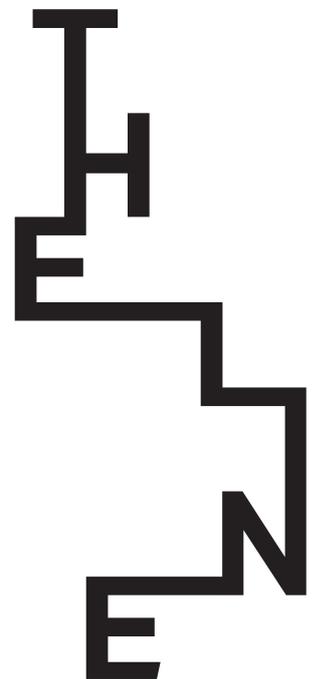


Thomas J Price: Statues

Teaching Notes

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



Session overview

This session can be delivered as a standalone lesson or it can be delivered after the 'Reaching Out' 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 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 will be asked to consider who statues should represent. Subsequently they will be shown the work of Thomas J Price, an artist 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). In a short interview clip, Price shares his own beliefs about who statues should represent. Students reevaluate their initial responses, either consolidating their thoughts or changing their opinion. Students are then presented with information about 6 individuals, who have contributed to UK society, who could have statues of themselves erected. Students choose one person to be celebrated/commemorated, justifying their decision. In an optional additional activity, the teacher can ask students to research their own choice of individual.

In the interview 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?

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 evaluate who statues should represent
- To consider questions about society, diversity and inclusion
- To justify their decisions about who should be celebrated

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

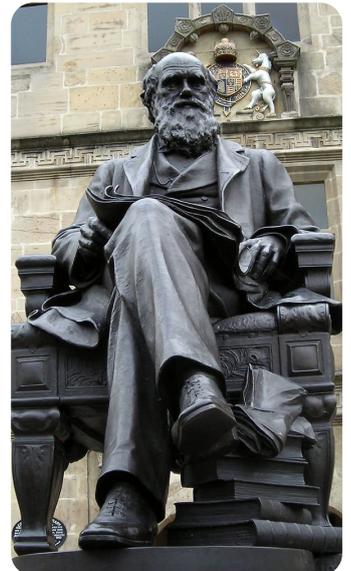
Teaching Challenging Topics

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.

A statue should represent someone who is...



Resources – Slide 2

10 mins (20 mins inc. optional activity)

Activate

Display slide as students enter – “Statues should represent someone who...”

Think/Pair/Share – take feedback and create a list of ideas on the board.

Suggested ideas to support student discussions are:

A statue should represent someone who is... powerful, important, successful, historical, traditional, valuable, praise-worthy, famous, inspirational...

Then ask students to think about public statues they have seen – do they see people from their area/culture/race/religion represented in these statues? Refer to the list you have created on the board – does this mean that these qualities should be recognised in people from more diverse backgrounds?

Optional Activity

To extend the discussion, share a range of existing statues from your area. Who is represented in your locality? Do they have anything in common? Why are they celebrated/commemorated in a statue? Is there anyone in your local area who should be remembered by a statue?

Or...



Reaching Out



Network



Cover Up



Numen

Resources – Slide 3, 4, 5, 6

40 mins (70+ mins inc. optional activities)

Explore

Students respond to 4 statues by Thomas J Price, which are strikingly different to most statues in the public realm. His work usually depicts people of African descent, wearing contemporary clothes, standing in casual and natural poses.

Think/Pair/Share – how do these statues compare to the list we created on the board?

The Line is a free outdoor art walk running between Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and The O2 in East London. The piece 'Network' was installed on The Line between 2015 and 2019.

Price's newest piece is called 'Reaching Out' and was installed on The Line in 2020.

You can read Price's article on public statues, for background reference, here:

<https://time.com/5854797/taking-down-statues/>

Clip of Thomas J Price speaking
about his creative process



Resources – Slide 3, 4, 5, 6

40 mins (70+ mins inc. optional activities)

Explore

(Optional Activity – this clip is also in the 'Reaching Out' lesson)

Show students the short interview clip of Price.

Take feedback. How does Price's explanation of his own work link to the ideas that the students suggested at the start of the lesson about who statues should represent?

Highlight key ideas and key questions raised in the clip, for example:
power, representation, diversity, feelings, emotion, stereotypes, prejudice.

I want to “force people to confront the image of someone they usually ignore, avoid or are told negative things about – I want to shift who we see as important and valuable”



Resources – Slide 3, 4, 5, 6 **40 mins (70+ mins inc. optional activities)**

Explore

Optional activity

Divide the class into 6 groups.

Assign one of the three Price statues depicted on Slide 6 to each group.

Share Price's quote: I want to “force people to confront the image of someone they usually ignore, avoid or are told negative things about – I want to shift who we see as important and valuable”. You can watch the full interview here for background reference:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dYRMv5vGSYg>

How does each of the statues fulfil Price's aim? Why do you think Price has this aim?

Why do these statues represent people who are usually 'avoided or ignored'?

How does society tell negative stories?

Take feedback and lead into a class discussion on the key questions around prejudice, stereotyping, diversity and inclusion.

Refer to the list on the board, created to complete the sentence

“A statue should represent someone who is... ”

Ask students Do we want to change any of the ideas that we discussed at the start of the lesson? Do we want to remove anything from this list or add in any new ideas?

You may also wish to link to the debate around why many people feel that certain public statues should be removed (e.g. the slave trader Edward Colston's statue in Bristol) and who these statues should be replaced by, as well as how/which artists are involved in creating the replacements (e.g. Marc Quinn's sculpture of Jen Reid). Price has shared his thoughts on this publicly: <https://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2020/jul/19/sculptor-unveils-black-everywoman-as-uk-row-over-statues-and-race-grows>

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.

Who should we represent with a statue?

Imagine that we are able to erect a new statue in our area...

Who should we commemorate?

Why?

Resources – Slide 7, 8, 9, 10 **40 mins (70+ mins inc. optional activities)**

Explore

Divide the class in to 6 groups.

Give each group a copy of the Statue Shortlist handouts.
(See slides 9 & 10 – these can be copied on to A3).

Students should evaluate which of the people on the Statue Shortlist should be selected to have a celebration/commemoration statue erected. Students present their choice back to the class, with justifications for their selection.

Remind students that they have a list of criteria on the board.

Optional Activity

Students research individuals and create their own Statue Shortlist. This is presented to the class, who vote on their favourite choice.

A statue should represent someone who is...

Resources – Slide 8

10 mins

Consolidate

Students return to the statement at the start of the lesson,
“A statue should represent someone who is...”

Every student is asked to complete the sentence, giving reasons to add further explanation to their response.

Optional Activity

Students extend their personal feedback by also reflecting on how their thinking has developed during the lesson. E.g. At the start of the lesson I thought.. but now I think... because...

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

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

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