
Beatboxing, rap, and spoken word

Creating contemporary music and lyrics inspired by culture and heritage.



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Introduction

This creative lyric and music project has been tried and tested with schools by the authors Rufus Mufasa, Beat Technique and Mr Phormula. The project is designed to be pupil-centred, fun, engaging, relevant and in-line with the Welsh Government Digital Competence Framework, while exploring pupil's individual creativity through the Expressive Arts Curriculum framework, and facilitating the curriculum's Four Purposes. The projects have been designed specifically to enable a focus on the creative process, as well as the creative output.

Beatboxing, rap, and spoken word will develop pupils' skills and confidence in music, performance, digital music production, and poetry while engaging them with the reading of objects and exploration of both historic and contemporary heritage for learning. The course, and this accompanying resource have been developed to support learning together in partnership with artists, cultural organisations and schools.

The projects in this resource can be simplified, adapted or further developed to suit your needs. There are plenty of opportunities for filmmaking, recording and performing, all of which help to develop wider creative attributes including resilience, presentation skills, communication skills, and collaboration that are so important to equip learners to thrive in our ever-changing world.

The resource includes curriculum guidance, ideas to adapt and vary the project, as well as methods of facilitating cross-curricular links including literacy and/or numeracy.

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Using collections and heritage to inspire contemporary artwork

Artists often find inspiration from objects, stories and places when creating new work, whether they are working with music, visual arts, poetry, literature, dance and performance, drama, digital, or a mix of these disciplines.

The studio of an artist often resembles a cabinet of curiosity, echoing early private collections known as cabinets that usually contained collections of natural curios and objects of artistic endeavour. As cabinets and collections grew, so the large public museums full of objects of wonder emerged.

Today, museums and galleries in the UK have an objective of supporting and enabling study or research of arts and sciences disciplines, as well as tracking the history of human progress through heritage collections. Museum collections are often established with learning and education as a core purpose, to explore the past but also to inspire the future. The new curriculum for Wales presents an opportunity to embrace the potential for creative, cross-curricular learning using museums, galleries, heritage sites and collections of objects as a starting point to inspire creative learning, and meaningfully engage pupils in their culture from a young age.



Pupils exploring collections at the National Roman Legion Museum

Objects help us to make sense of the world. They provide opportunities to make connections and learn about different cultures, personal identity, history, science, society, art and the making process. All objects, or heritage sites, were indeed once new. They were made using natural processes by an artist, craftsman or maker, or for more recent objects, produced in a factory or by digital means. Objects go on to have their own lives in connection to humans, and so we can learn a lot about human history, culture, technology, science, the environment and creativity from objects, making a great starting point for inspiring the expressive arts.

Bringing historic collections and sites together with contemporary arts will almost certainly make for a fun and unexpectedly creative project with pupils. Creating a long-term, contemporary arts based experience will help bring objects and heritage sites to life, and really engage pupils with collections. This in turn facilitates deeper and more meaningful learning.

Using collections and heritage to inspire contemporary artwork

Engaging with an arts or cultural organisation

A project developed within the frameworks presented in this resource can enable a whole term's work if well planned, incorporating a visit or experience with objects, heritage sites or collections to inspire the creative process. Forging a partnership with an arts, heritage or cultural organisation can also present the opportunity to take work created by pupils back into the organisation, to be performed or made available on digital platforms. This approach enables even wider community engagement with a project, ensuring this more contemporary art practice is represented within the organisation's public programme.

What kind of places could you visit?

- Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales (www.museum.wales)
- Other national museums, collections and galleries (eg Tate, Museum of Science and Industry, National Archives), visit www.nationalmuseums.org.uk a full list of national museums in the UK.
- Local museums, libraries, galleries
- Historic houses and parks
- National parks
- CADW sites
- Local built environment or areas of interest
- Collections online
- Handling collections that can be borrowed by a school
- University and college collections
- Local historic sites such as monuments, natural landscapes, bronze age sites, public art exhibits
- People's Collection Wales (www.peoplescollection.wales)
- Kids in Museums (www.kidsinmuseums.org.uk)
- Literature Wales (www.literaturewales.org)
- Urdd Gobaith Cymru (www.urdd.cymru)
- Regional Music Education Services

The possibilities are endless.

About contemporary beatbox, rap and spoken word

Beatbox

Beatboxing is a form of vocal percussion where the artist imitates electronic drum sounds – creating a beat box.

Modern beatboxing has its roots in street corner hip hop popular in the Bronx, Chicago and Los Angeles (USA). Evidence exists, however, that forms of what we recognise as beatboxing or vocal percussive music span millennia and cultures across the globe. (Source: ourpastimes.com/history-of-beatboxing)

Some notable beatboxers that are good examples to use in a school setting:

- Alem (France)
- Alexihno (France)
- Beardyman (UK)
- Beatbox Fozzy (Wales)
- Beatbox Hann (Wales)
- Beat Technique (Wales)
- Bellatrix (UK)
- Bigman (South Korea)
- Codfish (Australia)
- D Low (UK)
- Grace Savage (UK)
- Inertia (USA)
- Kaila Mullady (USA)
- Mr Phormula (Wales)
- Napom (USA)
- Piratheeбан (Singapore)
- Reeps One (UK)
- The Singh Thing (UK)

