Curriculum Project

Student Name: Claire McCormack

Title of Curriculum Project

An Ode to Birds Lost: bringing awareness to Ireland's endangered bird species through lino printing

1. Introduction to Curriculum Project / Subject Matter / Theme (Painting the picture....)

The overarching theme of this project is the decrease in biodiversity in Ireland, specifically students will look at how decreasing biodiversity has been brought on by the decline in bird species across Ireland.

An Ode to Birds Lost: This project involves the careful selection of bird species that are of serious conservation concern according to the Red List, provided by Bird Watch Ireland. These bird species will be depicted through detailed Lino prints, capturing their unique characteristics, as inspired by the work of Peter Nash. Our lino prints will act as a memoir of the birds that Ireland will surely lose in years to come, if conservation concerns are not rapidly addressed.

Students will get hands on experience with local conservation experts, Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary through a school visit. Through this experience they will have the ability to ask questions, learn about barriers to conservation, ways to help, and gather primary references for their project.

Students will present their work to the local community, raising awareness for Ireland's vulnerable creatures.





Peter Nash

I Never Forget A Face, m left, and

I Always Thought We'd Have More Time, m right,

2. Site Visits / Cross curriculum / Partnerships

Cross Curriculum – This CP will combine elements of visual appreciation and representation from the art classroom, with research and understanding of ecosystems and biodiversity from the lens of the biology curriculum.

Site Visit/School visit - Students will learn from local wildlife experts Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary and discover how they operate the rescue and rehabilitation of our native birds as well as other animals, and the importance of their work.

Library Resources (**local/school library**) – can provide access to books, articles, online resources related to biodiversity and conservation of ecosystems relevant to our project.

3. Research & Rationale

The steady decline of bird species in Ireland is a present and pressing issue as it has major deficits on Irelands biodiversity . "54 (25.6%) of Ireland's regularly occurring bird species now on the Red list is alarming, with some species having shown dramatic declines." (Gilbert, et al., 2021) Students will use elements of visual art as a tool for inquiry into this ongoing environmental issue. Students will gain insight into what is

happening around them presently in the case of biodiversity. They will also equip themselves with knowledge and

understanding of how together we can make a difference, and share this knowledge with the wider community.

Students will come face to face with animals who have been displaced, sick or injured in partnership with Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary. This personal experience will allow students to connect with the animals, and ask questions and learn from the experts who care for them. This is a unique and exciting experience that students can draw upon throughout the curriculum project.

As art can be largely emotive, it can create feelings of hope, care, responsibility, and solidarity. For purposes of learning about biodiversity this can be hugely impactful, as curating these feelings in a viewer can promote real action, which is what we need (Bentz & O'Brien, 2019).

References-

- Angeler, D. G. (2016). Viewing biodiversity through the lens of science...and art!
- Bentz, J., & O'Brien, K. (2019). ART FOR CHANGE: Transformative learning and youth empowerment in a changing climate.

4. Aim

This Curriculum Project aims to teach students the importance of preservation to maintain the health and diversity of Ireland's natural environment through visual means.

5. Overview of Curriculum Project

Taught in a continuum of four strands:

Strand 1: Research - Biodiversity and the birds we're losing

Students will be introduced to the project and primary artist reference Peter Nash. Students will learn about biodiversity – what is it? Why should we care? What are potential consequences of its neglect? Why is it relevant to us? Students will be initially introduced to this by the teacher through presentation (understanding what biodiversity is, and the consequences of neglecting it) and formulate further connections with the topic by engaging in class discussion, focusing on how our future will look if we continue this path of biodiversity decline. This discussion will present cross-curricular collaboration opportunity with the science department (biology in particular), whom we may approach with questions to deepen our understanding of biodiversity and how this may affect our ecosystems. Following on from this will be students own online research of how the current decrease in bird species is leading to loss of biodiversity, from reliable sources.

Students will be assigned one red-listed bird species each and will present their findings focusing on their bird (e.g., Curlew, Knot). They will present the class with information about their habitats, reasons for their decline, and current conservation efforts specific to the species (if any).

