

THE ART OF INEQUALITY

TEACHERS' OVERVIEW

Contents

- Introduction
- Aims of *The Art of Inequality*
- Structure of *The Art of Inequality*
- Differentiation
- Detailed session outline
- Global Citizenship
- Acknowledgements
- Useful resources

Introduction

The Art of Inequality

This resource, written specially for Art and Design teachers, features a selection of classic designs illustrating particular graphic design techniques and asks learners to use these techniques to illustrate a shocking statistic about global inequality. The resource has been designed to meet the requirements of the Art and Design curricula for England, Scotland and Wales and to enable learners to master design packages such as Photoshop. Using Art and Design to explore the issue of global inequality in a creative way, the sessions are presented with differentiation and extension possibilities that support citizenship education, develop critical thinking skills and help learners to see how resources are distributed amongst the world's population.

Purpose and target age range

The overall artistic purpose of this project is to enable young people aged 11 to 14 to learn how to apply design principles in Photoshop (or another design package or tools and templates available free online) to create posters that elegantly communicate statistics relating to inequality.

If we took the entire wealth of the planet and divided it into two, almost half would go to the richest 1% of people, while the other half would have to be shared amongst the remaining 99%. Inequality is increasing in the UK: the richest five families in the UK are now wealthier than the bottom 20% of the population (12.6 million people).¹

At this age, it has been observed that most learners will have an inherent and deep-seated sense of injustice when they are exposed to the facts and figures connected to inequality.

According to Barack Obama, income inequality is the “defining challenge of our times”,² while Pope Francis states that “inequality is the root of social evil”.³

¹ Oxfam (2014) ‘[A tale of two Britains](#)’, Oxfam Media Briefing, 17 March 2014.

² ‘Remarks by the President on economic mobility’, Speech given at the White House on 4 December 2013, White House Press Office, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/12/04/remarks-president-economic-mobility>

What do we mean by inequality?

Inequality has many different dimensions, including race, gender, geography and economy, which rarely work in isolation. Today, hundreds of millions of people are living without access to clean drinking water and without enough food to feed their families; many are working themselves into the ground just to get by. At the same time, the richest people are able to live longer, happier and healthier lives, and are able to use their wealth to see that their children do the same.⁴

Throughout *The Art of Inequality*, inequality will usually refer to wide differences in a population in terms of their wealth, their income and their access to essential services such as health and education.

Why is inequality a problem?

While some people argue that economic inequality may be necessary to spur growth and prosperity, extreme inequality causes problems. A widening gap between rich and poor is now being seen in many countries all around the world. Seven out of ten people in the world live in countries where economic inequality has increased in the last 30 years.

Inequality challenges the innate sense of fairness most people feel, but there are other reasons why extreme inequality is a problem. Among them is the fact that extreme inequality damages democracy and limits the opportunities poorer people have in life. Rich elites often use their wealth to influence governing institutions and political outcomes so that the economy is run in their interests rather than the broader interests of society. Others remain excluded and their views are not taken into account.⁵

For further background information about inequality, see the separate document *Background notes for teachers*.

What are infographics and why are they the media of choice for this project?

Infographics are eye-catching designs that combine graphics, diagrams and text to convey a lot of information succinctly. The number of designers who specialise in this medium has soared in recent years alongside the rising volume of data published and shared over the internet. These designers and data journalists can translate sets of data on almost any subject into beautiful, simple diagrams that can reveal patterns and connections⁶ that would be harder to tease out of more traditional and textual charts and tables.

Throughout this project, learners will be given a number of opportunities to join this design trend. They will be taking facts and figures about the effects of inequality collected by international organisations, such as Oxfam, the United Nations and the World Bank, which would otherwise be published in dense spreadsheets and Excel-generated charts, and

³ [Twitter, 28 April 2014](#)

⁴ Oxfam GB (2014) 'Even it up: Time to End Extreme Inequality', Oxford: Oxfam GB, p. 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ David McCandless (2010) 'The beauty of data visualization', TED talk, <http://www.ted.com/talks/>

turning them into accessible and aesthetically pleasing posters using the Photoshop skills and design principles they will learn along the way.

For ideas on further reading, please see the bibliography at the end of this document. Pupils may present their final work using a wide range of media, such as leaflets, posters, speeches, articles for local newspapers or as news features for radio or television, supporting their development as active global citizens.

