

Grade 7 Arts and Culture Worksheet

Assessment Task: San Art; Bushman Art South Africa

Bushman paintings

Read the following article:

Bushman paintings as documentary

Written by Lucille Davie

22 October 2008



The works on show at the Origins Centre at Wits University are Bushman paintings like you have never seen before. The artist spent 18 years recreating the ancient works exactly.

There were no Bushmen about to ask how to create the paintings, so artist Stephen Townley Bassett learned how to recreate Bushman paintings the hard way – by trial and error.

His dedication to the task over the past 18 years has led to the first major exhibition of his Bushman works – 30 extraordinary paintings assembled at the Origins Centre in an exhibition entitled Reservoirs of Potency, which opened this week.



“I threw away my penknife,” he says, together with plastic containers and metal tins. And went out into the bush discovering. He learned how to use animal blood, saliva, ochre, cobra venom and ostrich egg shells to create pigment to paint the images, precise copies of Bushmen paintings from around the country. He learned too how to use porcupine quills, buck horns, rocks, animal hairs, bird droppings, feathers and animal skins that would become his stock in trade. He made mistakes along the way but got it right. “I learned that

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fat is a good binder. I would make a paste which was easy to carry. I learned to liquefy it again with gall, saliva and blood.” He also learned about the different quality of hair of different animals, giving him fine hair for a paintbrush, or thicker hair for a bushier brush. He even made his own stone tools to skin spring hares and foxes he’d shot, to use the skin as a pouch in which to carry his painting implements.

The animals and people in his works, which he calls “documentary paintings”, are the precise size of the originals. The works are done on 100 per cent cotton sheets. Each piece, he says, is a one-off.

“So much has gone into each painting,” he explains. He would spend days at a site, deciphering the original, with a miner’s lamp on his forehead. “The first thing is to document as accurately as possible, doing it with pigments available to them, absolutely life size. I would only record what I saw, making it a little darker, to take account of dust,” he recounts. Then back at home a painting would take between six and eight weeks to complete. “The work is very exacting, very demanding. There is no debate, the work has to be right – everything exactly there. It is a blend of science, art and craft,” he says, referring to the tool-making as craft.



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Part One: Answer the questions

1. Who is the artist mentioned in the above article? [1]
 2. Why are his paintings unique? [5]
 3. What is meant by Indigenous Knowledge and how has this artist made use of this concept? [6]
 4. What does the artist mean when he says: "The work is very exacting, very demanding. There is no debate, the work has to be right – everything exactly there. It is a blend of science, art and craft". [4]
 5. Do you think there is value in what this artist is doing? [4]
- [20 marks]

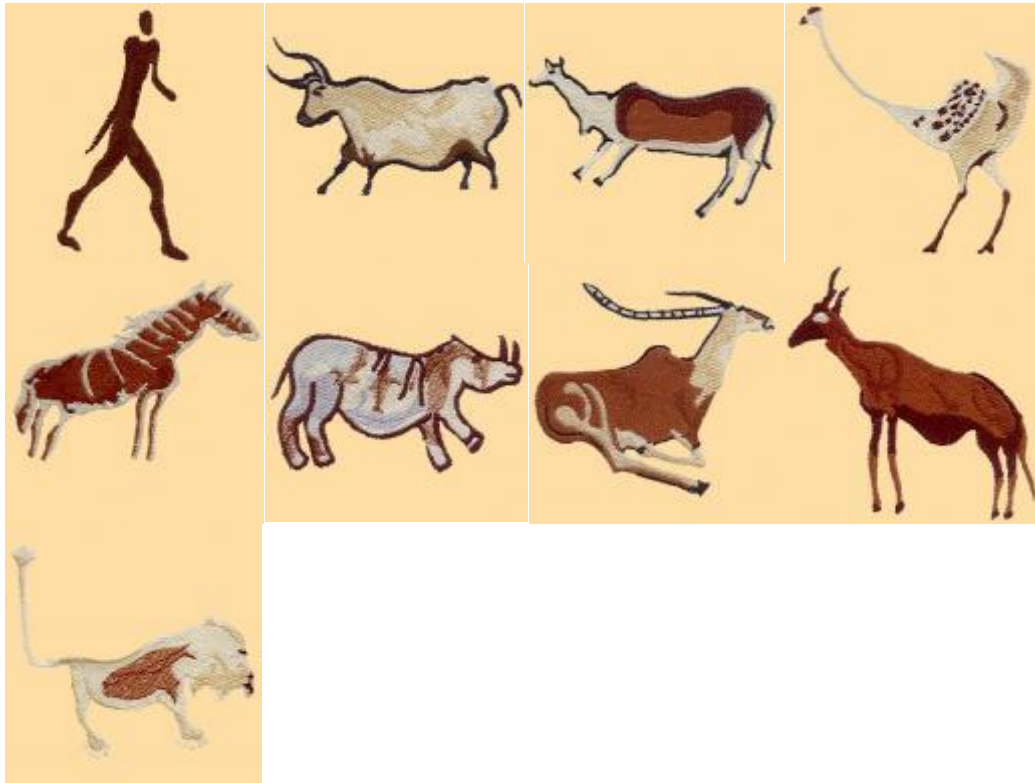
Part Two: Research on how to create Bushman "paints"