Teaching Activities:

- Presentation introduces students to the project. Students will learn about biodiversity regarding how this is affecting and being affected by the loss of bird species across Ireland, to understand the merit of the project and how the project's concept surrounds an issue that is current in time. The teacher will prompt class discussion of this topic with questioning.
- Presentation of work by Peter Nash (I Never Forget A Face, 2020) to provide students with a visual of the type of aesthetic qualities they should strive towards throughout the project. Teacher will help identify critical and visual language with students that they will be expected to use in future when participating in group critiques.
- Students will be provided with one bird species each, that features on the list of birds of serious conservation concern provided by Bird Watch Ireland. They will be asked to conduct independent research of their bird species and compile this into their sketchbooks, along with thumbnail sketches of the bird. Research should include specific information about the bird's appearance, habitat, reasons for their decline, and current conservation efforts specific to the species (if applicable).

Learning Activities:

- Students will engage in class discussion regarding biodiversity, exploring what they already know about the topic moving into discussion specifically about how biodiversity loss is being influenced by loss of bird species and vice versa.
- Following from initial class discussion, students will conduct independent research how the current decrease in bird species is leading to loss of biodiversity, from reliable sources (such as Bird Watch Ireland, National Biodiversity data Centre Ireland)
- Students will formulate any unanswered questions of biodiversity and ecosystems to present to the science department within the school, who may help us in furthering our understanding of the consequences of when the harmony in an ecosystem is shifted.
- Students will prepare questions of wildlife conservation for school visit from Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary, and gather these answers as part of their research in their sketchbooks
- Respond to work of artist Peter Nash (*I Never Forget A Face*, 2020 and *I Always Thought We'd Have More Time*, 2022) reflecting on the meaning of the work, how he highlights the physical attributes of the animal, the aesthetic qualities they can identify within them, using critical and visual language.





Peter Nash

I Never Forget A Face, 2020 (left) and
I Always Thought We'd Have More Time, 2022 (right)

Strand 2: Idea Development - School Visit and Discovery

School visit from Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary, an organization dedicated to wildlife rescue and rehabilitation. The sanctuary will bring along live birds and other animals (where possible) and offer interactive talks, allowing students to witness conservation work first hand. This first-hand experience will provide students with a real connection to the species they've been studying, thus adding depth to their project. Students will use this to deepen their learning of biodiversity, conservation efforts and why it is important that we act. Students will practice drawing this wildlife, using this as source material for their project. Students will ask their prepared questions regarding conservation efforts of wildlife to gather information on how we can each make a difference in combatting loss of species, thus maintaining essential ecosystems. Students will develop their sketches for their final lino print informed by the research gathered from their visit as well as previous research stage. Students will experiment with line and mark-making in their sketchbooks and aim to capture their bird's unique qualities (e.g., the Curlew can be distinguished by the length of its beak and patterned brown feathers). Each bird will be a different species and so we aim to show off their unique features.

Teaching Activities:

- Facilitate school visit by Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary for students to learn about conservation from experts and to draw/photograph from primary source animals to use as source material for their project.
- Encourage active participation during the talk by prompting students to ask their prepared questions.

•	I I		
	they learn to their art project.		

- Facilitate a class discussion after the visit; Compile key takeaways from the talk and student sketches as a shared resource.
- Circulate among students as they sketch from the primary source during the Animal Magic presentation, offering feedback and encouraging experimentation.
- Teacher presentation of works of Clare Curtis, in relation to her expression of texture and form of birds in lino print, in simplistic yet effective ways. Facilitate a group discussion regarding her work what works well? What aspects of her work can we adopt for our own prints?

