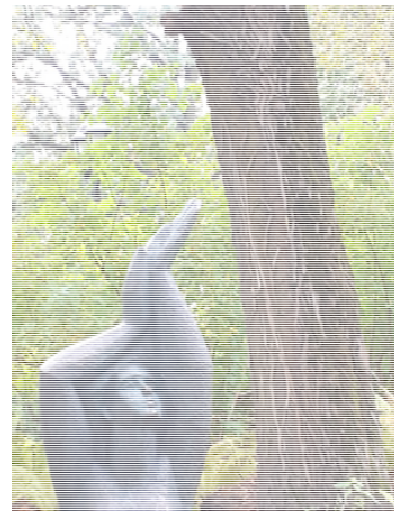
Sky pictures

- With a partner, choose a tree that you find interesting and either lie on the floor or simply look up.
- Describe what you notice: the lines, shapes and forms; the contrasts, colours and perspectives.
- Each draw as carefully as you can, your favourite part of the sky picture you see above you.



Tree yoga

- Find a tree form that you like and look at its key features.
- From a standing position, arms down by your side, consider a sequence of flowing movements that, step by step, create the form of the tree.
- The end position is one that you need to be able to hold, calmly and still.



How it came to be

Native American legend tells the story of how autumn colour came to be... The blood shed during a battle between the Deer and the Bear in the Land of the Sky rained down onto the trees of the lower world, turning the leaves into a riot of reds, yellows and oranges.

Choose an unusual feature of a tree, and tell the story of how it came to be.



Tree architecture

The architecture of the interior of Antoni Gaudí's Sagrada Família in Barcelona uses tree-like stone columns to invite cathedral visitors into a forest-like space.

Use the pattern of the tree canopies to draw your own architectural space.



The colour of feelings

'I found I could say things with colours that I couldn't say in any other way, things that I had no words for.' - Georgia O'Keefe

Artists use colour in landscape painting to reflect their perspective on the image.

- Make a sketch of a landscape.
- As you colour it in, rather than using colour to match what you see, use colour to express how you feel.



© KaritaArt

In a tree's lifetime

With deep roots and high reaching branches the tree of life has symbolised the connection between heaven and earth, and all living things for thousands of years.

Pick a tree, what memories do you think it has had during its lifetime?



Colour secrets

Splashes of colour can be found in the trees. Red berries against a dreary grey sky; bright yellow flowers against bare branches.

Photography helps highlight this.

Find a colour secret, a colour that surprises you... and photograph it.



A vocabulary of colour

DIY paint colour names can be unusual! Although green tends to be named after something in nature.

- Find as many shades of one colour as you can.
- Create names for them that describe what each shade reminds you of.
- Your friends should be able to picture in their minds the shade you are describing from the name you create, e.g. postbox red, golden buttercup, or misty white.

