

Take One Treasure

A series of creative activities to complete based around a chosen work of art or object from the collections of South Shields Museum and Art Gallery

Challenge 5

Slow Looking



'Back Lane of Eccleston Road',
by the South Shields artist Robert (Bob) Olley.
Painting, oil on canvas, 2016.

All about this activity

Take One Treasure is a creative activity focusing on a selected item from the collections of South Shields Museum and Art Gallery.

Being creative offers us the opportunity to give ourselves time to think and to reflect. We hope that you find the activities in this resource enable you to switch off from the stress of daily life and allow you to relax and focus on your creative process, develop all your senses, and to try something new. Here we introduce an effective way of doing this - Slow looking.

You can use materials such as paper, pencils, tape or glue, magazine or newspaper clippings and anything else you can find. Check you have permission before using.

At the end of each activity we ask you take a photograph of your work and email it to us to be included in our Online Art Gallery on our Facebook page.

Have fun and we look forward to seeing your creative Treasures.

Slow Looking

Slow looking is getting to know a work of art by spending time looking at it in detail slowly. It is a process that will enable you to really absorb what you are looking at. Practicing slow looking will enable you to switch off from the stress of daily life and allow you to relax and focus on your creative process and develop all your senses.

- Spend five minutes quietly looking at this painting. Try to explore all the different areas of the picture, try to notice the colours, shapes, clothing, activities, time of day, season, etc.
- If your mind wanders don't worry, bring your attention back to the picture.
- Pay attention to how this picture makes you feel. Does it trigger any memories, positive or negative feelings, does it make you feel calm or excited?



Slow Looking: Sensory Scapes

The more we look, the more we see. When you spend long periods of time slow looking, you will become aware of your senses, deepen your focus and develop a familiarity with what you are looking at.

- **Look again** at the painting quietly for another five minutes and focus on the many sounds you might hear if you were walking down this lane, living in one of these houses, playing on the street or even hanging out your clothes.
- **Try and recreate** those sounds using things you have on hand. What can you use to make the sound of the sheets flapping in the wind, the man beating the carpet, or the coal being unloaded?
- **Repeat this activity**, but focus on the shapes you see, and then the colours.
- **Now how does this picture make you feel?** Have your emotions or memories changed? Do you like it more or less? Have you discovered anything new? Did you find this relaxing?



Let's Create

Look outside your window and try to create a picture that illustrates what you see.

- You can use any materials you like.
- Take some time to slowly explore life outside. It can be what's happening in front of your home, in the back of your home, or what is going on off in the distance. Maybe look during different times of the day or night.
- Notice as much detail as possible. What can you see that makes sound? What colours and shapes do you notice? How do the people look, what are they wearing and what are they doing?
- Look at the landscape and the architecture. Are there any hills, lawns, street signs, traffic lights, cars, animals or something unexpected?
- When you have finished, show it to a family member or friend and ask them to **slow look** at your work of art!
- Why not share and complete these activities with family and friends who live in other parts of the country or world. Start a slow looking group and relax and destress together.

Send a picture of your work to sslm@twmuseums.org.uk to be included in the Take One Treasure on-line Art Gallery.



The Art of the Word

Create lists of words and phrases that describe both the painting by Bob Olley and your own picture that you have made.

- Describe the setting, sounds, smells, colours, feelings, memories and emotions that you have experienced while slow looking.

Write a poem or story using this vocabulary as inspiration.

Send your poem or story to sslm@twmuseums.org.uk to be included in the Take One Treasure on-line Art Gallery.

