

English

KS1 and KS2

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The portraits of the Great Chamber offer a rich resource for creative writing. The ideas below have been based on the paintings of King Charles II (who was president of the board of Governors at the Charterhouse) and Queen Elizabeth I, (who visited the Charterhouse of a number of occasions, most notably for five days prior to her coronation in 1558). These two were chosen for their particularly varied range of colour, texture and detail, but the writing activities would lend themselves to any of the remarkable collection of portraits.

Years 1-2

Painting with Words

Imaginative describing

- a) Start with a story: Background reading and story suggestions:
[Katie and the British Artists](#) or [Katie's Picture Show](#) – both by James Meyhew,
[Tell me a Picture](#) – Quentin Blake
 Each of these explore stories within paintings and encourage close observation and imaginative viewing.
 - b) Looking at pictures: Start with close observation of the portrait of Queen Elizabeth I or King Charles II: What can you see? What is the person doing? Wearing? Holding? What objects are in the background? What do you want to know? Is anything hiding? What is their expression like? What kind of mood do you think they are in?
 - c) Describe their clothing: Look at the colours, textures, designs. Gather some samples of satin, velvet, lace, leather, wool or ribbons for pupils to feel and compare.
 - d) Play with Words: Click on the link to access a manipulative game for the word bank below. Play with colour coded words for verbs, facial expression, dress, symbols and senses. Mix and match to create lively phrases. Very young children can be supported by pre-selecting suitable words to choose from.
- [KS1 Word Bank manipulative game](#)

Painting and portrait word bank

Posture	expression	dress	symbol	sensory
wait	proud	velvet	feather	pale
hold	cold	ribbon	globe	rich
touch	stately	sleeve	plume	stiff
gaze	grim	pearl	brooch	thick
clutch	cruel	jewels	pillar	dark
glance	grand	satin	column	crimson
watch	serious	lace	sieve	delicate
grasp	fierce	ruff		soft
drape	kind	cloak		scratchy
glint	fun	bows		shadowed
shine	happy			
stare	bored			
pose				

- *Describe together* How can we describe this person? Can we 'paint a picture with words?' Use the word bank. Add your own. Describe in colour. Describe in textures. Make up words. Explore interesting posture words; what is the person doing? Describe how they are posing. To encourage creative vocabulary try to avoid using 'stands', 'sits', 'holds', or 'looks'.

- *Imagination caps on!* What might the King or Queen be saying? Try adopting the same pose: feet, hands, head, shoulders, nose. Hold the pose for 10 seconds. Describe what it feels like!

What do we think the artist said to the sitter? Why did they ask the King to stand like that? Who might be watching just outside the frame? What is their conversation? Is there someone in the background of the painting? What are they doing/saying/thinking?

- *Speaking pictures:* Write or draw some speech bubbles together. Add in some 'thinks' bubbles or captions to a screen-view of the painting based on class or group discussions.
- *Tell the Picture:* Tell a story which includes all the items you spotted in the portrait. Tell the story of the background dancers. Why are they dancing? What can you see and hear in the picture? Tell the story of King Charles II's beautiful cloak and feathered hat. Maybe it has magical qualities or is made of something extraordinary or has its own story to tell.

Years 2-3

Painting with Words Descriptive Writing

Look really closely at any of the portraits: E.g. Charles II. Elizabeth I

- Use the Word Cloud/bank: Mix and match adjectives to create a word picture of one item of the clothing or the face in a painting. **Focus on the senses** as a way to unlock imagination.
- Introduce the concept of **visual** Simile: As blue as Encourage use of comparative words instead of colours (e.g. watery, daffodil, ruby)
- Describe the **texture** of the clothing with some creative comparisons rather than 'rough' or 'smooth' . (e.g. bristly, peachy) What other items in pupil's experience can be used for comparisons of texture the artist has achieved on the clothing?
- Try using a texture or **temperature** word to describe the expression on the sitter's face. What would a Velvety smile be like? Or a chilled eye? Can you draw them? Dream up some more texture words to describe the look on the sitter's face or in their eyes.
- We use **flavour** descriptions frequently in speech. 'Sweet sounds' 'Sour expression' 'bitter cold'. Dream up some more flavourful words or similies to describe elements of the portrait.
- **Sound** words might also be useful: Singing, scraping, clashing might all be used to describe colour, or expression or texture in the painting.
- What words can be added to the word cloud? Make up some original comparisons and turn them into adjectives with -y or -ish or -like.
- See if you can take all your suggestions and complete a sentence using adjectives, comparisons, similes or metaphors:

.....[name of sitter] [posture word]
 like.....
 Is wearing a.....,,
 And stares at me with a, gaze.

Word Cloud: creative adjectives



KS2 Creative Writing

Portrait Poetry

Use the Virtual Tour of the Great Chamber to thoroughly explore the room and paintings, the ceiling, fireplace or windows.

Take a close look at the portrait of Queen Elizabeth I. She is dripping in pearls and dazzling jewels. She holds a sieve which refers to a Roman myth about an innocent goddess who proves her purity to the gods by miraculously carrying water in a sieve. What details can you find in the background?

