



LIGHT, SLEEP & WELLBEING CONNECTION

TEACHER RESOURCE:

This resource will support teachers on a self-guided tour of Yorkshire Sculpture Park. It includes a selection of sculptures which lend themselves to discussions about wellbeing, nature connection and our sleeping well potential. Each page focuses on a different sculpture and includes:

- ◆ **An image**
- ◆ **Information about the artwork**
- ◆ **Enquiry questions**
- ◆ **Helpful tips to support wellbeing for you and your class**

The information and ideas in this resource can also be used to connect with the nature and landscape of your local area. Replicate or adapt these ideas on a walk near your school or college, using landmarks or points of interest as starting points for discussion.

**NIGHT AND DAY -
MARIALUISA TADEI**



NIGHT AND DAY - MARIALUISA TADEI

Night and Day is a two-sided circular sculpture covered in an intricate pattern of mosaics. Marialuisa Tadei's work explores mystical and spiritual views inspired by anatomy and nature. She uses geometric forms, such as circles, to symbolise eternity. *Night and Day* is an extension of the artist's *Oculus Dei* series (1998-2008), which are colourful, abstract disks made of glass and marble that can be interpreted as the details in human eyes. Tadei believes the eyes and the act of looking is

very important. This work invites the viewer to gaze in, acting as a portal into another world. She first became interested in the connections between humanity and the cosmos, nature and the human body in the early 1980s. In 1994 an accident meant the artist had to spend a long time in hospital, where she became aware of fluorangiography, the technique of studying blood vessels in the iris and retina. Following this, she began creating works that investigate the eye as a microcosm.

ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

♦ Look at both sides of the sculpture. What do you notice?

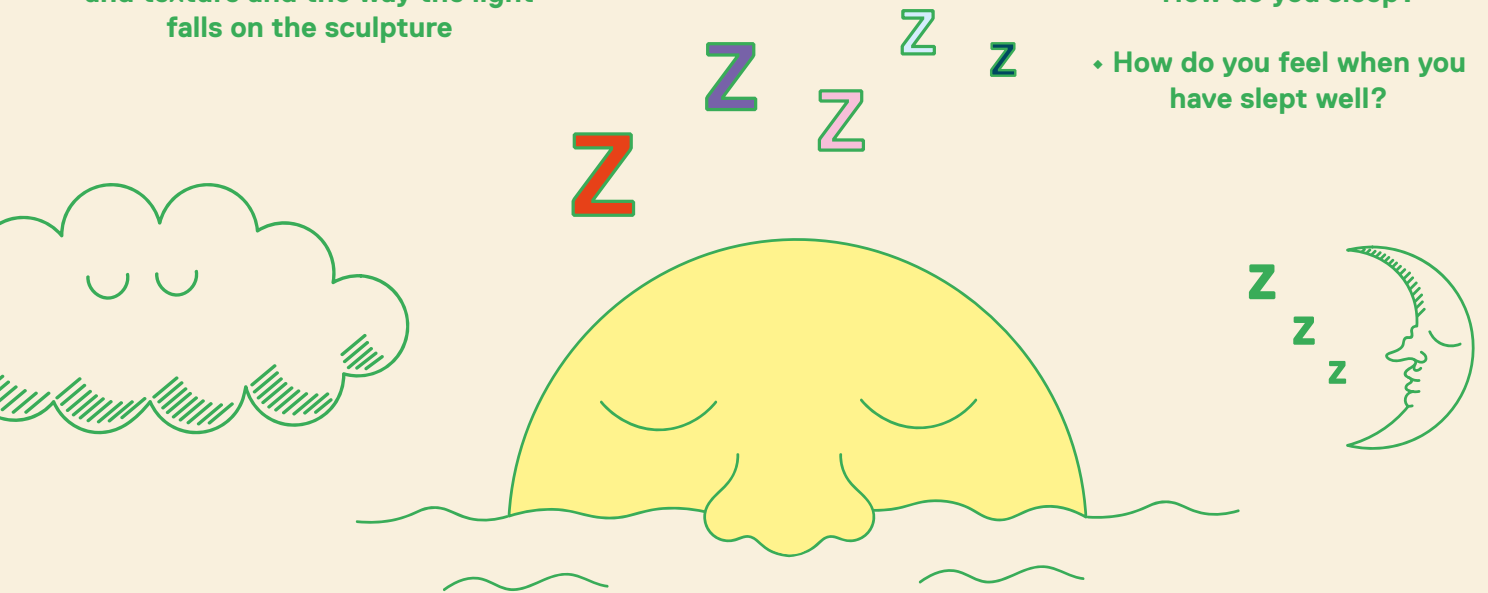
♦ Consider the colour, pattern and texture and the way the light falls on the sculpture

