

KS5 The moral of the story

The Four Times of Day

HOGARTH'S HOUSE



William Hogarth, the 'Father of British Art'

William Hogarth was born in 1697 and spent his life as a painter, print maker, satirist, social commentator and philanthropist. He is known as the 'Father of British Art' and his work was in opposition to 'High Art' – art that was based in the Renaissance style with subjects that were heroes from mythology, classical history and the Bible.

British art was based on English life and culture. Hogarth used his art to show the life of everyday people and cast light onto social injustices.

The Four Times of A Day series

This series of prints shows everyday people of different classes occupying the same social spaces in London. They highlight that a sense of place is complex, with people interacting differently with the city and its residents depending on their social standing. There are four prints (called plates in reference to the printing plates used to produce them) in this series: Plate 1 *Morning*, Plate 2 *Noon*, Plate 3 *Evening* and Plate 4 *Night*.

How to use this resource

1. First split the class into pairs or small groups. Have each group look at one of the four prints in Hogarth's *Four Times of Day* series and discuss its meaning. Use the 'Vocabulary and themes' list on page 2 to help you.
2. Now take a look at the 'Hogarth's use of symbols' on page 3. How does this historical context confirm or change your initial reading of the print? Do you think the print is still relevant today? Why or why not?
3. List some modern day symbols that could be inserted to make the print's meaning more apparent to a person today. Why not create your own version of the print using your new symbols?

What is a print series?

A print series is like a pictorial novel - a story made from pictures. Each print can be 'read' individually, but also collectively. Hogarth's series were often meant as a social commentary against things Hogarth disagreed with, such as animal cruelty or poverty.

How prints were made

Prints were made from engraved metal plates that were printed on paper for use in books or pamphlets. They were a cheaper way of producing art to reach a wider audience.



Vocabulary words:

Scythe	a tool used for chopping down crops
Transient	lasting only for a short period of time
Huguenot	a group of French Christians who were kicked out of France due to their religious beliefs
Scold	A woman who berates and possibly abuses her husband
Restoration Celebration	celebrates the restoration of the monarchy in 1660

Themes to discuss:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| - Poverty | - Gender roles |
| - Immigration | - Refugees |
| - Race | - Consent |
| - Class divisions | - Discretion |

The Four Times of Day

Hogarth's use of symbols

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Historical context of Hogarth's use of symbols

Often Hogarth would include symbols in his work that would have readily meant something to a member of the public in the 18th century, but can be more difficult for a modern audience to decipher as our lives and current events have changed.

Plate 1 *Morning*

The woman's fan The woman is using her fan to shield her eyes from what she would have considered an improper scene: the promiscuous men and women in the street. This scene is set in the morning, which suggests these people have been up all night in a near-by establishment and will be almost finishing with their evening as is beginning her day.

Plate 2 *Noon*

The man of colour People of colour appear in Hogarth's work regularly and this shows us that, despite what some history books suggest, it was common to see people of colour in 18th century London. Slavery was still legal in England at the time, but there is evidence from magistrate courts that tells us that many people of colour who fled their captors were protected by people within the community. In this print, the man of colour is seen to be very much part of the local community, even though the image we have of that community is not a positive one.

Plate 3 *Evening*

The cows horns A cuckold is a husband whose wife has committed adultery. 'Wearing the horns' can be used to refer to a cuckold. It was a phrase more common in the 18th century than it is today. The cow appears behind the husband in a manner that appears as if he has the horns of a cow, which suggests that his wife is an adultress and possibly these children are not his.

Plate 4 *Night*

The drunken Freemason The apron and set square worn by the man in the left foreground of the print tell us he is a Freemason - a member of the Masons, an order that was established for mutual help and fellowship. Hogarth himself was a Freemason. Hogarth would often use real people in his work and this person is thought to be Sir Thomas de Veil, a magistrate who became unpopular when he handed heavy sentences to gin-sellers, despite being a well-known drinker himself. Here he is needing assistance to walk.

The Four Times of Day: Plate 1 *Morning*

HOGARTH'S HOUSE



Things to discuss:

- Take a look at the first plate on a cold winter morning. How does the washer lady look in comparison to the lady with the servant?
- How does she feel? How does Hogarth show us their feelings?
- What other things could you compare?
- Can you see any symbolism? Look out for the clock with a **scythe** and hour glass, symbolising the **transient** nature of life.

The Four Times of Day: Plate 2 Noon

HOGARTH'S HOUSE



Things to discuss:

- There is a clear contrast between the French **Huguenot** refugees (on the right) and the native English people at the pub (on the left). What is each group doing? How are each depicted? Sophisticated? Disorderly?
- How does this compare to images of refugees in the news today?
- The symbolism in this print suggests that the lives of the British people revolve around sex and food. What do you see that suggests this? Do you think Hogarth is passing judgement on class or the class divide? Why?

The Four Times of Day: *Plate 3 Evening*

HOGARTH'S HOUSE



Things to discuss:

- There are two sets of people here: a husband and wife on the right and two young children on the left. The woman is depicted as a **scold**. This stereotype has been around for hundreds of years. What clues in the print give us that impression?
- Look at the children, are they assuming the same gender roles as the adults? What is this print saying about the examples set by parents?

The Four Times of Day: Plate 4 *Night*

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Things to discuss:

- This scene is set at night after sunset, what are the sources of light?
- There are many signs of disorder - notice the **chamber pot** thrown out the window and the group of rough sleepers under the shop window. What else do you see? How are the streets of London similar and different from today?
- This scene is possibly depicting a **Restoration Celebration**. What do you think Hogarth might be trying to say about the British monarchy?