

# Understanding Land Art

## Creative activities suitable for Key Stage 1-4

### About Richard Long

Richard Long shot to fame in 1967 with an artwork called 'A line Made by Walking', a line left after walking through the long grass. This simple act and the declaration that art could be a journey became a turning point in conceptual art. He has explored the theme ever since, creating numerous land works around the world, recording his journeys with photographs and making lines and circles from materials he finds on site.



*My work is “A love and celebration of the natural world.” - Richard Long*

Associate Artist Liz Gregory describes the 'Jackdaw Line', a piece of land art created by Richard Long at Hestercombe Gardens in June 2020.

*“His newly installed artwork Jackdaw Line snakes through the grass near the top pond, surrounded by huge trees in Hestercombe’s Georgian Landscape Garden and uses stone sourced from a slate quarry in the same valley. He created a line using the contours and subtle shapes of the land, using string and sticks, then placed a stone at every turning point. Having removed the string, he then filled in the gaps with more stones, building them up until he was satisfied with the look and feel of the work.”*

### About Hestercombe

Hestercombe House and Gardens sit beneath the Quantock Hills overlooking the Tone valley with long views towards the Blackdowns. The surrounding grounds have long been famous for the collaboration between the garden designer Gertrude Jekyll and architect Sir Edwin Lutyens and the beautiful formal gardens, which sit alongside the wilder, less cultivated areas, but the Contemporary Art Gallery is a relatively recent addition, staging its first major exhibition in 2014. While aiming to present the best in contemporary arts practice it focuses on the relationship between art and landscape. It aims to be a place where art is not just shown but where artists and designers can explore, collaborate, research and respond in order to make new work. The Richard Long sculpture is very much part of this tradition.

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## Starting with Collage

Developing an understanding of land art with KS1-4 through simple collage activities

### National Curriculum links:

One of the key aspects of the art curriculum is to respond to and find out about famous artists. This resource is aimed at Key stage 3 children but could easily be adapted for younger or older children.

I am going to show you two ways in which you could respond to this sculpture and relate it to the national curriculum for art.

The first one is by making a collage, which can be done in the classroom with limited space and basic materials, the second is making a piece of land art outside in your school grounds.



Making this stone collage is a practical activity that will develop students' ability to look at shapes, patterns, colours and textures. It is taking the basic elements of Richard Long's sculpture, stones found at the site, and looking them as sculptural objects. It is an opportunity to experiment and play with shapes and colours. This will teach your students how to draw with scissors by cutting directly into the paper instead of following a pencil guideline.

### Method:

Look at your stone and choose a base colour from a choice of black, white or mid tone. Make a very simple outline drawing of your stone in pencil, to fill the page. Look at the textures and patterns on your stone. Cut shapes that respond to these patterns in another colour to your base colour and stick them down. This could vary from just a few lines, to an intricate composition using several contrasting tones. Cut out the stone shape when finished and display as a line around your classroom: your own version of the Jackdaw Line.

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## Recommended artists to reference:

Richard Long (Land artist,  
natural materials, walks)

Richard Long, Jackdaw Line,  
Hestercombe 2020

[https://www.hestercombe.com/  
whats-on/jackdaw-line-by-  
richard-long](https://www.hestercombe.com/whats-on/jackdaw-line-by-richard-long)

Henri Matisse: Used scissors as  
a pencil to make shapes

Henri Matisse *The Clown (Le  
Clown)* from *Jazz* 1947

[https://www.moma.org/collection/  
works/105379](https://www.moma.org/collection/works/105379)

## Here's what you'll need....



**Paper:** Variety of shades of A3 paper, including black, white and a mid tone (such as packing paper, sugar paper or re-cycled paper)

Pencil, white chalk (for drawing on to black paper) scissors and glue

**Subject:** Stones, large or small

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# Creating your own land art