Here's an example of French beatboxer, Alem, that could be shared with pupils: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rsDTZiEP3c&t=85s>

Rap and hip hop

Hip hop music, also called rap music, is a genre of popular music developed by inner-city African Americans and Latino Americans, in the Bronx borough of New York City in the 1970s. It consists of a stylised rhythmic music that commonly accompanies rapping: a rhythmic and rhyming speech that is chanted. (Source: Wikipedia)

Notable hip hop and rap artists that are good examples to use in a school setting:

- Akala (UK)
- Baba Brinkman (Canada)
- Lauren Hill (USA)
- Little Simz (UK)
- Lizzo (UK)
- Logic (USA)
- Lowkey (UK)
- Testament (UK)
- Token (UK)

Spoken word poetry

Though some spoken word poetry may also be published on the page, the genre has its roots in oral traditions and performance. Spoken word can encompass or contain elements of rap, hip hop, storytelling, theatre, and jazz, rock, blues, and folk music. Characterised by rhyme, repetition, improvisation, and word play, spoken word poems frequently refer to issues of social justice, politics, race, and community. Related to slam poetry, spoken word may draw on music, sound, dance, or other kinds of performance to connect with audiences.

Notable spoken word artists:

- Benjamin Zephaniah (UK)
- Candy Royalle (Australia)
- Clare e potter (Wales)
- Cristin O'Keefe Aptowicz (USA)

- Deanna Roger (UK)
- Elizabeth Torres (Columbia/Denmark)
- George the Poet (UK)
- Hanan Issa (Wales)
- Joelle Taylor (UK)
- Kate Tempest (UK)
- Kevin Coval (USA, but educated at University of Wales)
- Mab Jones (Wales)
- Mahogany L Brown (USE)
- Murdoch Burnett (Canada)
- Rosanne Watt (Scotland)
- Samuel King (UK)
- Sarah Jane (USA)
- William Letford (UK)
- Zena Edwards (UK)

Why make a rap, beatbox sample or spoken word poem?

Rap, beatboxing and spoken word poetry are creative art-forms that are popular, engaging and relevant to young people. These art-forms have a significant online presence, particularly on social media, with poetry in particular becoming hugely popular with young people on Twitter, created by a generation who are adept at communicating through the written word.

Projects that explore rap, beatboxing and spoken word will be fun and engaging, while also naturally facilitating the expressive arts curriculum as well as having a strong literacy element that can be drawn from a project. Using a historic site or collection as inspiration, will enable pupils to really explore their own responses to an object or site, thus developing their own connection with a historic story, but through the contemporary art-form. Such a project will also facilitate the humanities subjects, and creatively enable the Four Purposes of the new Welsh Curriculum.

The project frameworks set out in this resource, could certainly form the basis for a whole term of learning with a specified group of pupils. If planned well, and making

use of local cultural resources, a quality, best practice project can be designed, providing an opportunity to invite parents or the wider school community to take part in a performance or presentation of the art produced to celebrate the achievement and creativity of the pupils.

Following the authentic creative process that this framework achieves, provides a real-life experience of what's involved in creative practice, and all the skills that are involved.

This framework has been designed to support the facilitation of the new Curriculum for Wales, Expressive Arts Area of Learning and Experience.

This includes:

- Developing new knowledge on Welsh, British and international contemporary artists.
- Using local cultural resources for research and inspiration.
- Reading and writing with fluency.
- Following instructions (verbal and written) and applying these practically.
- Developing knowledge of arts and culture in Wales, the UK and internationally.
- Developing vocabulary and new technical terminology.
- Meaning making.
- Exploring cultural identity.
- Creative idea generation.
- Responding to new ideas, positively and critically.
- Communication, presentation and team working skills.
- Using a range of digital tools, both skills-based and for communication purposes.
- Making connections.
- Developing skills in critical analysis, refinement and improvement.

And of course to facilitate the enjoyment and satisfaction gained from creative expression.

Planning your project

Before you start

The central objective of this project is to study, describe and document objects at the museum that are of interest to the groups. This will create the foundation for the framework of the rap, beatbox or spoken word performance.

You will need

- Tablets, smartphones or cameras (for pictures and filming)
- Paper/pens
- Clipboards
- Objects or detailed pictures of objects

Spend some time planning

Use this table to plan your project.

Session

1

Initial exploration:

Explore the art-form and selected contemporary artists and creators using the internet and class discussion. Share some examples and discuss these in the classroom. What suggestions do the pupils have? What kind of rap, beatboxing or spoken word do they like?

2

Explore a theme:

Introduce or select together with pupils the wider project theme. This theme will inform your work over the term. Example themes include: the Romans, industry, local history, world conflict, sustainability, the body, contemporary art, street art.

Planning your project

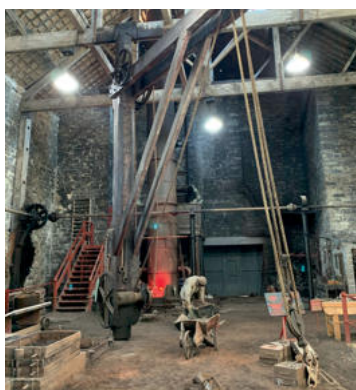
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Session

Researching the site:

A session on the history and heritage of the site or museum you will visit. Think about the stories, the landscape, smells, tastes and so on that might be expected at the site. Include some time to explore ideas around responding to objects.

