



INTRODUCTION

Drawings from the Royal Collection

This exhibition introduces you to one of the world's great collections of drawings - and to works by some of the greatest artists.

This resource has been developed to help teachers lead a self-guided group through *Holbein to Hockney*. It features information on a selection of eighteen of the seventy-six artworks in the show.

Holbein to Hockney includes every type of drawing practised in European art over the last 500 years. It also offers a special insight into the artist's creative process, both through the works themselves and by connections made through its themes.

Drawing in the form of studies and exercises emerged as central to the creative processes of European artists during the fifteenth century. But only a tiny fraction of the drawings produced over the last five centuries has survived to the present day. Often their survival has depended on collectors (including other artists) continuing to value them for the light that they cast on an artist's creativity.

Since 1547, British kings and queens have bought or commissioned some 40,000 drawings and watercolours for the Royal Collection, forming one of the world's greatest collections of drawings. Fragile and sensitive to light as such works on paper are, they are usually preserved within albums and portfolios and kept with printed books in libraries. This collection is housed in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

The works chosen for *Holbein to Hockney* offer a survey of the collection. They range from quick sketches to finished presentations and represent every important group within the collection – compositions for paintings, studies from life, portraits, landscapes, and observations from nature. In the exhibition, they have been arranged in themes intended to bring out connections between works of art executed often hundreds of years apart.