

PRESENT STATE EXAMINATION

ACTIVITY GUIDE



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



CROYDON
www.croydon.gov.uk

This activity guide is most suitable
for anyone aged 7+.

It is inspired by the 'Present State
Examination' online exhibition.

The 'Present State Examination' website
contains references to mental health
crises and addiction.

The guide does not directly quote
exhibition content, but refers to artworks
which deal with these subjects.

If you're exploring the website with
children, we recommend that adults look
over the content first to decide which
parts are most appropriate for your child.

This online exhibition is called 'Present State Examination'. It was organised by Morgan Quaintance and Amanprit Sandhu. Morgan and Amanprit work together in group called DAM Projects.

DAM Projects asked artists Louisa Martin, Bella Milroy and Jessica Scott to each make some new art for this online exhibition.

You can visit the exhibition website at turf-projects.com/present-state-examination

Here you'll find writing, photographs and recordings by the artists and DAM Projects. There's an exhibition audio tour you can listen to on the web page above

'Present State Examination' is the first fully online exhibition at Turf.

Usually you can use your activity guide to explore art in Turf's gallery in the Whitgift Shopping Centre in Croydon, South London.

But this activity guide is designed to be used at home, or somewhere else you feel comfortable to sit, think, draw and write.



Illustrations by Jo Brown @jobrown_art

This exhibition explores how the world treats people whose bodies and minds work in ways that don't fit into what a doctor might say is 'normal'.

The artists have been thinking about the ways their minds and bodies are treated.

A lot of the time these 'treatments' come from doctors and as medicines.

But other kinds of treatments can work too.

This might be care from friends, family or yourself.

Or changing the places around us to make sure they're welcoming to everybody.

Scroll through this guide to find some activities to help you explore these ideas on your own or with someone else.

PLACE

FIX THAT



Instead of trying to change people to fit into the world around them, how can we shape the world around us so it works better for everyone?

Think of a place that you don't like to go because you find it uncomfortable.

It might be a place that's too loud, or where people aren't very friendly, somewhere it's hard for you to move around, or anything else.

In *one colour*, draw the place you don't like to go.

Now think about some of the things you would change about that place to make it better for you and for other people. Can you think of ways to make it more accessible?

By 'accessible' we mean making it easier for people to get into the place, to move around it, and to join in with things happening there.

Maybe you would relax the rules?
or replace the stairs with a ramp?
or turn down the lights?
or make sure there are always free snacks there?

Once you've finished your one-colour drawing of the place you don't like to go, get a new colour to draw with. In *the new colour*, draw some of the changes you would make over the top of your original drawing.

Show your drawing to someone else and explain your ideas. Do they have any other changes to add?

If you like, you could post your drawing to the place you drew, to give them some ideas for things they could do better!



TAKE A BREATH

There are little things that we do every day to take care of ourselves. Some days you may feel tired, sad or confused.

What things might help you feel better?

Do you stop and take some deep breaths?

Hug a person, pet or toy?

Listen to a favourite song?

Write a list or draw pictures of the things you do to feel better.

Pick one thing off your list and do it today.

You could put your list up somewhere at home to remind you to do those things more often!



TODAY WAS...

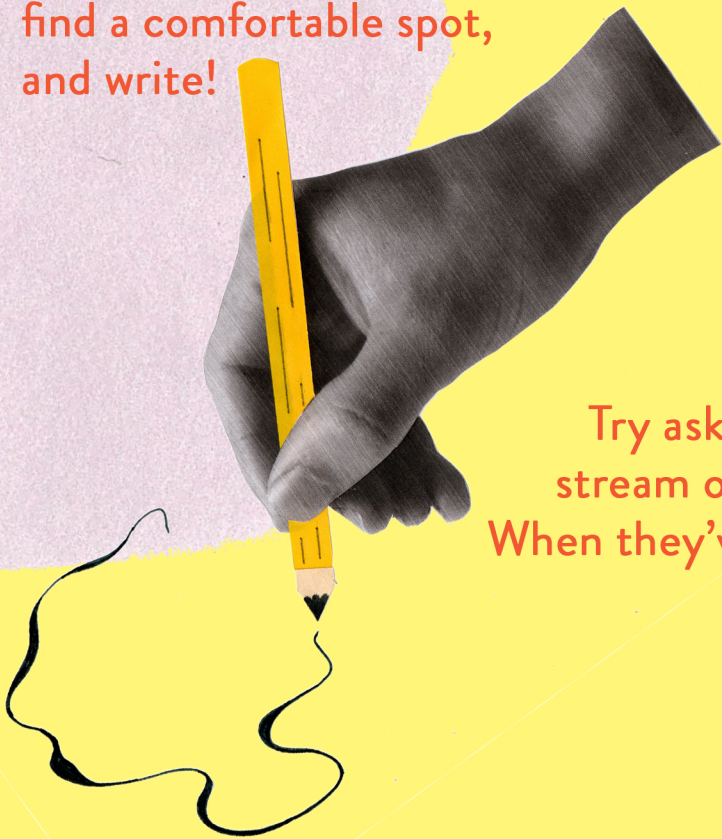
Some of the artists in 'Present State Examination' have written about a day in their life.

This writing might take the form of a poem, a diary, or something else.

One way to get started with writing is a 'stream of consciousness'. This means setting an amount of time (e.g 3 minutes), and then writing everything that comes out of your mind in that time. Don't think about it too much, or worry if it will make sense to someone else.

Try writing a stream of consciousness about your morning.

Grab a pen & paper,
set a timer for 3 minutes,
find a comfortable spot,
and write!



You could use some of the questions below to help you get started.
How did your mind and body feel when you woke up today?
What did you eat for breakfast?
What did the air smell like?

Try asking someone else to write a 3 minute stream of consciousness about their morning. When they've finished, read their writing, and let them read yours.

What made your mornings different?
What was the same?

We'd love to see what you've been writing and drawing at home.
Tag us #presentstateexamination

OTHER RESOURCES

Rethink Mental Illness

Rethink “improve the lives of people severely affected by mental illness through our network of local groups and services, expert information and successful campaigning.”

<https://www.rethink.org/>

Parenting with a mental health problem, from Mind:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/parenting-with-a-mental-health-problem/parenting-and-mental-health/>

Easy read info about the social model of disability, from Shape Arts:

<https://www.shapearts.org.uk/news/social-model-of-disability-easy-read>

Samaritans

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

Phone: 116 123 (free 24-hour helpline)

Website: www.samaritans.org.uk

SANE

Emotional support, information and guidance for people affected by mental illness, their families and carers.

SANEline: 0300 304 7000 (daily, 4.30pm to 10.30pm)

Website: www.sane.org.uk/support