Learning Activities:

- Before the visit, students will research conservation topics and prepare a list of thoughtful questions regarding wildlife protection, rehabilitation, and ecosystem preservation.
- Students observe animal behaviours and listen to conservation stories.
- Students will experiment in sketchbooks using their source imagery gathered from their school visit by Animal Magic, using expressive making techniques to convey textures, unique attributes and atmosphere surrounding their species of bird
- Students refine their sketches based on observations and experiment with different line and mark-making techniques.(Examples: Long, sweeping lines to capture the Curlew's distinctive beak. Crosshatching for textured feathers.) Select a finalized composition based on their sketch explorations.
- Simplify complex textures into bold, printable shapes while maintaining the species' unique traits



Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary Limerick – school visit



Clare Curtis, Winter Estuary

Strand 3: Create

Inspired by Peter Nash, students will create their own prints that commemorate the redlisted bird species they have studied. They will create bold, graphic representations of these birds as a form of tribute. These prints will serve as memoirs, honouring the species and raising awareness about their conservation status as it currently stands. Students will combine their work to create a collaborative piece that celebrates the coming together of different species by printing on the same large canvas. Following on from their final prints, students will show these birds in a sentimental stop motion inspired by William Kentridge, using charcoal drawings. Their stop motion videos will depict their birds in flight. They should aim to portray a sonder feeling to the viewer, as William Kentridge achieves. They videos will be looped, representative of the cycle of loss that is occurs when we neglect to acknowledge the factors affecting biodiversity loss.

Teaching Activities:

- Encourage students to brainstorm visual ideas by observing Peter Nash's graphic approach and understanding Kentridge's ability to convey emotions through animation.
- Offer individual feedback on how to emphasize the bird's distinctive features and conservation message.
- Demonstrate lino cutting and printing techniques, ensuring safety when using tools.
- Facilitate discussions on how each student's print can fit into the collaborative canvas, ensuring cohesion while celebrating diversity in species representation.
- Oversee the final printing process, ensuring all contributions come together harmoniously.
- Share examples of William Kentridge's stop motion animations, focusing on the emotional resonance and the use of charcoal as a medium.

•	Discuss the idea of sonder—the awareness that every bird has its own story and
-	
	significance within the ecosystem
	<u>.</u>

- Demonstrate how to use charcoal to create dynamic, expressive movements, layering and erasing to show transitions and motion. Guide students in using tonal contrasts to bring depth and life to their animations.
- Assist students in capturing their animations frame by frame, using simple tools such as smartphones, cameras, or stop motion apps.

Learning Activities:

- Translate sketches into simplified, graphic designs suitable for lino printing.
- Students carve their designs into As lino and print on individual sheets, practicing safe use of tools previously demonstrated by the teacher.
- Combine individual prints on a shared large canvas, arranging them to celebrate biodiversity.
- Plan the layout collaboratively, ensuring the species' unique features and roles are represented harmoniously.
- Explore the expressive qualities of charcoal, focusing on capturing motion and emotion.
- Practice drawing sequences of a bird in flight, layering and erasing to create a sense of movement.
- Students sketch 6—8 frames, then draw and photograph each frame of their animation using stop motion apps or cameras.
- Erase and redraw parts of the scene to depict fluid motion, aiming for a looped sequence





Claire McCormack, lino print of Knot, 2024



William Kentridge, Bird Catcher, 2006



William Kentridge, Untitled, 2011

Strand 4: Present

The project will conclude with a community exhibition or presentation, providing students with a platform to showcase their research, creative work, and conservation advocacy. The community exhibition will allow students to present their lino prints, stop_motion animations, and reflections on the importance of protecting red_listed bird species. They will actively engage the audience by sharing insights learned from their visit with Animal Magic Wildlife Sanctuary and suggesting practical conservation actions inspired by their research and discussions.

Teaching

Activities:

- Provide scaffolding for students to plan and execute a professional-level exhibit.
- Offer suggestions on layout, presentation skills, and interactive elements to enhance audience engagement.
- Help students translate their research into practical conservation suggestions.
- Encourage critical thinking about the impact of their work. Use reflective prompts to deepen students' understanding of how art and advocacy intersect.

Learning Activities:

- Students will lead the planning and execution of the exhibition, from preparing prints to setting up the space, working together to ensure the exhibition is cohesive and impactful, while reflecting on their individual and collective contributions.
- (Review lino prints and select the strongest print based on craftsmanship, clarity, and impact. Mount the selected prints on high-quality backing paper or frames. Prepare stop-motion animations, ensuring smooth loops, appropriate timing, and, if feasible, add titles or soundtracks.)
- Complete a final group critique session where peers provide constructive feedback on the presented work.
- Use their art and knowledge to inspire action, creating a meaningful dialogue about conservation with attendees of their exhibition.
- Brainstorming session where students outline their bird's story, its endangered status, and their artistic intentions. Conduction of a peer-editing activity where students swap statements for clarity and impact.

