

Title of Lesson

The magic of surrealism

Background *(What museum artefact are you using for your lesson ? What curriculum areas does your lesson address, (eg History, Science, Language, etc.) ? What age range is your lesson suitable for ? What pre and post activities do you envisage? How will the work be assessed ?)*

7 – 10 years old

Art and Design

The René Magritte collection in the Museum of Fine Arts in Belgium: <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/artist/magritte-rene-1?string=magritte&page=1>

Students will become familiar with elements of surrealist art through the work of famous Belgian painter, René Magritte. They will be prompted to use vocabulary familiar to the five senses, and understand and use the language appropriate for the art they are seeing (tone of colours, form of shapes, etc) in order to later try replicating this style of art for a creative drawing task.

This assessment targets artistic creation by observing with the five senses, imitating and experimenting.

Learning Objectives *(What are the learning objectives addressed referenced to your own national curriculum ?)*

Core Skills – Arts Education (Basic education and the first stage of secondary school education)

<http://www.enseignement.be/index.php?page=24737&navi=31>

Students are expected to exercise the following transversal skills:

- Perceive works of art and associate them with registers of the sensory languages.
- Express an emotion felt when encountering a work, music, a particular situation.
- Justify an emotion, mode of expression, performance techniques, the subject, the context, the means used.

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Students are expected to exercise the following disciplinary skills:

- Perceive and differentiate shapes.
- Identify and name the colours.
- Identify modes of expression and execution techniques.
- Adapt production to the format.

Lesson Starter (*First 10 minutes : How will you begin the lesson in an engaging way ?*)

Play this video promoting the René Magritte Museum in Brussels:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyhccqYewAE> (around 2 mins of watch time)

Discuss with students which were the realistic parts of the video (people walking to work, fruit and vegetables in the markets, etc.) and the **'magical' parts of the video** (the items floating and flying around the city). Then focus on the last painting shown in the video: Magritte's La Bonne Foi (1:41) and discuss with students what the realistic and 'magical' parts of that painting are.

This will provide a segue into the main topic of the lesson – the work of René Magritte. Start by giving the students a brief biography on Magritte (available on the museum website) and then **defining the style of art** they saw in his painting from the video – “surrealism is creating extraordinary images and situations from ordinary objects and settings”.

Main Activity (30 minutes : What is the task children need to do ? How are the children organized -pairs, groups, etc.? How is the work differentiated? What extension activity is there ?)

Once the children have been introduced to who Magritte is and given a brief overview of surrealism, you will now introduce them to his works of art to help them **identify elements of surrealism art** (compared to art that portrays realistic scenarios/images). You are free to choose any of the paintings from the Magritte collection on the Museum of Fine Arts website that embody his surrealist approach. Then discuss what makes these paintings seem like they're magical and not realistic. Remember to **ask the children how each of the paintings makes them feel** (as if they're in a dream, as if they're watching a sci-fi movie, etc.)

Some suggestions are these 5 paintings:

"Une panique au Moyen-Age": <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/rene-magritte-une-panique-au-moyen-age?artist=magritte-rene-1&string=magritte&page=8> (surrealist elements: missing body parts, strange placement of objects...)

"La saveur des larmes": <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/rene-magritte-la-saveur-des-larmes?artist=magritte-rene-1&string=magritte> (surrealist elements: combining of two objects into one, strange colour choices...)

"Georgette": <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/rene-magritte-georgette?artist=magritte-rene-1&string=magritte&page=3> (surrealist elements: floating objects...)

"Golconde": <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/rene-magritte-golconde?artist=magritte-rene-1&string=magritte&page=3> (surrealist elements: floating objects, differing dimensions, duplicates of the same object, different hues and colour tones...)

"La lecture défendue": <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/rene-magritte-la-lecture-defendue?artist=magritte-rene-1&string=magritte&page=4> (surrealist elements: placement of objects ie.staircase leading to nowhere, unrealistic dimensions of objects, floating objects...)

Once you've discussed the surrealist paintings, **identify the artistic elements and choices** which were most frequent such as: floating objects, unnatural placement of objects, combining two

objects together and drawing objects bigger/smaller than they really are. Write them on the board for the children to see.

This will lay the groundwork for the main activity: **the children drawing their own surrealist images**. To capture the 'random' nature of some of the objects chosen by Magritte in his drawings, you will have the children **retrieve a slip of paper from a mystery bag**, which will contain the name of an object. In order to prompt greater peer discussion and peer assistance if needed, write down 5 objects (such as: window, apple, man, dog, table) and duplicate them in the bags so that the entire class will retrieve one of those five objects for their drawings. Once all the students have retrieved a slip of paper with the name of the object they will draw, instruct them to **create a surrealist work of art with that object as the focus**, according to the elements of surrealist art that you've written on the board.

Plenary (10 minutes : *How will the children share what they have learned ? How will you link back to the Learning Objectives ? How will you link to the next lesson ?*)

Once the children have completed their drawings, have them present to the class **why they believe this is a surrealist painting** (which elements from the board have they added) and **how do they want others to feel** by looking at their drawing.

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Resources (What is needed to run this lesson (eg PowerPoints, Worksheets, Ipads, Internet access, Video Projection, Interactive whiteboard, etc.) ? Attach example documents and jpeg of artefact.)

A video introducing a work of art by Magritte and hinting at his art style:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SyhccgYewAE>

A quick biography on Magritte, his work and life: <https://www.musee-magritte-museum.be/en/about-the-museum/biography>

5 surrealist works of art by Magritte from the online collection of René Magritte works available at the Museum of Fine Arts in Brussels: <https://www.fine-arts-museum.be/fr/la-collection/artist/magritte-rene-1?string=magritte>

'Mystery grab bag' containing the names of 5 objects written on pieces of paper (number of pieces should match the number of students in your classroom)

A4 blank sheet of paper, coloured pencils