

Palestinian Art Appreciation



A 4 week picture study pack connecting children with the art of Palestinian artists

Themexplorers_homeschool



What is Palestinian art?

Palestinian art is a term used to refer to paintings, posters, and other visual media produced by Palestinian artists. Through the work of Palestinian artists the Palestinian narrative is given a voice and it enables a first hand understanding of the social, cultural and political elements through their perspective. Palestinian artists have used art to communicate their connection to their land, memories of their country, identity, culture, belonging and the right to return.

Why study art with children?

Traditionally art/picture study is used to introduce children to a wide range of art from famous artists (predominately from the West) such as Van Gogh, Monet, Piacasso etc. This approach can be used to study art and introduce our children to artists from the Muslim world and allow them to access a wider range of experiences that they can relate to. Picture study is a simple yet enriching way to make the full range of human experiences accessible and acquaint children with great works of art. Through this simple and short activity children will develop mindfulness, learn to pay attention to detail, better retention, improve verbal skills and it will lend to finding connections in literature, history and geography.

How to do a picture study?

This resource has four images of Palestinian art for you to study with your child, a short biography for each artist and some question prompts. Picture study is very simple technique that doesn't require much time or effort but reaps much reward. You study one picture a week, this resource will cover 4 weeks worth of content. If you find this beneficial do keep an eye out for a 12 week picture study pack of Palestinian artists, inshaAllah.

So how do we do a picture study?

Step 1: Ask your child to observe the picture closely until they can close their eyes and imagine each detail in it's place.

Step 2: Turn the image over and ask your child to describe it to you. You can ask them leading questions to help them, e.g. "What colours did you see"?, "Are there people?", "Is the picture bright or dim?" etc.

Step 3: After the picture has been described look at it again and discuss your descriptions. This is an opportunity for you to do an in-depth observation and discuss the picture and any missed details. There are some notes for each image with this pack that you can use.

Step 4: After you have studied the picture put it on display for the rest of the week where your child can see it easily and look at it if they want to.

Step 5: If your child is old enough they draw or sketch an element of picture paying attention to colour, lines, style and place on the image. They don't need to duplicate the picture but try to place the elements correctly in their places.

Art Appreciation



Untitled (1970s) Ibrahim Ghannam

About Ibrahim Ghannam

Ibrahim Ghannam was born in 1930 in a village near Haifa, Palestine. In 1948 his family fled the Zionist violence to a refugee camp in Beirut, Lebanon. In his childhood he contracted polio which resulted in him having to use a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

Limited in mobility due to his disability and living in a refugee camp he painted with precision a narrative of life before exile. He was instrumental in the inception of Palestinian art and a founding member of two art foundations for Palestinian and Arab art.

His paintings gave a visual form to Palestine as a lost paradise and depicted daily life before the 1948 Nakba. He used vivid colours and painted scenes of harvesting, olive picking, wedding ceremonies, village life and people dressed in traditional clothing. His work was promoted throughout the Arab world and provided images of the lost homeland for the generations born in exile and it also served as a model for future Palestinian artists. He passed away in 1984.

Question prompts:

- What colours do you notice? Look at the different shades of green, brown and blue.
- What are the people doing in the painting?
- What do you notice about the setting? The farming, the traditional clothing, the mountains in the background, the village homes etc.
- How do you think the artist remembers his country?
- How do you imagine life was before 1948 for the Palestinians?

Further information:

<https://dafbeirut.org/en/ibrahim-ghannam>

<https://www.palestineposterproject.org/special-collection/ibrahim-ghannam>

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Untitled (1970) by Jumana El Hussein

About Jumana El Hussein

Jumana El Hussein was born to a prominent family in Jerusalem, 1932 but her family were forced to leave their home in 1948 and settled in Lebanon. She studied, lived and worked in Beirut until the Israeli invasion of 1982 and then went onto settle in Paris. She painted throughout her life and passed away in 2018. Her work featured in many art galleries.

Palestine was always a source of inspiration for her art and the city of Jerusalem was a recurring theme in her work. Rather than paint realistically her style was always to use geometric shapes and a colourful palette with accents of gold. She created a dreamlike quality of her home city allowing viewers a gaze at the city through a lens of seeing the city in a radiating light.

Question prompts:

- The colours used to paint the city portraying a bright and colourful place. How does the artist remember her home city?
- The shapes and lines used to make the buildings. Can you see the Dome of the Rock, arches, other domes, minarets, windows and gates?
- The artist is showing the masjid and church in the painting, does this show that before the occupation they all lived peacefully together?
- If you could speak to the artist what would you want to ask about her painting?

Further information:

<http://jumanaelhusseini.com/Biography.html>

<https://iamfrompalestine.com/>

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Last Return (2017) by Iman Abu Arra

About Eman Abu Arra

Eman Abu Arra is a Palestinian artist currently residing in Ankara, Turkey where she has pursued a masters degree in Arts. Her painting 'Last Return' is a portrayal of the Palestinians desire, hope and love to return to their homeland. She is devoted to portraying themes on the right to return.

Question prompts:

- The traditional clothes of the people in the painting. Why would the artist paint them in traditional clothes?
- Why are there children in the painting? The young children taking the lead in the painting depicts their curiosity to connect with their roots. The children taking the lead is also a message that the old Palestinians may die but the future generations will not forget the cause.
- Do you spot the houses? Why are they there?
- The path that the people are taking, they are all heading to Jerusalem. Why are they heading that way?
- Do you notice the lady holding the key? Why is that? The key in Palestinian art is a symbol of their right to return,

Further reading:

<https://www.dailysabah.com/op-ed/2019/09/23/iman-abu-arra-palestinian-artist-devoted-to-depicting-themes-on-right-of-return>

Artist can be found at:

<https://www.instagram.com/eman.abuarra/>

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Untitled (2018) Wael Rabie

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About Wael Rabie

Wael Rabie is a Palestinian artist residing in the West Bank city of Ramallah. His work focuses on the Palestinian heritage and depicts the beauty of Palestinian landscape and the hopes and dreams of the people to return to what is rightfully theirs.

Question prompts:

- The man is the focal point of this picture. What do you notice about him?
- Do you see that in this picture the man is holding a key? Do you remember we saw a lady holding a key in last week's picture?
- Why do you think the artist painted the man holding a copy of the Quran?
- Why is the man's head bowed down?
- Why is the red flower there?
- What colours has he artist used?
- What do you notice in the background?

The artist can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/wael.rabie.56>

<https://www.instagram.com/rabie4706/>