

Post-visit activities

These activities have been developed to consolidate learning from the exhibition and workshops; they can be incorporated into lesson plans for various subject areas.

Your own Innisfree

Children draw/make a model of their own Innisfree or write a poem about somewhere that is important to them.

Family tree

In the exhibition the children saw the Yeats family tree. Encourage children to draw their own family trees – they may need to ask parents or grandparents for help. Discuss the types of sources available to people researching their family history.

Self-portraits/ 'When I am Old'

In the exhibition is a self-portrait of Yeats' father, John, which he painted as an old man. Children could draw their own self-portrait or they could do a futuristic self-portrait of how they imagine they might look when they are old (this second activity would work well as a response to the poem 'When You are Old').

Your world

In the exhibition, the 'Yeats – his worlds' installation shows a map of the world which highlights all the places which were important to Yeats. Children could each draw their own special map and mark in the places which are important and special to them, the emphasis being on self-expression rather than geography.

Ye Pleiades

Yeats and his brother and sisters made their own family magazine called Ye Pleiades. Each of them contributed something that they were good at. Perhaps the class could make a magazine about Yeats, each child adding something different.

Poetry aloud!

The children learnt about the psaltery which Yeats sometimes used when he was 'chanting' poetry. (Yeats always believed that poetry

should always be read aloud or performed.) Why not get the class to try reading one of Yeats' poems aloud, paying lots of attention to onomatopoeic, or 'sound', words. Have a listen to Yeats again for some inspiration - you can find the recording of him reading 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree' on the British Library website:

<http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/features/beautifulminds/sounds.html#yeats>

Masks and legends

Yeats drew great inspiration from the Japanese 'Noh' tradition and incorporated its use of dance and the wearing of masks in much of his drama. In the exhibition, you saw some of the masks which were used in Yeats Cuchulain plays. The class might enjoy making a mask of a character from another Irish legend.

Making money

WB Yeats was very involved in choosing the designs to go on the new Irish coins in 1922. He chose images of livestock which he thought represented Ireland. Ask the class if they had to design new euro coins for Ireland what they would choose to put on them. What symbols do they think represent Ireland today?

Prizegiving

Do the class remember the Nobel medal WB Yeats won in 1923? Get the children to design their own medal as a special award. Who would they give it to, and what for?

Birthday presents!

The lapis lazuli carving was a beautiful gift WB Yeats received for his 70th birthday and which he then wrote a famous poem about. What are the best birthday presents the children have ever received, and why? Perhaps they could draw the present or write a short poem about it.

Family jewels

George Yeats designed a beautiful ring for her husband which she gave to him as a gift. How many animals could the class find on the ring? Encourage the children to design their own special ring or one for their family. What animals would they put on it?