3



Pupils might also undertake their own research.

4

Planning ahead:

Pupils plan how they are going to record their visit, and collect material from which to create their raps, beatbox, or spoken word. This might include photography, film, drawing, note taking, making notebooks, sound recordings and so on. Consider whether pupils should work in teams and/or adopt specific roles.

Planning your project

(cont.)

Session

The visit – object exploration and analysis:

Museums and galleries often facilitate guided tours for school groups. Book tours in advance, but for this project, make sure the pupils have time to explore the objects that especially interest them.



Upon arrival at the museum, split pupils into groups and encourage them to create mind maps, word banks and pictures (digitally or hand drawn) describing in detail the objects that they choose to examine which are of interest.

The aim of this exercise is to document and analyse objects in detail in order to further examine and develop a creative framework in school.

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For example:

- a. Describe how it looks: colour, hot or cold, hard or soft, big or small, the shape, decoration, rough or smooth, lumpy, and so on.
- b. Describe the materials: manmade, natural, metal, plastic, moulded, sculpted, wood, textile, and so on.
- c. How does the object smell and/or sound?
- d. What are the object's surroundings today and in the past?
- e. What does the label tell us about the object?
Are there some facts to collect?
- f. How does the object or wider site make us feel?
What emotions do we experience?

Planning your project (cont.)

A large, empty rectangular box with a light pink border, intended for project planning notes. The box is divided into a header section at the top and a main body section below it. The header section is a thin horizontal bar, and the main body section is a large vertical rectangle. The entire box is set against a white background.

Planning your project

(cont.)

Session

Beatbox/rap activities – in school or at the venue:

Ask groups to present their findings and observations to the class, describing in detail the objects that they have examined. Upon completion, ask each group to further develop the object exploration, by creating a character that will be associated with the object using the following exercise.

Exercise: Object character building and development activity

Developing a character from an object can be a great way to bring an object's identity to life. The task here is to create a character from the object that they are examining.

For example, the object is a Mining Drill

- Who is the person using this mining drill?
- Where is this person from?
- Are they a happy, miserable, funny or frustrated person?
- How old is that person? Maybe it's a child?
- Did this person have a nickname and why?
- Are they part of a big family? Who are their family and friends?
- Has this person been to school?
- What are they wearing?

6

Now create word banks of key words describing the person and the object. There is no correct way of doing this, it's entirely up to the group to create a fictional character based around the object.

Now ask the pupils to draw the character.

Planning your project

(cont.)

Session

Creative writing:

The next task is to transfer keywords into a story and rap. See the following Methods sections for how this task is undertaken.

Ask each group to form a short rap based on their fictional character and the word banks they have created. The raps can be simple or complicated, the only task here is to further enhance the object's identity.

7

For example:

*My Name is Dafydd, I have a skill
I work in the mine with a noisy drill!
(Ysgol Pentraeth).*

Performance:

Once the groups have completed their raps, they are tasked with creating a simple beatbox beat to use as a backing track (see Method 1e below for tips on how to approach this). Each group elects one or two members to perform the backing track while the rest perform the rap.

Each group then performs the final rap and beatbox to the rest of the class (film recording using a phone or tablet is optional).

8

Methods 1

Creating rap lyrics

Take inspiration from the museum visit and any recordings, notes or mind maps that were made. A process for creative development is set out below:

a. Create a scene

When writing raps in first person and portraying stories through lyrics it is important that the scene is set early to grab the attention of the audience.

Make deliberate vocabulary choices to create the right mood in order to draw the audience into the story. Use this table of words to get you started.

Setting	Mood	Example vocabulary
city	happy	Bright colours blared from of the paint on the wall
historic house	inspired	A dragon fly zips across my path, a virtual path in my vision
hilltop	determined	The rain drove, into our faces, and we drove on
coal mine	hopeful	Small white cloudlets could be seen hovering when we looked up from the darkness, we felt we could touch them...
jungle	sad	The baboon's cries pierced our hearts

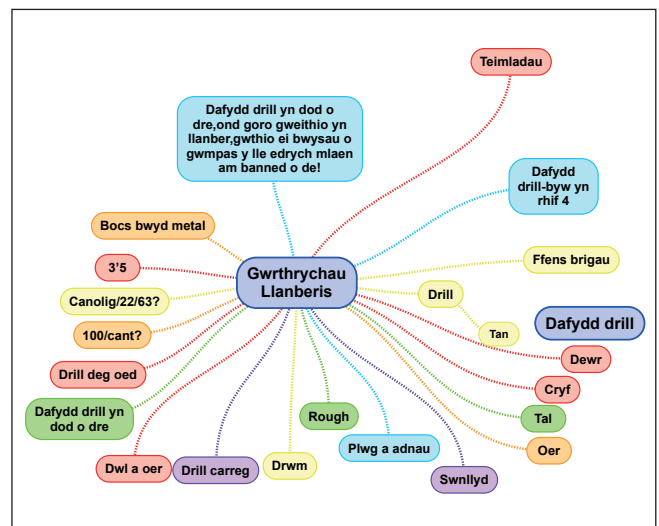
See the case studies later in this document for examples of work produced by pupils.

b. Write the lyrics

Gather as much information as possible on your character and scenario before starting to write lyrics. Use mind maps to get the creative ideas flowing. This could be done in groups or as a whole class exercise.