Yr 3-4

Cinquains (san kane)

Cinquain form rules

- Cinquains are pocket-sized poems just five lines long.
- They have 2 syllables in the first line, 4 in the second, 6 in the third, 8 in the fourth line, and just 2 in the last line. Total 22 syllables Easy to remember as 2,4,6,8,2

Line 1	2 syllables
Line 2	4 syllables
Line 3	6 syllables
Line 4	8 syllables
Line 5	2 syllables

- Cinquains do not need to rhyme, but you can include rhymes if you want to.
 - Start with a simple word or idea in two syllables which stirs a feeling in you about this subject.
 - Brainstorm five or six things you know, like, dislike, and feel about it. Jot them down. Play around with words as you count syllables.
 - Add in something you want your reader to think about or something which you notice or imagine.
 - Now think about the last line. It could echo your first or give a different view point of it.

Starting points

- The schoolboys of Charterhouse used to put on Guy Fawkes Night plays in this room. Try a Cinquain about fireworks or a bonfire.
- The Fireplace is the heart of the room. Try a cinquain about this room as part of a home: what would happen here? Would it ever be warm? Or draughty? Cosy or imposing? Would you relax by this fire, or stand and deliver a speech? Imagine this

room in the firelight. Can you capture the colours, sounds, smell or flickering shadows in your poem?

- The portraits all reveal character. Look closely into the eyes of any portrait on the virtual tour and imagine what they might be thinking and shape the thoughts into a cinquain. Observe and note what you see in the picture. Focus on something unexpected. Make your reader look at the painting with new eyes.

Here's an example based on the portrait of Charles II and what he might have been thinking as he was painted looking so proud and stately. I wondered if he was day-dreaming about something unexpected. (I squeezed in a little bit of rhyme, but you don't have to).

I pose
Draped in velvet
Squashed toes in satin bows.
I long to run barefoot in grass.
Kings can't

Yr 5-6

Dazzling Diamante Poems



Look at the windows of the Great Chamber on the Virtual Tour. They are all diamond shapes. Some have names scratched in them – either by glaziers over the centuries, or schoolboys leaving their mark.

‘Diamante’ means Diamond-like and these little poems are written in a diamond shape to a carefully cut pattern.

Diamante form rules

- Diamante are jewel-like poems seven lines long, with a set number of words per line.
 - Word count per line: 1 2 3 4 3 2 1
- Each line also follows a grammar pattern.
 - 1 Noun, 2 adjectives, 3 verbs, 4 nouns, 3 verbs, 2 adjectives, 1 noun
- Diamantes can be Antonymic – which means that the first and last words are opposites (e.g. light and dark), or Synonymic: first and last words mean the same (e.g. Queen and Monarch)

Line 1	1 word	Noun	Opening focus word
Line 2	2 words	Adjectives	Describing the Line 1 word
Line 3	3 words	Verbs	Relating to Line 1 word
Line 4	4 words	Nouns	If your Diamante is Antonymic, the 'turn' in your poem is on the 3 rd noun on this line.
Line 5	3 words	Verbs	Relating to your Line 7 word
Line 6	2 words	Adjectives	Describing your Line 7 word
Line 7	1 word	noun	Can be synonymic (meaning the same) or antonymic (opposite) with Line1 (or synonymic but with a twist)

You can create a Diamante poem based on any portrait.

- a) Start with a sparky noun which inspires you for Line 1. It could be about anything you can see in this picture: e.g. her brooch, her pearls, the globe, the courtiers dancing, her sieve or something which quickly evokes other images in your mind. For inspiration, play a quick game of Connection with a partner starting with anything you can see in the painting. If you find a word which immediately inspires other words and images in your head, start your poem with that. (For example: If I say 'Jewel' what would be the next word or image you thought of?)
- b) Now think about your last word. Decide if you would like a Synonym - (another word for the same thing) – or choose an Antonym – (which means the opposite). Or choose an ending noun which complements or adds to your first word in some way. If you like, it shows a different 'facet' of the first word.
- c) Now brainstorm as long a list of nouns, adjectives and verbs as you can, which relate to your first and last nouns. Write them in lists or a word cloud. Be really creative and stretch your imagination.

Here's an example. I love Queen Elizabeth's stunning ruby, pearl and diamond brooch. I think it says something about her as a Queen.

Jewel

Ruby dazzling

Flashing, sparkling, bewitching

Diamond, pearl, purity, glory

Commanding, demanding, governing

Fiery, imperious

Queen

If you choose an antonymic or complementary Diamante, the 'turn' from the first word towards the last needs to take place exactly in the middle. Can you see in the example above where that might be?

Dazzling Display

- Write them out in a perfect diamond shape.
- A class could each write their diamond poem, cut them out and display to create a whole window of poetry.
- Or write them out with a permanent marker on diamonds of acetate sheets and stick them on a window. Wonderful words cast paintings in a new light.

