



JOHN HEGLEY: PUTTING YOU IN THE PICTURE

These activities form part of a larger resource pack exploring poetry and visual art, available at: bit.ly/35Yvlut

Key stage 2

Putting You in the Picture is an education initiative by John Hegley

Resources text © Clare Elstow

Produced by Tom MacAndrew
www.tommacandrew.com

Who's the man? Paul Cezanne.

Who's the man? Paul Cezanne.
He likes trees and he likes apples
and also, he's a fan
of grappling with light and colour,
Monsieur Paul Cezanne.

I go marching through the archway
I am going to meet my gran
with assistance in a distance done
by one called Paul Cezanne.
She'll make us all an apple flan
herself, myself and someone else,
the painter – Paul Cezanne.

Can I smell something in the painting?
Give me a moment – yes I can.
Is it the cooking of my gran? Non.
Is it blossom? Non? Flowers? Non.
It is the smell of fresh manure? Oui.
Merci. Paul Cezanne.

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Written in the National Gallery, inspired by Paul Cezanne's 'Avenue at Chantilly' (bit.ly/2OAyj10) and the imaginative responses of children from Thomas Buxton Primary School.

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Begin by looking at and discussing an artwork with the children. There are many artworks available to view online on www.artuk.org.

Once everyone's had a chance to share their views, these two approaches begin to examine the artwork creatively, and use children's responses as stimulus for class writing.



SILHOUETTE

Ask the children to draw the picture from memory, or alternatively, show an image for one minute, ask the children to look closely, scanning it; then remove or cover it before they draw it.

The children's drawings will identify the key elements they found most memorable. Discuss their responses.

Now ask the children to draw themselves in their picture. Where will they place themselves? Why? If there are other characters in the picture, what would they say to them? What might those characters say in reply?

If working as a group, ask them to turn so they are facing a neighbour's back, or alternatively sit so they can see your back. Ask the children to add this person to the picture too, from behind, as though they are looking at the scene – maybe as a silhouette.

Ask the children to give appreciative feedback to each other about seeing themselves represented in the picture. Does it change how they feel about the picture?

GIFT-GIVING

Now ask the children to imagine being in the picture and meeting a character. What words describe them? What mood might they be in? How could you help them feel (even) better?

If it were their birthday (or they were sad about something), what gift might you bring them?

Choose something that starts with the same letter or sound as your name:
e.g. Amarjit brings amber, Nik brings noodles, Sam brings a salamander.

Share the choices in groups or as a whole class, using a call and response pattern:

Class/group: '[Name of child], what is your gift?'

Child: '[Name of character - make one up if necessary!], my name is... I bring you...'

These lines can be collated to create a group call and response poem, or can be a starting point for further creative writing about the characters in the painting.

