



WHAT'S HACKNEY YOUNG VOICES?

Why what how!

This resource will enable you to run a set of 7-8 sessions to develop artwork worthy of a billboard and start your students developing their personal portfolio of creativity.

It supports positive engagement, deeper connection across peers, their school and community, as well as students' mental health and wellbeing by nurturing creativity, critical thinking and teamwork.

You can use the resource to fit your school's timetable: it could be used in lesson time to support a topic over a term, or as an after school activity, or as a special project. You do not need to be a specialist in art or SEN to deliver this, just bring an open curious mind and positivity!

This project was developed by experts in neurodiversity, education, children development with support and contribution from the Centre for the Study of Childhood Culture at Queen Mary University and funded by Arts Council England and Hackney Council.

Why take part

Teachers, parents and children alike widely reported a strong increase in self confidence, creativity and collaboration, showing that even a short intervention such as this can have a strong positive impact on students and could help support better engagement, behaviour, attendance, social and emotional progress as well as curriculum achievement and attainment.

Why creativity and play matter

Creative and cultural industries are thriving in the UK. In a world of increased automation and ai, we need more creativity, not less: imaginative problem-solvers, innovators, critical thinkers who can come up with creative solutions to the challenges we are already facing as citizens of planet Earth.

Art and creativity are shown to support Mental health and wellbeing, a key part of healthy development and learning. We all know the value of play in child development, yet from the age of 7 to 8 till they reach 16, young people's opportunities to explore, be curious, and try things out, what we define as PLAY often doesn't get much space in a busy curriculum. Students need such opportunities to develop strong creative thinking skills to equip them for their future, complementing and we believe also enhancing their academic abilities as they feel more engaged and confident in their own learning journey.

We want to invite schools to see what happens when we give students the space and freedom to explore creativity on their own terms, and enable schools to showcase creative outcomes beyond the classroom walls.



LEARNING AND CURRICULUM LINKS

how this support children's development

Objectives

This is an inclusive opportunity to invite children and young people to reflect on their personal creative work and express themselves positively, celebrating difference and togetherness through a collaborative student-informed project. It gives your students a chance to celebrate their uniqueness and grow in confidence, to be recognised and validated on a more personal level, and to forge stronger connections with their peer group and school.

Supporting neurodiversity and inclusivity

In the same way that no two people will ever look exactly the same, there is growing recognition that we all think differently across a spectrum of brain chemistry. And this is a good thing - a difference to celebrate and embrace. So this resource was conceived to support neurodiversity, recognising that by supporting neurodivergence needs is also best practice for all students as they benefit from a positive, clear, validating experience.

Curriculum fit

This resource supports several strands across the curriculum that are relevant to children aged 8-16 in particular:

- **English:** explore, express ideas, concepts and emotions fluently, exchange ideas, collaborate negotiate, evaluate and build on the ideas of others; select the appropriate register for effective communication, in order to communicate their ideas clearly across visual media
- **Art and Design:** produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences, become proficient in drawing, painting, and other art, craft and design techniques, evaluate and analyse creative works using the language of art, craft and design, now about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing**

This resource supports the eight principles to promoting a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing as set out by government guidelines:

 - **Curriculum teaching and learning** to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning
 - **Enabling student voice** to influence decisions
 - **Staff development** to support their own wellbeing and that of students
 - **Identifying need** and monitoring impact of interventions
 - **Working with parents and carers**
 - **Targeted support** and appropriate referral
 - **An ethos and environment that promotes respect and values diversity**



SESSION PLANNING

What you will need to deliver sessions

Resources overview

Resource pack 1 - Creative YOU

About building participants' sense of self, confidence, understand that creativity and play are core skills for their future, as well as explore ideation, profile their creativity, and start their own personal portfolio. It includes a presentation introducing play and creativity and supporting activities for:

- Session 1: Get inspired
- Session 2: Play time!
- Session 3: Creative YOU

Resource Pack 2 - Project: Billboard

About designing their artwork, planning background, assets, messaging, bringing it all together - with a presentation exploring the skills, billboard ideas, and supporting three core steps and tools involved:

- Background
- Assets
- Messaging

Set the right mindset and atmosphere

Allowing an open playful atmosphere is key to unlock creative potential. When running the project, consider the following:

Change the layout of the room to push tables out, or make a circle

Play music - ask children to request songs they like

Allow physical freedom: move about, pair up, talk to each other, sit if more comfortable

Offer snacks and biscuits as an energy boost!

Get participants to share creative activities they do, without judgment - Tik Tok actually requires a lot of creative thinking and skills!

Recommended set-up and materials

You will need Internet access/ screen or whiteboard to show the presentation elements.

Print out enough activity sheets for each participants (and a few spares in case!)

Core materials

Roll of paper
Plain A4 paper
Coloured A4 paper
Pencils/ pens/ paints as available
Glue
Blu Tack
String

Optional and extras

A folder/ file/ A4 notebook
to keep their work
Collage materials
Paint
Photo prints
Any other materials you
see fit to include!