

## **Module 4: Planning in Context**

**Theressa François**

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### **Stage Two – Global Context Exercise (Journal Response)**

#### ***1. Select a current news article (online) that would relate to your programme, subject specialization and grade level. Include the link.***

Cotter, Holland. (October 12, 2018). *An Enthralling Show of Afro-Atlantic History Illuminates Brazil*. The New York Times. Retrieved October 14, 2018 from:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/12/arts/design/afro-atlantic-histories-sao-paulo-museum-of-art-tomie-ohtake-institute.html>

#### ***2. Explain why you chose the article and how it relates. Describe compelling ideas.***

This article sits perfectly within the intersection between aesthetics, history, and relationships and identity. The images are stunning and it is fortunate that so many have been reproduced in this article. This article provides an excellent jumping off point for early MYP students to learn about the Atlantic slave trade, or as a deep dive for older students who have already studied the topic.

For students who are familiar with art history, the very first image could be jarring. It is the first time I have seen a person of African heritage depicted wearing luxurious Dutch dress. That the painting was executed in the 17th century makes it all the more remarkable. The gentleman depicted in the painting was Don Miguel de Castro, Emissary of Kongo. What would conditions have been like for most Africans in Brazil - and in the Netherlands - at the time?

What does Sidney Amaral's "Who Shall Speak on Our Behalf?" say about the Afro-American experience in contemporary media? Will students catch the reference to slavery? What could the unidentified sculpture illustrating a gallery in the exhibit represent? There's so much to unpack, and from different perspectives. What is the statement behind Brazilian artist José Alves de Olinda's "Eshus's Barge"? What can students (or their instructors) learn about African mythology and spiritualism?

Finally, on a meta level, why did an art critic from New York decide that an exhibit in Sao Paulo was worthy of such an extensive review?

#### ***3. What global context might connect to this article and help students understand why the article is important? Explain.***

**Subject group:** Arts

**Global context and exploration:** several (see below)

**Compelling ideas and connection to global contexts:**

I see a number of global contexts applying to the study of this article.

Identities and Relationships:

- Identity formation; self-esteem; status; roles and role models (How often do we see depictions of successful Africans in Western art?)
- Human nature and human dignity; moral reasoning and ethical judgment; consciousness and mind. (Why does Sidney Amaral equate ubiquitous media with slavery?)

Orientation in space and time:

- Civilizations and social histories, heritage, pilgrimage, migration, displacement and exchange. (Where was “Eshus’s Barge” headed? Will it arrive at its destination?)
- Epochs, eras, turning points and “big history” AND Peoples, boundaries, exchange and interaction (What was an emissary of Kongo bearing a Spanish name doing in 1640s Netherlands?)

Personal and cultural expression:

- Artistry, craft, creation, beauty. (Do you recognize different cultural artistic styles in the various works?)

Scientific and technical innovation:

- Digital life, virtual environments and the Information Age. (What does “Who Shall Speak on Our Behalf?” say about contemporary media? What are the pros and cons of ubiquitous recording devices in modern society?)

Fairness and development:

- Inequality, difference and inclusion AND Power and privilege AND Authority, security and freedom AND Imagining a hopeful future. (Slavery in Western societies may technically be illegal, but what is the legacy of slavery? Does that legacy affect the way you view some people?)

### **Stage Three - The Role of Concepts in Planning (Journal Response)**

**2. Choose one key concept and two related concepts relevant to the article and global context. Explain.**

Key concept: Identity

Related concepts: Audience, Representation

Global context: Identities and Relationships



Jaspar Beckx. (1654). *Don Miguel de Castro, Emissary of Kongo* [painting].

Retrieved from:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jaspar\\_Beckx\\_\(tidl.\\_tilskrevet\)\\_-\\_Don\\_Miguel\\_de\\_Castro,\\_Emissary\\_of\\_Kongo\\_-\\_KMS7\\_-\\_Statens\\_Museum\\_for\\_Kunst.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Jaspar_Beckx_(tidl._tilskrevet)_-_Don_Miguel_de_Castro,_Emissary_of_Kongo_-_KMS7_-_Statens_Museum_for_Kunst.jpg)

The first painting displayed in the article shows Don Miguel de Castro, Emissary of Kongo in full Dutch dress and depicted using contemporary European painting vernacular and techniques. The choices Don Miguel made when representing himself on the world stage were carefully considered. Modern celebrities also make calculated decisions when choosing how they are to be depicted. In the era of social media, curated imagery is the norm (who posts an ugly picture of themselves?) and shared photos convey a great deal of additional information.

Questions for students:

1. For whom is this painting intended?
2. Why would Don Miguel adopt a foreign name?
3. Why would he wear Dutch clothing for his portrait?
4. What is your favourite image of yourself and why is it your favourite?
5. Is your favourite image meant to be shared with others?
6. How do modern teenagers depict themselves in photographs and for what purposes?

#### **Stage Four – Statement of Inquiry and Inquiry Questions (Journal Response)**

1. ***Develop a statement of inquiry by combining the chosen key concept, related concepts and global context.***

Identity is constructed through both individual representation and audience interpretation.

**2. Then create one factual, one conceptual and one debatable question based on the statement and the planning components.**

Factual Question:

What Kongolese interests would Don Miguel be advancing in 17th century Holland?

Conceptual Question:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of adopting your host's dress and customs?

Debatable Question:

Is this portrait an example of cultural appropriation?

***FYI - A Possible Next Stage (though not asked for this assignment): What assessment task might you design to allow students to show their understanding of the statement of inquiry?***

Create a self-portrait (in the media of your choice), that transmits your identity (beliefs, culture, aspirations, values, interests, skills) in ways that can be interpreted by your intended audience.