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# Brockwood Park School

## January/February Newsletter



Thunder explodes across the landscape, as students turn in astonishment to see a herd of feral horses gallop alongside them

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"Obviously, I am the product of environment. That is the beginning, the first fact to see. To find out if I am anything more than merely a product of environmental and climatic influences, I must first be free from those influences which exist about me and of which I am the product. I am the result of the conditions, the absurdities, the superstitions, the innumerable factors, good and bad, which form the environment about me; and to find out if I am something more, I must obviously be free of those influences, must I not? To understand something more, I must first understand what is. Merely to assert that I am something more has no meaning until I am free from the environmental influences of the society in which I am living. Freedom is the discovery of not merely a denial of them. Surely, freedom comes with the discovery of truth in everything that is about me - the truth of property, the truth of things, the truth of relationship, the truth of ideas. Without discovering the truth of these things, I cannot find what one may call the abstract truth or God. Being caught in the things about me, obviously the mind cannot go further, cannot see or discover what is beyond. A man who is seeking to understand himself, must understand his relationship to things, to property, to possessions, to country, to ideas, to the people immediately about him. This discovery of the truth of relationship is not a matter of repeating words, verbally throwing at others ideas about relationship. The discovery of the truth of relationship comes only through experience in relationship with property, with people, with ideas; and it is that truth which liberates, not mere effort to be free from property or from relationship. One can discover the truth of property, of relationship, of ideas, only when there is the intention to find out the truth and not be influenced by prejudice, by the demands of a particular society or belief, or by preconceptions concerning God, truth, or what you will; because, the name, the word, is not the thing. The word "God" is not God, it is only a word; and to go beyond the verbal level of the mind, of knowledge, one must experience directly, and to experience directly one must be free from those values which the mind creates and clings to. Therefore, to understand this psychological process of oneself is far more important than to understand the process of outward environmental influences. It is important to understand yourself first, because in understanding yourself you will bring about a revolution in your relationships and thereby create a new world."

**J. Krishnamurti Bangalore 2nd Public Talk 11th July, 1948**

### Inquiry Time





**January 24th. Do we feel discriminated because of our age?**

Students presented the topic and we split up into small groups. Does age determine capacity? Does age imply maturity? Are we more mature the older we are? Why do we have to reach 18 to be considered adults? Many questions were raised around capacity and maturity in relation to age. Society needs a guarantee that certain things can only happen when one is of a certain age, for instance to become a doctor, to be able to drive a car .....

**January 31st. Image making and its effect on relationships.**

We had a presentation by staff on visual effects and then we split into small groups. Images play a big role in our lives as they inform us about the world that surrounds us and as a consequence they sooth the uncomfortable feeling of the unknown. However, do images match the reality? Can we know people through images? Why do we need to know everything around us and label everything? Do images box us in? Why do we protect our images? Do we get hurt because we have an image? Can we be aware how images play out in relationships? We relate by adjusting each other's image and call that relationship. The dialogue discussed these topics and many more.

**February 6th. Authority and Freedom**

The whole school discussed together the topic of authority introduced in unison by students and staff. Many questions around functional and psychological authority were brought up. We are trying to create a learning environment in which there is not psychological authority, which is very challenging. We went into the inner and outer authority and how authority is created. Do we always need to follow authority? Do we need leaders in our lives? Can we stand on our own?

**February 13th. Authority and Freedom**

It was a continuation of the previous Inquiry Time in small groups and we focused on freedom. We started by looking at the etymological meaning of the word. Freedom is a fundamental question for humans which is easily misunderstood and misused in the world. Is freedom the ability to do whatever I want? This approach encroaches on other's people freedom and for this reason it is questionable. We depend on others, but when this dependency becomes attachment, it destroys the very freedom we long for. Do we really wish to be free?

**February 20th. Uncertainty, is it possible to live with uncertainty in an intelligent manner**

We discussed the topic in small groups. We looked at the dynamics of the past and future in our lives and the anxiety and fear that it can arise in us. Uncertainty in our lives is a fact and we seem to fight it through knowing but can we know everything? Is there a limit to knowledge? The assumption that the more we know the better is a strong part of what we are and how we perceive life. Uncertainty cannot go away as is the nature of life

**February 27th. Climate change, what is a real change?**

The whole school discussed this topic so present around us. Most of the scientists are expressing the dangers of increasing the average temperature in the world above two degrees. What to do in front of something that feels too big for the individual? We can get depressed by the stream of environmental news in the media or become an activist and start fighting for the environment. Would any of these approaches resolve the insensitivity that humans show towards nature? Is there another approach? In the meantime, it is important to clean-up as much as we can our small backyard.



