



Overview

This TSM contains information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The materials provide multiple opportunities for revisiting the text several times.

“Fly Me Up” explores the artworks of Tiffany Singh, an artist who works with communities to create large, colourful installations that draw attention to social issues. Tiffany has Indian and Samoan ancestry, and her artworks are influenced by her personal explorations of identity, culture, and spirituality. One of her major works, *Fly Me Up To Where You Are*, is made from over fifteen thousand flags painted by New Zealand schoolchildren. The work was inspired by the prayer flags Tiffany saw flying in the Himalayas. Another of her works, an installation on Waiheke Island, was created in collaboration with refugees from the Auckland Resettled Community Coalition. Each of Tiffany’s artworks carries a message about the value of working together to create a more peaceful, colourful, and inclusive world.

This article:

- explains how a social-practice artist differs from other types of artists
- touches on a range of social issues, including inequality and displaced peoples
- includes photographs to illustrate the text
- contains several embedded quotes
- includes non-continuous text with subheadings
- aligns with the visual arts curriculum by providing examples of what artworks can communicate and the motivation and imagination evident in an artist’s work.

A PDF of the text is available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme

“The Great Ordinary: The Photographs of Edith Amituanai” SJ L4 November 2016 | “Six Photos” SJ L3 August 2016 | “Painting the Town” SJ L3 November 2014 | “John Pule: Artist of the Pacific” SJ L4 October 2012

Text characteristics from the year 6 reading standard

We have retained the links to the National Standards while a new assessment and reporting system is being developed. For more information on assessing and reporting in the post-National Standards era, see: <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-and-reporting-guide>

of colour in everyday life. She helped craft workers to form collectives so they’d be better paid – that’s when she learnt the power of the group.

While Tiffany was in India, there was heavy rain, and a dam collapsed. Thousands of people lost their homes, and Tiffany worked for an agency that helped them. “Families had lost everything; they had nowhere to go,” she remembers, “but I could leave anytime I wanted.”

This difference had a big impact on Tiffany. “It really messed with me,” she says. Tiffany spent time at a Buddhist monastery in Nepal. Here, she was taught to treasure teaching, meditation, and service to others. “I learnt that life is cyclical. There is not one lifetime but many. I learnt to take responsibility for my own life and to practise loving kindness for the benefit of others.”

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abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students’ understanding

Choli and Siapo

Until she went to India, Tiffany didn’t think much about having an Indian grandfather (this is her father’s father). At first, the colour and crowds in India overwhelmed her, but then she began to dress like the local women. And although she couldn’t speak any of the local languages, gradually Tiffany blended in. When people learnt about her grandfather, they said, “You are Indian, too!” Tiffany thought, “Yes, I am. I’d never realised that.”

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some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text

If you go to Tiffany’s website, the first thing you’ll notice is her photograph.

She’s wearing a purple sari. Look at the short, fitted bodice (called a choli) beneath her sari. You might recognise the patterns. They’re similar to the ones on siapo, the traditional bark-cloth of Sāmoa. Tiffany’s father is also part-Samoan, although Tiffany grew up in Auckland with her Pākehā mother.

a significant amount of vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students (including academic and content-specific words and phrases), which is generally explained in the text by words or illustrations

“The boats were gold,” Tiffany says, “because gold lifts

your spirits and draws you forward.” Tiffany used this to encourage people to enter the installation. It was sad, some more hopeful – to reflect the

figurative and/or ambiguous language that the context helps students to understand



