

**Making Conversation workshop created by artist Naomi Kendrick.  
September 2020  
Work**

**What to do**

This activity has three simple steps 1. Spend time with the artwork 2. Think about what it means to you 3. Make something in response. Don't feel pressure to make anything precious, there is no right or wrong here, just enjoy the art works and the process of playing with materials.



Work by Ford Madox Brown 1852 -1865

To find out more about Work and to see a larger image of it click here  
<https://manchesterartgallery.org/collections/title/?mag-object-82>

**Working, employed, zero hours contract, unemployed, volunteer, freelance, keyworker, carer, stay at home parent, retired, apprentice...**

**What does work mean to you?**

**What does a typical day of your work (past or present) look, sound, smell, feel and taste like?**

**Create your own art work in response to the theme 'work'**

**Step one - Spending time with the art work**

Grab a cuppa and a biscuit, sit comfortably and allow yourself to spend time with this painting. You might want to write down notes about what you notice, but you don't have to.

First of all, just notice your first impressions of the painting, do you like it, does it remind you of anything, does it make you feel a certain way, do you have questions about it?

Then, take your time to notice the following aspects of the painting, one by one

Composition – what shapes make up the painting, how much space is around them?

Colours – you could try focusing on one colour at a time for example noticing all the different shades of green in the painting, and then all the different shades of white.

Light and shadow – scan the painting looking first for all the brightest parts, and then explore all the areas of shadow.

Texture – notice the different textures in the painting, soft, shiny, scratchy, smooth.

**Step two - Letting your mind wander**

What might the story of this artwork be? Why do you think the artist has created this and what might they be trying to say? It doesn't matter if you don't know the art's history just use your imagination. Does the artwork relate to you and your life recently in anyway?

**Step three - Starting to make**

What you make is entirely up to you, you could start to play around with some materials and see what emerges. Beginning is the hard part, once you get started just follow your hands.

Here are a few suggested materials you could use from around the house to make your artwork with:

Loo roll tubes, paper and pen, computer/smart phone, envelopes/junk mail, old magazines, packaging, biro, pencil, string, rubber band, tape, scissors, wrapping paper, camera/smartphone, old fabric/clothes, wool things from the garden/pot plants and of course anything else you might want to use....

A few reminders of different types of art you could try should you want a prompt: poems, songs, letters, drawings, costume, photography, collages, rubbings, prints, sculptures.

Please email Kate Day (k.day1@manchester.gov.uk) with a photo of what you have made, or any thoughts or comments you would like to share. These will be included and shared in our next Making Conversation newsletter.

**And...**

The gallery is busy working on a redisplay of gallery 7 on the theme of work and are asking people to join in the conversation, even helping to choose an artwork to display. To find out more and make a contribution click here

<https://manchesterartgallery.org/exhibitions-and-events/exhibition/work-redisplay/>