



## **Educator's Pack**

### **John Clare: Research Project**

*'I never had much relish for the pastimes of youth, instead of going out on the green at the town end on winter Sundays to play football, I stuck to my corner stool poring over a book...'* John Clare

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John Clare is one of our most remarkable poets of the English countryside. The magnitude of Clare's achievement was not fully appreciated until the recent publication of a first complete edition of his poetry, much of which had remained neglected in manuscript archives for 150 years. Now scholars' worldwide regard him as one of our leading poets.

This pack provides a thoughtful exploration and investigation into Clare's life and times. It encourages learners to investigate, gather and present information about John Clare using the internet and IT computer resources.

This pack is designed to support educators in the planning, delivery and lead up to a visit to Clare Cottage. It is intended as an introduction into the social and historical context of Clare and includes a collection of ideas, workshops and points for discussion. The activities are suitable for all ages and can be adapted to your needs.



Look carefully at this image of John Clare.

Discuss when you think he lived? What gives you clues about when he lived?

Discuss what type of job you think John Clare may have had?

*'I never had much relish for the pastimes of youth, instead of going out on the green at the town end on winter Sundays to play football, I stuck to my corner stool poring over a book...' John Clare.*

*'There is nothing but poetry about the existence of childhood, real, simple, soul – moving poetry...' John Clare.*

**Read** the above quotes, written by John Clare.

**Discuss** what type of person you think Clare is in light of the above quotes.

**In pairs**, list what kinds of job you think John Clare could have had.



**Explore** this image of Clare's Cottage. What part of the cottage do you think belonged to Clare and his family?

**Discuss** how this cottage may have changed over time?

**Discuss** when you think this cottage was built?

## John Clare: Research Project Tasks

Use the internet and books to help you to investigate and explore who John Clare was and what life was like for him.

The following websites will help:

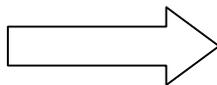
[www.johnclare.info](http://www.johnclare.info)

[www.johnclare.org.uk](http://www.johnclare.org.uk)

[www.poetsgraves.co.uk/clare](http://www.poetsgraves.co.uk/clare)

- 1) Where and when was John Clare born?
- 2) Where did he live?
- 3) Which school did he attend?
- 4) Who did he fall in love with in his early adult life and why didn't the relationship work out?
- 5) What various jobs did he have?
- 6) What major social and economic change was taking place at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century?
- 7) What inspired him to write?
- 8) What is he most famously known for?
- 9) What happened to him in 1837?
- 10) Where did he spend the last 23 years of his life?
- 11) Collect the following and copy into a Microsoft word document entitled 'John Clare' to use in your next piece of work:

- Picture of John Clare.
- Map of where he lived.
- Image of his home.
- Image of his grave.
- A poem of Clare's you like.



You will use this to create your own individual factsheet / slide show about John Clare.

You must use visual images as well as text

It should be aimed at teenagers who know very little about John Clare.



## Exploring John Clare – The Peasant Poet

### Task 1)

Using a John Clare poem explore how he uses metaphor or simile to describe his 'home' and local rural surroundings.

Metaphor	Simile

### Task 2)

- Using A3 paper, create a visual representation of the poem you have been exploring. You can highlight and use words, as well as images in your visual representations.
- Use colour and other materials to create a unique individual representation of John Clare's poetry.
- When your visual representation is complete share it with the rest of the class.

### Task 3)

- Create your own poem entitled 'home'.
- Think carefully about your 'home' and local environment.
- How can represent your 'home' to an outsider.
- Draft and write up your poem to be entered into John Clare Poetry competition.

## **Educational Visits**

The cottage is open for educational visits; please contact the following Education Outreach Officers to arrange a bespoke, tailored package to suit your centre / schools needs.

### **Contact Details**

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