



GET CREATIVE
WITH ART ONLINE

MODULE No: 5 of 8

OUR WORLD

- Lesson Background for Teachers -



LESSON AIMS and OBJECTIVES

- To increase pupil's consciousness about our planet
- To think about the connection between individual behaviours and the global situation
- To consider how Art can communicate our feelings about our world

FOCUS

Art, Drama, Language (SMSC) Spiritual, moral, social, cultural understanding

AGE RANGE

Ages 9 – 11 (Adaptable for younger or older pupils)

SKILLS

Analytical Thinking/ Creativity/ Perception/ Self Awareness

Theme: Our World

What do we think of when we think of it?

OUR WORLD is the planet where we all live. Our Earth has a surface of about 500 million square kilometres and is inhabited by nearly 8 billion people.

We share the planet with many other living things; however, the human species is the one that has most shaped and modified the Earth. Since our origin, mankind has tried to improve life on Earth by making the most of the planet's resources and characteristics. Doing that, has generated many traumatic events for the planet, including pollution, war and destruction of ecosystems.

Despite this, we humans are becoming increasingly aware that we are part of a large global system and that our world is affected by everything that each of us does.

In our daily lives, OUR WORLD might feel limited to our immediate home environment-- our school, neighbourhood or place of work -- and we usually consider only our personal interactions with our family, our friend or our pets. But most of us know that we need to think on a bigger scale and protect the complete ecosystem of the Earth, which is our only planetary home.

Why is it important?

Our planet is important because its health is what determines the quality of our lives. As far as we know, the Earth is the only place where human beings and other species can survive. Damaging its function and balance threatens our well-being and even the existence of future generations. So, it is important to grow a sense of responsibility towards our world, learning to take care of it and making our choices, not only according to our individual needs and desires, but also taking into consideration the effects that our behaviour has on the entire planet.

Thinking and acting with a global perspective doesn't mean forgetting how important our immediate environment is to each of us. The context of our daily lives and everything which creates our immediate world is also very important to each of us. It is what defines our identity and how we recognise ourselves. The quality of the place where we come from and where our daily life activities take place is essential for us to flourish. The challenge, for each of us, is to learn to integrate our individual lives (and world) with a more global and responsible perspective.

How does it affect our lives/ our world?

The health of our planet is directly connected to the well-being of all life. Environmental conditions like air quality, the availability of water and food, and having the necessary natural resources is largely what determines our survival.

The climate emergency, as our world warms, is making this connection ever clearer. Global warming is leading to natural disasters like drought, heat waves and flooding which could affect us all.

But each person's experience of 'their world' also relies on their relations and associations with the community and environment directly around them. How we experience the world is also determined by the quality of the human relationships we can build and by the economic resources we can gather to afford the things we need.

A world founded on cooperation and mutual support would reduce many of the current problems we face, both on a global and a local level.

Did you know ...

- Our World is not just ours. Scientists estimate that we share this planet with 8.7 million other species, despite only a tiny proportion of them being known to science.
- People make up just 0.01% of all the life on Earth.

- However, humans are the species which has colonised the world in the most invasive way. The mass of human-made things is now greater than the whole of Earth's living biomass. This means that if we measured the dry weight of all living things on the planet, this would be lower than the weight of all the things like buildings, transport devices and manufactured objects produced by man.
- The number of people on Earth is increasing incredibly fast. Our population is now around 7.6 billion -- about twice the population of just 50 years ago and about four times compared to a century ago. We reached these numbers in only a few hundred thousand years of human presence, which is less than 1% of the Earth's existence (around 45 billion years old).

HOW MIGHT AN ARTIST PORTRAY 'OUR WORLD'?

The way in which an artist represents the world will depend on many personal, social and cultural factors -- and often on his/her purpose. An artist might be moved to depict the world in which they live as realistically as possible; like painting a beautiful landscape they live by or a typical situation they experience regularly, in an almost photographic style. As a human being, however, the artist might have a personal view of the world that they want to communicate. Or their work might be more representative and present those things in a more imaginative or abstract way -- like Impressionist's landscapes do.

Whether realistic or not, artworks can be overlaid with a personal feeling or thought of the artist about the world. The artist, through the work, may want to express personal feeling or thoughts about the reality. e.g. to celebrate or to criticise some aspects of the world. In Picasso's famous 'Guernica' artwork, for example, he used a style characterized by sharp-edged lines, angled shapes and gloomy colours in order to represent the horror of bombing and his protest against the cruelty of war.

Equally, Art can be a great instrument to improve the world and can be used to convey and spread important ideas for positive change. In the second half of the 20th century many artists, including Robert Rauschenberg and Alberto Burri, started making sculptures and installations from waste materials. Today, this so called 'junk art' or 'trash art' is widely made. It is sometimes made with an explicit critical and polemical purpose against the overproduction of waste by our society.

