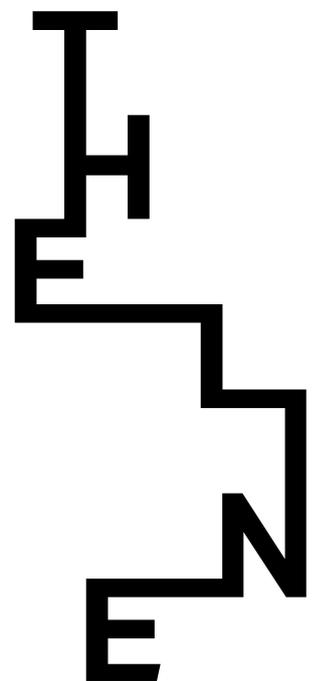


# Larry Achiampong: Relic Travellers I

## Teaching Notes

Lesson inspired by the artwork of Larry Achiampong, featured on The Line, London



## Session overview

This session can be delivered as a standalone lesson or it can be delivered alongside the two other lessons focussing on the work of Larry Achiampong. It can easily be tailored for students in Years 5 – 9 by adapting the teacher facilitation, while keeping the core activities the same. The core lesson can be delivered in 60 minutes however it can be extended to 90+ minutes, and split over a few lessons, by completing additional optional activities.

At the start of the lesson students are presented with a thought experiment : 'If a time traveller observed our society what would they learn about how our society is structured?' This leads into a class discussion about whether our society is fair and equal. Students are introduced to the artist Larry Achiampong, whose work is featured on The Line (a free outdoor art walk, which runs between Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2 in East London). Students learn about Achiampong's multidisciplinary science-fiction project based around his concept of a Relic Traveller. Students watch a portion of the film 'Relic 0' and draw out ideas that can support their discussion about whether our society is equal or fair. Finally, students discuss what vocal testimonies a Relic Traveller might find in our society and record their own vocal testimonies and mantras.

Achiampong imagines a future in which African countries have become the most prosperous and wealthy in the world, joining together to form a Pan African Union. In this imagined future, the Pan African Union sends Relic Travellers around the world to find the lost vocal testimonies of people from the past. The Relic Travellers are specifically focused on collecting the testimonies of the African diaspora, who have been exploited and oppressed, to collate lost African histories from around the world. Students consider what we can learn from the past to prepare our society for the future.

The underlying themes of the session are oppression, racism and equality. They are implicit within Achiampong's work. Students evaluate related concepts and consider fundamental questions about who can be considered to be oppressed in our society and who can be considered to be the oppressors. Throughout the session, the teacher can pose questions to support students in making links between the lesson content and these key themes.

## The learning objectives

- To evaluate whether our society is fair and equal
- To consider who is oppressed and why
- To explore how we can learn from the past to improve the future

Schools and students who are unable to access The Line in person will be able to supplement their learning by visiting virtually via [www.the-line.org](http://www.the-line.org)

## Teaching Challenging Topics

When discussions address issues such as diversity, racism, inclusion, prejudice and stereotyping, teachers should ensure that they are familiar with the school's Child Protection Policy.

This topic is extremely sensitive, and the issues covered will need to be handled with care. It is important to be mindful that certain groups of students may have encountered prejudice and racism, or may come from families where racist views are held.

Please see Teacher Guidance: '[Teaching about race and prejudice](#)' from Cumbria County Council's e-library.

If a time traveller  
observed our society...

What would they learn?



Resources – Slide 2

10 mins

## Activate

Split the students into groups and set up the thought experiment:

'Imagine that a time traveller came to visit us from the future, they didn't want to reveal that they were here so they simply observed our society through our everyday life... they watched TV shows, looked at our social media streams, listening to conversations in the street, eavesdropped in shops, observed how we treat each other, and studied the news... what would they learn about us?'

Take feedback from each group and focus on any responses that consider the structure of our society. Write those points on the board. E.g. equality, diversity, oppression, power, history, politics, wealth, poverty, discrimination...



Resources – Slide 3

**40 mins (60+ inc. optional activity)**

## Explore

Facilitate a class discussion – Do you think that the time traveller would think that our society is fair and equal? Why/why not?

Collate examples of fairness and inequality in our society.

Further thinking questions to support the discussion:

- What inequalities exist?
- Why do inequalities exist?
- Who is responsible?
- How are they linked to history, power and wealth?

### **Useful questions for facilitating a student-led discussion**

- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Can you/someone give an example to back up that point?</li> <li>— Can you/someone explain that with more detail?</li> <li>— Are you saying X ?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Is that always true, sometimes true or rarely true?</li> <li>— Who agrees/disagrees with this point?</li> <li>— Are there any counter examples?</li> <li>— Can you make a link or connection to another idea/concept?</li> <li>— Can we draw any conclusions?</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Who can summarise what we have discussed?</li> <li>— Do we feel that we have answered the question, or do we need to return to it and discuss it further?</li> <li>— Has your thinking changed during our discussion? Why?</li> </ul> |
|--|---|--|



Resources – Slide 4

## Explore

Introduce the artist Larry Achiampong, whose audio work 'Sanko-time' is presented on The Line and can be accessed via [www.the-line.org/listen](http://www.the-line.org/listen).

