



Girl with Fruit

How can you accurately represent somebody you don't know?

Think about a country you have never visited and imagine a person who lives there. Write a list of the person's characteristics. You will have probably used stereotyped ideas. Think about where these have come from.



Girl with Fruit, painted by John Gilbert in 1882.

Additional Information for Teachers

Little is known about the sitter for the portrait. Sadly, in historic gallery collections in the UK, it is not common for sitters to be named if they were not considered to be notable.

We do not know how accurate the representation is, i.e. how well the person or their culture is depicted. We do not know if the person was painted in their country wearing their clothes and carrying their own belongings, or whether it was staged in England with a Black sitter and the artist's own props.

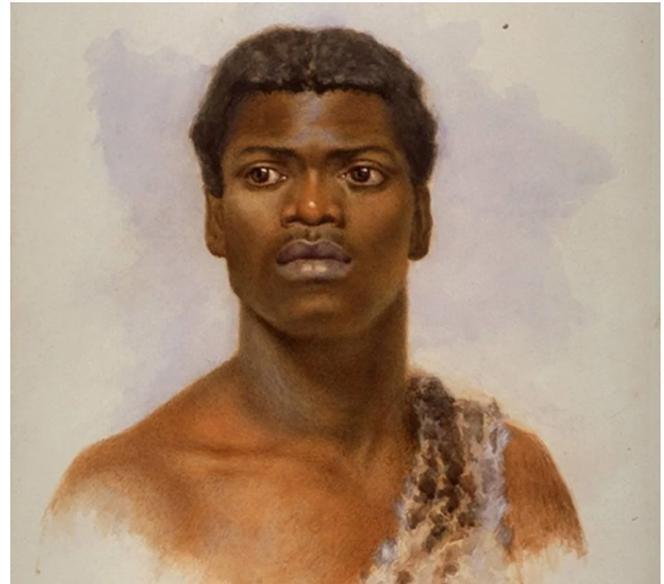
We do know that the artist made at least three other versions of the same subject before this work, and that in each new version the sitters costume, props, and even facial features changed considerably.



Head of a Zulu

'Until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter', *Chinua Achebe*.

Think about the links between this quote from an acclaimed African author and this portrait of a man with no name. Write a short story about what the sitter might have experienced, and how he might have felt, if he did visit the Queen.



Head of a Zulu, painted by amateur painter, Constance Wood in 1881.

Additional Information for Teachers

Constance Wood is a little-known 'Sunday painter' (i.e. an amateur) who won a Queen's Scholarship award for this detailed, evocative watercolour, when she was aged 20.

The sitter is unidentified, but he was probably a model for various painters at a time when Black people were becoming increasingly represented in British art . It is possible that he was at Queen Victoria's court as a result of the visit of the Zulu leader King Cetshwayo in 1882. Cetshwayo was the leader of the Zulu people and Kingdom during the Anglo-Zulu War (1879).



Tower Bridge

How do we build cultural bridges? What is Britain's link to Nigeria?

Draw a British landmark in a style inspired by traditional Nigerian colours and printing techniques.



Uzo Egnou's Tower Bridge, painted in 1969, is typical of his style, which draws on European modern art and the traditions of West African art to reinterpret London.

Additional Information for Teachers

Uzo Egonu came to Britain from Nigeria in 1945 and lived and worked in London from 1948 until his death in 1996. This long association with the capital became a major presence in his works.

Egonu's work explores the life, landmarks, decline, and hope of London. In the 1960s he painted a series of famous London landmarks, including St Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Trafalgar Square and Tower Bridge. Tower Bridge has a bold composition, merging representation and abstraction, and a cyclical and bird's eye view. These techniques, that Egonu introduced to his work in 1966, are characteristic of Igbo art traditions from Nigeria.