Reading standard: by the end of year 6


VOCABULARY

Possible supporting strategies

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “social-practice”, “collaborating”, “social issues”, “jostling”, “universal ideals”, “sharing of resources”, “acceptance of diversity”, “power of the group”, “fitted bodice”, “transform”, “landscaping students”, “medicinal”, “indigenous”, “textile students”, “performing arts students”, “abandoned dinghies”, “arranged upright”, “origami”, “hulls”, “resettled community”, “refugee background”, “citizen of Aotearoa”
- Art terms, including “easel”, “studio”, “exhibition”, “gallery”, “art-lovers”, “installation”
- Organisations and events: “Auckland Arts Festival”, “city council”, “Earthquake Commission”, “[aid] agency”, “Auckland Resettled Community Coalition”
- Words and phrases related to Buddhism, including “monastery”, “meditation”, “service to others”, “cyclical [nature of life]”, “practise loving kindness”, “prayer flags”, “spirits”, “the gods”, “peace offering”
- Non-English words, including “sari”, “choli”, “siapo”
- Words related to life in India, including “slums”, “craft workers”, “collectives”
- Places, including “South Auckland”, “Aotea Square”, “India”, “Nepal”, “the Himalayas”, “Waiheke Island”
- Phrasal verbs such as “take notice”, “draw attention to”
- Collocations including “common interest”, “blended in”, “narrow way”, “high winds”
- The use of macrons: “Pākehā”, “Sāmoa”
- Identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar. Explain briefly before the students start reading that the article is about a special type of artist and that they will be finding out about some of the personal experiences and ideas that have influenced her art.
- Prompt the students' prior knowledge of strategies to work out unknown words, such as reading and thinking about the surrounding information, putting the words into context, and using parts of the words they recognise.
- Remind students to use the photographs to support their understanding of the text, particularly the descriptions of each artwork.
- Provide sticky notes for students to indicate words, phrases, or concepts they don't understand and want to come back to.
- Use a “concept circle” to help students use the new vocabulary. For example, concept circles could be used to explore the idea of social-practice art or Buddhism.
- *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
- See also [ESOL Online, Vocabulary](#), for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

Possible supporting strategies

- Some understanding of the various reasons why people create art
- Some understanding of what social issues are
- Some knowledge of the Christchurch earthquakes
- Some understanding of life in India, Nepal, and Sāmoa
- Some understanding of Buddhism
- Prompt students to discuss what they know about artists and various forms of art.
- Explore understandings about why people create art. Discuss ways that artists' cultural knowledge and experiences can influence their art. You may want to explore ways that artists from different cultures create collaborative artworks, for example, painting tapa cloth or creating a mural.
- Review what the students know (or have experienced) of the Christchurch earthquakes. Note that “Painting the Town” (*School Journal*, Level 3, November 2014) provides useful supporting information on the restorative role arts can play during times of community upheaval.
- Display some images of life in India (including images of the monsoon, women wearing saris, colourful painted slums, and craft workers), Nepal (including images of the Himalayas, Buddhist monasteries, and prayer flags), and Sāmoa (including images of medicinal plants and Samoan textiles).
- Locate each country on a map. Prompt students to share what they know about each country and what questions they have. Take care to avoid generalisations, for example, that everyone in India is poor.
-  The students could use Google Maps or Google Earth to locate the countries.
- Prompt prior knowledge of the term “refugees” and clarify any confusion. In particular, discuss the differences between a refugee and an immigrant.
- A jigsaw reading approach could help make this text more manageable. Jigsaw reading also provides opportunities to preview the text, integrate speaking and reading, and repeat language and ideas. Read the text about the Auckland Festival flag project together. Introduce a 5Ws and an H graphic organiser and model how to use it to outline key aspects of the artwork. Assign sections of the text (each based on an art project) to pairs of students. Have each pair read their section and record information about the project. The students then form groups, with each pair sharing information to the whole group about their part of the text.
- ESOL Online has a [Visual Arts Learning Progression and Assessment Methods](#) resource that provides information on ways to support students to discuss and write about art.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A non-fiction article with subheadings, several of which are figurative and require interpretation
- Sections divided by project, with the flags project roving across several sections
- Occasional information-dense complex sentences
- Several embedded quotes
- Figurative language such as “(lives) turned upside down”, “gave children a voice”, “joyful, jostling reminder”, “this difference [inequality] had a big impact”, “it really messed with me”, “each flag was like a person’s dreams and wishes released directly to the gods”, “Tiffany blended in”, “a living theatre”, “reflect [on themselves and nature]”, “gold lifts your spirits and draws you forward”
- Titles of art works: *Fly Me Up To Where You Are* (subsequently abbreviated) and *The Journey of a Million Miles Begins with One Step*