Developing an understanding of land art with KS1-4 using found materials

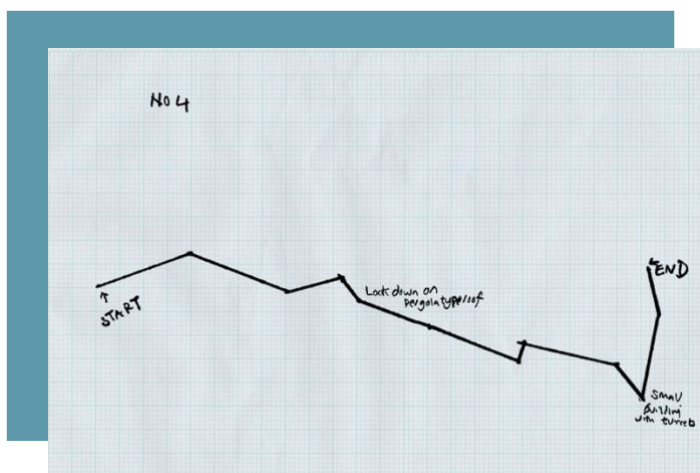
## National Curriculum links:

This activity will demonstrate how to make a piece of land art with found materials in your school grounds. Using Richard Long's Jackdaw Line as inspiration, you will make a line that links Hestercombe, the setting of the sculpture, to your location. The strength of land art is often in its simplicity and repetition of the same material. By gathering lots of stones and making a pattern or shape you will create a sculpture very simply. It is also an excellent way of showing students how to collaborate, by encouraging them to find and use strengths within their group. Lastly it will show the importance of recording, a process that is particularly important with an art form that is transient.



## Method:

Collect your stones, or natural materials. Choose one of the Hestercombe Lines below. Find an area outside where you can install your sculpture. Mark out the beginning of the line and each turning point with stones, sticks or leaves. This can be done roughly, or by pacing and counting.



When the whole line is marked out, fill in the gaps with the remaining stones. Hopefully there will be enough material to make a line, but if there aren't enough stones, simply space them out as evenly as possible. Photograph or video the whole process and remember to take pictures from far away as well as close up.

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Recommended artists to reference:

Richard Long (Land artist, natural materials, walks)

A Line Made by Walking 1967

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/richard-long-1525>

Andy Goldsworthy (uses found natural materials)

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/andy-goldsworthy/>

Robert Smithson (American land artist)

Robert Smithson 1970 Great Salt Lake, Utah

Mud, precipitated salt crystals, rocks, water 1,500 ft. (457.2 m) long and 15 ft. (4.6 m) wide

<https://holtsmithsonfoundation.org/spiral-jetty>

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Here's what you'll need....

### Materials:

The Hestercombe Walk lines (enclosed in pack)

Collections of natural materials: Big stones, small stones, gravel, sticks, leaves, seed heads or earth.

Phone or camera to record

An area outside that is suitable

Resources to photocopy on next page:

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Looking at different rock types for Activity 1 'Starting with Collage'