Aims of *The Art of Inequality*

This project will allow Key Stage 3 learners to:

- Develop a critical understanding of traditional and contemporary graphic design practices, expressing reasoned judgements that can inform their own work.
- Appreciate the causes and effects of inequality and the possible solutions to it.
- Increase their digital media skills by using Photoshop (or equivalent) to manipulate design elements (colour, space, composition, texture) to represent increasingly complex sets of data relating to inequality.

Please note: Explicit links to the English, Welsh and Scottish curricula for Art and Design have been detailed on the first page of the teacher's guide to each session.

Structure of *The Art of Inequality*

This project is intended to stretch over a minimum five sessions of a minimum of one hour each. Time and interest permitting, there are opportunities to stretch out each individual session and/or extend the project by adding or incorporating tasks that are more technically and intellectually demanding.

- 3 slideshows
- 1 video
- 5 session plans
 - Session 1: Can Information Be Beautiful?
 - Session 2: What is Inequality?
 - Session 3: Big Ideas in Graphic Design
 - Session 4: Let's Go Digital!
 - Session 5: Data Sets Can Change Mindsets

Some sessions include slideshows and/or activity sheets.

- Sessions 1–3 involve slideshows with teachers' notes embedded.
- Sessions 1, 3, 4 and 5 require activity sheets to be photocopied.

Differentiation

Most sessions lend themselves to differentiation by outcome and therefore there is no specific reference to differentiation in the session plans. However, you will see that there are often suggestions in the further ideas for how to stretch more able pupils.

Please note: Further instructions for sessions 1-3 can be found in the slideshow notes.

IT requirements

Before commencing the project, please note the following technical requirements:

- **The teacher:** Given the graphic nature of the outcomes, it is anticipated the teacher will already have some basic graphic design and digital media knowledge. If in doubt, designing a model infographic is recommended.
- **The classroom:** The basic equipment required comprises a projector for slideshows, speakers and enough computers with internet access for learners to work independently.
- **The software:** The project has been targeted towards the use of Adobe Photoshop CS6 (for PC), owing to its versatility and popularity. Some shortcuts and tools will be different in older and mac versions. Depending on the school's access and the teacher's experience, alternatives could be used, such as *easel.ly*, a free infographic app, or Adobe's more specialist graphics programme, InDesign.

Assessment and presentation

Like all design projects, there will not necessarily be a right or wrong solution but final posters could be assessed on the learner's depth of research into inequality and choice of data; their level of confidence in manipulating the design elements in Photoshop; and their ability to communicate clearly to their audience.

An ideal way for learners to share their work with a real wider audience is for schools to share their work via Twitter and tag @OxfamEducation in the tweet. We will then be able to retweet selected examples of learners' work for other schools to see. Please ensure that posts are only shared through your school's official social media account, that your school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies are adhered to and that you have gained relevant permissions before posting.

The Art of Inequality – detailed session outline

Session overview	Learning objectives Learners will:	Learning outcomes Learners will learn:	Key questions	Activities	Resources
Session 1: Can Information Be Beautiful? Learners are introduced to the art of infographics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin developing an understanding of the design elements of an infographic Listen to a designer speak about his own work Analyse the method and meaning of the work of a contemporary British designer, David McCandless. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To deduce the meaning of a blank infographic To appreciate how and why designers use infographics to make sense of vast amounts of data How to explain the effect of different design choices (on Activity Sheet 1.2). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why do data journalists, such as McCandless, choose to report statistics graphically? What information does/n't lend itself to being represented graphically? Why/ why not? What creative choices has McCandless made about colour, typography, space and texture? How does this affect your reading of the graphic? 	Activity 1.1: This is not abstract art! Activity 1.2: How do designers make all that information so beautiful?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer access for all learners (optional) Projector and speakers Session 1 slideshow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print notes pages Session 1 Teacher's Guide, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> copies of Activity Sheet 1.2 (one per pair) Activity Sheet 1.2, Teacher's Edition
Session 2: What is Inequality? Learners explore and define inequality before designing their first infographic by hand to express a specific statistic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate posters designed to inform people about a specific inequality statistic. Play or (imagine playing) a new version of Monopoly where wealth is distributed unevenly between players at the outset Watch a video about inequality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> That more than individual effort and skill shape the distribution of wealth About the causes and effects of economic inequality To use symbols to design by hand a balanced and informative poster about inequality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What examples of inequality have you seen or experienced? How can we define inequality? Why is it important to tackle inequality now? How can we tackle inequality? How can we visually communicate the idea that half the world's wealth belongs to just 1% of its population? 	Activity 2.1: Not playing fair Activity 2.2: What is inequality? Activity 2.3: Drawing the richest 1%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enough Monopoly sets for groups of four to eight learners to play. (Alternatively, a thought experiment should suffice!) Projector and speakers Session 2 slideshow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Print notes pages Session 2 Teacher's Guide Coloured pencils and drawing paper or sketchbooks

