

The Observatory: Take One

A Cross Curricular Learning Resource Pack for Primary Schools



The Observatory

The Observatory is a sculptural installation, an intervention, a space, a platform, a shelter, a look-out where six of artists will take up residence in two special locations over the next year.

- South Downs National Park at Winchester Science Centre
- Lymington Keyhaven

Whether through the study of the structure's unique design and engineering, learning about the local landscape, or exploring the work of contemporary artists, The Observatory supports learning for students across the school age range in subject areas including: Art & Design, English, Geography and Science. The Observatory also supports the aims of the Learning Outside the Classroom and Learning Through Landscapes programmes.

This pack forms part of a wider package of learning resources created by SPUD for The Observatory project. All of the learning resources for The Observatory are available to access on-line via the project website:

www.lookinlookout.org

SPUD also offers free workshops and activities for schools linked to The Observatory. If you are interested in having a workshop, developing a project, or undertaking a more in-depth unit of work about The Observatory, please contact: Kristina@spudgroup.org

Using this Pack

The Observatory: Take One is based on the National Gallery's highly successful *Take One Picture* programme. The National Gallery promotes the use of a single painting or object for cross-curricular teaching and learning through the *Take One Picture* programme. The scheme champions engagement with and exploration of a painting or object as inspiration for enrichment of learning through making meaningful connection both inside and outside the classroom. The aims of the *Take One Picture* programme are to:

- Promote the visual arts within education
- Raise pupils' self-esteem and standards
- Promote learning outside the classroom as a means of enhancing learning within the classroom
- Provide a stimulus for building the wider school community
- Enable pupils to build meaningful connections and inspire a lifelong love of learning

Further information about the National Gallery *Take One Picture* scheme can be found on the *Take One Picture* website (www.takeonepicture.org.uk).

A full colour reproduction of The Observatory is included in the pack, which can be reproduced for use in the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to display the picture in the classroom during the course of study.

Suggested **ways in**, **key questions** and **lines of enquiry** for The Observatory are provided to help stimulate discussion and learning around the structures. This is accompanied by background information

THE OBSERVATORY

A PLACE TO LOOK IN - A PLACE TO LOOK OUT

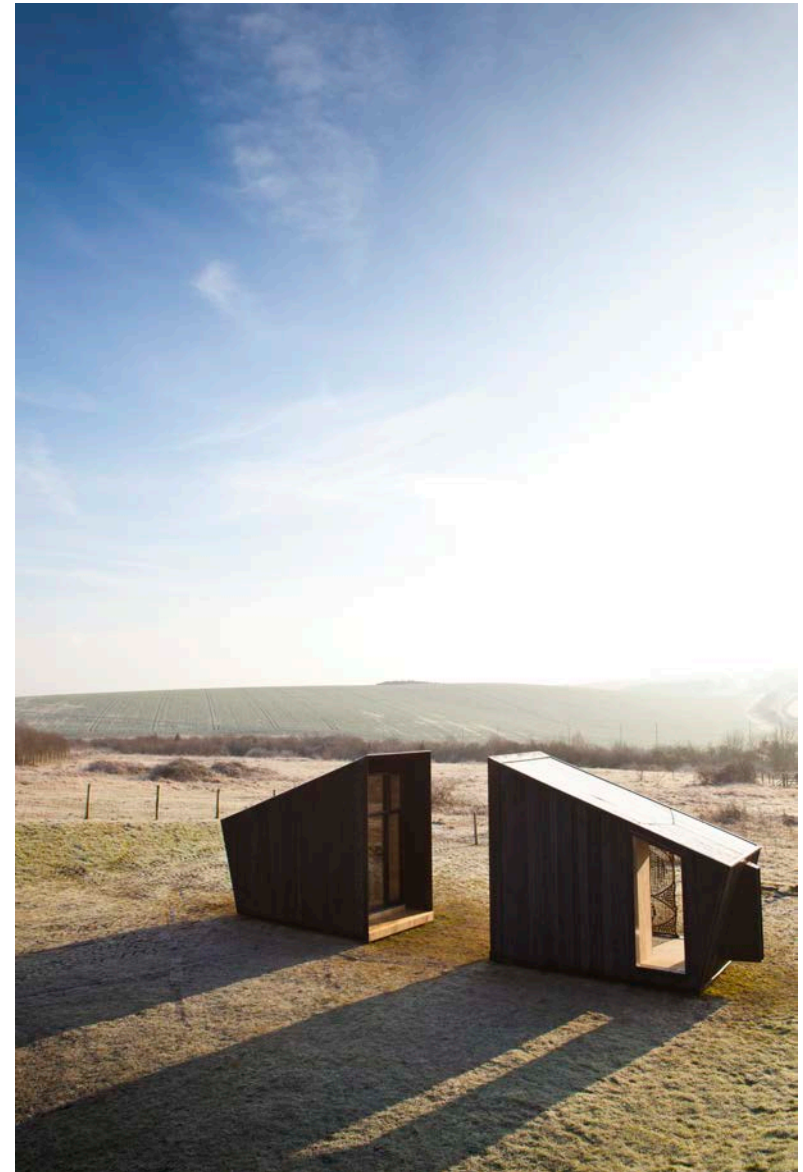
The Observatory: Take One

on the project, including information on how teachers and pupils can find out more about, or even go and see The Observatory. The Observatory can be used for learning in small groups to whole school projects.