♦ Read the label. Has this changed your ideas about what the sculpture might mean?

♦ What thoughts or memories come to mind when you think about the words night and day?

♦ How do you sleep?

♦ How do you feel when you have slept well?



YOUR WELLBEING

Sleeping well helps us to feel well. We feel healthier and we have more energy. Sleeping well gives our immune system a boost so we are less likely to pick up colds and bugs. When we have a good night's sleep, we are more able to manage our emotions, concentrate and remember things, like what we have learnt at school.

How much sleep do you think we need on average each night? For an adult it is around 8 hours, but for children and teenagers it is more. For example, a 9-year-old needs around 10 hours sleep per night. We know when we are sleeping well because we wake around the same time each day and feel sleepy at around the same time each night. When we are sleeping enough, we will wake up feeling energised and ready for the day.

Just think, if you live until you are 90 and you have slept for the average amount of time each night, you will have slept for over 30 years of your life! This demonstrates just how important sleep is. It's important to stick to similar times for waking up and going to sleep, even on weekends and holidays, because it helps us to have a strong body clock and stay in a good routine. You might notice you find it difficult to wake up for school after a holiday or weekend when you have been sleeping in.

Have you ever noticed that you feel sleepier when it's dark outside and perhaps through the winter months when it is darker earlier? This is because when it is dark, we produce a hormone called melatonin – this is our sleepy hormone which makes us feel sleepy and ready for bed.

**A NEEDLE WOMAN:
GALAXY WAS
A MEMORY,
EARTH IS A
SOUVENIR
- KIMSOOJA**



A NEEDLE WOMAN: GALAXY WAS A MEMORY, EARTH IS A SOUVENIR - KIMSOOJA

A Needle Woman is a tall conical sculpture made from steel, acrylic, laminated polymer film and mirror. The artist Kimsooja developed this towering sculpture in collaboration with scientists at Cornell University. Each panel is covered in a nanopolymer (a thin sheet of plastic) which has been designed to enhance the refractive qualities of light, producing an iridescent effect similar to that on the wings of a butterfly or a beetle's shell. It is responsive to changing light conditions and brought to life by sunlight on its surface.

There is a mirrored floor inside the structure which creates an illusion of the sculpture extending deep into the earth as well as reaching up into the sky. The work is a reflection on our human bodies standing still in the present moment, and our relationship to the wider universe beyond, extending into time and space.

ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

- ♦ Stand back and look at *A Needle Woman* from a distance.
- ♦ Run your eyes from the base of the sculpture to the very top. Look at how the artwork pierces the landscape.
- ♦ Hold your hand up at arm's length in front of you and see if you can fit the whole sculpture between your thumb and forefinger.
- ♦ Roll up a piece of paper or card into a tube and look at the sculpture through it. What do you notice?
- ♦ How big does the artwork look from where you're standing?
- ♦ Walk right up to the sculpture and stand next to it.
- ♦ How does the scale of the sculpture make you feel?
- ♦ What do you notice about the light and colours on the sculpture today? How might it look different next week or next month? Why?
- ♦ How does looking at the landscape make you feel?
- ♦ How many different shades of green can you see?
- ♦ How might the colours change during the different seasons?

YOUR WELLBEING

When we spend time outside during the day it helps us to sleep well at night. It is especially good if we spend time outdoors in the morning, because being outside in natural light lets our bodies know that it is time to be awake and sets our body clocks.