Using the above article as well as doing some extra research, write up some "recipes" for creating different coloured "paints" that could be used to paint traditional Bushman paintings. You must quote one other reference for your research.

[20 marks]

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Part Three: Design and paint a traditional Bushman artwork



Using the sketches above, the photographs in the article as well as your own research, create a sketch of a painting that you would like to make in the Bushman tradition.

As you are deciding on the elements in your artwork, keep a record of your ideas and explanations of what the artwork means. Why have you chosen to represent what you are drawing? What is the purpose of your art?

Once you have completed your sketch, find a piece of slasto or paving stone.

Trace or copy your sketch onto the stone.

Now paint your Bushman painting onto the stone. You may use any media you prefer, or the media provided by your teacher.

[40marks]

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Rubric to assess design and painting of a traditional Bushman artwork

Criteria	Level 4 [8 – 7]	Level 3 [6 – 5]	Level 2 [4 – 3]	Level 1 [2 – 1]
Design brief	Explanation is written in a dynamic and exciting style, excellent grammar and spelling.	Explanation is well written, good use of grammar and spelling.	Explanation is fairly well written, attention needs to be paid to grammar and spelling.	Explanation is poorly written, poor grammar and spelling.
Design: Reasons for choosing this content	Creative reasoning given in a clear explanation.	Sound reasoning given in a clear explanation.	Fair reasoning given in a limited explanation.	Poor reasoning given in a very brief explanation.
Sketches	Creative sketches, neatly rendered, giving a clear explanation.	Sound sketches, giving a clear explanation.	Fair sketches, giving a satisfactory explanation.	Poor sketches, explanation needs further development.
Actual painting	Painting is done in a most responsible manner, work area and equipment cleaned up.	Painting is done in a fairly responsible manner, work area and equipment cleaned up.	Painting is done in a satisfactory manner, work area and equipment not completely cleaned up.	Painting is done in an irresponsible manner, work area and equipment not cleaned up.
Finished artwork	Creative, pleasing to the eye, in keeping with focus topic. x 2	Mostly creative, attractive, generally in keeping with focus topic. x 2	Fairly pleasing to the eye, can be seen to have things in common with focus topic. x 2	Not very creative nor pleasing to the eye, not in keeping with focus topic. x 2

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Part Four: Solve an ownership problem

Here is a scenario:

A new road is going to be built through a mountain pass in the Drakensberg. The road crew discover a ridge of overhanging rock that is filled with ancient Bushman paintings. The road builders alert their bosses and the local authorities, as well as the farmer on whose property the road was being constructed. (The farmer had given permission for the road to be built and had been compensated by the government.)

One of the workers on the farm hears about the paintings and claims that one of his ancestors who lived in the area was responsible for these paintings and that they are sacred and have religious significance to the Bushman people. The paintings and ground around them must not be disturbed.

The farmer says the paintings belong to him. He wants to open a restaurant nearby and allow tourists to come and visit the paintings.

The national museum says the paintings must be removed and housed in a museum so the whole world can appreciate them and study them.

Who owns this art? What should be done with the paintings?

You are going to work in groups to role play the scenario and come to a possible solution.

Once you have developed your role-play, you will perform it for the class.

[40 marks]

Watch the other groups perform their role plays, and write careful notes on ways they have interpreted the situation differently to your group's role play.

Your teacher will facilitate a class discussion on the ways in which ownership of art is determined.

At the end of the performances and the discussion, write an essay in which you put forward all the possible solutions and then give your own opinion as to what should happen to the artwork.

[40 marks]

The rubrics below will help you to see how you will be assessed for this task.