Possible supporting strategies

- Before reading, have the students talk with a partner about the features of information texts.
- Direct students to features of the article, such as the photographs or the headings, to support discussion.
- Prompt students to use the photographs to support their understanding of each artwork.
- Ask the students to find the topic sentence in each paragraph, as this will help them unpack what the paragraph is about. Discuss how each topic sentence relates to the heading for the section.
- Have the students identify the direct quotes and discuss why it is useful to hear directly from an artist about the ideas and experiences that have shaped their art.
- Prompt students to look for clues in the context to understand the figurative language, for example, what comes before or afterwards in the text. Have them share their ideas with a partner and check for understanding.
- Have pairs of students share their ideas about what the titles of each artwork might mean and how they relate to the theme of the artwork and to its form. If necessary, explain what a proverb is and invite students to share proverbs and sayings from their own cultures.
- If necessary, support students to understand long sentences, or a section of text with several sentences, by breaking them up. *What is the information in the brackets telling us? What is the extra information between the commas? So what do we know now?*



Sounds and Words

Possible curriculum contexts

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of appropriate structures.

THE ARTS (Visual Arts)

Level 3 – Communicating and Interpreting: Describe the ideas their own and others’ objects and images communicate.

Level 3 – Developing Ideas: Develop and revisit visual ideas, in response to a variety of motivations, observation, and imagination, supported by the study of artists’ work.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Level 3 – Understand how the movement of people affects cultural diversity and interaction in New Zealand.

Level 3 – Understand how cultural practices vary but reflect similar purposes.

Possible first reading purpose

- To find out what inspires and motivates a social-practice artist
- To learn about how a large-scale collaborative art project was developed.

Possible subsequent reading purposes

- To explore the ways that an artist’s experiences and beliefs influence their art
- To explore ways that artworks, and how they are made, can communicate big ideas
- To think critically about the role art can play in creating social change.

Possible writing purposes

- To write about what inspired a piece of art you have created and the message it is trying to convey
- To describe and respond to a piece of community art or a large-scale public artwork
- To research and write a report on another New Zealand-based artist
- To develop a brief for a collaborative artwork related to a social issue.




The New Zealand Curriculum

First reading

- Share the purpose for reading with the students, then skim and scan the article together, prompting them to explore the visual text as well as the headings. Have them respond to what they can see in the photographs, describing the colours, the scale, and how the artworks make them feel. Encourage them to share any connections they make (what the images remind them of and what they make them think about) and to predict what the artworks are about. Ask what questions they have about the artworks and the artist.
- Before reading, you may like to ask students to write down their hopes and dreams for their community and for the world on sticky notes. Together, arrange the hopes and dreams into key themes, making connections (where possible) with some of the concepts mentioned in the article (“sharing of resources”, “acceptance of diversity”, and other universal themes). Note that some sensitivity is required with this exercise.
- Prompt prior knowledge of artists and different purposes and forms of art. If necessary, refer to the section “Text and language challenges” for suggestions about how to support students’ background knowledge.
- Read the introduction aloud and invite responses. Have students paraphrase for one another the difference between a social-practice artist and a conventional artist.
- Direct the students to work in pairs to read one section at a time, stopping to discuss each section and to identify information that answers their questions.
- Prompt the students to make personal connections with the ideas in the text, for example: *What would you see, hear, and feel if you were walking through one of Tiffany’s artworks? Which one would you most like to have seen or contributed to? Why? What messages do the artworks convey?*

