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ACCESSIBLE LEARNING WITH
JACOPO
AMIGONI

**ARTWORK
IN FOCUS**



Jacopo AMIGONI

Portrait group: The singer Farinelli and friends

(c. 1750–1752)

oil on canvas

172.8 x 245.1 cm

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

Felton Bequest, 1950

2226-4

OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE

The Accessible Learning with Art resources are designed to provide opportunities for students with diverse learning abilities to view and meaningfully respond to works of art and design from the NGV Collection. The resources promote the development of close looking skills and introduce strategies to encourage students to critically respond to visual elements, ideas and artmaking processes.

The video component focuses on a single artwork and is intended to be used as a starting point to inspire exploration, discussion and artmaking. Each self-contained video is accompanied by a PDF support document, which can be utilised by teachers and/or parents to scaffold and extend student learning. The level of support given should be adjusted based on the age and abilities of the students. Observe student engagement levels to inform how far to progress with the video and related activities. Each video can be watched in full or paused as needed.

In this video, students are invited to closely observe and respond to a painting by Italian artist Jacopo Amigoni (c.1685–1752). This painting is a group portrait depicting not only the artist himself, but several of his close friends, including Carlo Broschi Farinelli (1705–1782), the most famous and talented opera singer of his day. By interpreting the subject matter in this group portrait, students can reflect on the friendships they have established and individual character traits that are helpful to maintain and enrich respectful relationships with others.



LEVEL

Primary

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will:

- Identify and describe subject matter in an artwork.
- Analyse and interpret the meanings and messages expressed by an artist in an artwork.
- Discuss the characteristics and qualities of good friendships and respectful relationships.
- Recognise and discuss the ways individual strengths, skills and talents can contribute to positive dynamics and outcomes in social situations.

CURRICULUM LINKS**VISUAL ARTS****Respond and Interpret**

Identify and discuss how ideas are expressed in artworks from a range of places, times and cultures, including artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples ([VCAVAR028](#))

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CAPABILITY**Self-awareness and Management**

Describe the ways in which similarities and differences can affect relationships ([VCPSCSO021](#))

Explore and discuss behaviours that demonstrate sensitivity to individual, social and cultural differences ([VCPSCSO029](#))

Describe the characteristics of respectful relationships and suggest ways that respectful relationships can be achieved ([VCPSCSO031](#))

SUPPORT NOTES FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS

PRIOR TO WATCHING

PREPARE YOURSELF

- Familiarise yourself with the content and structure of the Jacopo Amigoni video resource.
- Identify and prepare any necessary visual cues required to further support student understanding of concepts explored in the video, guided discussion and activities.
- You can also read more about the painting, *Group portrait: The singer Farinelli and friends*, and discover further ways to engage your students, in an existing NGV resource [here](#).

PREPARE YOUR STUDENTS

- Introduce the activity when students are feeling calm and at ease.
- Introduce art galleries as places for displaying works made by artists. Talk about what students might see if they were to visit an art gallery. This may include drawings, paintings, sculptures, photography and films.
- Look at photos of the NGV and/or navigate through [interactive virtual self-guided tours](#) accessible on the NGV website. Explain that the artwork students will be looking at, as well as other works of art and design, can be viewed in real life on display at the Gallery, where anyone can go and visit.
- Explore editable [social stories](#) about visiting the NGV to familiarise students with the gallery experience.
- Ensure adequate time is allocated for students to slow down and look at the artwork, with minimal distractions.
- Explain to students that they will be looking at a painting and learning about friendship and how people can be connected by shared interests or hobbies. They will also be looking carefully at the work for clues that will tell them how the people in the painting are connected to each other.
- Invite students to talk about the different kinds of social and friendship circles they belong to and how they like to spend time with the people in this group. They might wish to share a particular memory or experience they've had that enhanced the connection between the people in the group.
- View a map of Europe and locate Italy, where the artist was born, and Spain, where the subjects of the painting lived and worked. You can also invite students to identify and name other European countries and cities that they are familiar with.

DURING AND/OR AFTER WATCHING**GUIDED DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES**

The video covers three key themes that you may wish to explore in more depth. You will find suggested discussion points and activities to assist on the following pages. They are intended to be flexible so choose the ones that best suit your students' interests and needs. You may like to encourage the students' efforts by modelling your own responses to questions or by trying the activities with them.



THEME 1: MAKING FRIENDS AND MAINTAINING RELATIONSHIPS

TUNING IN

Begin by asking the students to look closely at the painting and try to guess who the people in the painting might be and how they might know each other. Some questions may include:

- Who are these people? What can we assume about them?
- How do you think they know each other How can we tell?
- How have they been positioned? Look where each person is standing or sitting and where they are each looking. Are they touching each other at all?
- What's the reason behind this composition?
- What can you see in this painting that shows these people care about each other?

Introduce the topic of friendship by discussing the process of making and strengthening friendships and other relationships. Use guiding questions, such as:

- Who are your friends?
- Where did you meet them?
- What makes them special to you?
- What is a question you could ask someone to get to know them better?
- What are some of the ways you can be a good friend?
- How can we show our friends that we care about them?
- What do your friends do to show you they care about you? How does that make you feel?

