

Thomas J Price: Reaching Out

Teaching Notes

Lesson inspired by the artwork of
Thomas J Price, featured on The Line, London



THE LINE

Session overview

This session can be delivered as a standalone lesson or it can be delivered alongside the 'Statues' lesson. It can easily be tailored for students in Years 5 – 9 by adapting the teacher facilitation, while keeping the core activities the same. The lesson can be delivered in 60 minutes. It can also be extended to 90 minutes by increasing the student discussion time.

Students will be introduced to two sculptures by the artist Thomas J Price, whose work is displayed on The Line (a free outdoor art walk, which runs between Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2 in East London).

Students will discuss the sculpture 'Network', which was displayed 2015-2019, and 'Reaching Out', which was installed in 2020. Through teacher facilitated discussion activities, students will draw out the concepts and questions that the works elicit. These will provide a basis for class discussion about a range of issues which are relevant to the students. The students will also learn about how the sculptures are created and consider why they are important.

There are three film clips included from the artist. In the first clip, Price shares some of the inspirations for his work, which include the themes of power, representation and stereotyping. He poses questions which can support deeper discussion about society and diversity such as: Does the sculpture make you feel positive or negative emotions? What does this say about our society?

In the second clip, Price explains the process of creating the sculptures and the students will be able to experience all aspects of the production of 'Reaching Out'. In the third clip, the artist encourages students to visit The Line. Schools and students who are unable to access The Line in person will be able to visit virtually via www.the-line.org

The underlying themes of the session are diversity and inclusion. This is implicit in all the activities, as students use critical thinking skills to evaluate related concepts and consider fundamental questions about prejudice and stereotyping. Throughout the session, the teacher can ask questions to support students in making links between the lesson content and these key themes.

The learning objectives

- To infer concepts from artworks
- To consider questions about society, related to these concepts
- To learn key facts about how sculptures are produced

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

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

What do you see?

What do you think is happening?

What does it make you wonder?



Resources – Slide 2, 8

15 mins

Activate

Display Slide 2 on the board when students enter.

Ask students to discuss the image in groups of three, using the following questions to support their discussion: When you look at the image, what do you notice at first glance? What do you think might be going on just before, during or after this moment in time? What does the image make you wonder?

The teacher may wish to print out and share the Concepts Grid (Slide 8) with students to support their thinking.

Ask students to feedback back on the 'think' and/or 'wonder' questions.

During feedback, write any concepts that emerge from the feedback on to the board (to refer to later in the lesson) e.g. power, loneliness or ignorance. When discussing these concepts with younger students, the teacher may wish to compare them to abstract nouns.

Depending on the age/ability of the students, the teacher may need to draw these concepts out of the feedback by asking questions such as "It sounds to me like you are talking about... is that right?" or "If you were going to give that idea/feeling one word to describe it, what would it be?"

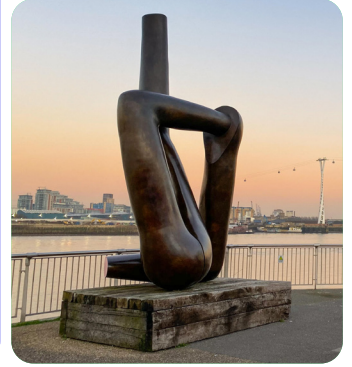
After students have shared their ideas, ask the class to think of a title for this sculpture and to explain why they have chosen the name.

Finally, tell students that the sculpture is called 'Reaching Out' and is by the London based artist Thomas J Price. How does the real name compare to the names that students suggested?

What is The Line?

The Line opened in 2015 and is London's first dedicated art walk. The walk runs between Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2, and the route follows the waterways and the line of the Greenwich Meridian.

The Line is a 3-mile outdoor gallery that features an evolving programme of art installations, events and landmarks, illuminating an inspiring landscape where everyone can explore art, nature and heritage for free.



Resources – Slide 2, 3

Activate

'Network' was displayed between 2015 and 2019, as a public artwork on The Line.

In this session students will be exploring two pieces of work by the artist Thomas J Price, 'Network' and the artist's most recent sculpture called 'Reaching Out'. 'Reaching Out' was installed on The Line in 2020.

Students will be exploring the ideas that the works elicit in their minds and learning about the process of making Price's 'Reaching Out'.

Clip of Thomas J Price speaking about his creative process



Resources – Slide 4, 8

35 – 60 mins

Explore

Show students the clip.

Take feedback. How does Price's explanation of his own work link to the concepts that the students suggested at the start of the lesson about 'Reaching Out'?

Highlight key ideas and key questions raised in the clip, for example: power, representation, diversity, feelings, emotion, stereotypes, prejudice. You may wish to add these to the concepts written on the board.

Return to the list of concepts which were written on the board earlier. Ask students to work in pairs and decide if any of these could be considered to be positive or negative.

Start drawing out any key questions from the students' discussion, e.g. "Why did you think of X when you looked at the statue?" Write these on the board, to be referred to in later discussion.

How does this sculpture make you feel?

What does this sculpture say about our society?

What big ideas/concepts does it link to?



Resources – Slide 5, 8, 9

35 – 60 mins

Explore

Introduce Price's work 'Reaching Out'.

Students work in groups to discuss this piece, using the questions to support their discussion. If you haven't already, give each group a copy of the Concepts Grid on Slide 8 to support their discussion.

Ask students to choose the three most interesting concepts that link to this work.

Take feedback from each group, asking them to share a different concept so that nothing is repeated. Ask the students to justify why they have chosen that concept.

Either draw out an overarching key discussion question from the student feedback OR ask students to create a key question for the discussion themselves. You may wish to use the question stems on Slide 9 to support the students in creating an overarching key question about one of the concepts the class has discussed.

Facilitate a class discussion on the key question.

Conclude the discussion by asking each student to summarise their thoughts in three words – these could be three words that create a phrase or three unconnected words.

Useful questions for facilitating a student-led discussion

- Can you/someone give an example to back up that point?
- Can you/someone explain that with more detail?
- Are you saying X?

- Is that always true, sometimes true or rarely true?
- Who agrees/disagrees with this point?
- Are there any counter examples?
- Can you make a link or connection to another idea/concept?
- Can we draw any conclusions?

- Who can summarise what we have discussed?
- Do we feel that we have answered the question, or do we need to return to it and discuss it further?
- Has your thinking changed during our discussion? Why?

How are Price's sculptures made?



Resources – Slide 6

35 – 60 mins

Explore

Ask students to work in pairs and discuss the following question: What are the 5 key steps in producing a new sculpture? Encourage students to think about both the design and production stage.

Take feedback and create a list on the board of the process.

Watch the clip about the process and then compare what happens during production with the list that the class created.

Ask students to discuss what they found most interesting about the production process.

Consolidate — 10 mins



Resources – Slide 7

10 mins

Consolidate

Share the clip.

Then ask "How would you persuade a friend to visit the sculpture 'Reaching Out' on The Line?"

Give students individual thinking time.

Take feedback from each student.

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

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[@TheLineLondon](https://www.instagram.com/TheLineLondon)

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These learning resources have been developed by
The Line (written by Sim Khera-Lye) and funded by the
London Legacy Development Corporation through the
Neighbourhood Priorities Fund.