Not only does being outdoors help us to sleep at night and strengthen our body clock and wake/sleep cycles, it can also help to improve our mood, helping us to feel happier and more able to manage our

emotions. Spending time outdoors in nature even helps us with problem solving and being creative.

Noticing what is around us in nature helps us to remember that we are part of something much bigger. It helps us to feel connected to each other and the Earth. How many different shades of green could you see? Why do you think we can see so many different variations? There are many shades of green visible to the naked eye – up to 99,

but some research suggests many more. The reason for this goes back to our ancestors and our natural connectedness to the Earth and nature. It was important for our ancestors to see the difference in shades of green in order to survive – from spotting predators that may be camouflaged, to finding food. Humans also feel calmer when around blues and greens. The special connection between humans and the Earth is called biophilia.

NETWORK
- THOMAS J PRICE

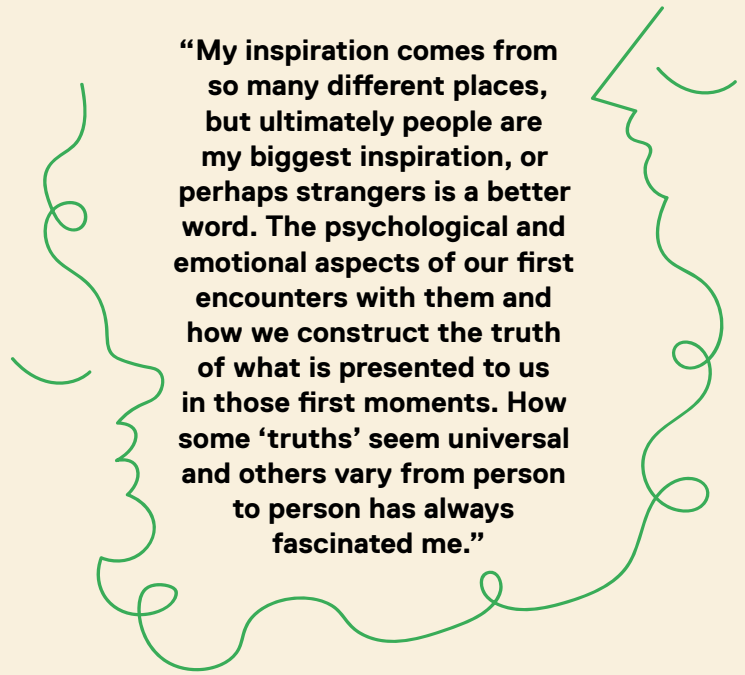


NETWORK – THOMAS J PRICE

Network is a three-metre-tall bronze sculpture of a man of African heritage. He is wearing modern clothes and holds a mobile phone. The artist, Thomas J. Price, explores themes of identity and representation. He creates sculptures that represent people of African descent to challenge the historical traditions found in

classical Roman and Greek art. He also questions who we choose to celebrate in artworks and asks why some people are commemorated in sculpture and others aren't. The use of the conventional sculpting material of bronze elevates the status of the subject and creates an interesting contrast between the traditional and the contemporary.

“My inspiration comes from so many different places, but ultimately people are my biggest inspiration, or perhaps strangers is a better word. The psychological and emotional aspects of our first encounters with them and how we construct the truth of what is presented to us in those first moments. How some ‘truths’ seem universal and others vary from person to person has always fascinated me.”



ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

- Have you ever seen a sculpture like this before?
- How is it similar and how is it different to other sculptures you might have seen?
- Consider the size of the sculpture. Why do you think it has been made to this scale?
- This sculpture is called *Network*. Why do you think the artist gave the sculpture this title? The figure might be connecting with his personal network of friends and family through his phone. What does connection mean to you? What would you call this sculpture?
- What are the benefits of digital connection and how we communicate using devices? What are the negatives?
- What impact might using devices have on our sleep?



YOUR WELLBEING

Using digital devices close to bedtime can have a negative impact on our sleep and make it difficult for us to fall asleep. This is because the blue light from the screens fools our minds and our bodies into thinking that it is time to be awake – slowing the production of our sleepy hormone (can you remember what this is called? Melatonin). Also, the content of what we are watching on our devices can make us feel emotional – nervous, excited, angry, worried, scared or sad.