If the students require more scaffolding

- Show students the video *Fly Me Up To Where You Are New Zealand – Tiffany Singh NZ Festival 2016*, which shows young New Zealanders explaining the flags they created for the project. The video includes an excerpt of Tiffany Singh explaining what prayer flags are.
- Remind the students to use the photographs to help make connections with the text.
- Spread the reading over two or more sessions, chunking the text and providing focused guiding questions for each section.
- Prompt the students to mark (in pencil) or make a note of any words, phrases, or ideas they find confusing. Check these as they finish each section.
- Support the students as they clarify the what, when, where, who, and how of each project. (The “why” of each project will be explored in subsequent readings). Provide them with a 5Ws and an H graphic organiser. Encourage them to work together to make notes under relevant headings.
-  The students could use Google Drawing or Google Docs for this activity.

Subsequent readings How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose. Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the questions and prompts in this section.

The teacher

Brainstorm factors that influence artists, for example, their cultural background, their ideas, their experiences, their motivations, and what they want to communicate.

Have the students reread the section “Close to the Spirits”. Working in pairs, have them identify the experiences and ideas described and how these are reflected in Tiffany’s artworks. Prompt them to find both concrete examples (such as the use of prayer flags) and more abstract examples (relating to how the artworks were created and the messages they convey).

The teacher

Direct the students to reread the section “Choli and Siapo”. Working in pairs, have them discuss the purpose of this section.

- *What did you learn about Tiffany in this section? How does this relate to her art? What similarities and differences can you find between the garden project and the other artworks described in the article?*

If necessary, prompt them to consider factors such as where the artworks are located (outside rather than in a gallery), their scale (large), the people who made them (local students), their components (flags and flowers and the use of spoken words), and their message (a place to think about yourself and nature).

The teacher

Draw attention to the description of Tiffany’s artistic practice (as outlined at the beginning of the article). Have the students discuss whether the artworks fit this description.

- *Do the artworks make people take notice? How? Why?*
- *What questions are the artworks asking? If you were the voice of one of the artworks, what might you say to the people who are visiting you?*
- *How well does Tiffany fit your idea of a social-practice artist? Give reasons for your answer.*

METACOGNITION

- *How do the words and the images work together to help the reader understand what the artworks represent? Has reading about what inspired the artworks changed the way you view them? Why or why not?*

The students:

- locate and record the ideas and experiences outlined in the text
- make connections between Tiffany’s ideas and experiences and her artworks, for example, choosing to work with groups of people rather than alone and the colourfulness of her artworks
- infer how being in India when the dam collapsed and thousands of people lost their homes has influenced Tiffany’s art, for example, her sense of wanting to make a difference to the world.

The students:

- locate and identify the purpose of the “Choli and Siapo” section and, in particular, how it relates to Tiffany’s cultural background and identity
- identify and compare similarities and differences between the garden project and the other artworks
- make inferences and discuss Tiffany’s motivation in turning a rubbish dump into a peace garden
- summarise some of the key experiences and ideas that have influenced Tiffany’s artworks.

The students:

- make inferences and draw conclusions about the ways that the size and colour of the artworks can capture people’s attention
- work in pairs or small groups to “be a voice” for one of the artworks
- evaluate how well Tiffany fits the definition of a social-practice artist provided at the start of the article.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You’ve identified two key ideas that have influenced Tiffany’s flag project: the importance of colour and the value of people working together. Can you find evidence of these same ideas in a second artwork?*



Reading standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

English Level 3 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of appropriate structures.

Text excerpts from “Fly Me Up”

Page 28

The idea for the flag project began when Tiffany travelled to India and Nepal. She planned to go for three months but stayed three years! In India, Tiffany worked with all kinds of people. She worked with children to paint the slums – that’s when she discovered the importance of colour in everyday life. She helped craft workers to form collectives so they’d be better paid – that’s when she learnt the power of the group.

