

Year 4 Art

Three connected units • explicit formal-element progression • ambitious final outcomes

Autumn

Drawing with Light & Shadow

Spring

Pattern: Roman to Radical

Summer

Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry

Year 4 progression is designed so each final piece demonstrates both technical learning and individual artistic choice.

Year 4 — Drawing with Light & Shadow

Autumn • Drawing

Creative enquiry

How can artists use tone and expressive line to make ordinary objects feel dramatic?

Formal elements

- Primary: Tone • Line
- Secondary: Form • Composition

Artist / visual source

- Artist encounter: Giorgio Morandi
- Käthe Kollwitz; contemporary still-life drawing

Final showcase outcome

Detailed charcoal/pencil still life using controlled observation, expressive line and a full range of tone.

What pupils should know

- Tone creates depth by showing differences in light and shadow.
- Artists can arrange objects deliberately to create balance, focus and negative space.
- Charcoal can make both very dark broad areas and delicate lines depending on pressure/tool.

Year 4 — Drawing with Light & Shadow: Progression

Prior learning • Why this? Why now? • Future learning • Disciplinary skills

Prior learning retrieved

Y3 proportion, charcoal and tonal shading; sketchbook recording and revisiting ideas.

Why this? Why now?

Year 4 now asks pupils to choose line and tonal approaches rather than simply use them. Still life creates a manageable subject through which pupils can refine observation, depth and composition before later perspective work.

What this prepares pupils for

Y5 continuous line/perspective and atmospheric painting; Y6 sophisticated tonal control and mixed drawing media.

Knowledge & skills to practise

- Arrange and crop a still life using viewfinders.
- Build tone from light to dark with pencil/charcoal.
- Select expressive line, smudging and erasing techniques to refine form.

Year 4 — Drawing with Light & Shadow: Inclusion & Wider Curriculum

Vocabulary • resources • SEND • SMSC • careers • sustainability

Key vocabulary

still life • tonal range • highlight • shadow • mid-tone • charcoal • negative space • composition • crop • form • refine

Key resources

Simple still-life objects; directional lamps; charcoal; pencils; white chalk; tonal paper; viewfinders; fixative used by adult if appropriate.

Careers

Illustrator • fine artist • storyboard artist • forensic/medical illustrator • art technician

Suggested SEND adaptations

- Use high-contrast objects and a simple 2–3 object arrangement.
- Provide tonal scale references and pre-divided practice boxes.
- Allow charcoal pencil instead of stick for pupils who dislike messy media.
- Use photographs of the class still life so pupils can work from a stable image if visual tracking is difficult.

SMSC

Spiritual: sustained looking and noticing subtle changes. Social: arrange a shared still life and discuss viewpoints. Cultural: compare different artists' approaches to ordinary objects and expressive line.

Climate / sustainability

Use found/reused everyday objects rather than buying props; discuss how artists can find value in ordinary materials and objects.

Year 4 — Drawing with Light & Shadow: Lessons 1–3

Skill building • explicit teaching • sketchbook practice

1

Build a still life

To investigate how object placement changes composition and negative space.

Resources: objects; viewfinders; sketchbooks

2

A full tonal range

To create highlights, mid-tones and shadows with pencil/charcoal.

Resources: charcoal/pencils; tonal scales

3

Expressive lines

To select different charcoal marks to communicate edge, texture and emphasis.

Resources: charcoal; erasers; paper

Year 4 — Drawing with Light & Shadow: Lessons 4–6

Apply • create • refine • showcase

4

Study the arrangement

To draw a still life accurately from observation using proportion and overlap.

Resources: still life; lamps; paper

5

Develop depth

To build tonal depth and refine the focal area.

Resources: charcoal/pencil; white chalk

6

Final drawing & evaluation

To complete and evaluate a dramatic tonal still life.

Resources: fixing/display materials; critique prompts

Year 4 — Pattern: Roman to Radical

Spring • Artist/design study

Creative enquiry

How can ancient geometry inspire a contemporary pattern?

Formal elements

- Primary: Pattern • Shape
- Secondary: Colour • Symmetry • Composition

Artist / visual source

- Adam Nathaniel Furman
- Roman mosaics; Orla Kiely as comparison

Final showcase outcome

Contemporary repeat-pattern panel or surface design that transforms Roman geometric ideas through bold modern colour and shape.

What pupils should know

- Roman mosaics use tesserae, geometry, border systems and repeated motifs.
- Contemporary artists/designers may borrow principles from historical pattern without copying a whole design.
- Symmetry, rotation, spacing and colour affect rhythm and balance.

Year 4 — Pattern: Roman to Radical: Progression

Prior learning • Why this? Why now? • Future learning • Disciplinary skills

Prior learning retrieved

Y3 repeated pattern in Britto/textiles; Y4 ability to balance compositions; understanding of simple symmetry.

Why this? Why now?

Staff value Roman pattern work but wanted a stronger artist focus. This sequence begins with historical visual knowledge, then shows how a contemporary designer can transform geometry, colour and architecture into new pattern.

What this prepares pupils for

Y4 relief printing; Y5 manipulating shape in design/architecture; Y6 original pattern and design briefs.

Knowledge & skills to practise

- Analyse a pattern unit and identify symmetry/repetition.
- Construct geometric motifs accurately with templates/rulers.
- Develop several colourways and organise a repeating contemporary composition.