This workshop is inspired by Achiampong's multidisciplinary science-fiction project based on his concept of a Relic Traveller. Achiampong imagines a future where African countries have become the most prosperous and wealthy in the world, joining together to form a Pan African Union. In this imagined future, the Pan African Union sends Relic Travellers around the world to find the lost vocal testimonies of people from the past. The Relic Travellers are specifically focused on collecting the testimonies of the African diaspora, who have been exploited and oppressed, to collate lost African histories from around the world. The aim of their project is to uncover the voices of people who have historically been unheard, unrepresented and unprotected.

The Relic Travellers will listen to and learn from the past, using this learning to prepare for the future and to heal wounds from the past. Achiampong has created four short films that follow a Relic Traveller who is collecting vocal testimonies for the project. A range of speakers bear witness to their experiences of exploitation and disenfranchisement in the African Diaspora of colonialisation, migration and globalisation. A link to one of these films is provided on the next page for your reference.

## Clip of Larry Achiampong speaking



Resources – Slide 5

**40 mins (60+ inc. optional activity)**

## Explore

Watch the embedded clip of Achiampong talking about his work.

### Optional Activity

Choose a Relic Traveller film to watch with the class.

You may wish to start with a small portion, e.g. Relic 0 (4 mins – 7.42 mins) - see box below

— Explore the key concepts in a class discussion, e.g. colonialisation, globalisation, oppression, racism, slavery, exclusion etc

— How do these vocal testimonies help us to answer the question 'Is our society fair and equal?'

### Relic 0, 4K Video (2017)

co-commissioned by Southbank Centre, Hayward Gallery & Jerwood Charitable Foundation.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/233983204>

Password: relic000

**If you were a Relic Traveller,  
what vocal testimonies  
might you hear about inequality?**



Resources – Slide 6

**40 mins (60+ inc. optional activity)**

## **Explore**

Divide the class into groups and ask them to imagine that they are a Relic Traveller...

'What vocal testimonies might you hear about inequality in our society?'

## Creating your vocal testimony



Resources – Slide 7

**20 mins (60+ inc. optional activities)**

## Create

Introduce the concept of Sanko-time, which is adapted from the Ghanaian Twi word Sankofa. Sankofa means 'to go back for what has been left behind'. Sanko-time alludes to using the past to prepare for the future.

Sanko-time is also the title of Larry Achiampong's audio artwork on The Line, which explores the histories of Greenwich and the Royal Docks in relation to the construction of the British Empire and lived experiences of discrimination and racism. The audio incorporates the voices of children from St Mary Magdalene School in Greenwich recorded during a workshop inspired by Achiampong's work, reinforcing the idea that we must learn from the past to prepare for the future.

- Can we create a positive vocal testimony or mantra about equality for our Relic Traveller to find?
- Listen to the student vocal testimonies about equality, and the class mantra.
- Each student creates and records their own individual vocal testimony.

### Optional Activities

- The class creates and records their own class mantra.
- Record other sounds from the local environment to include with your testimony or class mantra or record other members of the school community sharing their thoughts.
- Personal Reflection on Sanko-time. What can I learn from my past experiences to prepare for my future?

# Glossary

**Affirmation** – the act of confirming something positively, encourage and support

**African Union** – Continental organisation representing 55 African states

**Ally** – traditionally, a country who backs another in international affairs. In relation to Black Lives Matter (or prejudice in general), an ally is someone who is willing to act with and for those that are oppressed with the aim of ending said oppression

**Alliance** – a group or network formed to help and support one another

**Bigotry** – intolerance towards those who hold different opinions from oneself

**Colonialism** – the policy of one country seeking rule over other people or places

**Migrant** – a person who moves from one country to another seeking work or a better life

**Nationalism** – supporting or favouring your own country / nation sometimes to the detriment of others

**Oppressed** – people living under harsh or unfair treatment, unable to thrive

**Prosperity** – a state of financial security and wealth

**Protest** – an expression or declaration of objection, disapproval, or dissent, often in opposition to something a person is powerless to prevent or avoid

**Relic** – an object surviving from another time or place

**Revolution** – a forcible overthrow of a government or social order, in favour of a new system

**Sankofa** – Sankofa is a Ghanaian Twi word which means to 'go back for what has been left behind'. Sankofa also alludes to using the past to prepare for the future. Based on Sankofa, Larry has developed the concept of Sanko-time

**Science Fiction** – books and films describing invented worlds in the future, often featuring time travel

**Testimony** – a spoken statement, recording an event or experience

**White Privilege** – the societal privilege that benefits white people over non-white people in some societies, particularly if they are otherwise under the same social, political, or economic circumstances

**For more information and further resources visit:**

[www.the-line.org](http://www.the-line.org)  
[info@the-line.org](mailto:info@the-line.org)  
[@TheLineLondon](https://www.instagram.com/TheLineLondon)

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