Extend the discussion by inviting students to consider what it means to be involved in a respectful relationship. You can ask them questions such as:

- What are some 'rules' of friendships? For example, how should we treat each other? Why?
- What does it mean to be in a respectful relationship?
- Brainstorm examples of how we behave in respectful relationships.
- Who are people that you have respectful relationships with?

ACTIVITIES

- Create a collage of an ultimate crew of friends. Using people and/or characters that students are familiar with, create a 'cut and paste scene' of figures who have something in common. For example, Batman and Iron Man, who are both superheroes, could be depicted getting an ice cream with The Hulk. Or, pop culture icons Taylor Swift, Charlie XCX and Harry Styles might be at the beach together. Images can be found online and printed or cut from magazines if available.
- Create a group portrait of familiar people who socialise together. It might be a group that your students or someone they know belongs to. You may wish to suggest friendship groups, family or sporting clubs. Encourage students to consider the overall composition of their portrait, and how poses and props could help tell a story about the relationship the people in the artwork share.



THEME 2: CELEBRATIONS AND MEMORIES

TUNING IN

Jacopo Amigoni created this painting to remember the friendship and the good times he shared with the people pictured in the portrait. Invite students to think about special occasions they mark or celebrate with their friends. If they feel comfortable, they might like to share some of the experiences they've had. Encourage a group conversation with the following sample questions:

- What are some celebrations or special memories that you share with friends?
- How do you celebrate special moments with your friends?
- How do you remember the special things you do with friends? Do you keep any mementos or things to remind you of the special moments you've shared?

ACTIVITIES

- Design and plan a new and unique celebration. You can do this activity as a whole class or in smaller groups. Begin with a brainstorm, prompting students with questions such as:
 - We know about special days like birthdays, Christmas, Eid and Lunar New Year, but what if you could invent your own celebration? What would you celebrate and why?
 - What would people do during this celebration?
 - Are there any special customs or gifts?
- Ask students to make a greeting or thank you card for a friend, celebrating how awesome they are. Encourage students to develop a personalised design and a message that reflects the relationship they have with their friend. You can prompt them to think about what they like about this person, how they make them feel and the things they enjoy doing together.
- Encourage students to remember a time they spent with a friend that they really enjoyed and invite them to draw a picture that captures that time. It could be a realistic representation, but it could also be an abstract capture of the mood and feelings of the day.



THEME 3: TEAMWORK

TUNING IN

To start, check in with students to see if they can remember the talents that each of the people in Amigoni's painting possessed. Pointing to each figure one at a time, ask them to fill in the gaps:

- Amigoni was a clever _____ (painter).
- Metastasio was good at _____ (writing/composing).
- And Castellini and Farinelli were talented _____ (singers).

Although they all had very unique talents, when they worked together as a group, each of their individual strengths and skills helped make the Opera shows that they created even more special.

Explore the theme of teamwork in more detail by asking students to consider their individual strengths, skills and talents. Then, involve the group in a discussion about how they can apply these unique traits to group activities and situations that involve teamwork. You can lead the discussion with questions including:

- What are your strengths or things you are good at? How are these useful in school or family life?
- What areas or skills would you like to develop? Why? How might you do this?
- Have you ever worked in a group on a shared task or project?
- How did your individual talents contribute to the task or project?

ACTIVITIES

- Create a set of personalised trading cards with your class. Show students some examples of existing popular trading cards, such as Pokémon cards and basketball cards. Identify the key components of these cards, highlighting the image of the character or person, and some facts about their skills, strengths and challenges. Ask students to think about what a trading card about them would look like, and what stats and facts they would include on their illustrated card. Allow time to brainstorm some ideas and produce a draft, before moving on to the final copy of their unique trading card. To help students with the final design process, you might like to print a generic template for them to use. Once all the cards are made, consider laminating them to keep as a class set or for display. This activity could also be done in pairs, with students making their partner's card rather than their own.
- Extend this activity by playing a 'Guess Who' type game with the cards. Encourage friendship and teamwork among the group by reading the stats and facts on a hidden card while students guess who is being described. You could also put students into smaller 'guessing' groups or teams and have them guess together.
- Carry out a collaborative artmaking activity. As a class, choose an artwork or image that you'd like to reproduce by working together. Once an image is decided upon, print or photocopy a larger scale reproduction of the image and divide it into a grid. Then, assign each person a section of the image to recreate with drawing and/or painting materials. Once each section of the composition has been completed, invite the class to work together to re-assemble the individual pieces back together like a jigsaw puzzle. Display the finished collaborative artwork in the classroom.

EXTEND THE LEARNING

Plan a visit to the NGV for your students to see the artwork they have learnt about on display.

Please note that sometimes artworks are moved around the Gallery or are taken off display. We recommend checking their location in advance by searching [Collection Online](#).

For information on accessible programs, services and facilities at the NGV, visit the website or email education.bookings@ngv.vic.gov.au to talk to our bookings staff or NGV Educators about program options for your group.

A range of resources to help you prepare for your visit are available on the NGV website.



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Developed in collaboration with Specialist Art Educator, Karlee Sangster, Croxton Special School.