

Meaningful Learning Experiences

Strategic Commitment	✓	Part of a Derby Opportunity Area careers initiative
Curriculum Provision	✓	Learning based around the book, 'Escape from Pompeii'
Employer Partnerships	✓	Inspiration by local gallery's collection of paintings
Reflective Young People	✓	Evaluated as part of the 'Our Future Derby' programme
Informed Career Choices	✓	Learning about the work of an art gallery curator

Local 18th century painter inspires year 5 children's learning about the eruption of Vesuvius

For one half term, learning by year 5 children at Pear Tree Community Junior School in Derby was based around the book 'Escape from Pompeii'. The teacher brief suggested that, with some topics, '... it is difficult to plan a trip or 'see' what it's like' and that projects should 'bring the topic to life' and be 'memorable and engaging' for children'.

The outline plan for the project suggested several ways in which children could be inspired by the eruption of Vesuvius and get a sense of what it was actually like. Derby Museum and Art Gallery features a collection of work by the famous 18th century artist Joseph Wright of Derby, whose work includes dramatic paintings showing Vesuvius erupting.

A curator from the gallery recorded three short video clips, talking about his job role and the work of the famous painter, before promising to display the best of the artwork produced in class by students on the walls of the Joseph Wright Study Centre.

An approach to the general manager for the Pizza Express in the Intu Shopping Centre also resulted in the promise of a VIP visit to the restaurant and to actually make the best of the children's 'Vesuvius Pizza' recipes, after learning about the Neapolitan origin of pizzas.

The project concluded just as schools were closing due to the Coronavirus crisis. There was just time to create artwork, which was sent to the curator. Although Derby Art Gallery was also closed, they produced a press release and published images of the children's work on their social media sites.

Benefits for the Students

- In her response to the outline project plan, the lead teacher stated, *'I love the idea of producing art for the museum based on Vesuvius. The children could be quite creative with this and use paint and collage in a work of art. I can picture it. We could have an art gallery at school and invite Matt the curator of the museum to come and judge the winner. Could the winner be displayed in the museum? I think the children would love this.'*
- Under the challenging circumstances at the end of the project, the outcome showcased the children's work to a wide audience and could be easily shared with them and their families while most remained at home.

Benefits for the School

The project helped teachers bring an imaginative and engaging angle to a topic that appeared to have few opportunities to engage local organisations. Those identified included:

- Geography – volcanic activity around the Mediterranean and risk to people/communities
- Art/DT – illustrate how communities around Vesuvius could be saved from an eruption
- PSHE – create a healthy ‘Vesuvius’ pizza (i.e. Neapolitan cuisine)

Benefits for the Employer

'It was a pleasure to be able to assist with this project and use our fantastic collection at Derby Museums to inspire and educate young children in the city with a new approach to learning. It's lovely to see artwork the children have produced from studying the history of Pompeii and Joseph Wright's Vesuvius works. They have created some really dramatic pictures and using a variety of pastels techniques that Wright would be proud of.'



Year 5 children created artwork in oil pastels inspired by paintings by local famous artist Joseph Wright of Derby, whose work is displayed in the City's art gallery and was introduced to the children by the curator, who also shared their artwork on their social media sites.

