Endpoints for Art

Year 6 – Inuit

We will be learning about the Inuit way of life, including some of their cultural and artistic traditions.

What I know and can explain
Arctic animals are an important subject matter for Inuit artists.
Significant Inuit artists include Jessie Oonark, Karoo Ashevak, David Ruben Piqtoukun, Lucy Tasseor Tutsweetak and Pitseolak Ashoona
A stencil is a thin sheet of card, plastic, or metal with a pattern or letters cut out of it. Ink is applied to its surface which goes through the cut out and creates a print
Stencils can be reused if made from a durable material such as card or acetate. Each print will vary slightly due to factors such as colour fade, colour merging and pressure applied to either surface

Inuit art

The Inuit are indigenous people who live in the Arctic region, an area that includes Alaska, Canada and Greenland. Artwork made by the Inuit includes pictures, carvings, sculptures and prints. Animals, cultural myths and legends are the main sources of inspiration.

Inuit carver at work

Inuit carvings

The Inuit have a long tradition of being expert carvers. Carvings include tools, weapons and decorative items, such as animals and figurines. Common materials used in Inuit carving include bone, ivory, stone and wood. The carvings can be in a variety of sizes and colours.

walrus soapstone carving

owl carving

Inuit printing

Printmaking is a more recent addition to Inuit art, starting in the late 1950s with the help of James Houston, a Canadian artist, designer and government administrator. At first, stonecuts were used to print images. Later, stencils were used.

James Houston, Cape Dorset (Kinngait), Nunavut, 1960

Return of the Sun, an Inuit print on a stamp, c1980

Useful Vocabulary

Carving – A shape or pattern cut into wood or stone

Indigenous – Naturally existing in a place or country

Printing – A technique that allows an image to be accurately reproduced multiple times

Stylised – An exaggeration of colour, pattern or shape

Stonecut – A printing technique that uses a flattened stone block which is carved and coated with ink to make a print