

Teacher's notes

Maps as Stories: Estate Kids

Lesson aims

To think about maps not merely as simple directions but as tools for storytelling.

To use adjectives to create imagery.

Lesson objectives

Using the work from the map exercise, students should write a poem about where they live.

Resources

Example maps by East London school children

Download Google map of Hackney (or another home/familiar area)

Copy of '**Estate Kids**' by Savitri Hensman

Back cover picture of Savitri Hensman's book **Flood at the Door**

A thesaurus

Starter Activity:

Students should be encouraged to use descriptive language when responding to the questions. Students should be encouraged to use a thesaurus and take notes of the adjectives they have used. These will be useful in activity 3.

This simple table will help to keep track of their notes (see page 3 for a full version).

Place	Activities/Features	Adjective

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Activity 1:

Based on the list drawn up in the starter activity, students map their own world putting themselves at the centre then adding the activities and people that are the most important to them around. They should jot down adjectives on the map to describe their feelings about where they live.

Activity 2:

Teacher to read poem '**Estate Kids**' by Savitri Hensman to the class and show them her picture for context.

Background: Savitri Hensman went to school in Hackney and was 17 when she wrote the poem.

Activity 3:

Students should use the work from Activities 1 and 2 to help them write a group poem about where they live. This can be done in two ways:

- a) Use the classroom wall to pin up pieces of paper into a group poem.
- b) Create a horseshoe across the classroom.

Divide the class into groups of 3 or 4 depending on size. Each group should work on a different section of the poem: e.g. beginning, middle or end. Every student should contribute something.

Activity 4:

Students should recap and evaluate the session through a set of questions and written responses.

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Starter Activity: Are Hackney and London (or where you live) good places for children to grow up and why?

Place	Why is it a good place to live	Adjective

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'Estate kids' by Savitri Hensman, 1979, Centerprise Trust Ltd



ESTATE KIDS

Children of concrete
Playing in the shadow of the
Over-looking
Looming blocks,
Destined for the firm grip of
The machine-tool machine,
Like young plants through a crumbling stone path
Which twist and struggle upwards
Fighting for health and life
And yet, in the end,
Blooming.

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Picture of Savitri Hensman, 1979



This collection of poetry and pictures is by two people who are still at school. Yet it reflects many of the serious issues in our present society, like racism, or survival in cities, as well as its complexities.

The poems are powerful images of life today in varying moods, some angry, others lyrical or with a surrealist sense of fun. Savi, who wrote the poems, won the Hackney Poetry Competition in 1976. Sarah, who did the illustrations, studied for 'A' Level Art in one year on her own, and is at present studying science.

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Students' maps: Columbia girl's world, HEC/Talking Time and Place, Maggie Hewitt



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Students' maps: Map of my world, HEC/Talking Time and Place, Maggie Hewitt