OUR MAIN ARTWORK



- Title: SFERA N.2
- Artist: ARNALDO POMODORO 1926 – living, Italian
- Medium: Sculpture in gilded bronze
- Dimensions: 100.5 x 100.5 x 15.7cm
- Date Completed: 1963
- Location Displayed: NATIONAL GALLERY OF MODERN ART, ROME, IT
- Web link www.artsandculture.google.com/asset/sfera-n-2-arnaldo-pomodoro/1AGqje-g603cOg?hl=it
- How / When was it acquired by the gallery? -

How does it communicate 'Our World'?

Sfera N.2 (or Sphere Number 2) is one of a series of globe like sculptures made famous by Italian artist, Pomodoro. His shining and beautiful metal orbs capture the imagination of those who view them but never present the globe as completely perfect. All his spheres are about revealing the unseen mechanisms and hidden complexity of the world. In a way, they could be said to be a metaphor for our own Earth—wondrous, but with danger, damage or complexity which we often don't see at first or acknowledge.

Pomodoro wants to push us to learn more about our world, going beyond our daily superficial view, sometimes even looking at what is not really working. At the same time, his sculptures have been designed thinking of their specific installation location, because he wants to create a direct connection between the viewer and that specific place. He wants us to start our discovery process from the place where we are.

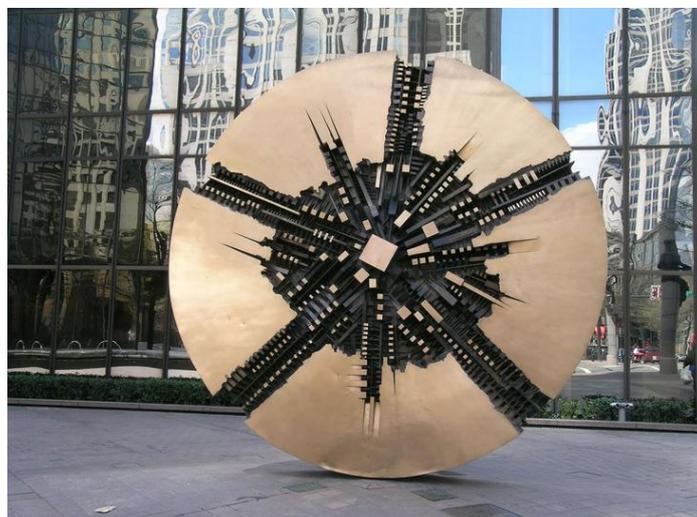
Sfera N.2 presents a view of our world as a wondrous globe, but with parts torn away as if by war or manmade environmental damage.

IN CONTEXT

Are there other works by the same artist (or others) that help us understand it more?



Pomodoro's many sculpted spheres seem to present the idea of collapse or breakdown. His most famous include 'Sfera con Sfera' in Dublin, Ireland, a broken spheres which looks like the destruction of the terrestrial globe and seems to invite us to question what we really know about our world.



More of Pomodoro's great metal circles can be found in Japan, Russia, Germany France, Denmark, Ireland, Australia and the USA, including this four and a half metre tall one, titled, 'Grande Disco' installed in Charlotte, USA in 1974.



Very complex concepts like the current ecological crisis are sometimes difficult to communicate. Art can be a useful solution, using the power of images, suggestive representations and symbols. 'Chimney and Iris' by Derrick Greaves depicts the gloomy atmosphere of a simple industrial landscape. In 1968-1969, when environmental pollution was not yet a popular topic, it was a great example of using expressive and provocative images to represent something negative about the world.

OTHER ARTWORKS THAT SAY SOMETHING ABOUT 'OUR WORLD'



From United Kingdom

- Title: A YOUNG ASTRONOMER
- Artist: Olivier van Deuren 1666 – 1714, Dutch
- Date Completed: about 1685
- Location Displayed: THE NATIONAL GALLERY, LONDON, UK

What it says about 'Our World'

The scientific discoveries of astronomy between the 17th and 18th century forced human beings to rethink our idea of the world. Old misconceptions of an Earth alone in space had to be rethought and our views of the universe and our place in it were questioned. This was a serious business, as well as exciting for the curious, as depicted in the face of the young astronomer in this painting as he examines a celestial globe which mirrors Pomodoro's.



From Greece

- Title: **STREET MARKET** (Λαϊκή αγορά)
- Artist: **PANAYIOTIS TETSIS** 1925 - 2016, Greek
- Date Completed: **1979 - 1982**
- Location Displayed : **THE NATIONAL GALLERY, ATHENS, GR**
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What it says about 'Our World'

The painted mural inside the doors of the Athens National Gallery shows an open-air market which used to take place every week in front of the artist's studio. With its colours, creativity, joy of life, movement and everyday people, it is a great example of an artist presenting his view of his own 'private world', as he regularly experienced it all around him. Because the work is life-size and fills the entrance, visitors get to walk around and through it, to really immerse themselves in the artist's world and to empathise and relive his experience.



