

Arts Tour: Drama, Dance, Music and Visual Arts

Madame Tussauds Sydney — Schools Resource

NSW Syllabus: Drama 7–10 (2023), Music 7–10, Visual Arts 7–10 | **Stage:** Stage 4–5

Note for teachers: Please cross-check exact outcome codes against your school's current syllabus documentation — this resource reflects the practice-based focus areas common across the Creative Arts 7–10 syllabuses (making, performing, appreciating).

About this resource

Madame Tussauds Sydney offers a unique setting for cross-artform learning: every figure is a frozen performance, combining sculpture, costume design, lighting and staging. This resource treats the gallery as a live case study in visual and performing arts practice.

Curriculum outcomes addressed

- **DR5-APP-01** - Analyse how creative choices shape intention and meaning through dramatic processes.
- **DR5-PER-01** - Apply performance skills to communicate intention and meaning.
- **VA5-CHV-01** - Interpret meaning and significance of artworks using Viewpoints.
- **VA5-AMV-01** - Apply and evaluate Viewpoints to represent meaning in artworks.
- **MU5-LIS-01** - Analyse music in relation to stylistic, cultural, historical and social contexts

Key inquiry question

How do visual artists and performers use pose, costume, expression and setting to "perform" a character without movement or sound?

Exercise 1: The Frozen Performance (Classroom — Pre-Visit)

Format: Classroom-based | 20 minutes

1. In groups, discuss: how do actors, dancers and musicians communicate character and emotion through their bodies alone?
2. As a quick practical warm-up, have students physically freeze into a "statue" that expresses a chosen emotion or role, without props.
3. Discuss what choices they made (posture, facial expression, hands) and how audiences might read them.

Exercise 2: Elements in Action (Excursion — In-Venue)

Format: Excursion-based | Individual or small group worksheet

Choose four figures from different sections of the gallery — aim to cover a musician, an actor, a sports figure and one more of your choice.

1. For each, identify the visual arts techniques used to create likeness (material, texture, colour, form).
2. For each, analyse the performance and design choices: pose, costume, expression, staging. What "moment" has been captured?
3. Choose one figure and imagine directing them in a 10-second scene. What would happen just before and just after this frozen moment?

Exercise 3: Create and Perform (Classroom — Post-Visit)

Format: Classroom-based | Extended task, 1–2 lessons

In small groups, choose a well-known figure (real or fictional) and create a "living waxwork" tableau of them at a significant moment.

1. Design the pose, costume and setting collaboratively, drawing on visual arts and design principles.
2. Perform your tableau for the class, then "bring it to life" for 30 seconds of improvised dialogue or movement.
3. As a class, discuss what artistic choices were most effective in communicating character.

Teacher note: This task can be adapted to focus more heavily on Visual Arts (design and construction), Drama (performance and characterisation), or Music (soundscaping the moment), depending on your subject.

Exercise 1: The Frozen Performance (Pre-Visit)

A. Body-only communication

In groups, discuss: how do actors, dancers and musicians communicate character and emotion through their bodies alone?

Write 3 examples:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

B. Freeze-frame warm-up

Physically freeze into a “statue” that expresses a chosen emotion or role (no props).

My chosen emotion/role: _____

C. Reflection: the choices you made

Describe your choices in **posture**, **facial expression** and **hands/gesture**. How might an audience read them?

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Exercise 2: Elements in Action (In-Venue)

Choose **four figures** from different sections of the gallery (aim for: a **musician**, an **actor**, a **sports figure**, and **one of your choice**).

A. Figures selected

Figure (name/character)	Section (e.g. Music, Sport)
1)	
2)	
3)	
4)	

B. For each figure, analyse the performance and design choices.

Figure # ____ : _____

1) Visual Arts techniques (likeness): material, texture, colour, form

2) Performance + design choices: pose, costume, expression, staging. What “moment” has been captured?

Figure # ____ : _____

1) Visual Arts techniques (likeness): material, texture, colour, form

2) Performance + design choices: pose, costume, expression, staging. What “moment” has been captured?

Figure # _____ : _____

1) Visual Arts techniques (likeness): material, texture, colour, form

2) Performance + design choices: pose, costume, expression, staging. What “moment” has been captured?

Figure # _____ : _____

1) Visual Arts techniques (likeness): material, texture, colour, form

2) Performance + design choices: pose, costume, expression, staging. What “moment” has been captured?

C. Directing the frozen moment (choose ONE figure)

Choose one figure and imagine directing them in a 10-second scene. What would happen **just before** and **just after** this frozen moment?

Chosen figure: _____

Just before:

Just after:

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Exercise 3: Create and Perform (Post-Visit)

In small groups, choose a well-known figure (real or fictional) and create a “living waxwork” tableau of them at a significant moment. Sketch on an additional sheet to convey your ideas.

A. Group plan

Our figure (real or fictional): _____

Significant moment we are showing:

B. Design the tableau

Pose (body position):

Facial expression + focus (eyes):

Costume/props (if any):

Setting/staging (space, level, lighting ideas):

C. Bring it to life (30 seconds)

After presenting your tableau, “bring it to life” with 30 seconds of improvised dialogue or movement.

What is the first line OR first action?

D. Reflection (after watching all groups)

What artistic choices were most effective in communicating character? Use examples.

Student Worksheets –

Exercises 1–3

Use this page to complete the exercises in order. Write in the spaces provided. If you need more room, continue on the back of the page or on separate paper.

Exercise 1

Instructions / Prompt (copy exactly from the resource):

My response:

Evidence / Work shown (if required):

Exercise 2

Instructions / Prompt (copy exactly from the resource):

Key ideas / planning notes:

Final response:

Exercise 3

Instructions / Prompt (copy exactly from the resource):

Step-by-step / working space:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Answer:

Quick reflection (1–2 sentences):