6. Learning outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that describe what knowledge, understanding, skills and values students should be able to demonstrate having completed this project.

The numbering is intended to support teacher planning in the first instance and does not imply any hierarchy of importance across the outcomes themselves.

Strand 1: Research - Biodiversity and the birds we're losing

	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to

Biodiversity and the decline caused by loss of bird species	Understand what biodiversity is, why it is important and why we should engage with it. Understand the merit of undergoing this project and engage with it accordingly.
Conducting research	Gather research rom reliable sources (online or inperson library) focusing on their specific bird species. Understand the reasons for their birds endangered status, compile research of their bird including appearance, habitat, reasons for their decline, and current conservation efforts specific to the species (if any)
Artist Peter Nash	Respond to the work of Peter Nash, how he captures a birds unique qualities, the emotions he is able to evoke from the style of his drawings, through visual and critical language. Develop their research into visual art by creating detailed sketches and preliminary designs informed by their artist research of Peter Nash.

Strand 2: Idea Development - School Visit and Discovery

	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to
Composition	to direct the viewer's eye, explore through balance of positive and negative space, how to create a visually compelling image within the constraints of Lino printing.
Artist Clare Curtis	
	Respond critically to work by artist Clare Curtis in relation to her expression of texture and form of birds in lino print, in simplistic yet effective ways
Reflections	
	Engage in reflective practice, based on feedback and self-assessment, refining their concepts to better meet their artistic and communicative goals

Strand 3: Create	
	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to
Development of ides to final print	Take multitude of previous preliminary sketches, taking on board feedback from reflective practice and teacher comments to create a final composition that captures the essence of their bird species and justly depicts them
mark-making techniques in lino printing	Experiment with various mark-making techniques in Lino printing, exploring how different tools and carving methods can convey texture, form, and depth in their designs.
process of lino print	Understand and demonstrate the process of lino print, using variations of mark-making, and consideration of composition, demonstrated in their final print
Strand 4: Present	
	Learning outcomes
Students learn about	Students should be able to
Artist statement	Articulate the concept and meaning of the work through a written artist statement and description of the work
Exhibition	Plan and curate an exhibition for a specific space within the town to promote the species we have translated through lino
Reflection of final prints	Analyze final prints and curated exhibition through group crit using critical and visual language

7. Links

(The way in which the project links to statements of learning, and to the eight key skills of junior cycle is highlighted and explained here.)

a) Statements of learning

Statement	Examples of relevant learning in the project
SOL 8: The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change.	Students, through their own creative ideas and work, will demonstrate that their Visual Art work can be used to reflect the needs, hopes and ideals of their wider communities or society as a whole. *Relevant to this project*: students are focusing on the concept of biodiversity, a widespread environmental issue. They will demonstrate their understanding of the this issue and the need for conservation efforts through their final works as well as reflective practices.
SOL 4: The student creates and presents artistic works and appreciates the process and skills involved.	Students will create finished pieces of art, craft and design work capturing and presenting the processes and decisions they made through using their Visual Art sketchpad. *Relevant to this project*: students will use their sketchpads as a resource for documenting research and experimentation. This work, and the reflective practice/annotations that accompany it, will inform their finished pieces of lino and stop motion videos.
SOL 23: The student brings an idea from conception to realisation	Students demonstrate that they understand and can apply different processes and methods in creating artworks, craft pieces and finished design solutions. **Relevant to this project*: students will compile**
	investigation of processes (used by artists references and experimented with in class. E.g.,. Charcoal drawing, mono-printing) into their sketchpads, reflecting on these processes through accompanying annotations. These processes will be refined and improved on upon realisation of finished pieces.

