



# Enquiry Plan

## Philosophical Enquiry for Year KS2 - KS4

### Accidental Art

*"This painting is an accident; believe it or not, it's true.  
So, is it art then? Well that's a question for you!"*

<b>Philosophical Potential</b>	<b>Aesthetics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Art, Intention, Purpose, Accidents, Contingency, Creativity, Skill, Meaning</li> </ul>
<b>Session Objective(s)</b>	<b>Community of Enquiry</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All children should connect contributions to what others have said when prompted</li> <li>• Some children should connect contributions to what others have said spontaneously</li> </ul>
<b>Facilitation Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is art?</li> <li>• Can you think of a clear example of art? Of not-art?</li> <li>• Who decides what is art?</li> <li>• What is an artist?</li> <li>• If a painting is made by an artist is it art?</li> <li>• Are all artworks made by artists?</li> <li>• If a painting is in a gallery is it art?</li> <li>• If a painting is sold for money is it art?</li> <li>• If someone calls something art, is it art?</li> <li>• If someone likes a painting is it art?</li> <li>• Can an accidental painting be art?</li> <li>• Can an artwork have no artist?</li> <li>• Can people who aren't artists make artworks?</li> <li>• Is there anyone (or anything) incapable of making art?</li> <li>• What (if anything) is wrong with an accidental painting as art?</li> <li>• How is an accidental painting different from an ordinary painting?</li> <li>• Does an artist have to do every brush stroke of a painting on purpose?</li> <li>• What does it mean to do something on purpose?</li> <li>• If an artist makes a mistake, does this mean it isn't art any more?</li> <li>• Who decides what is art?</li> <li>• Is an accidental painting worth more or less money?</li> <li>• Is an accidental painting more or less valuable in other ways?</li> <li>• Should we like, appreciate, or enjoy accidental art?</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pom-pom</li> <li>• Circle of chairs</li> <li>• A painting</li> </ul>

<b>1. PREPARATION</b>		5 min
<b>Introductions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Re) introduce facilitator(s)</li> <li>• Briefly establish or reiterate your class rules.</li> </ul>	
<b>Warm up</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Begin the session with an anecdote (in-role for younger children, out-of-role for older children e.g. <i>"There was a woman who loved art so much ..."</i>)   <p>"My sister loves art so much, she decided she would like some art in her house. So she went to an art shop, a sort of gallery where all the artworks were for sale. What kinds of artworks do we imagine she found in the art shop?"</p> </li> <li>• Allow the class time to speculate, gathering a range of kinds of artwork. E.g. <i>painting, pottery, photography, sculpture, film.</i></li> <li>• You may want to unpick some of the examples further asking: What kind of painting? <i>Figurative painting? Decorative painting? Abstract painting?</i></li> </ul> <p>Here you are assessing the extent of the children's experience of artworks and gathering examples for the ensuing discussion</p>	
<b>2. STIMULUS</b>		5 min
<b>Presentation of stimulus part one</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue the anecdote   <p>"So my sister found a painting she liked very much and she bought it. Now she's proud as can be that she has art in her house. But when my brother saw it, he wasn't sure that she <i>had</i> bought an artwork. Well my sister and brother have argued all weekend. So I've brought the painting to you to see if you can help."</p> </li> <li>• Present the artwork.   <p>Note: The session will change depending on the artwork you present. I have found that abstract expressionism like the action paintings of Jackson Pollock or the colour field painting of Mark Rothko work well because for many children, they are already 'borderline cases'. However, be aware that the children are rightly sensitive to the fact that you are presenting printed copies of these works and not the originals. Acknowledgement of this will affect their verdict on whether or not the work constitutes art.</p> <p>I have also found that sharing an original painting makes the sessions twist more believable as – among other things - they can see the brush strokes. You could use an original artwork you have in school or one made by a child in another class. Be aware that an artwork made by children will raise its own set of issues.</p> <p>Mimetic paintings of people, animals, landscapes etc. are harder to use with younger children but can be interesting with older children if they can make the leap of imagination.</p> </li> </ul>	

	Whether the painting is framed or signed by the artist, also affects the verdicts of younger children in ways that you may like to play with.	
<b>3. QUESTIONS</b>		3 min
<b>Prepared Question</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Write up the following central question: <b>Is it art?</b></li> </ul>	
<b>Thinking Time</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give the group one minute, allow children to take a closer look at the painting.</li> </ul>	
<b>4. DIALOGUE</b>		10 min
<b>First Thoughts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Begin the dialogue with a paired discussion.</li> </ul>	
<b>Collecting Ideas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite children with strong intuitions to share their best reasons.</li> </ul>	
<b>Getting Focused</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitated discussion, identifying key issues of interest to the children and identifying debate.</li> </ul> <p>The following sub questions may be helpful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is art?</li> <li>Can you think of a clear example of art?</li> <li>Can you think of an example that clearly isn't art?</li> <li>Who decides what is art?</li> <li>What is an artist?</li> <li>If a painting is made by an artist is it art?</li> <li>Are all artworks made by artists?</li> <li>If a painting is in a gallery is it art?</li> <li>If a painting is sold for money is it art?</li> <li>If someone calls something art, is it art?</li> <li>If someone likes a painting is it art?</li> </ul>	

<b>TWIST</b>		2 min
<b>Presentation of stimulus part two</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After your initial discussion, show the students a note you found taped to the back of the painting. It reads:</li> </ul> <p>“Believe it or not, but this painting is <u>an accident!</u> True I am an artist and this painting belongs to me, but I am not the artist of <i>this</i> painting. At least I don't think I am.</p> <p>What exactly do I mean? Well, I was carrying a blank canvas and some cans of paint when I tripped. My fall made a terrible mess and when I was tidying up I noticed the most extraordinary thing. On the floor, on one of the empty canvases was this picture: beautiful, colourful, ordered and perfectly art-like but entirely accidental. I must admit, that I think it is the best painting to have ever come out of my studio. But is it art? Well I'm afraid I just don't know the answer to that question.”</p>	

<b>Digging Deeper</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paired discussion on the twist. Refer to the central question: <b>Is it art?</b></li> <li>• The following sub questions might be helpful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Can an accidental painting be art?</li> <li>○ Can an artwork have no artist?</li> <li>○ Is there anyone (or anything) incapable of making art?</li> <li>○ What (if anything) is wrong with an accidental painting as art?</li> <li>○ How is an accidental painting different from an ordinary painting?</li> <li>○ Does an artist have to do every brush stroke of a painting on purpose?</li> <li>○ What does it mean to do something on purpose?</li> <li>○ If an artist makes a mistake when painting, does this mean it isn't art any more?</li> <li>○ Is an accidental painting worth more or less money?</li> <li>○ Is an accidental painting more or less valuable in other ways?</li> <li>○ Should we like, appreciate, or enjoy accidental art?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 min
<b>Final Push</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Return to the central question pressing for revised answer(s). <b>Is it art?</b></li> </ul>	5 min
<b>Last thoughts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on time, go round the circle once, hearing from everyone. Encourage the children to respond: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ "Yes because..."</li> <li>○ "No because..."</li> <li>○ "I don't know because..."</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	10 min
<b>5. REFLECTION</b>		5 min
<b>Reflection on the Community of Enquiry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self Assessment (based on session objectives) Ask the following questions asking children to indicate yes or no with thumbs up or down: Have I connected by ideas to someone else's ideas today?</li> </ul>	