From Sweden

- Title: **THE TALE OF TOMTEBOBARNEN, PLATE NO. 16**
- Artist: **ELSA BESKOW** 1874 – 1953, Swedish
- Date Completed: **1910**
- Location Displayed: **THE NATIONAL GALLERY, STOCKHOLM, SE**

What is says about 'Our World'

Bekow's illustration of babies playing by a stream shows the small and sweet world of the very young, when our experiences are only of our close proximity and everything is wonderful and new. For babies, the world is a place to explore and to experience for the first time. The mushroom hats are symbols for children's connection and belonging to the forest and the natural world.

PUPIL ACTIVITIES:

(POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES TO USE AS APPROPRIATE WITH YOUR PUPILS)

Teachers can choose from each category below or devise their own – *or* different activities, like creating computer generated images, a piece of music/ song/ rap inspired by art or researching other galleries or pieces of art they feel illustrate this theme.

ART ACTIVITIES

We share our world with many other living things. Choose an environment which is part of your daily life. It could be your classroom, bedroom, home, neighbourhood or town. Paint a representation of it in acrylic paints, but make sure you include at least 6 living things (humans excluded)-- from microorganisms to animals to plants and fungi. They can be 'larger than life' and not to scale.

Everyone experiences the world in a different way, depending on their direct contacts, their economic circumstances, their responsibilities, their age and so on. Use a camera or smart phone to take the ultimate image which represents how you see the world. Make sure your picture is completely different from everyone else's in the class and completely unique to you.

Open <https://world-geography-games.com/> (or using a traditional paper world map) and see who in the class can win the most points by locating as many different regions of the world. Draw out the shapes of each place on card as quickly as possible.

Collect unused objects or waste materials and make a sculpture or installation from them to represent the world, as Pomodoro did in brass. It might be necessary to decorate or modify your materials or to combine them together. Name and exhibit your work.

LANGUAGE ACTIVITIES

Think about a place where you have been and write an essay to describe it for your classmates. Include everything you remember of it, but make your description more detailed than a typical conversation by including your full set of sensory recollections – how it looked, sounded, smelled and felt. You might choose somewhere exotic, like a foreign country that you've visited, or somewhere very familiar like the school playground or a random spot you discovered in a back yard.

Pick five words of your choice (-objects, animals, activities you like) and five languages different from your first language. (You could choose them randomly from countries on a world map). For each word look for the translation in all five languages that you chose and write it down. Then try to learn their pronunciation. Choose languages that you're not familiar with. For the translation pronunciation, you can use an online or traditional dictionary. If you have access to a device, you can listen to it on websites like context.reverso.net or forvo.com.

In pairs, choose five places in the world with different longitude and note the time differences from the place where you live. Then, write down five activities that you do during the day and the time when you usually do them. (For example, Start school -- 9am/ Lunch -- 12.30pm.) Then see what time it is in the other places while you're doing each of your activities and think about what the people in those distant places are doing at that time. For instance, some people might be waking up just as you're going to bed. With your partner, take it in turns to swap time zones in all the different places and have an imaginary phone conversation, describing what you might be doing in each place at each time.

DRAMA ACTIVITY / Circle Time

In groups of 4-5 select any art work proposed by this module, or created by a classmate during the art/language activities. Recreate the scene in the class space, using minimal objects or pieces of furniture (chairs, desks, bags etc). Now, zoom the image out! Would there be more people present in your group still life image? What would be their role in this?

Try to bring the still image to life, by improvising: how do people move around? Do they interact? Pause for a moment, and say (in turns) a word that comes to your mind, in role. It can be an emotion, a thought, something you are looking at, at this moment, etc

Work together or separately to think of a world somewhere on earth or another planet. What makes it unique? How can you represent it using only the objects nearby or in your classroom -- pieces of furniture, bags, paper etc? When you have decided, bring it to life, by improvising your daily routine in that setting, showing how it makes you feel and how it affects who you are.

USEFUL RESOURCES

'Our World' – by the UN

<https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/>

The Guardian Newspaper Assessment of Life on Earth

www.theguardian.com/environment/2011/aug/23/species-earth-estimate-scientists

Science News – Human's Objects Weigh More than all Life

<https://www.science.org/content/article/human-stuff-now-outweighs-all-life-Earth>

Links for World Geography Games

www.bing.com/videos/search?q=world+geography+games&qvvt=world+geography+games&FORM=VDRE