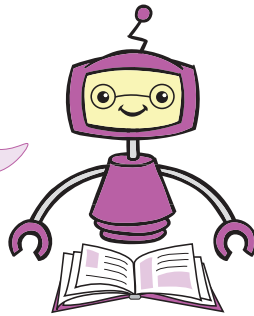


A picture tells a thousand words

Have you heard the expression, 'A picture tells a thousand words'? Sometimes, an artwork can tell a thousand words about the person who painted it, the country they come from or the subject of the image. Let's find out more about reading an image ...



LINKS TO:

Stage 3, Module 8
Learning Object 2: *A slow connection*

PRIOR LEARNING:

Stage 2

Module 12 Work Sheet 2: *Diary days*
Work Sheet 3: *This is your life!*

1 Here's looking at you, kid

People have painted images for tens of thousands of years. They are one of the ways we express ourselves as people and communicate with others.

Sometimes, a particular work of art becomes famous. Leonardo da Vinci's *Portrait of Lisa Gherardini*, wife of Francesco del Giocondo (better known as the *Mona Lisa*), for example, is very famous. It became even more famous after it was stolen from the Louvre in 1911.

Blue Poles (also called *Number 11, 1952*) by Jackson Pollock, became famous in Australia after it was purchased by the Australian National Gallery in 1973 for a record price of more than \$1 million.

Other works of art might become famous because they are exemplary works, important examples of a particular style of art or representations of important people or events.

Some works come to be strongly associated with a particular country. Can you think of any iconic Australian works of art?

Perhaps Sidney Nolan's painting *Ned Kelly*, Russell Drysdale's *The Drover's Wife*, Albert Namatjira's *Central Australian Landscape*, Frederick McCubbin's *The Pioneer* or Tom Roberts' *Shearing the Rams*?

Reading an artwork

You can 'read' an image by adapting many of the same skills that you use when reading a text.

What is on the line?

What does the image literally show? For example, in the Tom Roberts painting below, the image literally shows a shearing shed with men engaged in shearing sheep.



This image is in the public domain

Tom Roberts, *Shearing the Rams*. 1880–1890.

What is between the lines?

What inferences can you make from the content of the painting? For example, in the Tom Roberts painting, it is possible to infer that there is a hierarchy of roles. The shearers occupy the centre of the painting, whereas the others are arranged around its edges and are looking towards the shearers.

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What is beyond the lines?

What other information can you draw on to inform your understanding of the painting? For example, Roberts' painting was completed around 1890. What role did shearing play in Australian culture in the late 1800s? How is that reflected in Roberts' painting?

Exercises

Below is an iconic Indonesian artwork, accompanied by some curator's notes. Read the text and study the image using all the strategies you have learned. After you have studied the text and image, you will be asked to complete some reading comprehension questions, and some questions about reading the artwork.



This image is in the public domain

Raden Saleh, *Penangkapan Pangeran Diponegoro*. 1857. Oil on canvas.

Raden Saleh lahir dalam sebuah keluarga bangsawan di Jawa Tengah pada tahun 1807. Dia pertama kali bertemu dengan guru lukisnya: AA Payen ketika bekerja di Pusat Penelitian Sains dan Budaya milik Pemerintah Kolonial Belanda. Payen berhasil meyakinkan pemerintah kolonial untuk mengirim Saleh ke Negeri Belanda untuk belajar seni. Saleh berangkat ke Eropa pada tahun 1829 dan tinggal di sana sampai tahun 1851 untuk belajar melukis dan kemudian bekerja sebagai artis profesional. Seperti bisa dilihat di dalam lukisan ini, dia sangat dipengaruhi oleh gaya lukisan Romantik yang populer di Eropa pada waktu itu.

Lukisan ini diselesaikan pada tahun 1857, enam tahun setelah Saleh kembali ke Indonesia. Lukisannya

mengabadikan sebuah saat penting dalam sejarah Indonesia: penangkapan Pangeran Diponegoro. Pangeran Diponegoro adalah seorang pangeran Jawa yang berperang melawan pemerintah kolonial Belanda selama lebih dari lima tahun sebelum dia ditangkap pada tahun 1830.

Lukisan ini digantung di Istana Kerajaan Belanda selama 200 tahun sebelum akhirnya, pada tahun 1978, dikembalikan ke Museum Nasional Jakarta.

Apa kamu bisa melihat orang yang kepalanya terlihat dari samping, mengintip dari belakang seorang wanita yang berdiri di antara dua orang perwira Belanda? Katanya itu adalah potret diri pelukisnya.

Exercise 1

First, let's see how well you have understood the text.

1.1 What are the main ideas in the text? In English, summarise the main ideas in each paragraph.

Paragraph one

Paragraph two

Paragraph three

Paragraph four

1.2 Were there particular words or phrases that you found difficult to understand? What strategies did you use to understand these words or phrases, or to understand the text as a whole despite not being sure what some words meant?

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1.3 When was this painting completed?

1.4 What event does the painting commemorate?

1.5 How long did Raden Saleh spend in Europe before he returned to Indonesia?

Exercise 2

In this work sheet, you have learned that you can adapt some of the reading strategies you have already used to 'read' an image or artwork. The following exercises guide you through the process of 'reading' Raden Saleh's *Penangkapan Pangeran Diponegoro*.

2.1 Reading on the line: What does the artwork literally illustrate? Describe the people and objects it includes, and any contextual information, in English.

**2.3 Reading beyond the lines: What other information can you draw on to inform your understanding of the artwork?
Answer in English.**

Hint! You can draw on the information in the text that accompanies the artwork in this work sheet, as well as your prior knowledge of Indonesian language and culture to answer this question.