b) The eight key sk	tills of junior cycle	
Key skill	Key skill element	Student learning activity
		Write an example of one or two activities for each key skill element chosen, referring to actual activities students engage in during the project, e.g. Students create a website to

		display Remember to remove me please!
Being literate	Expressing ideas clearly and accurately	Annotations in sketchbook clearly indicate students on current work, indicating areas for improvement and work that is successful. Responding to work of others (artists references/ peers) using critical and visual language.
Managing myself	Being able to reflect on my own learning	Annotations in sketchbook reflecting on successful work and that which can be improved upon. Written artists statement at conclusion of project reflecting on the success of the overall project.
Staying well	Being social	Peer reviews, group critiques, collaborative final piece, creation and execution of a whole class exhibition final works
Managing information and thinking	Gathering, recording, organising and evaluating information	Research of artist references, specific bird species for lino print, conservation efforts, biodiversity. Note-taking during school visit by Animal Magic regarding conservation efforts. Using all of the above research to inform creative work.

Being numerate	Developing a positive disposition towards investigating, reasoning and problem-solving	Showing wide range of sources, quality research that can inform creative practice. Students should show engagement with research by the volume gathered in sketchbook and their willingness to present work to their peers/teacher.
Being creative	Implementing ideas and taking action	Discovering conservation efforts to minimise the decrease in bird species and presenting this through their final pieces/ discussions with peers and viewers of their final exhibition.
Working with others	Contributing to making the world a better place	Bringing light to the current state of biodiversity loss through visual art, promoting conservation efforts
Communicating	Using language	Using critical and visual language throughout group critiques and reflections. Using visual language throughout their artist statements.

Inclusive Education – Differentiation Strategies

- Assign different roles within the collaborative printing stage of the project. This allows each student to contribute based on their strengths and interests.
- Allow students to present their research findings in various formats (written reports, visual
- presentations, oral reports). This accommodates diverse communication preferences and skills.
- Varied presentation skills. Including teacher PowerPoints, interactive brainstorming sessions,
- class discussion, worksheets and additional information printed for students
- For any student with additional needs or any sensory issues that may impact their engagement with the lino process, they will be encouraged to use mono-printing for their final artefact.
- Encourage students to set individual artistic goals within the group project. This allows for
- differentiated expectations based on skill levels and aspirations.
- Pose tiered questions during discussions, starting with basic comprehension and progressing to
- analytical and evaluative questions
- Continuous informal feedback between student and teacher throughout the project, peer reviews, whole class discussion

1. Assessment and reporting

Strand 1: Research

Learning Activities:

- Gathering information on red-listed bird species.
- Responding to artwork by Peter Nash
- Compiling questions regarding conservation/biodiversity for Animal Magic Sanctuary visit to school.
- Documenting findings in visual or written formats (e.g., annotated sketches, fact sheets on their specific bird species). Formative Assessment Opportunities

Research Notebooks or Fact Sheets:

- Teachers provide feedback on the clarity, depth, and accuracy of the student's research.
- Highlight areas for improvement, such as integrating more primary sources or refining how information is presented.

Classroom Discussions:

- Use questioning strategies to check understanding of biodiversity and conservation topics.
- Encourage peer feedback to build collaborative learning assess questions compiled for Animal Magic as a class and refine them to be presented as a whole group effort

Strand 2: Idea Development

Learning Activities:

- Developing initial sketches of bird species based on research/visit from Animal Magic.
- Experimenting with techniques for lino print: namely mark-making, and composition, explore these through sketchbooks work and mono-printing

Formative Assessment Opportunities

Sketchbook Reviews:

- Teachers assess creativity, attention to detail, and application of techniques.
- Offer feedback during one-on-one reviews to refine students' approach to markmaking and composition.

Practicing qualities of lino:

- Observe students during practice sessions and provide feedback on technical skills of mono-printing (amount of ink used, pressure applied to page, composition)
- Encourage peer critique by having students share their work and discuss design choices.

Strand 3: Create

Learning Activities:

- Creating a lino print
- · Creating stop-motion animations using charcoal drawings. Formative

Assessment Opportunities Lino Printing Practice:

- Observe students during practice sessions and provide immediate feedback on technical skills (e.g., carving safely, achieving desired textures).
- Encourage peer critique by having students share their work and discuss design choices in real time.