Think about when you are gaming, on social media or watching a video – how do you tend to feel? If we are feeling strong emotions, it makes it more difficult for us to fall asleep. It is always best to switch all our devices off at least an hour before bedtime to make sure that we feel relaxed and ready to sleep when we get into bed.

WILSIS
– JAUME PLENSA

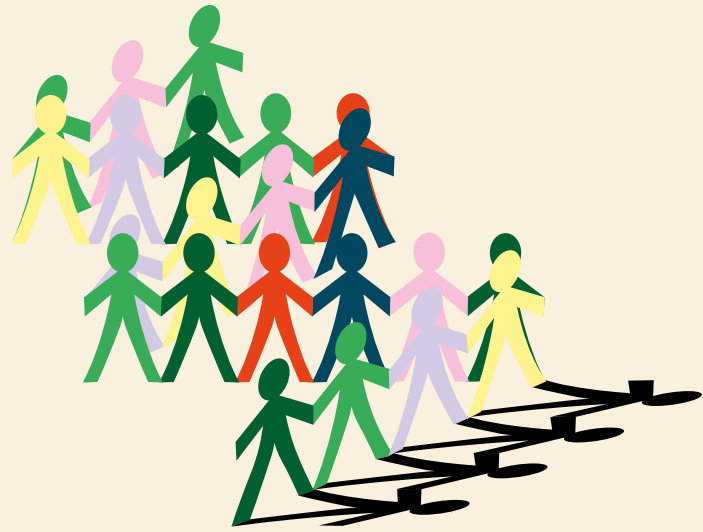


WILSIS - JAUME PLENSA

Wilsis is a 7-meter-high cast iron sculpture of a young girl with her eyes closed. She appears to be deep in thought or dreaming.

She is inward-looking and self-contained, remote from the present moment and the beauty of the surrounding scenery. Although monumental in size, the sculpture depicts a normal girl, rather than immortalising a traditionally extraordinary or powerful person.

Plensa chooses to celebrate the potential in all of us, and the beauty in the everyday. *Wilsis* belongs to a series of cast iron portrait heads that depict real girls from many different places around the world. They suggest possibilities for unity across divided people and cultures and their youthfulness represents hopefulness for the future.



ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

- ♦ Look at *Wilsis* from across the lake. Look at her from up close.
- ♦ What do you think she is thinking? How do you think she feels?
- ♦ Walk around the sculpture. What do you notice?
- ♦ What does the sculpture look like from different angles?
- ♦ Has anything surprised you?
- ♦ Stand next to *Wilsis* and follow her gaze across the lake. What can you see?
- ♦ Slow your breathing and look at the sculpture. What details can you see?
- ♦ Notice the light, contours and shadows.
- ♦ Spend some time silently noticing, keeping your breathing slow and deep, in through your nose and out through your mouth.



YOUR WELLBEING

How do you feel? Calm, relaxed, quiet? It is important to spend some time every day being still and calm, quietening your mind and your body. We often spend time being busy all day, looking at our devices and being connected or 'switched on' in our spare time. This can make it difficult for us to relax and feel ready to settle down at night for bed. If we practice being quiet and still for 5-10 mins a couple of times a day, it can help us to feel calmer and more able to fall asleep and sleep well. Think of it as strengthening your relaxation skills or your relax muscle memory.

What did you think *Wilsis* might be thinking? Is it easy to tell how someone is feeling from the way they look? What might you notice if someone was sad/angry/happy/scared/excited? Sometimes we hide how we are feeling or wear a 'mask' to give the impression that we are okay when we we're not. It can help to talk to another person and share how we're feeling, especially if you are feeling sad, scared or worried. Sharing how we feel with someone that we trust can help and often makes us feel much better.