Examples of text characteristics

ARTIST PROFILES

When writing about an artist, it’s important to explore factors that inspire and influence their art. Understanding these factors can help people to understand what their works represent.


Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Discuss how artists express their ideas, beliefs, and values through their art. Their cultural knowledge and experiences can also have a big influence.

Have students work in pairs to discuss ways that they can find out what factors have influenced an artist or what factors have influenced their own artworks.

Discuss the difference between writing a personal response to an artwork and writing a profile of an artist and whether the two can be combined.

Have the students choose an artist and write a brief profile about them. The artist could be someone they have read about or whose artworks they have seen. Alternatively, the artist could be a classmate. They could interview the classmate about an artwork they’ve made.

DIGITAL TOOLS  The students could use Google Slides for this activity. Google Slides has a comments feature that can also be used to give peer feedback (see the next activity).

Some English language learners would benefit from seeing written models of an artist profile and by completing a graphic organiser before writing their own artist profile.

Page 26

Tiffany Singh is a social-practice artist. The word “artist” might make you imagine someone with a brush and an easel, alone in their studio. If that artist is lucky – and they’re good – a gallery will hold an exhibition of their work. Art-lovers will come and buy it. Some of the paintings might even end up in a museum.

But a social-practice artist has a very different way of working.

HELPING READERS MAKE CONNECTIONS

When you are introducing a term or concept that may be unfamiliar to readers, it can be helpful to connect it to a more commonly used term or idea. You can then compare the two to make the distinction between them clear.

Discuss ways that writers can support their readers to make connections with their texts, for example, by tapping into their prior knowledge or by including information that readers can relate to on an emotional level.

Have students discuss which parts of the text they could most easily connect with and why.

- *How did the writer help you to connect with the information?*
- *Were there parts of the text that you found harder to make connections with? Why?*
- *How can you apply these ideas to your own writing?*

Discuss the importance of having a peer provide feedback on your writing to find out which parts might need additional clarification or more detail. Have the students share their artist profile with a partner. Each partner gives feedback about any parts they found hard to follow or that needed more detail. Peer-review checklists can help prompt students to look for specific things when providing feedback,

Writing circles are another way for students to review their writing. Direct the conversations to specific details that will have a big impact, for example, subheadings that use figurative language. The students will learn from each other by hearing others’ work and discussing what makes some examples successful and others not work so well. You could provide a mini-lesson if required.

Page 30

“Each flag was like a person’s dream and wishes released directly to the gods,” Tiffany says. Back home, thinking about the Auckland Festival, Tiffany remembered those flags in Nepal. She also thought about the children who’d painted the slums. “How good would it be,” she thought, “if Auckland children could make flags of their own?”

QUOTATIONS

Using quotations when writing about a person gives the reader a chance to hear things in the person’s own words, without the writer interpreting them.

Discuss why it can be useful to include quotes in an artist profile. Emphasise the connection between artistic expression and the ideas and beliefs of the artists.

Highlight the verbs the writer uses to introduce each quote to show who is speaking. Notice the various verbs the writer used (“says”, “remembered”, “thought about”).

- *What other words could the writer have used to signal who is being quoted?*
- *Why is it useful to vary the verbs you use when you are quoting someone?*

Have students make a list of words they can use when they want to insert a quote.

Compare the use of quotation marks on page 31 to explain what Tiffany called the garden (“a living theatre”) with the use of full sentences in the rest of the text.

The students could add quotes to their profile. If they have chosen an artist they don’t know personally, they could find an interview with their artist and use parts of the interview as a quote. Alternatively, for the purpose of the exercise, they could include imaginary quotes in keeping with what they know about the artist.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You’ve described how the artwork made you feel when you looked at it, which helps to show its impact. Can you provide some extra detail to show how the artwork and the feelings it creates are connected?*

METACOGNITION

- *How did you choose which quotes to use in your artist profile? What made you decide to reject some quotes?*



Writing standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions