

This lesson card will help you discover the sculpture garden and some famous sculptors. You'll 'discover' these gentlemen through their ladies, who represent important developments in sculptural art. Compare their forms and surprise your classmates by guessing the date of a different sculpture, without looking at the title board.

In the nineteen fifties, director Hammacher had the idea for a sculpture garden, directly behind the museum. That idea fit well with the vision of Helene Kröller-Müller, who had already placed a few sculptures in the park herself. But Hammacher wanted more. He envisaged a 'sculpture museum' in the open air and initiated a second specialism for the museum: contemporary sculpture.

1 Take a look around the two sculpture lawns, on either side of the pond. The shape and arrangement is still almost the same as when it opened in 1961. Say whether the following statements are true or false.



Marta Pan, 1923-2008
Floating sculpture, Otterlo, 1960-61

True / false: every sculpture in the garden has enough space, but it's also about the combinations.

A good example:

True / false: you see only bronze sculptures in the sculpture garden because these can withstand the rain and snow.

A good example:

True / false: a sculpture garden offers a different experience than a museum room (inside).

A good example:

2 One last and (perhaps) surprising statement:

True / false: artist Marta Pan designed *Floating sculpture, Otterlo* (see map), but also the shape of the pond and of the whole lawn.

Sketch the three outlines below:

3 It's no coincidence that the artwork by Marta Pan stands in this spot. Director Hammacher believed that this work could attract the visitors outside. Why do you think he thought that?

1

2

3

The *Floating sculpture* might also be a lady, but Marta Pan certainly was. In the adjacent field you will find many more ladies. Director Hammacher placed them together to show the development of sculptural art.

4 You can read some of his statements below. Connect the statements with the correct sculpture and draw a line to the correct date on the timeline.

'For me, that agile, that beautifully muscled, entirely loose and free body of the [...] woman, with her mask of complete submission, is such a living and dark wonder [...]'

'This is a calming of sculptural art after Rodin, a mustering and commanding of an elegiac sensitivity [...]'

'[This work] is a rich fruit of spatiality fallen to earth.'



Now, let's zoom in on that development. Because what do you actually see and what can you discover? Look at the first sculpture in the timeline (Rodin's *Squatting woman*).

Rodin was an important innovator in sculptural art. At a time when the official art was focused on ideal forms and beauty, Rodin went back to nature. He depicted what he saw, looked closely at muscles and emotions and experimented with poses. The result was so 'real' that people didn't believe that he sculpted the work himself. They thought he made casts of his models.

5 Which feeling or emotion do you recognize in this artwork?

.....

6 Assignment for pairs: ask a classmate to bend their head in the same way (backwards) and look at the neck and shoulders. How can you tell that Rodin also observed well?

.....

.....

7 In the pose of the woman, different joints are touching each other (for example the heel and buttocks). Can you name another two?

.....

8 And now the ultimate test: can you make the same pose as the sculpture?

.....

9 Hammacher had no doubt: this sculpture had to go outside, in the daylight. Do you agree?

.....

10 Which art movement do you think this 'Squatting woman' belongs to?

- Impressionism
- Expressionism
- Cubism

Now look at the second sculpture in the timeline.

11 What are the three main differences with *Squatting woman*?

1

2

3

Antoine Bourdelle was a student of Auguste Rodin, but his style is different. Bourdelle was inspired by classical Greek sculptures and sought calm and balance. His subject is also from Greek mythology: Penelope is the wife of the Greek hero Odysseus, who goes on a long journey. Penelope remains faithful to him. And after 20 years they are reunited.

12 Now that you know this: what do you think Penelope is looking at? And with what feeling?

.....

.....

13 A mean question of conscience (no answer required): would you also wait 20 years for your sweetheart?

The last sculpture in the timeline is also based on a Greek myth. The beautiful Niobe challenges the goddess Leto by proudly announcing that she – with her 14 children – is more divine than the goddess. Leto sends her twins (Artemis and Apollo) to take revenge. As a punishment, all of Niobe's children are murdered. According to the myth, Niobe's tears created the largest river in Greece.

14 Which part of the story has Permeke depicted?

15 What are the two most obvious differences with 'The large Penelope'? Think, for instance, about the pose and the shapes.

1

2

16 Look at the work from all sides.
From which side do you best see the emotion?



Constant Permeke, 1886 - 1952
Niobe, 1951

17 Which art movement do you think this 'Niobe' belongs to?

- Impressionism
- Expressionism
- Cubism

18 Finally: would you now be able to date an artwork yourself? You can choose between two ladies: Henry Moore's *Two-piece reclining figure* (on the hill beside the lawn!) or *l'Air* by Aristide Maillol (in this field). Find them with the help of the two photos; don't look at the title board and guess the year.



Henry Moore
Two-piece reclining figure II



Aristide Maillol
l'Air



Were you successful? Give two reasons why you chose this date:

- 1
- 2

X! Extra assignment: Choose one of the ladies that you just researched and take another good look at her pose. Imagine that she would suddenly move: what would the following pose be? Draw this new pose in the box.

