

Pictures at an Exhibition: Representations on Display

In a group, students plan, prepare and stage an exhibition that explores how contemporary and historical situations have been represented, and that raises awareness of the strengths and limitations of various forms of representation.

The exhibition is comprised of (at least) the following components:

From each individual student

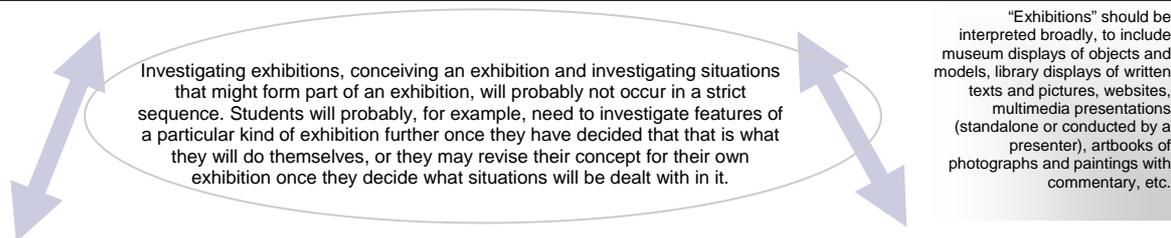
- actual representations of a historical situation selected by the student (including ostensibly factual and avowedly imaginative representations)
- the student's own representations of a contemporary situation that can be usefully compared with their selected historical situation (including a defensibly accurate factual account and an imaginatively insightful response)

From the whole group

- connecting and clarifying material to give coherence to the exhibition.

Investigate exhibitions

Students investigate various forms and instances of exhibitions, both physical and virtual, and take account of (for example) the choice of themes, guiding ideas, media, genres, points of view, use of contrast, diversity of content, and use of program materials and notes.



Conceive an exhibition

In small groups, students plan an exhibition (which they will mount) that will explore connections between the students' various chosen pairs or sets of situations, and representations of them. The exhibition will deal with issues of evidence, persuasion, manipulation etc. and will be devised for a particular, nominated audience.

Each individual student is primarily responsible for contributing texts/products/activities relating to their chosen pair or set of situations; the group is jointly responsible for conceptualising and staging the overall exhibition.

Investigate historical and contemporary situations

Students identify pairs or sets of contemporary and historical situations that could productively be used as the basis of an exhibition on ways of representing. Each pair or set is to have at least one common element or point of comparison that is worth discussing. For each situation, they research a number of opinions or points of view relating to it.

"Situations" may include events, circumstances, issues, movements or various social phenomena. For example, campaigns (McCarthyism/the War Against Terror), disease (the Black Death/AIDS/Bird flu), voice-of-a-generation fame (Lord Byron/Dylan/Eminem), disasters (Pompeii/World Trade Center), glamour (Greta Garbo/Nicole Kidman).

The contemporary situation could be (but need not be) controversial.

Students might start from a contemporary situation, then identify a corresponding historical situation, or vice versa.

It might be useful to distinguish between contemporary ("in the present") and contemporaneous ("at the time of the event").

Investigate representations

Students investigate ways in which their chosen events have been represented in different media and/or different genres (which might be more or less factual or imaginative) and how different forms of representation have been used to express different opinions or points of view (which might display varying degrees of fairness). They extend this investigation to other ways of representing situations, and to issues of the ethics of representation.

Media/genres might include history textbooks, historical fiction, newspaper reportage, painting and sculpture, photography, documentary film, dramatic film, stage drama and musicals, letters, songs, posters, poetry, political cartoons, satirical current affairs shows.

Specific techniques might include digital enhancement of evidence, the effect of juxtaposition (for example, placement of images in a display, soundtracks to movies and documentaries).

Ethical issues might include journalists' guidelines on the use of digitally enhanced photographs.

Create representations

Students (individually) create their own representations of their chosen *current* situation for inclusion in the exhibition: one (at least) intended to be and to seem accurate and factual, one (at least) intended to offer an imaginative insight into the event.

Mount the exhibition

Students in groups mount a coherent, varied, engaging and insightful exhibition for their nominated audience. The exhibition includes representations (which the students have located) of the historical situations, representations (which the students have produced themselves) of the contemporary situation, a title and appropriate cohesive material.

Cohesive material might consist of explanatory documentation, program notes, captions for pictures or objects, help files for websites, live explanation for digital demonstrations, etc.

