

Renaissance Architecture and Sculpture

Year 6

Lesson Sequencing

This unit builds on the children's knowledge of the renaissance from work in the previous unit on *Art in the Italian Renaissance*. In the first lesson they revisit the concept of linear perspective, focussing on the work of the architect Brunelleschi, and his design for the dome of Florence cathedral. The children make detailed drawings of this famous building. In lesson 2, through the work of Ghiberti, on the doors of the Florence baptistery, they explore the concept of relief sculpture, already studied by looking at the *Parthenon Marbles* in the unit on *Architecture* in year 3.

Lessons 3-6 of the unit focus on the work of Michelangelo. They learn in lesson 3 that, as well as working as painter (painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, as studied in Autumn A) Michelangelo worked as an architect and was partly responsible for the design for St Peter's Basilica in Rome. They go on to learn in lesson 4 that, despite his talent in both painting and architecture, Michelangelo primarily considered himself to be a sculptor. Through study of his huge carved sculpture *David* (perhaps one of the most famous sculptures in the world) they compare relief sculpture with sculpture in the round. In lesson 5 they look at the *Belvedere Torso* and discover how sculpture in the renaissance was influenced by classical sculpture. They conclude the unit in lesson 6 by connecting ideas of classical representation, revitalised in the renaissance with modern day sculpture by comparing the work of contemporary sculptor Thomas J. Price with Michelangelo's *David*.

The children use their drawings of Florence cathedral, completed in lessons 1 and 2 to undertake an extended project to design and make a relief sculpture in lesson 3-6. This exercise allows them to develop their skills of rolling, modelling and carving clay.

Key concepts covered in this unit are sculpture in relief and in the round; sculpting by carving, casting, and modelling clay; the influence of classical style; architectural design; the representation of space using linear perspective.

Key skills

Drawing skills using pencil covered in this unit include:

- Holding the pencil in a firm but relaxed grip.
- Just using lines.
- Drawing light lines, not pressing too hard.
- Simplifying observed details.

Sculpting skills using clay covered in this unit include:

- Rolling clay into a ball on a wooden board.
- Using batons and a rolling pin to roll clay on a board and cutting to proscribed dimensions.
- Wrapping clay in plastic so it remains workable from lesson to lesson.
- Adding detail by cutting clay away/drawing into clay or by adding clay in accordance with a design
- Adding clay by cross hatching a surface, adding slip to the cross hatched area and sticking a shape on before smoothing down the edges of shapes with fingers or a tool.

Annotation/planning skills include annotating a drawing to indicate different raised/cut-out layers of clay using a simple key.

Painting skills applying mod podge/PVA glue used in this unit include:

- Holding the brush like a pencil to give good control.
- Controlling the amount of glue/mod podge that is loaded onto the brush.
- Pulling the brush smoothly and applying an even, smooth and thin coating.

Key processes covered by the children in this unit are analysing other artists' work including analysis by comparison; using observation to create their own work; planning and designing their own work; evaluating their own work.

Key disciplinary concepts covered in this unit include understanding that sculpture can be created both in relief and in the round and on different scales (e.g. very big in the case of Michelangelo's *David*). Through studying the work of Michelangelo, they learn that an artist can create work in more than one artistic discipline (i.e. painting, architecture and sculpture). By comparing sculptures from classical, renaissance and modern contemporary times they understand how the style of one period of history can influence another. By this comparison they also consider how art can serve different purposes, whether to show idealized representations of the human form or seeking to convey an 'ordinary' person.

Outcomes

Children carry out a one task in the first two lessons of this unit and take four further lessons to complete one task. Both tasks might be described as 'divergent' (using specified techniques but with an unspecified endpoint). These are:

- Creating a line drawing of Florence cathedral which they annotate to create a plan for a clay relief tile.
- Modelling and glazing a clay relief tile of Florence cathedral.