

Europeana Learning Scenario

Title

Medieval Graphic Design Programme

Authors

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Abstract

Illuminated manuscripts in the Middle Ages can be viewed as objects of pioneering graphic design featuring decorative fonts and images to engage readers. The term 'design' was not used in the same way during the Middle Ages. However, medieval craftspeople left few records of their processes, so we need to use contemporary vocabulary to help us understand them. The term 'design' speaks to the craftsmanship and ingenuity of the manuscripts in the Middle Ages. They were more than just books for writing in. The illuminators created elaborate fonts and artworks consisting of diverse shapes and sizes and examining these can inspire contemporary design. In this programme, students aged 12 - 16 will use medieval manuscripts, including fonts and imagery, as inspiration for their own graphic design projects.

Keywords

Monasteries, Cities, Courts

Table of Summary

Subject	Visual Art, History, Maths
Topic	Graphic design project using Medieval Manuscripts for inspiration
Age of students	12 - 15 years old
Preparation time	45mins
Teaching time	235mins
Online teaching material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Making Manuscripts' by the Getty Museum • 'Scripts Exploring the Medieval Manuscript Book' by Universiteit Leiden • 'Structuring the Medieval Page' by Universiteit Leiden • Ruling template • 'Traces of Users' by Leiden University • 'Dimensions and Forms' by Leiden University • Calligraphy Templates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carolingian - Gothic • Calligraphy Pen Video • Making Ink Instructional Videos: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video 1 - Video 2
Offline teaching material	N/A



Europeana resources used

- ['Reading and Writing Aids in the Middle Ages' Gallery](#)
- ['Female Literacy in the Middle Ages' Gallery](#)
- ['Church Fathers' Gallery](#)
- ['Lighting the Way: How illuminated initials guided medieval readers through books'](#)
- [Illuminated Initials gallery](#)
- [Europeana Art of Reading in the Middle Ages online exhibition](#)

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Integration into the curriculum

This programme provides a series of modules that link with the post primary school art, history, and maths curricula. In this lesson plan, students will explore the design features of Medieval manuscripts. Students will carry out visual research and create visual notebooks inspired by the collections on the Europeana website. This will incorporate sketching and practicing fonts. Mathematical aspects of manuscript layout will be explored, including the process of measuring and ruling grid and guide lines. Students will also engage in self-initiated research into the history of medieval manuscripts to gather facts in order to create and design their own medieval manuscript page inspired by a chosen topic or fact from the Middle Ages.

Aim of the lesson

- Students will explore and research design features of medieval manuscripts including scripts, decorative features, and layout mechanisms
- Students will carry out research using the Europeana collections to create a visual notebook.
- Students will learn about page layout and the practice of drawing and measuring graphs and guide lines to aid with page layout.
- Students will carry out further research into the history of the Middle Ages to select a topic or fact to inform their design project.
- The lesson will culminate in a design project, where students will design and create a manuscript leaf on a topic of their choice from the Middle Ages, informed and inspired by their design research documented in their visual notebook.

Outcome of the lesson

Students will have an increased understanding of the significance of manuscripts in the middle ages. They will have an increased understanding of the craftsmanship behind the creation of manuscripts, and an increased ability to describe and discuss the design elements of Medieval manuscripts. They will have an ability to compare and contrast different styles of calligraphy. They will also apply their visual research when creating their design projects.

21st Century Skills

- **Creativity:** Students will employ creativity skills when designing and creating their manuscript leaf inspired by their visual and historical research.
- **Information Literacy:** Students will employ information literacy skills when researching the history of the Middle Ages to inform their design project, and when carrying out visual research.



- **Technology Literacy:** Students will employ technology literacy skills when using the Europeana website to research and explore manuscripts in the Middle Ages.



