

Learn to Tag: Jaz Rogers, Devon Graffiti Artist

Lesson Plan

National Curriculum links & curriculum fit	Art: students should “produce creative work, exploring their ideas and recording their experiences”. English: work on autobiography.
How to use	Sixth activity in the Telling Our Stories pack. Could be delivered as a standalone lesson. Optional visit by Jaz Rogers (please contact DDE for details).
Aims	To appreciate the value of graffiti and street art. To think about identity and to be proud of who you are.
Duration	60 mins minimum. Could be stretched over multiple lessons and turned into a project.
Materials required	Jaz Rogers Powerpoint (Resource 6b). Jaz Rogers video (Resource 6c). Optional interview transcript (Resource 6d). How to Tag handout (Resource 6e). This provides a 6 step guide to making a graffiti tag, on handout and on PPT. Paper and pencils for students. Music to aid creativity.
Differentiation	Students should be encouraged to adjust the tag activity to their own ability level. Two things that might make it easier: use smaller paper size and keep the word short. For less confident writers / artists, you can do step 1 (writing the word) for them.
Background reading & references for teachers	It will help if the teacher and TA make their own tag before the lesson. Article in local paper: www.northdevongazette.co.uk/news/bideford-councillor-speed-warning-on-home-1-6860706

Stage 1 (KS2 and KS3): Meet Jaz Rogers (15 - 20 mins)

- Introduce Jaz on the Powerpoint (**Resource 6b**). Show his photo and a map showing the location of Westward Ho! (the only town in the UK with an exclamation mark in the name).
- Watch video (**Resource 6c** - 5½ minutes). Some of the concepts might be difficult for your class (eg. identity, skin tone, outcasts), so you might like to stop and explain or discuss at key points.
- You can view the video here: https://youtu.be/_pfcKvjVC9Q

Hold a discussion with the class, using some of these questions:

- What do you think of Jaz's work?
- What do you think it might be like growing up as the “only Black child in Westward Ho!”?

- What do you think Jaz means when he says:
 - “I’m who I am, I’m from where I am and I’m proud of it”.
 - “Be yourself. Don’t forget your past, but don’t forget your future either. Be yourself, be bright, be beautiful, be who you are!”
 - “Identity: it’s what I do more than my skin tone”.
- This should lead organically to a discussion about being proud of who you are and having a choice about how to present yourself to the world, and about identity.
- Do you know other graffiti artists, old or new?
Suggest Banksy / Mau Mau (another Devon graffiti artist)
- Also, graffiti can become a historical record, an archive. There is graffiti at Pompei in Italy. Closer to home, there is graffiti at Okehampton Castle from 1809. This is from a French Prisoner Of War held there. The earliest ‘name’ of any Devon resident is scratched on to a cup by a Roman legionary at Exeter: Lucius Iulius Hipponicus.
- What do you think is the difference between graffiti and a mural? What are they for? Who are they done by?

Notes to aid discussion:

- Graffiti often feels subversive, like it’s naughty, done by people who will get an ASBO. There’s much more to it than that.
- Graffiti is illegal in much of the UK. Artists like Jaz make sure that they get permission from property owners before painting.

Stage 2 (KS2 and KS3): Make a Tag (20 - 30 mins)

- A basic graffiti element is the tag – like a signature on a wall.
- This is usually not your given name but an assumed name, a nickname you give yourself, a moniker.
- It is usually something about your identity: it expresses you and it reflects you. You literally make your mark.
- You could show the students a few tags, including your own, so they see the finished result.
- Hands up: What might your moniker be?
- Jaz changed from being known as ‘Black Jaz’ to ‘Graffiti Jaz’. You could ask the children what they might call themselves, or want to be known as e.g. Footballer Max, Funny Freddie, Dancer Diana.
- Show the students Jaz’s step by step guide to making a tag on the Powerpoint and talk it through together.
- Step 4 (the shading) is probably the most difficult bit, where they may need extra help. It may be useful to think of this as being like a light shining on their tag from one side, and the shade is on the opposite side.
- Then students should work on their own tag, using their name, a moniker, a pet’s name, or a concept like ‘love’. The key thing is that they make their own choices, which need no explanation.
- While they work, you could play some music, or let them chat, or talk about identity using these prompt questions:
 - What makes you, you?
 - Is it about your family, your genes? Or does it come from inside you? Or is it related to the place and the time you’re born?
 - In what ways are you similar to or different from your parents and siblings?

Extension: If people finish early, an extension activity could be to try another longer word; to do the same in mirror writing; or to find out about other graffiti artists on the internet.

Stage 3 (KS2 and KS3):**Discussion on improving the local area (10 mins+)**

- Show slide 3 on the Powerpoint – about Jaz’s ‘Kill your speed’ mural in Bideford.
- Discuss the mural with the class, using these or similar prompts:
 - Do you like the mural?
 - If we could ask Jaz to come to our town / village / neighbourhood to do something similar, what would we ask for?
 - If we were to make a mural to improve your school/local environment, what would it be?

Extension / homework activities

- The children will benefit from repeating the artwork, so they can perfect their style.
- Class could make a mural or a time capsule of all of them, aiming to show their joint identity, using words or tags. This could supplement their annual class photo.
- Start a local campaign to improve a feature of their environment.
- Design something with family members - a tag or a mural.