Example mind map responding to Big Pit (sensory exploration)



Example mind map in response to the National Slate Museum (character exploration)

Methods 1

(cont.)

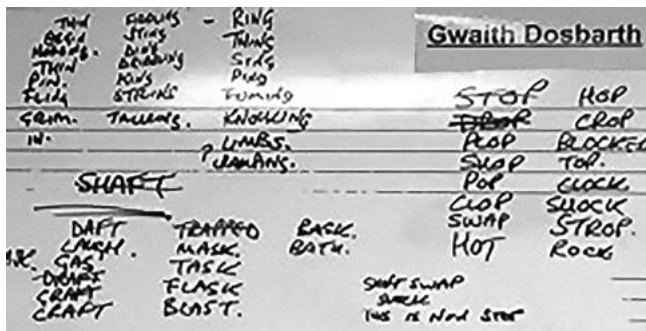
c. Rhyming word banks

Building rhyming word banks keeps the creative process flowing. In groups, take words from the mind maps and create individual rhyming pools – that is groups of words that rhyme with the selected one. Aim to generate sets of rhyming words, the words don't need to have similar spellings or endings – in rap, a lot comes down to how a word is pronounced during the performance.

For example, piece rhymes with fleece but could be used alongside feet, seek, sheet, speak because of the E sound.

This is a creative idea generating activity. Write everything that you come up with even if you don't think it could ever be used.

To aid this process, the website www.rhymezone.com is helpful.



Rhyming word bank

d. Construct the sentence

Now use the mind maps and rhyming word banks to start writing sentences by constructing them backwards. To achieve this, take a rhyming word and think of a sentence that is relevant and would proceed it.

Sensory example:

Echos through the void as I finish my **task**
Cramped and claustrophobic in this dark,
damp, **shaft**
Trapped like a rat as I feel the cold **draft**
Clunking sound of the water, back an'
forth in my **flask**

Character building example:

My Name is Dafydd, I have a **skill**
I work in the mine with a noisy **drill!**

e. Create a beatbox

Once the groups have completed their raps, the next step is to create a simple beatbox beat to use as a backing track.

To try out the method, start off by electing one or two members of the group to perform the classic Queen song – We Will Rock You as a beat or rhythm.

To achieve this, the beatboxers use the letters B (Kick) and K (Snare) in the same order, so for We Will Rock You:

B, B, K; B, B, K; B, B, K; (and so on)

To use a different tempo or beatbox pattern then edit, add or subtract words from your rap in order to maintain the chosen flow.

Use **Method 2** to explore beatboxing techniques.

Methods 2

Beatboxing techniques

Watch this introduction tutorial to basic beatbox sounds created by Beat Technique. Use the methods in the film alongside this description to start experimenting with beatboxing.



Kick drum

1. Say the word *Boots*.
2. Now build up the pressure behind the lips and release it to say *Boots*. This will give the power needed for a kick drum sound.
3. Take away the *oots* part of the word and you will be left with a short punch kick sound.

Hi-hat

1. Create a *Hi-hat* sound by saying *Tuh*. Whisper this sound rather than speaking it at a normal volume.

Rim shot snare

1. Say the word *Cats*.
2. Concentrate on the start of the word as it's said (the *C*). Create a click sound in the back of the mouth/throat when the *C* is pronounced.
3. To create the sound of a snare drum, increase the pressure on the *C*/click sound.

Methods 3

Spoken word poetry

The following approach provides a process for reflective creative thinking in response to a heritage site or museum collection.

It takes a holistic approach to creative writing, enabling the writing to be more fluid, but exploring the words associated with meaning in more depth. It is useful for exploring language structure and for introducing concepts such as similes and metaphors.

a. Choose an object

In groups choose an object to explore, thinking about it practically, emotionally, and abstractly; asking questions and listening imaginatively. Ask the pupils to make mind maps to collect their words and ideas.

b. Question time

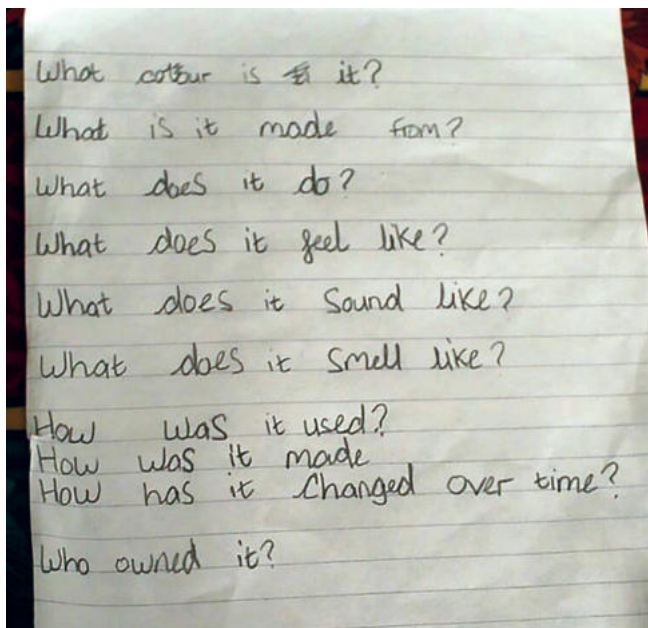
Continue to use the chosen object, but this time use the questions below to begin exploring new ways of making meaning. Have some fun here, the more fun you have, the more the creative ideas will flow.