<p>Session 3: Big Ideas in Graphic Design</p> <p>Learners are introduced to four ideas that influence today's infographic designers before using one to modify their work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a critical understanding of historical design trends that continue to inform today's infographic designers • Experiment with pictograms, calligrams, complementary colours and/or overlapping transparent colours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify a range of technical design choices and analyse their effect on the meaning and/or aesthetic appeal of the works listed on Activity Sheet 3.1 • Refine their 1% designs from the last session by adopting one or more of these choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What design ideas and techniques do today's infographic designers borrow from the past? • Which of these could I practice using to improve the design I drew in the last session? 	<p>Activity 3.1: Big ideas in graphic design</p> <p>Activity 3.2: Assessing the 1%</p> <p>Activity 3.3: Refining the 1% design</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projector • Session 3 slideshow <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Print notes pages • Session 3 Teacher's Guide, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies of Activity Sheet 3.1 ○ Activity Sheet 3.2, Teacher's Edition • Colouring pencils or a computer with printer access for each learner (for the optional extension activity in the final column of Activity Sheet 3.1)
<p>Session 4: Let's Go Digital!</p> <p>Learners are introduced to the essential tools and concepts in Photoshop. They will then create their own infographic conveying inequality data</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarise themselves with the Photoshop interface • Experiment with transparent coloured layers and pictograms in Photoshop • Develop a repertoire of skills and shortcuts in creating digital infographics. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify the most useful tools, panels and windows in Photoshop, using Activity Sheet 4.1 • To recreate a digital infographic that conveys the same inequality data as last session • To log the Photoshop tricks and shortcuts they learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we already know about how Photoshop works? • Which Photoshop tools will be most useful in (re)creating our 1% poster design? • What shortcuts and/or tricks have you learnt from experimenting? 	<p>Activity 4: Create a 1% poster in Photoshop</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computers with internet access and <i>one</i> of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Access to www.easel.ly ○ Photoshop (model instructions are based on the CS6 version but could be adjusted for another) ○ Another design programme that the learners are accustomed to using • Session 4 Teacher's Guide, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies of Activity Sheets 4.1 to 4.3
<p>Session 5: Data Sets Can Change Mindsets</p> <p>Learners create a more refined infographic relating to inequality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider different layouts, colour schemes, typefaces, pictogram and calligrams • Refine their infographic design skills in Photoshop • Research and discuss different inequality data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To select/find the data set that interests them most • To record and evaluate three design options by hand • To produce a final inequality poster in Photoshop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which one of these statistics grabs your attention? Why? • How could this new data be represented graphically? • What have you learnt about Photoshop tools/techniques and design elements that could inform your design proposals? 	<p>Activity 5: Create your own inequality infographic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The same IT requirements as above • Session 5 Teacher's Guide, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Copies of Activity Sheet 5

Global Citizenship

The Art of Inequality is a global citizenship resource written for Art and Design teachers. Education for global citizenship is a methodology to help young people to develop as active global citizens. Oxfam suggests a Learn-Think-Act approach to help structure global citizenship activities and give young people the opportunity to learn about issues, think critically about how to solve them, and act as responsible global citizens. Actions may simply be to find out more or think more deeply about an issue. They may also involve making others more aware of an issue or engaging in specific fundraising or campaigning activities. For more information, see: <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/global-citizenship>

The key elements of responsible global citizenship are:

Knowledge and understanding	Skills	Values and attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social justice and equity • Identity and diversity • Globalisation and interdependence • Sustainable development • Peace and conflict • Rights and responsibilities • Power and governance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical and creative thinking • Empathy • Self-awareness and reflection • Communication • Cooperation and conflict resolution • Ability to manage complexity and uncertainty • Ability to take informed and appropriate action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of identity and self-esteem • Commitment to social justice and equity • Respect for people and human rights • Value diversity • Concern for the environment and commitment to sustainable development • Commitment to participation and inclusion • Belief that people can bring about change

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For further information about Oxfam Education, including a wide range of other curriculum-linked resources, see: www.oxfam.org.uk/education

Useful resources

Infographics

- Heller, Steven and Veronique Vienne (2012) *100 Ideas That Changed Graphic Design*, London: Lawrence King Publishing.
- McCandless, David (2010) 'The beauty of data visualization', TED talk: http://www.ted.com/talks/david_mccandless_the_beauty_of_data_visualization
- McCandless, David (2012) *Information is Beautiful* (new edition), London: Collins.
- McCandless, David (2014) *Knowledge is Beautiful*, London: Collins.



- McCandless's work, some examples: http://www.davidmccandless.com/design_work/
- Rogers, Simon (2013) *Facts are Sacred*, London, Faber & Faber.
- Rosling, Hans, 'The best stats you've ever seen', TED talk: http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_shows_the_best_stats_you_ve_ever_seen#t-68705
- *The Guardian's* datablog: <http://www.theguardian.com/data>

Inequality

Oxfam publications

- Even it up campaign video: 'The rich and the rest' (2014): <http://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-us/find-an-action/even-it-up>
- 'Even it Up: Time to End Extreme Inequality' (2014): <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/even-it-up-time-to-end-extreme-inequality-333012>
- 'Wealth: Having It All and Wanting More', Oxfam Issue Briefing, January 2015: <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/publications/wealth-having-it-all-and-wanting-more-338125>
- Kelly, Mike (2014) 'Defining a living wage means understanding the local context', Policy and Practice Blog, Oxfam GB website, 15 December, <http://policy-practice.oxfam.org.uk/blog/>

Other

- Danner, Mona J. (no date) 'Instructions for how to play Inequality Monopoly': <http://paulsjusticepage.com/elite-deviance/Monopoly-StratifiedSociety.pdf>
- Equality Trust website: Impacts, attitudes, scales and trends relating to inequality: <http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk/about-inequality>
- Barack Obama on inequality as the defining challenge of our time: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/12/04/remarks-president-economic-mobility>
- Rosling, Hans (2009) 'Let my data set change your mindset', TED talk: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KVhWqwnZ1eM>
- UN Population Fund (2015) 'Ten things you didn't know about the world's population', 13 April, <http://www.unfpa.org/news/10-things-you-didn%E2%80%99t-know-about-world%E2%80%99s-population>
- Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett (2009) *The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*, London: Allen Lane.
Wilkinson, Richard (2011) 'How economic inequality harms societies', TED talk: http://www.ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson
- Wilkinson, Richard and Kate Pickett (2014) '*The Spirit Level* authors: Why society is more unequal than ever': <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/mar/09/society-unequal-the-spirit-level>, *The Guardian*, 9 March.

Gender inequality

- *The Guardian* (2013) 'Show and Tell', 25 October, <http://www.theguardian.com/news/womens-blog/interactive/2013/oct/25/world-gender-gap-index-2013-mapped-iceland-uk>
- *The Guardian* (2014) 'Women's rights country by country – Interactive', 4 February, <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/ng-interactive/2014/feb/04/womens-rights-country-by-country-interactive>



- UN Development Programme website, Gender Equality Index, <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/gender-inequality-index-gii>
- UN Population Fund, Gender Equality page, http://www.unfpa.org/swp/2005/presskit/factsheets/facts_gender.htm
- Visually, Inc: A company that helps designers and journalists create visual content: <http://visual.ly/gender-equality-europe>
- World Bank (2014) 'From participation to opportunity in women's work: What data tell us', Open Data blog, 3 December, <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/participation-opportunity-women-s-work-what-data-tell-us>
- World Economic Forum (2013) 'The Global Gender Gap Report', Geneva: WEF, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2013.pdf

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