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Accabre Huntley, age 9 (reading).

The Art in Communicating

Elbow Room: creating a space for Black art and cultural practices in Britain

The *Elbow Room* theme reflects the strong, brave struggles of artists & activists as expressed in their statements against oppression and injustice. The art of communicating your views, feelings or position represents the work and the challenge and opportunity to create your space at the table.

Materials you will need include: Photocopy of *Love* by Accabre Huntley; colour pencils, Writing materials, White board; Clip of Valerie Bloom performing *Sandwich*. Visit www.nocolourbar.org to watch the video or use this link: <https://vimeo.com/129887993>

The Art in Communicating

Elbow Room: creating a space for Black art and cultural practices in Britain

CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

Radical ideas about art and expression grew in prominence in this period of the 1960s-1990s. Black British artists – across art form including poetry, art, music and many other modes of creativity, used art to demonstrate pride of being both Black and British. This period of activism generated a wealth of artistic contributions to Britain that not only encouraged others to explore their sense of self, but also created new ways to expose the value and beauty of cultural differences, promoting acceptance, appreciation and unity.

ACTIVITY ONE

Present video of Valerie Bloom performing *Sandwich*

- Explore the poem in an open discussion: likes, dislikes, what can they relate to?
- Analyse the poetic/performance content: title, techniques, use of voice, tone, use of language & body language and performance skills.
- Discuss the use of different cultural languages used at home, school, with friends.
- How is the way we speak and express ourselves part of our identity?

ACTIVITY TWO

Read aloud the poem by Accabre Huntley called *Love*.

- What is the poet saying about Love? What expressive language did they use?
- Explore the structure, rhythm and style used by the poet through the poem. What feeling is she expressing?
- What are the different ways people express love and emotions? How would we express these feelings to people we love?

RESEARCH

What other topics can you discover that interested poets of Caribbean heritage? Find one example of a poem that causes you to think about making room for another member of your family, friend or a neighbour. What does making room mean to you?. Explore the works of other poets from the Caribbean via the links provided on www.nocolourbar.org.

REFLECTION

Using the format of *Love* pupils will write a poem about someone they love and care about. Using the concepts explored from the *Sandwich* performance, pupils will plan how they will present their poems unique to their culture and identity. Pupils can practise their performance elements in pairs.

EVALUATING AND DEVELOPING WORK

Pupils can present their poems to the class at the end of the lesson. They should be able to explore their individual style of expression through the discussion on *Sandwich*, encouraging self-reflection as well as understanding of individual or cultural differences. Their performance should encourage self-esteem and confidence. Pupils will also be exposed to Black British literature from the 1970s that has been written by a young person. This activity will encourage self-expression and an understanding of different styles of expression through the written and spoken word. A discussion should take place at the end of each session to provide pupils with the tools and confidence to investigate the themes on their own.

For useful links please visit: www.nocolourbar.org

No Colour Bar: Black British Art in Action 1960 -1990 is a collaborative project between The Friends of the Huntley Archives at the LMA, the City of London: London Metropolitan Archives, and the Guildhall Art Gallery, supported by the National Lottery through the Heritage Lottery Fund.