Questions about the object:

- What do you see?
- Can you describe the colours?
- How would you describe the materials used?
- What else could it be?
- Who made the object?
- Who used the object?
- What does the object look like in your life?
- How does the object feel/sound?
- Does the object remind you of anyone?
- What else could the objects mean?

Questions about people and places connected to the object:

- Who might have used the object in the past?
- Are these people alive now?
- Who do those people remind you of?
- Are there any similarities between the historic people you're thinking of, and people who are alive now?
- Who lived here?
- Who worked here?
- What did they like about their lives?
- How did they have fun



List of questions by pupils at Tredegar House

c. Discussion groups

Now hold a discussion with the pupils to draw out and explore some of the more interesting or challenging topics that have emerged. This could be done in small groups or as a whole class. Begin by exploring the concept of linking the past to contemporary life.

Here are some ideas to start discussions off with pupils:

- What are we learning about the past?
- What stories are we hearing?
- Is anyone being treated unfairly or unjustly?
- Does someone in the story have a lot of power?
- Who holds the power? Who is being exploited?
- Is there conflict?
- Is anyone doing anything about this?
- Is there anywhere in the world that this still happens?
- Who is this person like today?
- Is there anything in the news that is similar to this story?
- What is similar about the stories?
- Who do you think is part of the story that we don't know about?
- Has anything changed?

Continue to make mind maps in response to the discussions. This could be done in groups or as a whole class.

d. Start to form sentences

While the discussions are still fresh in people's minds, challenge them to use their individual mind maps to form short, concise, descriptive sentences that use the words to describe the stories or objects.

e. Write and perform a spoken word poem

Work individually, in groups or even as a whole class, to pull your sentences together into a poem.

Discuss and test out how you might perform it, thinking about the following:

- What voice you might use – will you take on a character, emphasise certain words, introduce emotion?
- Think about volume and cadence, will some bits be loud and some bits be quieter?
- How will you use your body language, facial expressions and hand gestures to perform the poem?
- Will it be performed on your own or as a group?

Case studies 1

Welsh language with key stage 2 – Ysgol Pentraeth, National Slate Museum, Mr Phormula, and Bari Gwilliam

The aim of this project was to bring objects to life at the National Slate Museum, and use these as a basis for learning, through music/beatbox and rap. The project took place over three full days of activity.

The first session took place at the museum. The class explored the location and created word banks and mind maps describing the items in detail.

Objects that stood out included: mining drills, thick rope that had been used to suspend workers on sides of the mountain, helmets and jackets worn by workers, and slate dust that was hazardous to workers, amongst many other artefacts.

Once the groups had explored and analysed the objects we took the ideas back to school where we worked in groups and shared the objects with the rest of the class. Through exploring the objects we collaboratively worked on a big mind map highlighting descriptive words and ideas that best described the objects we were analysing. Through this process a fictional character was created: *Dafydd Drill*.

The pupils decided that *Dafydd Drill* was a rather unpleasant individual due to him having to carry his gigantic drill around the quarry every day! He also lived in *dre* (town), but travelled to *Llanber* (Llanberis) every day which made him even more grumpy. By making this short character story about *Dafydd Drill* the class created a rhythmical rap based on this character:

*Dafydd Drill yn dod o dre,
Ond goro gweithio yn Llanber,
Taflu ei bwysau o gwmpas y lle
Edrych mlaen gael panad o de!*

Session 2 aimed to develop the objects into groups. There was a recap of the museum visit and pupils explored their pictures, each group choosing an object and creating a mind map or word bank to describe the selected object and its use. The groups then followed the same rap writing process as in the previous session to develop a character of their choice, and subsequently a rap.

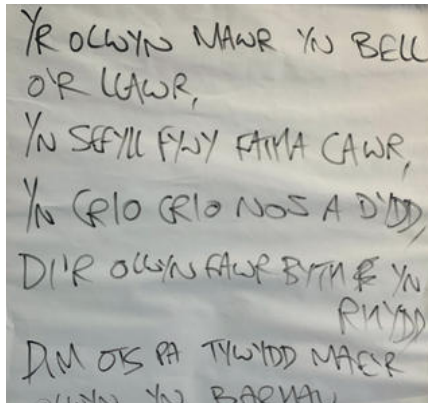
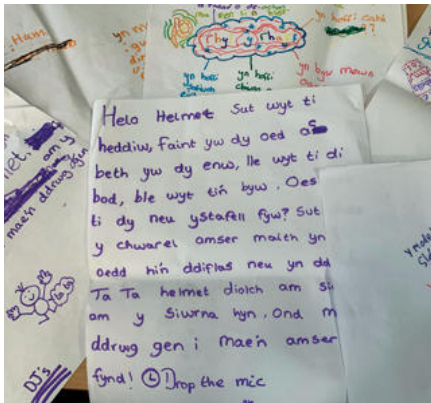
Objects selected included:

- *Jack Siaced* (Jacket Jack – A worker's jacket)
- *Huw and Hannah y Helmet* (Worker's protective helmet)
- *Llwch y Mynydd* (Mountain dust)
- *Olwyn mawr* (Big wheel)

Each group performed their short rap based on the above characters, this objective was all about fun, expression, confidence building and character development. By using the above ideas we were able to create a collection of raps focusing on different objects and thus developing the object's identity.