A range of suggested learning activities linked to different curriculum programmes of study and suitable for pupils in KS1 and KS2 are provided as a starting point, but we encourage you to be creative in how you use The Observatory to stimulate further learning across the curriculum and inspire children's imagination about the local landscape.



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The Observatory

The Observatory is a sculptural, architectural installation offering a work space, a platform, a shelter, a look-out, for a series of twelve artist residencies to take place over 2 years in 4 different and unique locations:

- South Downs National Park at Winchester Science Centre
- Lymington Keyhaven
- South Dorset Ridgeway
- River Tamar

The resident artists will be undertaking an investigation of site, environment and community, resulting in an outcome that will be presented to an audience. The Observatory will generate an exciting and varied body of new work by artists responding to 4 special locations and introduce contemporary art to new audiences, through planned activity and through people 'stumbling upon' the Observatory and its artists by chance.

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The Observatory builds on a recent SPUD project, the Exbury Egg. The Egg was a temporary, energy efficient, self-sustaining work space designed by PAD architects for artist Stephen Turner on the River Beaulieu. It was a place to stay, a laboratory, a collecting and collating centre which took on the patina of 730 daily tides below the water line, and 365 days of weathering by wind, rain and bleaching by the sun above.



© SPUD

A key element of the project was enabling the artist to explore a sensitive SSSI location. Public access had to be severely limited due to the nature of the site. Interest in the Egg was global and the lack of physical public access proved quite frustrating. The Observatory aims to afford artists a similar opportunity to explore the natural environment but offering a much more accessible structure. The Observatory will become an interface for the public to engage with both the artist and the place.

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The first stage in developing the Observatory project involved a series of intensive collaborative workshops. These workshops brought together artists, architects, other professionals and students to develop the competition brief for the structures and the artists' brief.

The design for The Observatory was chosen through an international competition. After a rigorous interview process SPUD was delighted to award the winning design to a team of recent graduates working at Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios in London, along with artist, Ed Crumpton. The judges felt their design offered a high quality approach to materials, intrigue in its turning mechanism and a strong understanding of the project brief and budget.



© Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

The first six artists have been selected for residencies in The Observatory at Winchester Science Centre and Lymington Keyhaven, during 2015. The first artist's residency commenced in January 2015.

For more information about The Observatory and the resident artists, please visit:

www.lookinlookout.org



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'Ways In' to The Observatory

Think about the ways in which you might introduce The Observatory to pupils, to stimulate interest, raise questions and inspire imagination. Here are some suggestions for **'ways in'**, for The Observatory...

- Place the picture of The Observatory against a large sheet of plain paper with an invitation to write down questions or comments, which can then be developed by the whole class.
- Cover up the picture and reveal small areas at a time to enable the class to focus on different details.
- In pairs, pupils draw a picture of The Observatory from a verbal description given by a partner.
- Give pairs or small groups of pupils a picture of The Observatory to discuss and ask them to think of three words to describe or three questions to ask about the picture.
- Provide pupils with a selection of pictures of observatory-like structures included in this pack. In pairs or small groups, ask pupils to respond to key questions (see next section).

It is a good idea to display a picture of The Observatory in the classroom to give students the opportunity to discuss the picture between them and throughout the course of study.

Key Questions

Identify key questions to initiate discussion and encourage pupils to engage fully with The Observatory. These discussions will help to develop potential lines of enquiry. Some key questions for discussion could include:

- What do you think the structure is for?
- Where could this be?
- What does the structure remind you of?
- What do you think the structure is made of?
- How does the structure make you feel?
- If you could ask the person who made this structure one question, what would it be?

Prompts which will develop pupils' dialogue with the picture, include...

- What else...?
- Can you tell me more...?



Lines of Enquiry

'Lines of enquiry' begin with themes or questions about The Observatory, and extend to become a focus or context for exploration and further learning. Projects that enrich learning will emerge as you explore the different contexts and possibilities that The Observatory creates for you and your pupils.

Investigation of the lines of enquiry that emerge from The Observatory provide opportunities for learning across subjects with the line of enquiry giving coherence to a potentially fragmented curriculum. In any one class or school a number of lines of enquiry may be followed and pupils should decide which lines of enquiry are of most interest to them for further investigation.

Some possible lines of enquiry linked to **The Observatory** include:

- **Look in, Look out** – Explore how the Observatory can be used by artists and the public to learn about the landscape. How can a space be designed to meet the needs of the artist and the public (private vs public). What other kinds of buildings have public and private spaces?
- **Views of the Landscape** – The Observatory is designed to rotate 360 degrees to enable artists to select different views of the landscape. Why are views of the landscape important? What makes a good view of the landscape? What views can be seen from the windows of your school or your house?