**08/01/2019- 14/01/2019:** Brockwood Staffpartook in their annual staff retreat in the Lake District where they participated in morning dialogues, afternoon walks, and quiet evenings in front of the fire and spending time getting to know one another and sharing their reflections outside of the context of the school.



One of our retreat days was spent hiking in the area of Coniston led by trustee member Gary Primrose.

### **16/01/2019: Student Arrival Day**

**17/01/2019:** The **Core Health & Movement** class started looking into the topic of stress. The leading causes of death in 1900 and 2010 were compared - nowadays, most of the diseases that lead to death in the industrialised world are stress-related diseases. The class also watched a short video of Stanford scientist and stress researcher Robert Sapolsky (author of "Why Zebras Don't Get Ulcers") explaining how stress can be both a savior and a killer.

**17/01/2019:** The **Core Math** class explored 'tesselations' which is an arrangement of shapes closely fitted together, especially of polygons in a repeated pattern without gaps or overlapping.

**18/01/2019:**

The **Elective Health & Movement** class picked up the practice of floor work, a practice related to contemporary dance which includes smooth movement patterns close to and on the floor such as rolls and slides that are knitted together to flowing sequences.

**18/01/2019: Elective Art** students gathered to share their investigation into their chosen urban space that they did over winter break. They showed a range of photo's, sketches, written experiences, some emotive and personal responses. Being a group from many different parts of the world this was especially interesting for all over us - one showed a sunny beach with palm trees, another a newly built mega-causeway over a remote rural village, another a village built in Wales in the early 20th Century to compliment with nature. We discussed the nature of these spaces and how it felt to be in them. The rest of the first half of the morning was spent continuing to document and build this investigation into their sketchbooks. The second half of the morning we watched a documentary on Robert Rauschenberg and his creative response to urban spaces, his approach to using material, and his life's continually innovative journey.

**18/01/2019:** This happened!





**21/01/2019:** In **Elective Humanities** a new topic was introduced on 'Countries' discussing questions such as 'Do you think national borders can be fixed?' 'Do you notice borders and boundaries at Brockwood?'

**21/01/2019:** As we get closer to the A2 exams the **History A2** students are asked to practice exam questions in class on the French Revolution.

**21/01/2019: History AS** Students gave presentations on influential individuals of the British Empire, the power and significance of these men to shape the world around them is fascinating.

**21/01/2019: Core Art** returned from Winter Break to have a studio day of working on our personal projects, starting a simplified design from our previous sketches, and near the end an introduction to the artist Julien Trevelyan in preparation for our trip next Thursday 24th. In the second half of the morning we watched a documentary called 'Radiance' (BBC), based on colour and how and why it has been used throughout art history up to the present day. Thursday 24th: Core Art trip to Pallant House Gallery to study the work of Julien Trevelyan who painted and lived alongside the swans and river Thames in London. We had a discursive tour of his work and collaborative activities as part of our engagement with his work. The main themes that emerged were: working with landscape, a personal response to place, collaboration with fellow artists, and observing social settings as research.

**22/01/2019:** This term, the **EAL** (English as an additional language) class started working on a play. Studying a play in a foreign language is a big challenge, but brings many learning opportunities. While studying 'Gifts of Flame' from the British playwright David Cullcutt the students improve their pronunciation, enunciation and articulation of words and sentences in the English language.

**22/01/2019: Art** Portfolio students participated in a collaborative exercise where they worked in pairs. Students were presented with three found images already attached to a roll of paper which related to landscapes around the world and environmental, humanitarian, and political crisis. Apart from closely studying the imagery and observing certain impacts on the world and our environment, students worked to develop the image further through their own imagination and with the use of found objects and materials. Through the act of collaborating, pairs found themselves working closely side by side and seeing how they could combine their imagery and approach, while also taking in to consideration the process of the other person, their space and where two people can come together, meet and work through their differences.

**[View the Videos here](#)**



Artistic Collaboration in the Art Barn: Video 1



Artistic Collaboration in the Art Barn: Video 2

**25/01/2019:** This week's **Health and Movement** session was dedicated to the learning of a large amount of coordination patterns, challenging body and brain likewise. These practices included a number of different stepping patterns, arm-swings, full body coordinations as well as partner games and exercises that put the brain and body into full learning mode.