Case studies 1

(cont.)



The groups then had the opportunity to create and sample sounds using Mr Phormula and Bari Gwilliam's equipment.

The third session was aimed at performing and recording our object raps. Each group recapped the general overview of the project. The final task was to mix beatboxing, then to perform and record the rap.

Each group elected a number of members to be *beatboxers*. The *beatboxers* of the group recreated Queen's simple "We will rock you" drum pattern to form the backing for the rappers. This beat is simple to re-create and only requires two letters – "B" and "C", the individuals simply recreate the beat – "B / B / C, B / B / C, B / B / C".

The groups then separated and practised their raps and had the opportunity to add dance or movement which further enhanced the performances. The performances were recorded on tablets.

This project has involved:

- Object exploration and analysis
- Local history exploration
- Beatbox and rap activities
- Object character building and development
- Creative writing
- Performance, and dance
- Digital competency.

For more ideas on how to further enhance performances using tablets please see the section below on 'Extending the learning'.

Case studies 2

Beatboxing and rap, English language with key stage 3 – Lewis School Pengam, Big Pit, Butts Beat Technique and Steve

A year eight group visited Six Bells Guardian Monument, Abertillery. This monument commemorates the 1960 Six Bells Mining disaster. The group was accompanied by beatboxer Beat Technique, and their teaching staff from the Expressive Arts department.

The pupils participated in a guided tour led by a volunteer and had an opportunity to explore the mining object collection in the community museum at the site.

The group then moved on to National Museum of Wales, Big Pit, Blaenavon, where they participated in an underground tour of an interpretive mining experience. During this tour, the pupils were asked to really think about everything that they were experiencing. They were asked to consider their sensory experience of the tour: sight, sound, taste, smell, feel, and the emotions that they were feeling.

Pupils were also tasked to ask the museum guides plenty of questions in regards to different roles in the coal industry, working conditions, and the experience of being underground.

Back at school each of the classes were given a short introduction to beatboxing and a rap lyric writing session. Working with beatboxer Beat Technique, the pupils learnt how to produce basic beatbox sounds and also how to sequence them to make beatbox routines. They also explored how raps might flow and how different tempos and beats will affect this.

An example of work produced:

*Echos through the void as I finish my task
Cramped and claustrophobic in this dark,
damp, shaft
Trapped like a rat as I feel the cold draft
Clunking sound of the water, back an' forth
in my flask*

Year 8 pupil, Lewis School Pengam

Case studies 3

Bilingual with key stage 2 – Tredegar Park Primary School, Tredegar House (National Trust), Nicola Williams and Rufus Mufasa

Over a three day project, a year six group created spoken word poetry in response to their visit to Tredegar House in Newport. They worked with spoken word artist Rufus Mufasa, their teacher, and the Newport Fusion Network Coordinator.

Day 1: Developing confidence in creative play with language and a basic understanding of reading objects

In advance of their visit to Tredegar House, Rufus Mufasa led a whole day session in Tredegar Park School to introduce her practice. This covered her background, her professional journey and her experience of being a woman artist in the hip hop scene.

Rufus introduced the concept of storytelling through poetry and rap. The session included a lot of games to free up the use of spoken language, including current youth culture language, nicknames, interests, hobbies, pets, and so on, to develop the pupils' confidence in telling stories about themselves. It was important to highlight that each pupil was a teller of stories, and each one was unique, with a unique interpretation of the world.

In the afternoon session, the group explored memory. The artist presented extracts from a book, inspiring the children to think about their own experiences of childhood. The artist also talked about her own childhood memories.

The group then went on to look at a selection of objects brought in by Rufus, including old cameras, vinyl records, flags, a tin phone box, decorated wooden eggs, old medals, a kettle with a whistle, tins of loose tea, lemons, and giant wooden cutlery.



*Pupils responding to objects in the classroom
Photo: Naz Syed*

The pupils worked in groups to create mind maps and then to use the words they'd gathered to start to construct sentences. These were then developed into quick, simple poems, raps and stories.

Finally, the pupils then agreed a list of questions they would be asking themselves during the visit to Tredegar House on Day 2.

Case studies 3

(cont.)

Day 2: Visit to Tredegar House

The aim of the visit was to collect creative ideas and make notes in response to the house and its collections, to take back to class.

The group were given a tour of the site by the House Manager. This included a special trail around the property that introduced the Chartist Movement in relation to Tredegar House and its history. All pupils carried a notebook and their list of questions, and made notes during the tour.

The artist collected her own notes, and after the first room, she read these out to the pupils. Her notes recorded words, thoughts, feelings and ideas, including ways to link the historic objects the group had seen to the world today. She stressed that there was no right or wrong thing to write down.