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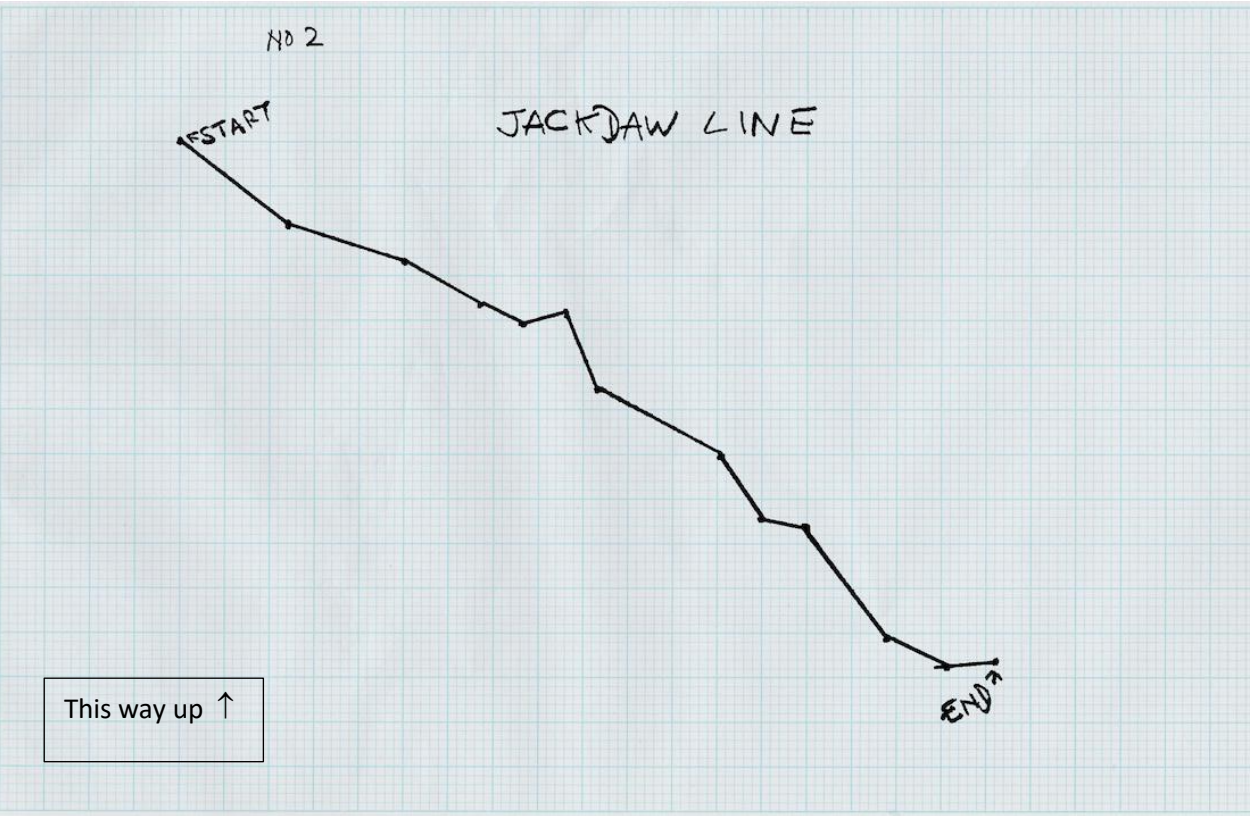
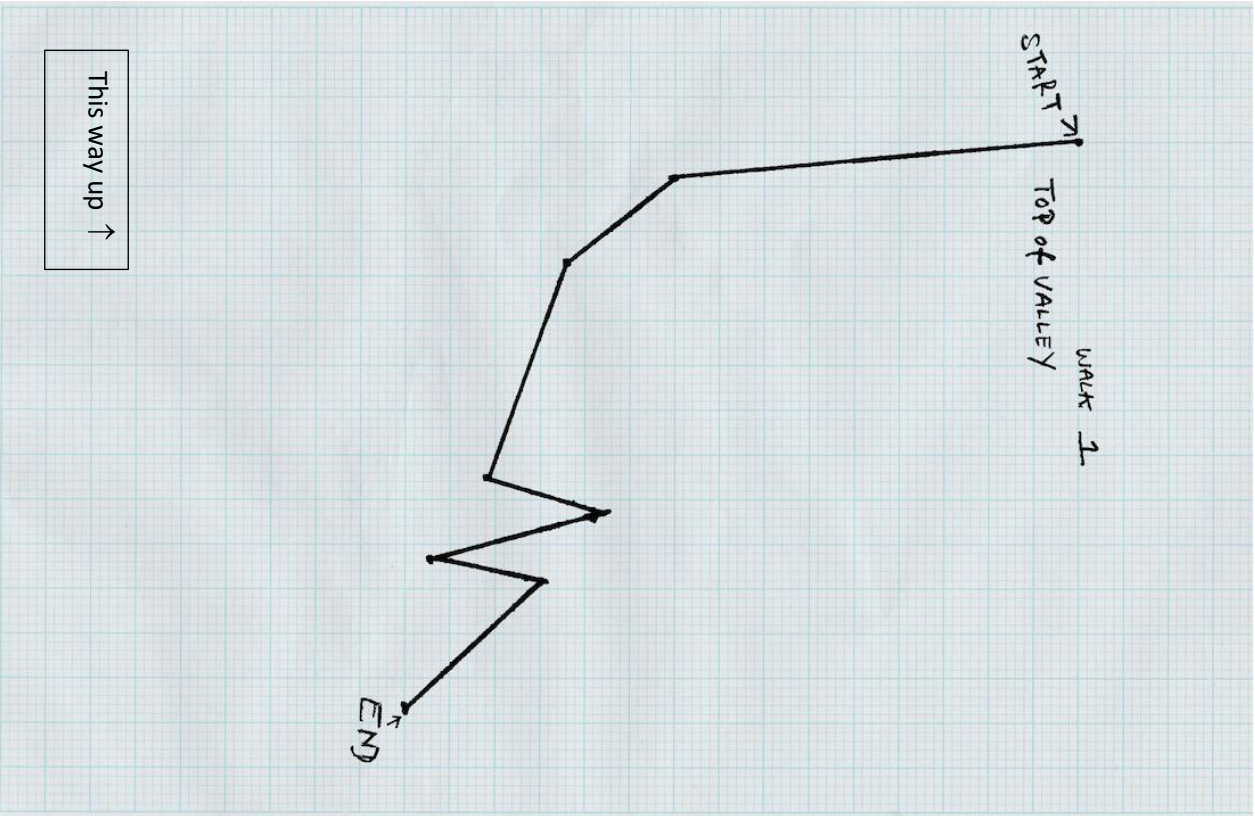