DEER SHELTER SKYSPACE – JAMES TURRELL



DEER SHELTER SKYSPACE – JAMES TURRELL

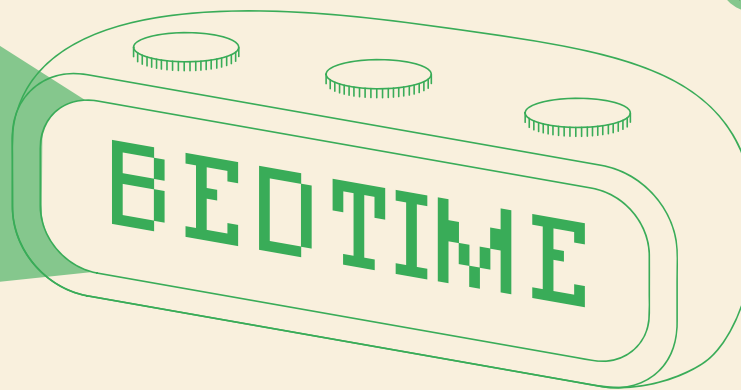
James Turrell's practice is concerned with light and space, and he has been building *Skyspaces* since 1974. A *Skyspace* comprises a chamber containing only seating, lighting and an aperture in the ceiling through which to view the sky. They give space for thought and alter our perception of light. In 1993 James Turrell visited

YSP and became fascinated by an 18th century deer shelter in what was once the estate's Deer Park. He drew up plans for a *Skyspace* within the structure, but the project was not realised until 2006 when sufficient funding was acquired.

The Deer Shelter Skyspace creates a place of contemplation and revelation, harnessing the changing light of the Yorkshire sky. It allows us to take time to sit, to think, and to contemplate; an open invitation to access a peacefulness that is often denied in our busy lives, that are filled with technology and speed.

ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

- How does it feel to be in the *Skyspace*? Is it warm or cold? Do you feel relaxed, nervous, calm or excited?
- How does the stone feel against your skin?
- What do you notice about your surroundings? Wake up your senses. What does it look like? What does it smell like? What can you hear? What do you feel?
- How do your surroundings affect how you feel?
- What kind of surroundings make you feel relaxed?
- How do you think our surroundings might affect our sleep?
- What do you think helps in your bedroom for you to feel tired and ready to sleep?



YOUR WELLBEING

Our surroundings can have a big impact on how we feel. This might be how calm or relaxed we feel or how excited or angry we feel. If we have a quiet and calm bedroom with few distractions and decorated in relaxing, muted colours, it can be easier for us to get a good night's sleep and fall asleep quickly. This means a room without devices and gadgets, a comfortable bed, a cool temperature of about 18 degrees and most of all – dark. When it is dark in our bedrooms it is easier

for us to fall asleep and to stay asleep. Remember the sleepy hormone? Melatonin. A dark bedroom can help with melatonin production, helping us to feel drowsy and ready to sleep. However, lots of people, even adults, struggle to sleep in the pitch dark, so why not try a night light or a soft glow light? This will help make the room relaxing, but not too dark.

MAKE YOUR OWN NOTES HERE

EXPLORE FURTHER

YSP's [YouTube](#) channel contains a library of videos about the Park, plus artist interviews from our current and past exhibitions.

Hear from artists and curators on our digital guide via the [Bloomberg Connects app](#).

Discover more artist interviews on YSP's IGTV channel on Instagram: [@yspsculpture](#)

Please share your discoveries and creativity with us: [#YSPSchools](#) [#YSP](#)

Marialuisa Tadei, *Night and Day*, 2009. Photo © Jonty Wilde

Kimsooja, *A Needle Woman*, 2014. Photo © Jonty Wilde

Thomas J Price, *Network*, 2013. Photo © Jonty Wilde

Jaume Plensa, *Wilsis*, 2016. Photo © Jonty Wilde

James Turrell, *Deer Shelter Skyspace*, 2006. Photo © Jonty Wilde

This resource has been designed by Lisa O'Hara. [@lisaoaha](#) / [lisaoaha.com](#)

Thanks to the Future in Mind Mental Health Support Team, CAMHS Wakefield for their input on the content on sleep, mental health and wellbeing in the production of this resource.



Bloomberg
Connects

Click to download our free digital
guide from your app store



Supported using public funding by
ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

wakefieldcouncil
working for you

LIZ AND TERRY
BRAMALL FOUNDATION

SAKANA
FOUNDATION

ROGER
EVANS