**27/01/2019: Sustainable Fashion with Textiles** group went to V&A in London to view the Fashion from Nature Exhibition. The exhibition highlighted Fashion's misuse of Nature in Fashion and how this has impacted the world and our environment. It also touched on the future of fashion and highlighted ways in which we can help reduce the impact of fashion.



**28/01/2019:** The **History A2** class are beginning a new topic today looking at the French Revolution

**30/01/2019:** This week, the **Journalism** class explored free-writing. With a timer set to ten minutes, everyone scribbled down the contents of their subconscious, then shared the resulting word mash with the group.

**31/01/2019: Core Maths:** The class explored the concept of Learning about Prime numbers and Factors by examining a diagram of coloured circles

**31/01/2019:** In **History A2** class we debated the impact of World War One on the British Empire. It was great to hear the student formulating opinions and then arguing their viewpoint!

**10/02/2019 - 15/02/2019:** The **Art** Portfolio class went off to for a week to have a retreat at Gayles Retreat in the beautiful South Downs, about a 20 minutes walk away from the white chalk cliffs of Seven Sisters in East Sussex. The retreat was an opportunity for the students as well as staff and teacher apprentice to find out about their relationship with art and their immediate environment, away from the everyday rhythm and the familiar landscape of Brockwood. With sketchbooks and cameras in their bags, the group went for long walks along the cliffs and the beach to gather inspirations, tokens, impressions, moments and a few freckles on their faces. Back at Gayles there was time and space to respond to the gathered impressions by making more elaborate pieces of art as well as documenting their reflections on nature and their process in their portfolios. Mid-week, the group visited Charleston House nearby, former home to artists Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant, who were part of the Bloomsbury Group, known for their bohemian lifestyle and their post-impressionist inspired art and craft making. Not only was it a week of exploration for each individual and their art making, it was also a time where the class worked together to prepare the daily breakfast, to sit in silence and practice yoga, to work on a large collaborative painting and to give the place a good farewell clean-up.



The Art Portfolio class sitting on the Haven brow while sketching the eastern half of the majestic Seven Sisters chalk cliffs in front of them.

**12/02/2019:** In this morning's assembly, we were treated to a poem and a harp performance. What a wonderful start to the day!





**18/01/2019: 18th:** A portfolio student- Elle - who had spent the day in a professional printmaking workshop, came to share her experiences and demonstrate how to combine collagraph and mono printmaking techniques. She joined us in making for the rest of the session, sharing tips and encouragement. Students who had made collagraphs got to adjust the printing press's settings and print their plates.

**20/02/2019:** What will Brockwood look like in 25 years time? That was the essay question the **EAL** class worked on as part of our exploration of the future tenses in the English language. Many students expect some of the current students returning to Brockwood in the future as teachers or the principal!

**20/02/2019:** This week in **Journalism** class we watched a few TED Talks about the media and had subsequent discussions about each topic. Questions like does the media have a 'duty of care' was one topic we explored. We discussed the abolishing of the Fairness Doctrine under President Reagan's administration. We also watched an interview with Julian Assange and discussed the impact Wikileaks may or may not be having on our culture.

**22/01/2019:** Today's **Health & Movement** class focused on our backbone, the spine. Starting with some theoretical input on anatomy and function of the spinal column, as well as some examples of spinal movement in nature (spinal waves in the movements of crocodiles and cheetahs), we then delved into an hour long practice of different exercises to develop awareness and motor control of the spine and all its individual vertebrae.



**25/01/2019 and 01/02/2019: Elective Art** students respond to their urban investigations by painting and collaging a memory-map/expression of the space. This was a chance to work large scale, to be free and loose with the body, and to be expressive as well as introducing realistic elements. 1st of Feb: A re-cap presentation and discussion on the basic elements of a painting (i.e. paint application tools, Ground colour, layer layer layer, happy accidents and experiments, colour relationship, perspective and depth, Detail, lights and darks).

**26/02/2019:** Spanish class took place in a more Spanish setting yesterday, outside in the sunshine!





**26/02/2019:** A group of **Science and History** students visited the Greenwich Observatory and National Maritime Museum for a combined history and science trip. In the morning we were wowed by the exhibition of Astronomy Photography, visited the excellent interactive displays on maritime adventure throughout history and spent a beautiful sunny lunchtime soaking in the weather. We then walked over to the Cutty Sark, a 19th century tea clipper and learnt about life at sea for a Victorian sailor. A great day out for all involved.



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**27/01/2019:** This week the **Economics** class began looking at the functioning of labour markets with a view to understanding how and why people in different occupations are paid different wages.