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Standards, referents, repertoires

The following standards, New Basics referents and targeted repertoires of practice apply to any valid implementation of this Blueprint. A school may supplement the New Basics referents with other sets of valued practices and/or learnings (e.g. QCAR Essential Learnings). Additional standards, New Basics referents and targeted repertoires of practice may come into play in a particular implementation by a particular school; if so, they are to be recorded in the task documentation.

Standards

Desirable features indicate what high-quality performance in the task will look like. *Acceptable performance* represents full task completion, at an acceptable level. (See the Grading Master.)

Desirable features

Knowledge: (Individual) In-depth knowledge of, and insight into

- contemporary and non-contemporary events that may be fruitfully compared
- different ways people have understood and responded to these events
- different reasons and motives for different ways of understanding and responding to these events

Representations: (Individual) Exposing to an audience different ways of representing events factually and imaginatively, through a discerning exploitation of these ways in the context of the chosen events

Exhibition: (Group) A coherent and varied exhibition, which engages the audience in a consideration of the strengths and limitations of various forms of representation of contemporary and non-contemporary events

Acceptable performance

Defensible knowledge of chosen events from different times

Representations of chosen events from different times, each discernibly tending towards imaginative or factual ways of representation

An on-topic exhibition with some elements that cohere

New Basics referents

“...groups of core, essential sets of practices that young Queenslanders need to survive and flourish in new economic, social and cultural conditions. As a set, they are not meant to be exhaustive, nor could they be. They are limited selections from an infinite set of possibilities. Teachers and schools will include other knowledges—local, traditional, multicultural, and alternative.” (New Basics Technical Paper)

Life Pathways and Social Futures

Who am I and where am I going?

- Collaborating with peers and others

Multiliteracies and Communications Media

How do I make sense of and communicate with the world?

- Blending traditional and new communications media
- Making creative judgments and engaging in performance
- Mastering literacy and numeracy

Active Citizenship

What are my rights and responsibilities in communities, cultures and economies?

- Understanding the historical foundation of social movements and civic institutions

Targeted repertoires of practice

The cognitive and cultural, linguistic and social skills needed to be acquired developmentally in order to complete the Rich Task.

- Exploring and experimenting with ways of representation
- Investigating and identifying distinctive and shared characteristics of events from different times
- Mounting an exhibition, including documentation for patrons
- Noting and evaluating common and distinctive features of staged presentations and exhibitions
- Representing events purposefully and variously
- Revising tentative specifications for a joint presentation in the light of available individual work
- Tailoring individual work to contribute to coherent joint presentation

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Draft Grading Master

KNOWLEDGE

- In-depth knowledge of, and insight into
 - contemporary and non-contemporary events that may be fruitfully compared
 - different ways people have understood and responded to these events
 - different reasons and motives for different ways of understanding and responding to them
- In-depth knowledge of contemporary and non-contemporary events that may be fruitfully compared, knowledge of different ways people have understood and responded to these events, and an understanding that these ways are related to people's motives
- Knowledge of contemporary and non-contemporary events with some common point of comparison, and of ways in which these events have been represented
- Defensible knowledge of chosen events from different times, and an identification of different representations of these or similar events
- Defensible knowledge of chosen events from different times

REPRESENTATIONS

- Discernment in exploiting factual and imaginative ways of representing the chosen contemporary event; the representations are insightful and plausible in their own right and exemplify relevant techniques
- Insightful representations of the chosen contemporary event, exemplifying relevant techniques and illustrating distinctively factual and imaginative approaches
- Representations of the chosen contemporary event that illustrate distinctively factual and imaginative approaches
- Discernibly different kinds of representation of the chosen contemporary event, each clearly tending towards either the imaginative or the factual
- Discernibly different kinds of representation of the chosen contemporary event

EXHIBITION

(Groups)

- A coherent, varied, engaging and insightful exhibition on the topic
- An exhibition with elements that, taken together, open interesting and informative perspectives on the topic
- An exhibition on the topic that includes exhibits of genuine, relevant interest that convey more when taken together than they would taken individually
- An exhibition on the topic that includes exhibits of genuine, relevant interest
- An exhibition with a recognisable connection with the topic

A

B

C

Successful performance in some facets of the task (at least one of the descriptors above), without meeting task specifications in full

D

An attempt at undertaking the task

E

Notes

1. It is vital that, as usual, assessment in each pole be carried out across the entire collection of students' demonstrations.
2. A school can include a supplementary assessment pole of its own design when it is believed that the existing poles do not sufficiently cover the range of what students in that school have learnt specifically as a result of engagement in this task.