Year 4 — Pattern: Roman to Radical: Inclusion & Wider Curriculum

Vocabulary • resources • SEND • SMSC • careers • sustainability

Key vocabulary

mosaic • tesserae • geometric • motif • repeat • symmetry • rotation • border • colourway • contemporary • surface design

Key resources

Roman mosaic images; Furman/Orla Kiely images; rulers; compasses/templates; coloured paper/paint pens; tracing paper; grids; sketchbooks.

Careers

Surface-pattern designer • architect • ceramic/tile designer • interior designer • graphic designer

Suggested SEND adaptations

- Use pre-cut geometric templates and grids.
- Colour-code the repeating unit and its rotation/reflection.
- Provide reduced design choices first, then invite one independent change.
- Allow collage construction before drawing for pupils with motor/visual-spatial barriers.

SMSC

Cultural: connect ancient Roman design with a living contemporary British designer. Moral: distinguish inspiration from copying. Social: critique how designs might work in public/shared spaces.

Climate / sustainability

Discuss durable patterns in buildings and how long-life design can reduce replacement; use scrap coloured paper for prototypes.

Year 4 — Pattern: Roman to Radical: Lessons 1–3

Skill building • explicit teaching • sketchbook practice

1

Read a Roman pattern

To identify motifs, borders, symmetry and repetition in Roman mosaics.

Resources: mosaic images; tracing overlays

2

Meet Adam Nathaniel Furman

To identify how bold colour and geometry are used in contemporary art/design.

Resources: artist images; discussion prompts

3

Build geometric motifs

To construct accurate geometric shapes and pattern units.

Resources: rulers; templates; grids

Year 4 — Pattern: Roman to Radical: Lessons 4–6

Apply • create • refine • showcase

4 Test symmetry and repeat

To explore rotation, reflection and spacing in repeat patterns.

Resources: tracing paper; pattern tiles

5 Develop a colourway

To select and justify a bold contemporary colour system.

Resources: paint/markers; colour cards

6 Final surface design

To create and evaluate a repeat-pattern panel inspired by ancient and contemporary sources.

Resources: final paper; mixed media; display labels

Year 4 — Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry

Summer • Printmaking

Creative enquiry

How can positive and negative shapes create a strong print?

Formal elements

- Primary: Texture • Pattern
- Secondary: Shape • Positive/negative space

Artist / visual source

- Artist encounter: Angie Lewin
- William Morris; local flora illustrators

Final showcase outcome

Two-colour relief print of local/native plant forms using simplified positive/negative shapes and repeated arrangement.

What pupils should know

- A relief print transfers ink from raised areas; cut/pressed-away areas remain the paper colour.
- Positive and negative shapes must be planned before cutting/pressing.
- Artists simplify complex natural forms into strong shapes for printing.

Year 4 — Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry: Progression

Prior learning • Why this? Why now? • Future learning • Disciplinary skills

Prior learning retrieved

Y1 object printing; Y2 frottage; Y3 texture/pattern; Y4 Roman pattern and symmetry.

Why this? Why now?

Pupils are ready to move from stamping to a designed relief block. Natural forms create strong silhouettes and connect positive/negative shape to repeated printed texture.

What this prepares pupils for

Y5 monoprint concepts and deliberate texture; Y6 stencil/repeat print and more independent print decisions.

Knowledge & skills to practise

- Simplify a plant into positive/negative shapes.
- Create a safe foam/polystyrene relief block and ink it evenly.
- Register/repeat prints and experiment with two colours or rotated arrangements.

Year 4 — Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry: Inclusion & Wider Curriculum

Vocabulary • resources • SEND • SMSC • careers • sustainability

Key vocabulary

relief print • positive shape • negative space • block • ink • roller • registration • repeat • impression • silhouette • symmetry

Key resources

Local plant images/specimens; foam printing sheets; blunt pencils; water-based printing ink; rollers; trays; cartridge paper; registration corners.

Careers

Printmaker • pattern designer • book illustrator • packaging designer • botanical artist

Suggested SEND adaptations

- Use large bold silhouettes and foam rather than lino.
- Provide high-contrast positive/negative planning templates.
- Offer roller guides and a printing buddy for stabilising paper.
- Permit one-colour repeat at Expected if colour registration becomes a physical rather than artistic barrier.

SMSC

Spiritual: appreciate local plant forms. Social: studio routines and shared print equipment. Cultural: compare printmaking traditions and contemporary illustration.

Climate / sustainability

Use native/local plant subjects and recycled test paper; clean/reuse rollers and ink trays; discuss sustainable paper choices.

Year 4 — Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry: Lessons 1–3

Skill building • explicit teaching • sketchbook practice

1

Positive and negative

To identify positive shapes and negative space in plant silhouettes.

Resources: plant photos; cut-paper silhouettes

2

Meet a printmaker

To analyse how Angie Lewin simplifies plants and landscape forms.

Resources: artist images; sketchbooks

3

Design the block

To simplify a plant into a bold relief-print design.

Resources: foam; tracing paper; pencils

Year 4 — Relief Print: Nature & Symmetry: Lessons 4–6

Apply • create • refine • showcase

4

Proof and improve

To ink, print a proof and adjust the block/design.

Resources: rollers; ink; test paper

5

Develop a repeat

To explore rotation, spacing and a second colour in repeated impressions.

Resources: registration corners; inks

6

Final print edition

To produce a small edition/repeated print and evaluate consistency and impact.

Resources: final paper; drying racks; labels