

# PORTRAITURE

## Teachers' Notes

Art Workshop for key stage 1 and 2 at the  
Wallace Collection



 THE  
WALLACE  
COLLECTION



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‘There are only two styles of portrait painting; the serious and the smirk’.

**Charles Dickens**

Explore portraits by Old Masters from Hals to Gainsborough. Look at how artists have painted both children and adults and explore the conventions of portraiture. The pupils will have the opportunity to pose and try on replica costumes. The session includes time for drawing from one of the portraits in the Wallace Collection and to learn about the basic principles of drawing a face. This workshop lasts for an hour and a half.

### Introduction

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#### Introduction

The session begins with an introduction to the Wallace Collection, what it contains and how it was built up over five generations of one family. What can the pupils see, what would it have been like living in a grand house like Hertford House, and do they have collections of their own?

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## Thomas Sully, Queen Victoria, England, 1838

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This coronation portrait was painted in the year after Victoria came to the throne at the age of 18. Thomas Sully was given five sittings at Buckingham Palace for a full-length portrait of the Queen. He painted this version at the same time as many people would have wanted a picture of the new Queen. Pupils approach this portrait by thinking about what they can see. Who is this young lady? What does she have with her to give us clues? What kind of chair is she going to sit on? How is she feeling? Pupils will have the opportunity to try on some replica accessories and adopt Victoria's pose.

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## Thomas Gainsborough, Miss Haverfield, England, early 1780's

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Miss Elizabeth Anne Haverfield was the daughter of the Superintendent Gardener at Kew. Thomas Gainsborough was one of the leading portraitists working in London at this date and this painting is a fine example of his late style. Pupils will try and decide where Miss Haverfield is, how old they think she is and where she is going on her walk. Gainsborough has brought his young sitter to life through her active pose and by placing her within an atmospheric landscape. Gainsborough very much enjoyed painting landscapes. A pupil will try to imagine, with the help of a replica costume, that they are Miss Haverfield.

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## Frans Hals, *The Laughing Cavalier*, Netherlands, 1624

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A highlight of the Wallace Collection, the identity of this man is a mystery. However by looking carefully at his pose, facial expression, props and costume the pupils will try to develop ideas about who he is. On closer examination, his extravagant jacket displays symbols associated with the theme of love. Perhaps this might give us some clues about why this portrait was commissioned? By trying on some replica costume and adopting his pose, the pupils can explore how Hals gives us a sense of this man's character and his self-assurance.



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## Diego Velázquez, *Prince Balthasar Carlos*, Spain, 1633

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Velázquez worked for the Spanish court in Madrid during the 1630s and 1640s. His work as a portrait painter has influenced subsequent artists for centuries.

Prince Baltasar Carlos was the son of King Philip IV of Spain by his first Queen, Isabel de Bourbon. His death at the age of 16 prevented him from ever becoming King, but here he is portrayed wearing the Royal sash of Spain, a sword and a gorget [the armour around his neck] to indicate his importance and future role as a king and leader of the army. In his right hand he is holding a baton, used by generals to direct their troops, which re-enforces the idea of military future.

Pupils will decide how old the prince is and discover why a young boy should be wearing a dress! There will be a chance to explore some of the sumptuous materials of his costume.



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## **Bartolomeus van der Helst, Jochem Van Arras with his Wife and Daughter Family, Netherlands, 1654**

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A group portrait with many messages incorporated to tell us about their success, particularly of the father figure. They are wearing fine clothes of velvet and silk and possibly deliberately red, white and blue. They pose in their vast garden with their hunting dogs. Only a few people had rights to hunt. They will eat well – fresh meat and ripe peaches. The basket of fruit also shows that the young girl will be fruitful and have her own family one day. The children dress up and pose as the figures in the painting – including the dogs.



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## **Drawing Activity**

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Pupils will be given tips on drawing a face, for example they will measure their own faces to discover that their eyes are in the centre of their head, not towards the top and the direction of the light.

Then they sit in front of their chosen portrait and look in detail at proportion, light and shade, hair style and pose. They will be encouraged to observe closely and to pay attention to detail.



Detail, Peter Paul Rubens, The Adoration of the Magi, Southern Netherlands, c. 1624