

Overlooked

Introduction

It is interesting to think about objects and our responses to them. How does our view of objects change depending on different factors such as time, perspective and what our friends say? This resource invites you to think about things that are overlooked, left out, unappreciated.

A room has many objects, some of them get used a lot because they are fun or useful. Other things might be 'just part of the room' or you don't use them so you don't think about them very often. Maybe you don't see them because they are out of sight; there might be things around you that you have never touched.

The following activities are to encourage thinking, discussion and an open creative response. There are no right or wrong answers.

Looking and Thinking Activity

Look around the room you are in. You will have to really concentrate on looking because some things are easy to miss. Look in places you wouldn't normally consider. Look in corners, behind things, under furniture. Also look at things that are right in front of you. Did you notice them before?

Find 5 things you think don't get looked at very often, if at all. They might be objects or parts of the room itself. Try and find things that are neglected or overlooked, things you didn't see until you started looking.

Are they big or small? What colour are they? What are they made from? How do they make you feel? You might quite like them, hate them or be indifferent, but can you work out why they have been ignored. For example, is it their position in the room? Is it what they are used for? Is it their size, or their colour?

For each object decide what the answer is to the following sentence. You can say it in your head or say it out loud to another person.

This has been overlooked because.....

Recording Activity

Draw the 5 objects on paper or card, it doesn't matter what type of paper it is or its size. Think about the object as you draw it, paying it close attention.

Time-based Activities

1. Put your drawings in your pocket or pencil case or bag. You now have 5 drawings of things that you feel have been overlooked. You are going to carry them around with you for a week. Whenever you remember your drawings, wherever you are, take them out of your pocket/pencil case/bag and look at them. Pay them some attention – they are having an adventure. Show your drawings to other people and tell them about your objects. You could keep a diary of where your objects have been during the week or make up a story about their adventures.

At the end of the week talk to someone about how it felt carrying the drawings around. Do you feel differently about the objects now? Do other people feel differently about them?

2. Next time you are walking through a park or down the street, see if you can spot something overlooked. You might be the only person who has looked at that particular thing that day, maybe ever or for a very long time. It is good to pay attention to the overlooked and it can feel exciting to have noticed something other people might have missed.

3. When you are a year older try and remember to think about these 5 objects again, or look at them if you still use the same room. How do you feel about them now?

Extension Curating Activity

You will need to draw more overlooked objects for this activity or combine yours with someone else's. Between 12 and 20 objects would work well.

A curator is someone who makes decisions about which artworks are put together for exhibitions. They also decide which artworks will be in a particular room, which ones will go on a particular wall or in a particular space, as well as which artworks go next to each other and which are on their own. A curator does lots of other things but this aspect of the role is one of the most enjoyable.

Group your drawings into sets – do some naturally belong together? This is how the curator might think about artworks in a gallery. You could put them into sets according to size, colour, material or where the objects were originally located in the room – what other categories are there? Try out different ways of curating them, not just one way – does this change how you think about the objects?

After you have experimented, curate the drawings into three or four groups. Each of these could be a small exhibition of overlooked objects. What would be a good title for your exhibition? You might want to think of titles for each of the drawings. Add your titles and photograph them next to your drawings – now you have documentation of your overlooked objects exhibition.