**28/01/2019:**

Core Art- Introduction to different printmaking techniques (mono, collagraph, lino) and their characteristics, and the concept of negative space. Continued developing a high contrast design for lino print.

## Global Issues:

For the past six weeks, the Global Issues class has been looking at the topic of sustainability and sustainable development. Students and teachers started off by learning about the topic of 'planned obsolescence' and watching the documentary "The Lightbulb Conspiracy". The class then looked at the characteristics of the current economic system and the differences between countries in today's globalized world, using and learning about different development indices such as GDP (gross domestic product), HDI (Human Development Index) and GNH (Gross National Happiness - Bhutan). Furthermore, the United Nations' goals for sustainable development were looked at and questioned. The class also had a look at the consequences of an economy based on growth and the up-and-coming concept of 'de-growth'. In the last weeks, the class had a number of interesting discussions such as one on the nature of change (in society and oneself) and its relationship to action and activism, inspired by the news of the recent climate protests. Students have also started their own projects in the field of sustainability, with topics ranging from de-growth and the Transition Town movement to ecotourism in Tulum, Mexico.

**28th of February**  
**Long Weekend begins**

## Club Focus: Brockwood's Book Club

**06/01/2019:** The book club continued reading together, this time with cake! Thanks to Maria and Tina.

**13/02/2019:** As many bookclubbers were on the art retreat, those who remained decided to watch a movie based on a book we had already read. It was a surprisingly faithful but simple account of John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men. The book club recommends this 1992 film directed by Gary Sinese, starring himself as George and John Malkovich as Lennie, to anyone who has read and enjoyed the book.

**20/02/2019:** After a short recap of the story so far, we got to the end of the book and found out how nobody managed to stop the Vicario Brothers from murdering Santiago Nasar, even though everyone in the village knew about their plans.

## Project focus: Anias' Photography Project

For her Photography Project Anais has been experimenting with Fashion Photography and has been involved with organising and photographing a fashion shoot for a well known Boutique in Alresford. Her photographs from last year have appeared in local press and the owners of the boutique were so impressed that they asked her to do their Spring/Summer promotional shots. The whole shoot was organised and led by Anais. She recruited two models (Amber and Samira) and made sure they had everything they needed for the shoot, liased with the store owner regarding 'looks' required for the shoot. The shoot took all morning and after editing and selecting the photos, Anais will be delivering the photo's to the store ( 4-8 March).

***There are too many happenings in Brockwood to list but we hope that you enjoyed our snapshot.***

## Video: Questioning Authority in Inquiry Time

Every Wednesday the whole school comes together to inquire into an important subject



which relates to our lives. On February 6th we looked at authority and freedom.



# School Gallery



On their way to breakfast, Arno, Carole, Rowan, Eva, and Anna stop to have a look at the white landscape.





Students worked fast to end their morning jobs a bit earlier than usual to have some time to play out in the fresh snow.



Some students and staff preferred the coziness of the house during the snow play.





Staff member Michael was in for a surprise morning wake-up.



Kai-Song...looking cool!





Rowan, Maria, and Meher at the back of the south lawn keeping distance from the snowballs flying across the south lawn.



Lucia takes time to look at a painting of Julian Trevelyan during an evening trip to the Pallant House Gallery in Chichester. A group of students participated in an interactive tour that included various observation exercises related to a retrospective body of work of Trevelyan.





Teacher Apprentice Carole Lussi helps to prepare a collaborative exercises with environmental images for the art portfolio class.