Stop-Motion Drafts:

- Review early animation drafts, focusing on storytelling, continuity, and emotional impact.
- Use rubrics or checklists to guide feedback on technical and narrative aspects.

Strand 4: Present

Learning Activities:

- Writing artist statements explaining their work and their message of conservation
- Preparing oral presentations of their work, so students may converse with viewers of their finished pieces during the exhibition and speak coherently and confidently about what they have made.
- Designing and setting up the exhibition collaboratively. **Formative Assessment**

Opportunities Draft Artist Statements:

- Provide feedback on how well students articulate their creative process and conservation message.
- Focus on clarity, grammar, and connection to the project's concept of biodiversity and conservation of these birds.

Presentation Rehearsals:

 Assess oral presentation skills during practice runs, including tone, pacing, and engagement with the audience. • Use peer feedback sessions to help students refine their delivery.

Exhibition Design Plans:

- Review and approve exhibition layout (sketches of the mock-up exhibition space), ensuring cohesion.
- Offer guidance on collaborative problem-solving and task distribution.

Features of Quality

There are descriptors of the standard of student work. Indicate here the features associated with each level of descriptor.

<u>Level 3</u> The 4 descriptors are Exceptional, Above expectations, In line with expectations and Yet to meet expectations.

Level 2 The 1 descriptor is Achieved

<u>Level 1</u> The 2 descriptors are Successfully Completed and Progress Achieved

Level 3 Descriptors

1.Exceptional

Features:

Demonstrates mastery of skills and concepts with innovation and creativity.

Artwork and projects demonstrate exceptional craftsmanship, attention to detail, and originality.

Research is thorough and shows deep rooted understanding of biodiversity.

Presentations are engaging, well-spoken and leave a strong impression on the audience.

Student reflection shows a mature, critical analysis of their learning.

2. Above Expectations

Features:

Exceeds the basic requirements with clear effort and thoughtful execution.

Artwork is visually impactful and demonstrates advanced use of techniques, though not yet reaching the level of exceptional.

Research is comprehensive and well-organized, with connections made to the conservation themes.

Presentations are confident and they effectively communicate the student's message.

Reflections show meaningful engagement and personal growth, though lacking the depth of

"Exceptional"."

3. In Line with Expectations

Features:

Meets all project requirements at a satisfactory level.

Artwork demonstrates a solid understanding of techniques with minor inconsistencies in quality or execution.

Research covers necessary information but lacks depth or personal/additional insight.

Presentations are clear and coherent but lack engagement.

Reflections demonstrate awareness of learning outcomes but show limited critical analysis.

4. Yet to Meet Expectations

Features:

Falls short of project requirements due to incomplete work or lack of effort.

Artwork shows minimal understanding of techniques or concepts, with noticeable errors.

Research is superficial, with missing or incomplete information.

Presentations lack coherence, preparation, or engagement.

Reflections are brief or fail to meaningfully address the learning process.

Level 2 Descriptor

Achieved

Features:

Successfully meets the core objectives of the project.

Artwork demonstrates basic competence with techniques, but there is limited exploration or creativity.

Research is accurate but may be basic or rely heavily on provided resources provided by teacher, shows no initiative to research.

Presentations adequately communicate ideas but lack confidence.		
Reflections indicate some understanding of the project aims, analysis is surface-level.		

Level 1 Descriptors

1. Successfully Completed

Features:

Meets the minimum requirements for completion.

Artwork is completed yet demonstrates minimal effort or engagement with techniques and concepts.

Research contains the necessary information but lacks depth/connections to the project's concept.

Presentations are basic and may be underprepared or lack confidence.

Reflections are brief and focus on task completion rather than learning achieved.

2. Progress Achieved

Features:

Indicates improvement or effort despite challenges.

Artwork or project components are incomplete but show evidence of skill development.

Research is incomplete but suggests emerging understanding of the topic.

Presentations may be incomplete, but effort is evident.

Reflections focus on personal growth or challenges faced, with limited discussion of outcomes.