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**HESTERCOMBE**  
paradise restored

Looking at the different walks around Hestercombe for Activity 2  
'Creating your own Land Art'

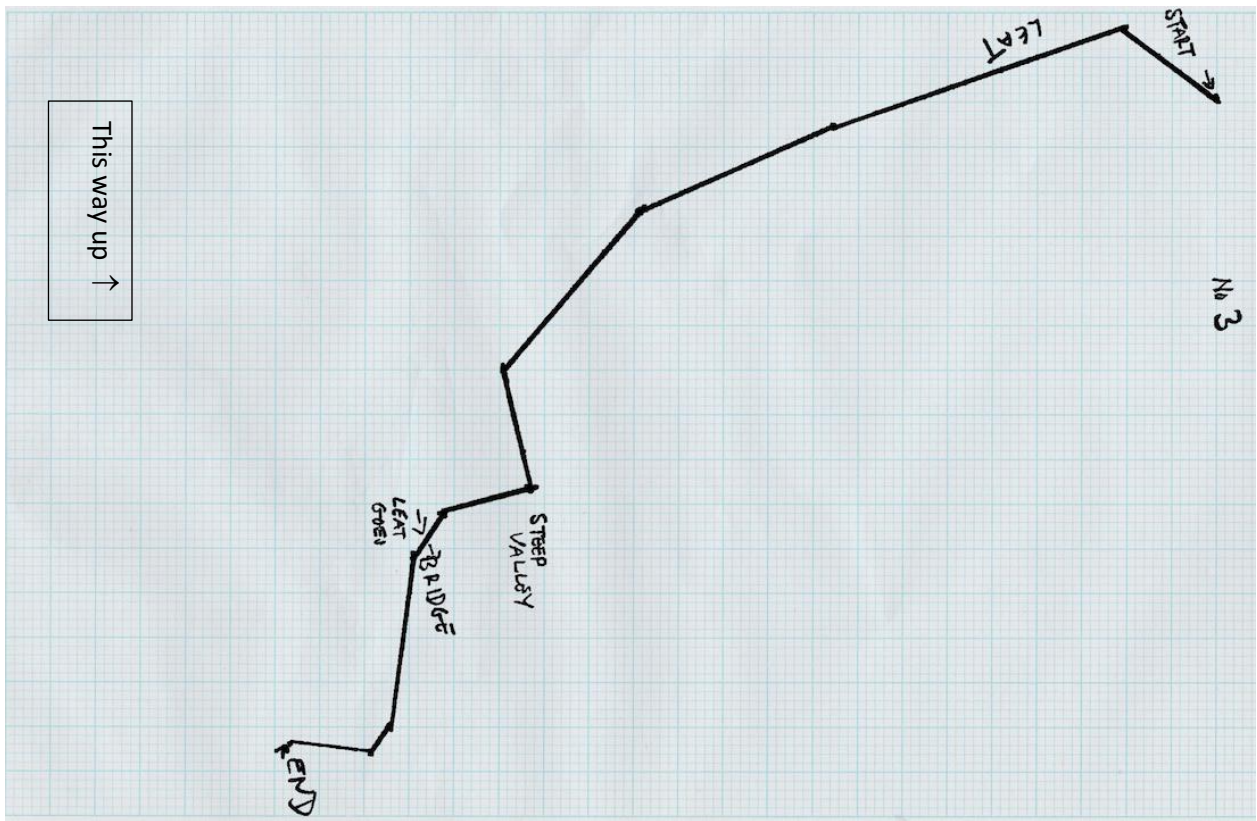


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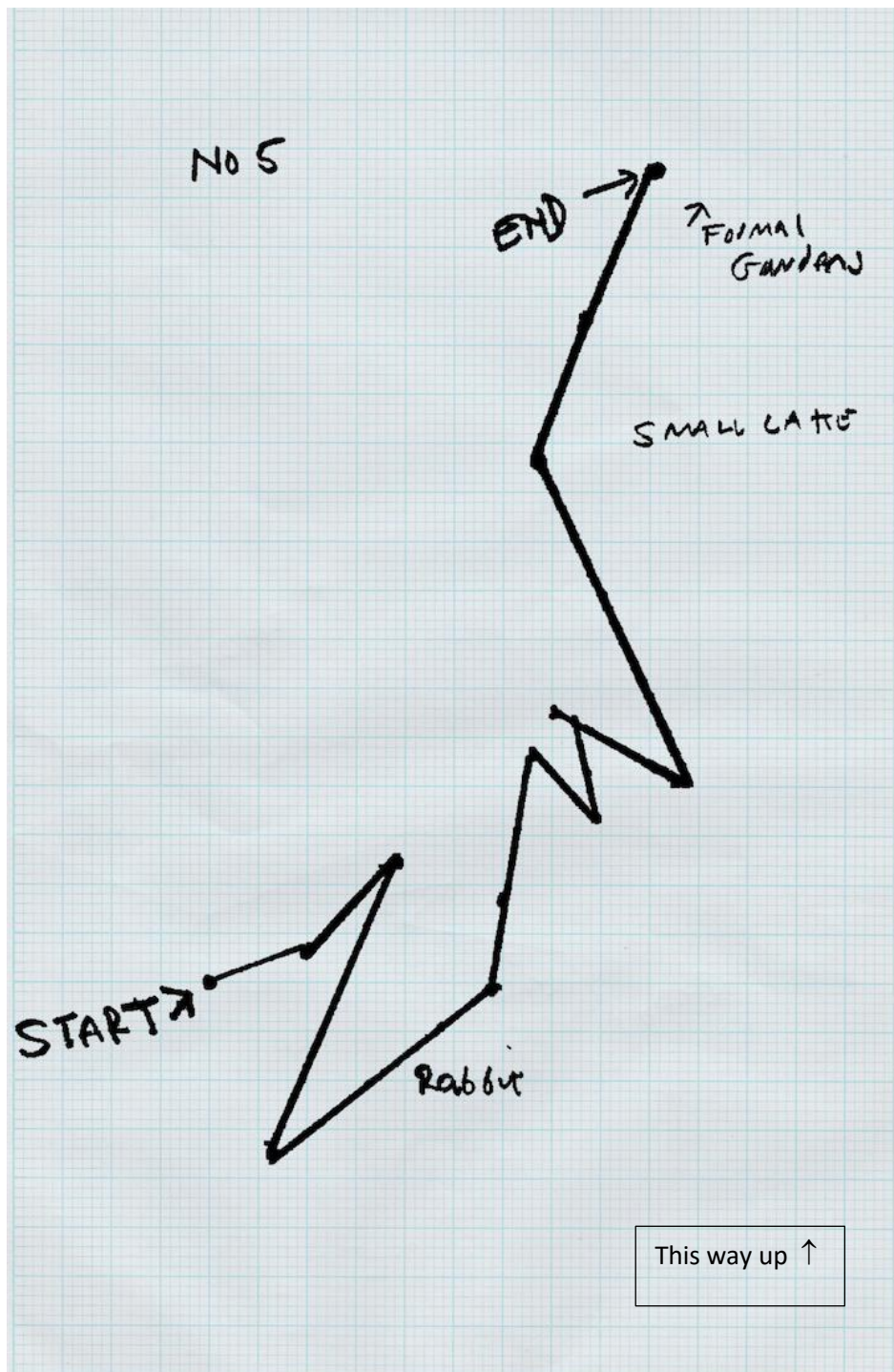


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