

Casting Sculpture into bronze

lesson plan



National Curriculum: KS3 Art

Casting sculpture into bronze is a long and complicated process but for centuries it has been the sculpture material of choice for artists. How do you go from an object made by an artist in a soft material like clay or wax to a more permanent metal version?.

Learning Objectives

Through using this lesson plan students should:

- learn about the history of art, craft, design and architecture, including periods, styles and major movements from ancient times up to the present day.
- acquire and develop technical skills through working with a broad range of media, materials, techniques, processes and technologies with purpose and intent
- develop knowledge and understanding of art, craft and design in historical and contemporary contexts, societies and cultures
- develop an awareness of the different roles and individual work practices evident in the production of art, craft and design in the creative and cultural industries
- develop an awareness of the purposes, intentions and functions of art, craft and design in a variety of contexts and as appropriate to students' own work

Overview

This lesson can be used:

- to start a sculpture project,
- to foster an understanding of the link between discoveries made outside the arts, and artists' practice
- to increase understanding of technical processes used in the production of sculpture over time.

Suggested Classroom Activity

Part 1.



Watch the short video about the bronze casting process several times and then task the students to find an object that is made using casting in or around the classroom. Ask them to attempt to explain all the stages of production beginning with the idea. This analysis can apply to any cast object from a one off sculpture to a plastic pen. Then get the group to discuss which of these stages they think need to be carried out by the artist themselves and which can be passed to craftsman or a manufacturing company.

Part 2.



Watch video two about the work of Sculptor Vanessa Pooley

Vanessa Pooley lives and works in East Anglia making sculpture that is cast into bronze. Because bronze casting is a time consuming and expensive process she has to decide which sculptures to invest in. Watch the short video about her work and ask the students to discuss why artists want to cast their work into bronze at all.

Development Activity

There are a number of other resources on CultureStreet that support this lesson plan.



Sculpture in Wax workshop delivered by Yorkshire Sculpture Park which includes footage from Castle Fine Arts Foundry.



Some of the work of Edgar Degas was cast into bronze after his death including a series of horses. You can find out about that and have a go at soft wax sculpture by using this lesson plan.



There are also films about the work of Joan Miro and his cast bronze sculpture.