

Bound by Clay Education Pack: Suggestions for Adult Education

OVERVIEW

Many of the themes and activities suggested in the guides for Higher Education and Key Stages 1-3 can be drawn upon for adaption with community-based adult students, bearing in mind the very diverse range of starting points that they will have. Often, themes in adult education are introduced gently through discussion topics or questions that can be explored further if students become interested.

ACL providers can also work effectively with schools and HE providers, both to support parents wishing to support their child's learning and to provide progression routes for students who become interested in further study through a 'taster' experience within their courses.

FAMILY LEARNING

Explore whether any of your students, or their family members, ever worked in the pottery industry and use this as a starting point to discuss the skills that they would have learned and used. If none of the group members did, a research task could be set to find somebody in their community and speak to them – if this is difficult for individuals an interview subject may be found.

Maths: How did women doing piecework calculate their wages? What measuring equipment or knowledge is needed to make different ceramics products? Do they use maths without even thinking about it? Which other areas of life might we find we're better at maths than we realise?

English/ESOL: Can they explain some of the words and phrases used for different ceramics products (the parts or their processes) that are unfamiliar to other students? (this might work well using everyday props like mugs, cups and tiles – ideally from Staffordshire!)

Science, Technology, Engineering Arts & Maths (STEAM/STEM): Many parents want to help their children get on well with STEM subjects as they are linked with good employment prospects. Using familiar, everyday objects as a starting point and perhaps incorporating craft activities, parents can work with their children to break down barriers to STEM subjects and learn together.

EMPLOYABILITY

The second part of the film illustrates the wide range of jobs that remain in the pottery industry. Did students realise this already, or did they think it was a 'dead' industry? If anybody has worked in potbanks, would they recommend the industry to family members now? Would they see working in the potteries artistic/creative work or factory work?

Research: Using the National Careers Service and local newspapers and websites, research the jobs that are available in the ceramics industry today as well as ceramicists who have developed their own brands and businesses. What routes would be needed to get into this industry now?

Science, technology, engineering arts & maths (STEAM, sometimes referred to as STEM):

Bound by Clay demonstrates the very wide range of STEAM industries that are within the pottery industry. Pick out some areas that students might not associate with the industry and explore them further – even better if they can be seen in a local company.

Examples: [Lucidean](#); [Global Ceramics Materials Limited](#)

You might want to explore the response of women to STEM careers: do they see some of these jobs as being more ‘for them’ than others and why?

Digital: Many students with barriers to employment might like the idea of turning an artistic passion into a living by becoming a sole trader. Compare the online profiles of an old, established name like Moorcroft with a young, individual producer like Camila Prada. See how both use social media and a mix of highly visual materials to build an audience and sell. What are all the different skills needed to create a ‘brand’; if you were starting out what would you need to learn and who else would you need to collaborate with? A team film-making project could be a way to learn and develop these skills.

Progression: Students can get an individual advice session from the National Careers Services if they wish to take any of the interests they have identified further through ongoing education or an entry-level job or apprenticeship.

CULTURAL STUDIES

Depending on your students and the subject of the course, themes such as history, sociology and geography may be made explicit or embedded as a response to the film.

Questions that might be raised, discussed and then pursued in more detail by interested students could include:

Women’s lived experiences: Did the opportunity to work make life better for women of the Potteries than other places? What challenges does working full time create for women at different stages of their life? Are judgments about women in work harsher than they are about men, especially women who achieved great success? Were the benefits of working worth the ultimate health costs that are touched upon in the film?

Women and empowerment: Do you feel that the women in the film had/have power? What do you think gives women power: economic independence, family choice, opportunities to ‘rise’ in organisations, reputation, or other things? What examples do you see in the film of women working collectively and supporting each other? How has the introduction of technology (machines) impact on ‘women’s places’ for good and bad?

Change, loss, passion and pride: How has the geography and population changed in Stoke in the time you have been here? For newer arrivals: what were your impressions of the Potteries when you arrived? How much did you know about the pottery industry, and the role of women within it? What are the emotional costs of economic change for you, or people you know? What impact has it has on people’s view on economics and politics? Did

the film make you feel more connected to Stoke's heritage and did it make you sad or hopeful?

Digital: As is discussed in the film, most of the leading ceramics designers and much of its workforce have been women. In general terms, women in all industries and across society do not get the attention of men and the Wikipedia '[Women in Red](#)' project sets out to address this. This could be a discussion topic that will draw students into further discussion about the profile of women in general, or well-known women in the pottery industry specifically. Student groups may wish to collaborate on a contribution to Wikipedia about a woman or an aspect of local history which will build digital, literacy, online editing, referencing and critical thinking skills.