- **Responding to Landscapes** – Compare the creative responses to the landscape by different historic and contemporary artists, writers, musicians, etc. What materials and techniques have they used? What moods and feelings has their work created? How do creative responses to the landscape reflect the time and place they were created?
- **In the Landscape** – The Observatory allows artists to work in the landscape. What other structures allow people to live and work in the landscape whatever the weather (e.g. garden sheds, barns, lookouts, hides, tents, ranger stations, International Space Station, etc. What do the structures have in common? What makes them unique to the landscapes they occupy or the work the people do in the landscape?
- **Observatories** – Explore different kinds of Observatories - astronomical, meteorological, geological, volcanic, oceanic, Stonehenge, etc. What are Observatories used for and what do they have in common? What is similar/different about their designs?
- **Seasons & Weather** – How would the weather and seasons impact upon the The Observatory structure and how the artist might respond to the landscape? How does the weather effect the local area and how we live in the landscape? How might the artist respond creatively to a stormy day? A hot sunny day?

Using The Observatory Across the Curriculum

Below are just some ideas to start the process of using The Observatory across the curriculum. These are by no means exhaustive and you may choose to take just one element as the starting point for a programme of study.

Writing the Landscape - Write poems or prose to describe the landscape around The Observatory or your own local landscape. Think about the sights, sounds, smells and the 'feel' of the place.

(Writing, Speaking & Listening)

In the News - Write a fictional newspaper article describing The Observatory's arrival in the landscape. What could this structure be...a modern house? An ice cream vendor? A spy base? An alien ship?

(Writing)

Change in the Environment - Explore effects of climate change /erosion /tourism /increased population /litter on the local environment. What can we do to protect the environment, research work of the South Downs National Park, New Forest National Park, ANOB, and other conservation organisations?

(Geography, Science)

Landscapes in Art - Talk about composition in landscapes: foreground, background, horizon, etc. Look at other artists who have depicted the landscape and different styles, materials, colours and textures they have used to create different feelings. Use different materials to recreate this landscape or another landscape, for example:

Use a range of materials (e.g., tissue, card, foil, cotton wool) and/or objects found in the landscape (e.g. soil, stones, leaves, grass, sticks) to create a textural collage of this or another landscape.

Make a diorama of a landscape dividing the foreground, middle distance and background. Use detail and colour to create illusion of space.

Get out into the landscape, sketch what you see from observation or take photographs using digital cameras. Review in class and create large montage of work – individuals could be tasked with recording different elements of scene to create the whole view, or everyone could draw the same scene to illustrate contrasts in approach and personal response to a place. Use software to manipulate the image of the landscape – make it warmer, colder, distort it, create painterly effects, etc.

(Art & Design, Design & Technology, Computing)

Local Time Line - Create a pictorial time line for the landscape around The Observatory or your own school. Using old photos / postcards / maps / press clippings and other archive materials and put them into chronological order to show how your local landscape has changed over time. When was the first settlement? What were the key events or developments and how did they impact upon the locality?

(History, Geography)

Design & Build an Observatory – Explore different kinds of Observatories, their function and materials. Develop a design brief for your own Observatory. What will you be observing? Where will the structure be? What materials will you need? Develop designs through drawing and mood boards, then build models of your Observatory using junk modelling materials. (There is a scheme of work, *Design & Build Your Own Observatory*, to support this programme of study. See [The Observatory website](#)).

(Design Technology)

Sound in the Landscape - Make a soundscape or piece of music based on the sounds might you hear in The Observatory landscape—birds, animals, insects, wind rustling leaves, river, people talking - and the feelings that the landscape inspires.

(Music, Computing)

Maps - Design your own map of the landscape around The Observatory or your local landscape, identifying key human and physical features in picture e.g. cliff, coast, hill, sea, river, valley, vegetation, season, weather, town/village, houses, port, harbour etc. Explore changes in the use of the landscape – industry, farming, tourism. Use compass points to navigate around the map. Look at aerial maps to identify key features.

(Geography, History)

Rotation – Explore the engineering behind The Observatory. How does the structure rotate? Use simple sprockets and pulleys to recreate the rotating mechanism on The Observatory. What other ways could be used to make structures be rotated? Look other examples of things that rotate e.g. carousel, turntable, car, pushbike, tank turret. How are they similar/different to The Observatory? (*The Observatory – Engineering Design Challenges* Resource Sheet can be used in conjunction with this programme of study. See [The Observatory website](#)).

(Design Technology, Science)

The ideas for cross-curricular work are referenced to the programmes of study and attainment targets outlined in the National Curriculum in England, Key Stages 1 and 2 Framework Document, September 2013.

Resources

Learning resources, images and further information about The Observatory is available on the project website:

www.lookinlookout.org

Useful Contacts:

The following organisations have information on the local area, additional learning resources and may be able to offer workshops, guided walks, talks or support further research:

SPUD

www.spudgroup.org.uk

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios

fcbstudios.com

Winchester Science Centre

www.winchestersciencecentre.org

South Downs National Park

www.southdowns.gov.uk

New Forest National Park

www.newforestnpa.gov.uk

St Barbe's Museum

www.stbarbe-museum.org.uk



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