Activities

Name of Activity	Procedure	Time
Introduction 'What are Manuscripts?'	Class Discussion: Introduce the topic of Medieval Manuscripts by asking the students the following questions: 1. What are medieval manuscripts? <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The handmade books of the Middle Ages are known as manuscripts- Manuscripts that contain artistic decoration are known as illuminated manuscripts. 2. What were manuscripts used for <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Many manuscripts from Europe in the Middle Ages were religious books. However, many books were created on other topics such as language, mythology, mathematics, and poetry. 3. Who made them <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Those that created the manuscript books were known as scribes. They were usually monks who lived in monasteries. Some monks travelled to other monasteries in other places to make copies of books to bring back their own monastery. View the video titled 'Making Manuscripts' by the Getty Museum with the class to get an overview of the key processes used in making manuscripts	10 mins

<p>Module 1. Scripts and Fonts</p>	<p>Preparatory homework activity: View the video ‘Scripts Exploring the Medieval Manuscript Book’ by Universiteit Leiden, created as part of the ARMA project.</p> <p>Read the blog: Corbie Abbey and today’s font</p> <p>Practical Activity 1: Practice scripts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Materials required</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calligraphy pen / pencil / fine paint brush - Ink - Templates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Carolingian - Gothic • Students can add save these tests to add to their visual notebook <p>Practical Activity 2: Research</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students can explore the Europeana galleries to gather examples of the Carolingian and Gothic Minuscules from Medieval Manuscripts. This can be assigned as homework. These can be added to their visual notebook. View the following galleries to find examples of the different scripts. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ‘Reading and Writing Aids in the Middle Ages’ Gallery - ‘Female Literacy in the Middle Ages’ Gallery - ‘Church Fathers’ Gallery <p>Practical Activity 3 (Optional): Making a calligraphy pen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Materials required</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large feather or drinking straw - Scissors - Paper - Black ink or watered down paint • Instructional video here 	<p>25mins preparatory activity</p> <p>40mins teaching time</p> <p>20mins for optional making calligraphy pen activity</p>
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<p>Module 2. Manuscript Illumination</p>	<p>Preparatory homework activity: Students can read the blog post on Europeana titled ‘Lighting the Way: How illuminated initials guided medieval readers through books’ and watch the video ‘Traces of Users’ by Leiden University.</p> <p>Practical Activity 1: Exploring Illuminated Initials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students should explore the Illuminated Initials gallery on the Europeana website. • Students should identify examples that they find interesting or inspiring, and practice drawing them them in their visual notebook. • Students can create their own illustrations inspired by the manuscripts in the following galleries: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ‘Reading and Writing Aids in the Middle Ages’ Gallery - ‘Female Literacy in the Middle Ages’ Gallery - ‘Church Fathers’ Gallery <p>Practical Activity 3: Making Ink (optional)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Materials required</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Plant material (foraged or shop bought) - Mineral material (clay, charcoal etc.) - Salt - Gum Arabic - Vinegar - Baking soda - Paper - Paint brush or pen - Pot - Hob • Making Ink Instructional Videos <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Video 1 - Video 2 	<p>15mins preparatory activity</p> <p>40mins teaching time</p> <p>80mins for optional making ink activity</p>
<p>Module 3, Layout and Form</p>	<p>Preparatory homework activity: Students can watch the videos ‘Structuring the Medieval Page’ by Leiden University, and ‘Dimensions and Forms’ by Leiden University created as part of the ARMA project.</p> <p>Practical Activity 1: Pricking and Ruling</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Materials required</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paper - Ruler - Pencil <p>It was necessary for scribes to carefully plan the layout of each page before they began their work. The practice of pricking and ruling was used to help guide this. They would create a template for their text before they began to write. This was carried out by pricking the parchment in specific locations and drawing lines either with a pencil or blunt instrument. They also lined up the pages and made marks with sharp tools so the lines would carry through to multiple pages.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Here you will find a template for pricking and ruling by Dartmouth University. Students can practice ruling a page in their visual notebook and experiment with different layouts inspired by other manuscripts on the Europeana website. 	<p>10mins preparatory activity</p> <p>25mins teaching time</p>

Module 4, The Design Project	<p>In this module, students will use visual research and the knowledge acquired during this programme to create a design for a manuscript page on a topic of their choice.</p> <p>Phase 1: Research Students should explore the Europeana Art of Reading in the Middle Ages online exhibition, picking a theme or topic of their choice to form the basis of their design. They should write down a page summary of what they learnt about the topic from the exhibition and further research on other websites. This summary will form the text on their manuscript design project.</p> <p>Phase 2: Planning In their visual notebooks, students can select which script they plan to use for their text. They should also practice some illustrations and illuminated initials to decorate their page. Finally, students must decide the layout and make a draft of their manuscript in their visual notebooks.</p> <p>Phase 3: Execution Students will create their own manuscript page design on a topic of their choice. They can use any materials or tools that they choose (ink, brushes, calligraphy pens, paper etc).</p>	120mins
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