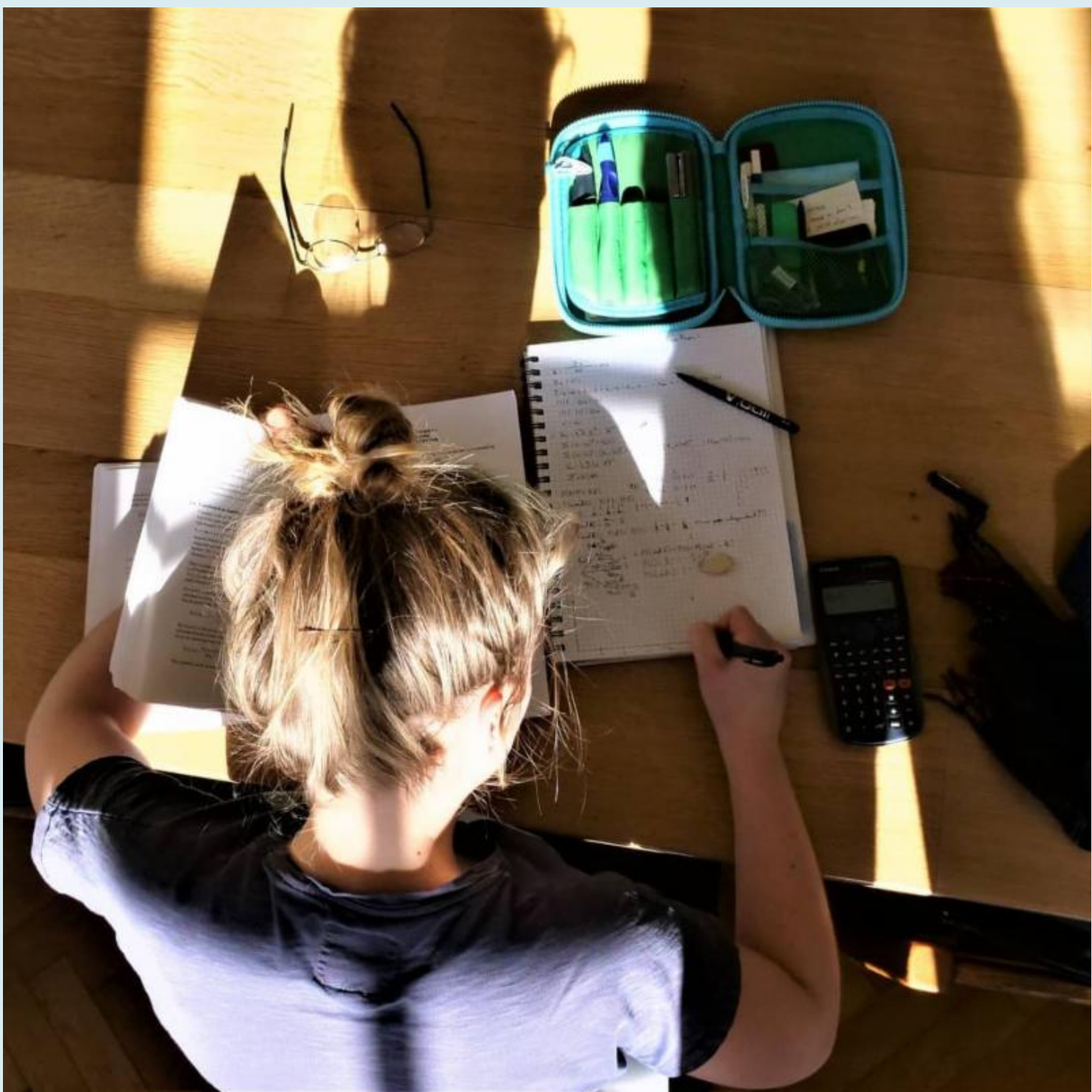


Laura and Tara collaborate during an exercise using imagery related to environmental, humanitarian, and political crisis.





Laura responding and building on to her given image of an oil spill through various materials.



The sun comes out for Tereza studying in the Dinning Hall.





Meher and Rosa take their studies outdoors for some sunshine



A group of students walking and approaching the Seven Sisters cliffside in East Sussex.





Students, staff member Jennifer, and teacher apprentice Carole stand at the point where the river Cuckmere meets the English Channel between Eastbourne and Seaford. From the brow of the cliff behind us we could observe the Cuckmere and how it meanders through the countryside and contains several oxbow lakes. Apart from this, we also witnessed and felt the strong current of the Cuckmere spilling out into the sea from the saltmarsh further up along the river.



A sketching session on Haven Brow, overlooking the Seven Sisters cliffs.





Elle and Laura making their way to end of the Cuckmere river.



Walking along the Seven Sisters coastline before returning to Brockwood.





Kai-song busy hand-crafting a new Duck House  
for our little feathered friends





There was not a suitable ballet barre for Annika when she came to Brockwood, but there was a Woodwork Barn where she could learn to build one!





Charlene plants new crops in our greenhouse.





Staff member Ashleigh playing the harp during a gesture drawing workshop in the art barn.



Students participating in a gesture drawing workshop in the art barn. Live music helped to set the mood and immerse the students in closely observing the gestural pose and responding with unconventional materials and tools.





Art portfolio students participating in a collaborative mural which was a reflection on their art retreat to Seven Sisters Country Park.

Visit our website at  
[brockwood.org.uk](http://brockwood.org.uk)

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