



Sir David Wilkie, *Distraint for Rent* 1815 Copyright National Galleries of Scotland

This is one of a series of resources exploring the theme **Scottish identity: who decides who we are?** This section uses *Monarch of the Glen* and other relevant artworks to focus on *social studies*, offering images, questions and activities for learners of all ages to explore.



Sir Edwin Landseer, *The Monarch of the Glen* (about 1851)

The ancient Palace of Westminster by the Thames in London was burnt down in October 1834 and the new Houses of Parliament, which still stand today, were built in its place. The prime minister at the time set up the Fine Arts Commission to decide which works of art should hang in the new building. The commissioners were mainly members of the Houses of Parliament, artists and art collectors.

Landseer was asked to create a series of three paintings for the dining rooms. Traditionally, animal painting had a lowly status, far below themes from human history and myth; so Landseer had to make his picture uplifting and celebratory.

Due to rising costs, the three paintings were never completed or hung in the Houses of Parliament. We do not know what Landseer planned to create for the other two paintings.

# Images Social studies

Here are some other artworks relating to social studies. You can find images of the Scottish Parliament art collection, which is intended to embody the unique spirit and character of the Scottish nation, at <http://www.parliament.scot/visitandlearn/15456.aspx>. You can also find out about the art collection of The Houses of Parliament in London, at [www.parliament.uk/art](http://www.parliament.uk/art).



Glyn Satterley, *Sportsman with Gun, Lt Col R.A.T. Campbell-Preston at Pheasant Shoot* from the series 'The Scottish Sporting Estates' 1984 © Glyn Satterley



Gerard M Burns, *Alex Salmond, b.1954 Politician*, 2014 © The Artist



David Peat, *An Eye on the Street, Glasgow* 1968 (Two boys gable end) 1968 © THE PEAT FAMILY.



Glyn Satterley, *Man gralloching stag*, Reay Forest Estate. Made about 1980 © Glyn Satterley



Ron O'Donnell, *The Great Divide*. 1987 © RON O'DONNELL



Wendy McMurdo, *Embryologist Bill Ritchie in the micro-manipulation lab at The Roslin Institute*, 2002



Damien Hirst, *Away from the Flock*, 1994



Walter Thomas Monnington, *The Parliamentary Union of England and Scotland 1707, 1925*.  
© Parliamentary Art Collection



Shauna McMullan, *Travelling the Distance*, 2004

# Questions Social studies

We wonder... ...what kind of art do we find in our country's most important places?  
...who makes decisions in our country and how do their decisions shape our lives?

What do your students wonder about the role of art in our society?

Ask your students to come up with questions, or try some of the questions below.



David Williams, *Primary School Teacher* from 'Pictures from No Man's Land'. 1984 © DAVID WILLIAMS.

## ABOUT YOU

- What do you have in your school's dining room? Is there any art?
- What has nature got to do with you?
- Who makes decisions about your life?
- What do we have now that we didn't have in 1850, when *Monarch of the Glen* was being painted?



Sir Edwin Landseer, *Low Life* 1843

## PICTURE POWER

- Is a stag a suitable animal to show in a dining room in the Houses of Parliament? What would and wouldn't be suitable?
- Should art in the Houses of Parliament reflect the past, present or future?
- How have animals been used as symbols of status or power?
- Are some artworks more important than others? Which ones deserve to hang in important places?



Artist unknown, *Mary, Queen of Scots, 1542 - 1587. Reigned 1542 - 1567. Made about 1610-1615* © National Galleries of Scotland

## IDENTITY

- Who should decide what art we see in our country's important places?
- Who designs our towns, cities, workplaces and homes?
- Who decides who we are?

# Activities Social Studies

Here are three ideas that explore social studies through art. We have purposely suggested activities that are not aimed at a particular level as we believe in teachers' professional judgement; you can adapt activities to suit any group and any time frame.

## Show me power

1 session



Murdo MacLeod, *Tom Kitchin, b. 1977. Chef.* 2010 copyright and photography Murdo MacLeod.

- Show pupils a large selection of images, newspapers, magazines, postcards etc
- In groups, ask pupils to create a collage of images or words they think show 'power'
- Discuss 'what is power?' 'Who has it?' 'What power do you have?'
- Now tell the class there is new source material to draw upon: their school. Invite pupils to take photographs, draw or write about situations they find in the school environment that they think show power in various ways.

**Creativity skills being developed include being curious, problem solving and exploring multiple viewpoints.**

**Possible links to the Curriculum for Excellence are politics in Social Subjects and speaking in Literacy.**



David Mach, *Gavin Hastings, b. 1962. Rugby player* 1996 © David Mach



Verena Jaekel, *Mona Siddiqui with her Family, Dullatur*, 2010. From *A Scottish Family Portrait* series. 2010 © Verena Jaekel.

- Introduce *Monarch of the Glen* and the fact that it was intended to hang in the Houses of Parliament along with 2 other paintings commissioned by the same artist i.e. as part of a triptych.
- What subject matter is suitable for the Houses of Parliament?
- What do you think the other 2 paintings might have looked like?
- In groups create a new artwork to complete the trilogy that reflects today's society

**Creativity skills being developed include imagination, problem solving, being flexible, adaptable and functioning well with uncertainty.**

**Possible links to the Curriculum for Excellence are history within Social Subjects, visual art in Expressive Arts, and speaking within Literacy.**



Richard Wright, *The Stairwell Project*, 2010, © The Artist

- Set pupils the task of finding artworks in their local area and locate them on a map.
- Ask the group to investigate the different artworks. Ask them to find out who they were commissioned by and what they were commissioned for.
- What is the impact of the art in these places? E.g. attracts tourists, commemorate an event or person, decorates the space etc
- Decide on new sites that lack art and come up with ideas for art to fill the gaps.
- Go back to the map and add your ideas to reimagine how the local area would look.
- The new artwork could be made and placed in the different spaces to see how their community responds to children and young people making decisions on the aesthetics of a public space.

**Creativity skills being developed include researching productively, persistence, registering patterns and anomalies.**

**Possible links to the Curriculum for Excellence are local history in Social Subjects, Expressive Arts, and geography in Social Subjects.**