

Pathway: Explore Sculpture by Making a Mobile

Pathway for Years 5 & 6

Disciplines:

Design, Making, Drawing, Sketchbooks

Key Concepts:

- **That a mobile is a kinetic sculpture which relies on balance and counterbalance of materials.**
- **That through 'Design through Making' we can explore how we can create objects which balance and move.**
- **That we can be inventive and playful exploring sculptural elements which are both abstract and representational when creating a mobile.**

In this pathway, suitable for ages 9-11, we explore the work of Alexander Calder. Calder created sculptures and mobiles using solid blocks of colour and simple shapes, exploring the relationships between the objects and lines.

This pathway encourages children explore the relationships between line, shape, form and colour when working in three dimensions. Pupils explore the relationships between design and fine art, and practise Design through Making. They have the opportunity to explore balance and counter balance, and learn to take creative risks and solve problems.

This pathway will take approximately half a term, based upon a weekly art lesson.

Medium:

Construction Materials (card, wood, wire, string), Drawing & Painting media.

Artist:

Alexander Calder



Additional Pathway

This pathway is an additional pathway to help you extend, develop or further personalise the [AccessArt Primary Art Curriculum](#).

We suggest this pathway is used to replace a "Working in 3 Dimensions" (Blue) or a "Drawing and Sketchbooks" (Orange) pathway for ages 9 and above. This pathway could replace the "[Shadow Puppets](#)" or "[2D Drawing to 3D Making](#)" (Years 5 & 6).

Please note the activities in this pathway are best suited to more confident teachers who are happy with a higher level of interaction with the work, and more able or experienced pupils.

You may also like to use the activities in this pathway with a smaller group of children in an after school club or community context.



Teaching Notes

Pedagogy in 250 Words: Making is Hard

Curriculum Links

Maths: Measuring, 2D and 3D Shapes

Science: Weight, Position, Direction & Movement, Shadows, Forces and Gravity

I Can...

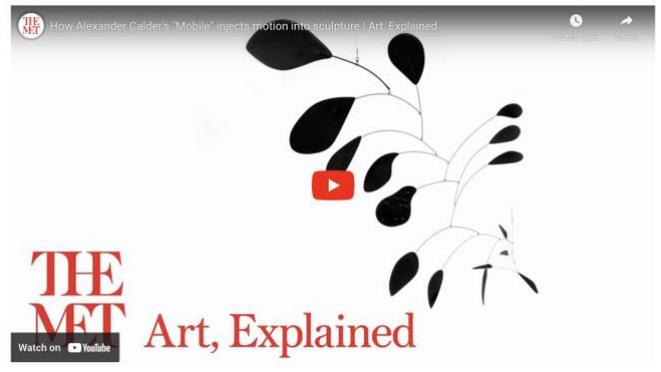
- I have explored the work of a sculptor/designer and seen they explore shape, form, line, colour and balance to make mobiles (kinetic sculptures).
- I can use my sketchbook to make visual notes to record and reflect. I can progress these notes into drawings in their own right.
- I can use my sketchbook to research the types of elements I might make, linking to an appropriate topic or idea.
- I can use the Design Through Making technique to create elements (shapes or forms) using colour, marks, etc, and see how these elements balance as a mobile. I can handle materials and tools and I can persevere when I need to.
- I can present and share my work, talk about it with my classmates, and listen to their responses to my work. I can review my own work and think about what I might do differently.

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Aim of the Pathway

The aim of the pathway is to give children the opportunity to explore line, shape, form and colour in three dimensions, challenging themselves to make a sculpture which balances and moves.

Week 1: Introduce

Introduce Alexander Calder



Introduce children to the work of Alexander Calder with "[Talking Points: Alexander Calder](#)". Follow the prompts on the "**Discussion & Sketchbook Work**" part of the "[Talking Points: Alexander Calder](#)" to develop understanding through sketchbooks and conversation. Encourage children to create "[Visual Notes](#)" in their sketchbooks as they watch.

Week 2: Sketchbooks and Prep

Show Me What You See

Revisit "[Talking Points: Alexander Calder](#)" and this time make a series of drawings in sketchbooks based upon the "Sketchbook Development Work" section.

- I can respond to the work made by my classmates and I can share my thoughts.
- I can take photographs of my work, thinking about focus, light and composition.

Time

This pathway takes 6 weeks, with an hour per week. Shorten or lengthen the suggested pathway according to time and experience.

Materials

Drawing materials, Large sheets of cartridge paper, Glue sticks, Foam board or Cardboard, Wooden kebab skewers (or Dowling or thin green garden canes), String.

Week 3/4/5: Draw, Paint, Cut, Build

You may like to use the resource [“Show Me What You See”](#) for guidance on running the session. Encourage the children to not just make drawings of Calder’s mobiles, but also to understand how these drawings can begin to exist in their own right as images.

Drawing & Making

Explore the [“Mobile Construction Methods”](#) post and the [“Heavy/Light Mobile – Drawing and Making”](#) resource. You may also like to see the [“Kinetic Mobile Sculpture”](#) resource – switching the knives for scissors.

Decide which method is right for your class. You can also tie the project into an existing classroom theme, for example an exploration of weather, or colour, or costume...



Spend one or two lessons researching (use sketchbooks) and making the “elements” before going on to construct the elements into a mobile in the next week.

Share, Reflect, Celebrate



End the pathway by taking time to appreciate the developmental stages and the final outcomes in a clear space.

Display the work appropriately including having open sketchbooks. Use the "[Crit in the Classroom](#)" resource to help you.

Encourage children to reflect upon all stages of the journey.

If available, children can use tablets or cameras to take photographs of the work.

[Explore how children can take high quality photographs of 3d artwork with this resource.](#)