Here is an extract from her notes:

Don't be fooled by wealth

It is still loaded with complication

Take Harry & Megan for example

Hand carved Caesars

Meet little Mousey

Floorboards the length of the house

Tall trees, taken from their homes,

thousands of miles away

Roots ripped up from the kisses of the sun

The group talked a lot about life in the time that the house was built, referencing the Chartists, the people who lived and worked there, their sources of wealth, and the backgrounds of the portrait painters and crafts people who built or decorated the house. There were also discussions around ethics and power.

After the tour of the house, the pupils did some drawings of how they imagined the people who worked in the house might have looked. Then there was an object handling session. Pupils worked in groups, using mind maps to record words they associated with the objects.



Pupil participating in object handling session at Tredegar House

Photo: Naz Syed

The artist asked what the objects reminded them of within their own homes? This introduced their own visual knowledge into the meaning making from the object.

Case studies 3

(cont.)



'They look like giant lampshades' (Pupil response to a 19th century hoop underskirt).

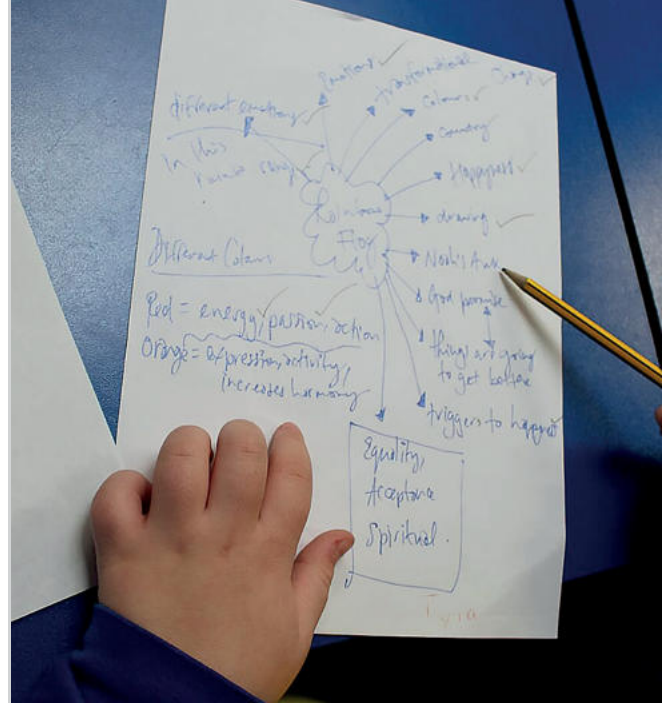


Photo: Pupil's word bank

The pupils then shared their creative word banks, and began writing their own poems.



'Games console' (Pupil response to a 19th century pinball game).

Case studies 3

(cont.)

Day 3: Writing poems

Back at school on the final day, the pupils focused on developing their word banks into full poems which compared history with contemporary life, and began to work on performing their creative work.

The first task was evaluating the experiences of the site visit. Many commented that they liked finding out about the people who'd lived in the house, especially the servants, whose stories were poorly represented.

'It's like we are giving them a voice and they are being seen properly now.'

Pupil comment

Rufus asked the class to think about why it was important to reflect on and learn from the past. They then discussed the pupils' reflections from the visit, making links to current affairs.

Working together with Rufus, the group then transferred these comments into a piece of collaborative creative writing:

*We're bringing back the past
Unlocking doors into the unknown
Peeling back the house's secrets
Stepping into other time zones
We're bringing the past back
Women wearing huge lampshades
Crocodiles crawl around the posh rooms
Next to the Louis Vuitton suitcase
We're bringing the past back
Old games come back out to play
Gold frames hang from the walls on chains
Way too heavy for nails*
Extract from collaborative pupil poem.



Pupils performing spoken word poems to their families at Tredegar House

This case study was supported by National Trust and Newport Fusion.



Extending the learning and facilitating curriculum learning

Ways to extend the learning:

- Create soundscapes of your character/ scenario/emotion by recording the voices or sounds present in the environment, for example, wind, bangs, thuds, whistles, machinery, or background noise. These recordings can be used as samples within a performance or recording.
- Develop the rap or poem to be performed as part of a live performance by the pupils. For example, alongside a band, percussion group, choir or visual film, or as part of a drama performance.
- Use the **Samplebot app**, which is designed to sample sounds via an Ipad's internal microphone. Pupils could use Samplebot to record sounds at the museum, or sounds relating to the objects. For example, at the National Slate Museum, pupils recorded the sounds of stones and slate hitting each other, then used Samplebot to put these sounds on virtual square pads. The virtual square pads on the screen were then used to create a sampled rhythm similar to an electronic drum beat. This method further enhances an object's sensory identity whilst creating a unique backing track for the rappers.
- Use the app **Simple Minds +** to create instantaneous mind maps including voice memos and photography to and create detailed mind maps.
- The **Pocket Operator Speak app** can be used for sampling voice and relevant sound effects and can be used instead of or alongside an Ipad.

Expressive arts project ideas:

- Offer open-ended creative tasks by inviting pupils to suggest ideas.
- Create animations to tell a visual story alongside the rap/beatbox/spoken word soundtrack.
- Explore dance moves to perform to the final track or performance.
- Create stage costumes and props to use in a performance.
- Design a book of the lyrics that includes illustrations and graphics.

