**Cultural Capital on Your Doorstep** Session Ideas to take back into school 1

What do you think you already provide that is good CC for your young people?

Share those connections.

Teachers tell fantastic stories. The facts that sit alongside the contents of the curriculum. How can we make everything about the people behind the subjects? Not just Geography, but the explorers and the merchants. Not just Science, but the scientists and the stories of their experiments. And everything else. And who was local and what happened here?

Take yourselves off for a walk around your neighbourhood first, familiarise yourselves with where the students live.

Create your own information panels

Some councils are doing great work to get people involved and proud of their local areas. From blue plaques to these information panels, there is so much to discover. From that obsession that the industrial north is for work and to the south that has the wealth for play, let’s change the narrative.

No more working class ‘Know your place’. Change it to ‘Get to know your place’

The doorstep challenge

As architectural styles have evolved over the years, so has every aspect of what we see in our suburbs and urban areas. We can use the historical timeline of changing designs. Tudor, Georgian, Stewart, Victorian, Bauhaus, to contemporary B&Q or Wickes. Let’s start at home and at school and open the door. Once you start looking you will not be able to stop. You may be creating the designers of the future - just from your doorstep. Enjoy a walk together looking at all the different styles of door. Exclusive penthouses have boring doors, but old fashioned terrace houses can be fascinating and full of tales.

Door to the city project

Perhaps you can be obvious and very unsubtle in what you get the young people to do. Working directly onto a door will give a greater understanding of scale and materials and how to display the work. Thematically, the students can ‘home in’ on home, be that the house they live in or their location. Gathering various images, objects and words to decorate a door with the focus of a local culture, community, or local event can be an amazing way, to visually demonstrate open access to local cultural capital. Representation is everything and of course, you may already know an artist who can exemplify this.

Playing games with numbers and typography

You may need to focus on too few subjects and miss out so many opportunities to to contextualise and apply subjects to each other. Cultural capital should help contextualise so many things in life. It makes us see patterns, adapt, reference and have a better ability to transfer our skills. So start with the basics. See numbers as art, see patterns, and styles and play with developing typography and graphic design skills.

Suburban Bingo

Hunting and gathering needs to be something that is done with relish. Setting this task in two ways or more allows for fun and variety and sharing. You will know your students well enough, to adapt this kind of task into more manageable ways. Person to find the most 3s, most numbers over 30 etc. Actually, you are getting them to look more closely and in different ways to how they usually do.

Here is an opportunity to look at craft and typography together. You can craft numbers from clay tiles or carve from wood, or forge from metal. Practically, you can link this to your maths lessons, but it also focuses the eye on how number shapes are formed. This is brilliant for manual dexterity.

Solid forms, negative space, hand made, machine made, or etched. Choosing themes to help research and resource gathering can be fascinating. Never lose sight of the fact that you will be taking in your local area, getting to know the streets and neighbourhoods. Walking where you have not been before - getting to know your place.

Select one material to look for or even just one number. Get a map and as you gather your photos of numbers, mark whereabouts they are. You can then hand out the map as a number treasures hunt.

Everyone knows of Rob Ryan’s epic paper cut outs and their intricacies and details. Many of you will also know the work of Kara Walker. Her silhouettes showing slavery and persecution. But sitting amongst the streets of Edinburgh is Astrid Jaekel and her reflections of lives past and present. These are all our stories and are prime opportunities for our students to tell the tales of our local histories. These were a series called 'Windows on the fringe’

Engaging with our communities is not always easy, but getting those memories from residents who remember places and stories can be very rewarding. Our high streets are full of 'dead' shop windows. These could be full of art. Some have big artwork decals, covering over them, showing bright multi coloured graphic imagery. Imagine if it was your students' artwork filing these voids.

Your students don't have nearly 50 years to wait and capture change. They don't have to. Businesses are coming and going at an alarming rate now. I didn't photograph Woolworths, or Virgin Records, or Littlewoods, C&A, BHS, or even Top Shop or GAP. And the signs may already have gone from Debenhams. Ask your students to photograph a shop each. They can recreate the whole high street or townscape. Perhaps you can set them exactly the same project next year, with completely different results.

