

Learning objectives:

- To explain why Norman Cornish was a significant person from the past
- To recall an important achievement in Norman Cornish's life
- To talk about what constitutes a challenge and the challenges the artist faced

Key vocabulary

art, painting, important, achievement, mural painting, challenges, difficulties

Tell the story of the Durham Miners' Gala painting (Powerpoint Resource). After telling the story, refer to the Norman Cornish timeline to pinpoint when this happened (1962/3)

Discuss how Norman felt on being asked to paint the huge mural painting for Durham County Council. Mixed emotions – pleased, excited, keen, honoured to have been asked BUT anxious, nervous, worried. It would mean a year of 'unpaid leave' so it was a great risk for a man who had a young family to support.

What questions do you think might have flashed through his head at this time?

For example, where will I paint this huge piece? Where can I buy a canvas big enough? How long will it take?

Potential here for a simple 'Conscience Alley' activity – one side of the class whispering loudly: This is a great risk, This is a great risk, This is a great risk and conversely the other half of the class whispering loudly: This is a wonderful opportunity, This is a wonderful opportunity, This is a wonderful opportunity. You can decide what each side whispers – ideas that the children offer perhaps. Choose one child to be the 'Norman Cornish' character who walks down Conscience Alley.

Another idea would be a 'Hot Seat' activity. Perhaps the teacher could be Norman Cornish in the hot seat and the children ask prepared questions.

What is a challenge? Explain if children don't understand. What challenges did the artist have to overcome?

Discuss the importance of perseverance, determination and resilience to complete a task set. Use this idea to promote discussion. Encourage the children to talk about examples of when they didn't give up or what they intend to persevere with.

This lesson can be linked to the PHSCE unit: Going for Goals or work related to aspirations/qualities of determination, never giving up.

Plenary

Discuss the lesson's key question and compile a class list of answers.