



From Egyptian hieroglyphics to Chinese calligraphy, text as an art form has been made since humans could carve stone or make paper from papyrus. In the early twentieth Century, artists such as René Magritte and the Dadaists began to incorporate text into paintings and collages. The appearance of mass printing and mass media later in the twentieth century led to more and more artists using text as their primary subject and source.

For this sheet I would like you to try making a piece of art using text. You could combine an image with a short text or word to alter its meaning or you could simply decorate a loaded word and make that your subject or turn a word into a pictogram. You could also cut text from newspapers and rearrange the words to gain new meanings in a collage.

Materials: paper and pencil, water based paint or scissors and glue (for collage) and a piece of scrap paper for notes.

Method: on a scrap of paper, sketch out your ideas, note which words or phrase you plan to use. If you're making a collage, this will be determined by what you can find in your newspapers or magazines.

For a collage: cut out the words you plan to use and arrange them on your paper before sticking them down. If you're happy using the words alone then stop there. If you want to combine the words with images then cut out images from your magazines etc and add them to your paper or use your drawing materials or paints to create your final image.

For a drawing: start by drawing out your chosen text, if you want it to be very precise you can measure two lines to put the text between to keep each letter the same size. If you want to write it in your own hand writing then use your drawing materials to do that. Then add any images you want to include in your piece in pencil, pens or paint. Think of images that relate to the words, either that add to their meaning or change it completely.

For a pictogram: try to transform your word into an image that looks like the word. See the Chinese pictograms for tree 木 and mountain; 山 they look like the object they represent. Can you recreate a word as a simple pictogram?



David Sherry, *Drift Off*, paint and ink on board, 2020



Kevin Hutcheson, *Street*, collage on paper, 2013

Images courtesy of David Sherry, the estate of Kevin Hutcheson and Patricia Fleming, Glasgow