Shop signs

The varieties are endless and very familiar. These are the shop signs that many of our young people see every day. They live here, some of their families own these stores. If we bring our class prejudices into school, perhaps by not mentioning some of our local areas we are delivering a powerful message of unworthiness, lack of cultural capital and of course poor versus rich. So can you turn this into an exploring adventure of typography, colour, scale, urban & social geography?

As advertising has changed dramatically over the decades we have become over saturated with visual information that we have learnt to ignore in some way. Sounds, noise, colours, movement, scale can all become a trigger for feeling claustrophobic and oppressed. 'Bright lights-big city' can be over powering, but hunting down the sweet treats of humour and urban commentary can be a fun and full time hobby. Interesting signage and random opportunities are not limited to urban environments either. We are really teaching our young people how to see. To spot the small and find the insignificant. Artists are observant and see so much more of the world, because we have been taught to look closely.

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Imagine creating mosaics in your paths around school? Wherever there’s a gap or a hole? Are we reimagining the discovery of Roman villa mosaics, 2000 years ago?

Why not set about creating your own fossils? How quickly would this look like a huge mural, art piece? What about the space for growth? What about hands, feet, objects?

**Know our place - Without referring to a map**

1. Draw the continents of the world
2. Draw the UK
3. Draw the 3 counties of Yorkshire
4. Place Wakefield, Leeds, York, Sheffield onto it
5. Draw West Yorkshire, place Wakefield, Leeds, Bradford, Dewsbury, Halifax, Hebdon Bridge, Ilkley, Otley, Huddersfield, Wetherby, Castleford, Pontefract, Keighley as accurately as you can.
6. What do we know of the world we inhabit? The tasks above let us see how much or little we have absorbed or been exposed to geographically.

**Make connections with your local artists, galleries and museums**

*The Art House*

*Open studios 13th May 10-4pm*

*Artists Emi Alrai*

*& Ellie Way*

*The Art House -* [*https://the-arthouse.org.uk/*](https://the-arthouse.org.uk/)

*Westgate studios*

*Robin Taylor Fine Arts*

*SNAParts*

*7A*

*The Art exchange*

*Westgate Studios @Whitehorse yard*

*Urban Arts*

*Edgelands Arts -* [*https://www.edgelandsarts.co.uk/what-we-aim-for*](https://www.edgelandsarts.co.uk/what-we-aim-for)

*Beam -* [*https://www.beam.uk.net/what-we-do/*](https://www.beam.uk.net/what-we-do/)

*Art studios @ Whitehorse yard*

*Andrew Simpson Art*

*Juliette Anne*

*Neon workshops -* [*https://www.neonworkshops.com/*](https://www.neonworkshops.com/)

**How much local history do you know?**

*Wakefield - Waca’s field. Open field belonging to someone called Waco*

*Or from the old English Waco to watch or wake.*

*The field in which wake’s were held*

*The 1086 Doomsday book calls it*

*Wachefelf and Wachefelt*

*Brigantes - pre-Roman Ancient Britons - Brigantia became known as Yorkshire*

*Romans*

*Angles*

*Vikings*

*Wapentakes - the administration of justice by the hundred*

*Edward the confessor*

*William the Conqueror*

*The battle of Wakefield - in the War of the Roses*

*The Normans*

*Wakefield was dubbed the ‘Merrie City’ in the middle ages*

*QEGS, WGHS are historical schools*

*Sandal Castle*

**Wakefield goes POP**

Shaws and the coca cola factory

CocaCola Enterprises is the largest soft drinks factory in Europe

Has an education centre

500 employees

210m cases

11production lines

**Festivals**

*The Rhubarb festival*

*The Liquorice festival*

*https://experiencewakefield.co.uk/?utm\_medium=culturehosts&utm\_source=Experience Wakefield&utm\_campaign=Wakefield City Centre*

*Leeds 2023*

*Sculpture Triangle*

*Yorkshire Sculpture International*

*Bradford City of Culture 2025*

*Invent your own local/school festival - start history*

*What is the theme? Reason?*

*What will be the music, dance, artwork created?*