Ideas for cross-curricular learning:

- Film and record performances digitally.
- Write scripts and/or subtitles for a film or animation.
- Share digital recordings on social media.
- Create a written and visual blog to track the project process from beginning to end.
- Design the project to facilitate a humanities topic or project.
- Use a science or natural history collection for inspiration.
- Reflect on the content of the lyrics created through a critique/ reflection session.
- Explore maths through rhythm and lyrics.
- Explore maths through film editing.
- Improve emotional literacy by exploring emotional connections to objects.
- Write about the materials (science) of the objects that are being explored.

Next steps

Presenting creative work in partnership with arts and cultural organisations further supports the cultural democracy model of the new *Expressive Arts Curriculum*, and helps to facilitate the 'Four Purposes'.

Why not approach the cultural organisation that you visited, or that the work is connected to, to ask if it could support a sharing of the pupil's achievements. Some ideas for this are:

- A performance, welcoming the wider school community at a cultural organisation.
- A TV screen that shows the completed work displayed for a number of weeks, placed near to objects that inspired the pupils work.
- Sharing work digitally with the organisation.
- A display showing the whole creative process including the initial visit, the creative mind mapping, written poetry and the final performance.
- Ask the cultural organisation and the pupils to suggest some ideas for sharing work produced

Online resources

Collections online
[museum.wales/collections/online/](https://www.museum.wales/collections/online/)

Art UK
www.artuk.org

People's Collection Wales
www.peoplescollection.wales

Available on HWB

- People's Collection Wales Image Resource
- History of Wales resource
- National Museum of Wales resources

People's Collection Wales, Learn
(for teachers and includes resources).
www.peoplescollection.wales/learn

About the authors

This course and resource was created for the Arts and Education Network: South East Wales by the following group of artists and cultural educators.

Beat Technique is a talented beatboxer rapper, DJ, producer and songwriter. He also works as a music educator and consultant. He has forged a unique performance style and stage presence, which were built on the stages and events of Glastonbury, the O2, Royal Ascot and Silverstone to name a few. He is an advocate in the beatbox battle scene, having competed in the UK championships in 2014 before participating in the first ever Welsh Beatbox Championships in 2015.

He currently spends the majority of his time teaching the art of beatbox, rap, dj-ing and music production, in schools and youth organisations. He has achieved significant success with disaffected young people who find school a challenge, enabling them to improve attendance, behaviour and motivation in all areas of the curriculum.

Rufus Mufasa is a pioneering participatory artist, literary activist, poet, rapper, singer songwriter, theatre maker, and mother. Rufus is the Wales Future Generations Act Poet in Residence (2019 – 2020); a Hay Writer at Work (2018–19); and a Barbican Fellow (2015–17). She practises locally, nationally and internationally, and has participated in international arts programmes in Finland, Indonesia and Sweden that explore indigenous languages and women's rights.

Rufus has published two solo albums of poetry collections entitled *The Pride – Magic and Molecules* (2019) and *Flashbacks and Flowers* (2020). She has a degree in *Theatre and Media Drama*, and a master's degree in Scriptwriting from University of South Wales.

Mr Phormula is a pioneering beatboxer and live looping artist. With a career as diverse as the Welsh landscape within which he is rooted, Mr Phormula's inspired performances and vocal compositions have gained him international recognition as a leading beatboxer, rapper and producer. Over 15 years' experience of working in educational environments highlights Mr Phormula's commitment to using bilingual beatboxing and rap to engage people from all walks of life. Mr Phormula possesses a solid work ethic and involves participants from a wide range of backgrounds with varying needs.

Mr Phormula is guaranteed to be engaging and entertaining whilst also supporting skills such as increasing confidence and collaborative working.

Danielle Cowell is Learning, Participation & Interpretation Manager at the National Roman Legion Museum, and the strategic lead for digital learning for Amgueddfa Cymru - National Museum Wales. She has 20 years experience in delivering museum learning programmes at National Museum Cardiff and St Fagans: National History Museum. She currently leads the learning strand for the People's Collection Wales.

Danielle set up the successful digital learning project *Spring Bulbs for Schools*, which has been running for over ten years with 7,000 pupils participating each year across the UK. Her current role involves leading the learning programme at the National Roman Legion Museum and developing staff across the organisation to increase their digital skills and create new digital learning resources (many of which are published on Hwb). Danielle has contributed to numerous strategic partnership projects including the First World War education project with National Library Wales.

Ruth Lloyd is the Co-ordinator of the Arts and Education Network; South East Wales. She has over twenty years' experience of working in learning and interpretation settings in museums, galleries and the wider arts sector, and a special interest in bringing cultural organisations, artists and communities together through authentic creative projects. Her previous work has included setting up the innovative museum residency programme at the V&A Museum in London; project managing the establishment of the Exhibition Road Cultural Group in London; working on the Arts Council of Wales Lead Creative School programme and producing a wide range of socially engaged artworks and projects as a freelance producer. Ruth has a degree in Fine Art Textiles from Goldsmiths College, University of London, and a masters degree in *Interpretation, Representation and Heritage* from University of Leicester.

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