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Rubric to assess role play presentation

Criteria	Level 4 [8 – 7]	Level 3 [6 – 5]	Level 2 [4 – 3]	Level 1 [2 – 1]
Group worked well during preparation stages in developing the role play and understanding the scenario	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.
Group worked well together and all contributed to the success of the role play as a performance	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.
Role play is delivered confidently to class, with good delivery techniques; keeps class entertained and educates	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.
Characterisation in role play is convincing	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.
Role play addresses the problem of ownership in a creative and believable fashion	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.

Rubric to assess essay

Criteria	Level 4 [8 – 7]	Level 3 [6 – 5]	Level 2 [4 – 3]	Level 1 [2 – 1]
Content/ ideas	Writing is confident and clearly focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant details enrich writing.	Writes related, quality paragraphs, with little or no details.	Writing does not clearly communicate knowledge. The reader is left with questions.	Writing is extremely limited in communicating knowledge, with no central theme.
Organisation	Writing includes a strong,	Uses correct writing format.	Writing is confused and	Writing is disorganised and under-developed

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	beginning, middle, and end with clear transitions and a focused closure.	Incorporates a coherent closure.	loosely organised. Transitions are weak and closure is ineffective.	with no transitions or closure.
Vocabulary/ word choice	Effective and engaging use of word choice; effective and accurate use of language.	Uses a variety of word choice to make writing interesting; uses language.	Shows some use of varied word choice, beginning to use language.	Careless or inaccurate word choice, which obscures meaning.
Purpose of essay	Purpose was well met and there are no questions concerning the focus of the task.	Purpose mostly met and questions largely addressed.	Needs greater attention to be paid to meeting the purpose of the task.	Purpose not met; little focus and meaning.
Contribution to discussion and use of discussion in writing the essay	Exceeds expectations.	Meets expectations well.	Satisfies expectations but in a limited fashion.	Does not meet expectations.

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Suggested Solutions

Question number	Possible marks	Solution
1	20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Stephen Townley Bassett ✓ 2. Because they are exact replicas✓ of ancient Bushman paintings ✓ and they are painted using the tools✓ and materials ✓used by the Bushmen who painted the originals. Each artwork is a “one-off”.✓ 3. IK refers to the knowledge✓ and skills ✓possessed by people living in this area long ago.✓ The artist has used the ancient Bushman ✓knowledge and skills to recreate the pigments ✓and brushes✓ used to paint his artworks, rather than use modern tools and materials.✓ 4. The work is very precise. ✓It is hard work.✓ The science comes in with knowing which substances to use for the pigments and tools✓ and the art comes in with the blending of the colours and the actual creation of the pictures.✓ 5. There is value in the artist’s work. He is using indigenous knowledge✓ to create replicas of ancient paintings that could disappear one day. ✓ He is creating a record of original paintings. ✓He is showing us how IK of the Bushman can be used to create paintings that are just like the ones painted long ago.✓
2	20	<p>Learner answers will differ. Award 3 marks for every colour described with its source material and for every tool described. Award a mark for the reference supplied as well as up to 2 marks for the format of the recipes presented. This information can be used as a guideline for marking, in conjunction with the article.</p> <p>The materials used in the paints are all local. Blood, or rock or soil rich in ferric oxide (rust) provide reddish brown. Variations in redness can be obtained by heating the pigment in a fire. A very interesting aside is that the Lammergeyer “paints” its white breast by repeated contact with iron-rich rocks, and must do so after every moult. Charcoal provides black, while white is created with bird droppings or clay. Other colours are rare. The Bushmen weren’t that particular about matching colour to that of the live subject. Elephants tend to be painted red. The subtly different colours in life of some of the small antelopes are not addressed in the paintings, making some identification difficult. Less is known about the medium used to convert the pigment into usable paint. Melted fat beeswax or egg white work well, but the secret ingredient that gave permanence to the paintings is not known. Old eyewitnesses, long dead, claim the Bushmen used a brush of Black Wildebeest mane or tail attached to a reed; pointed bone was used for finer definition. We know from incomplete paintings that white was applied first, and additional colours, if any, were painted on top.</p>
3	40	<p>The instructions in this task are purposely left a little vague. As teacher, decide how “authentic” you want to make these paintings! If you are prepared to go the route of recreating the IK-situation and have an abattoir or butcher close by to supply the natural products – go ahead!</p>

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		Otherwise, let learners use chalks and charcoal – but the artwork will not be permanent; or acrylics for a more permanent finish. See rubric in Appendix of Assessment Tools.
4	40 40	See rubrics in Appendix of Assessment Tools.

Appendix of Assessment Tools

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