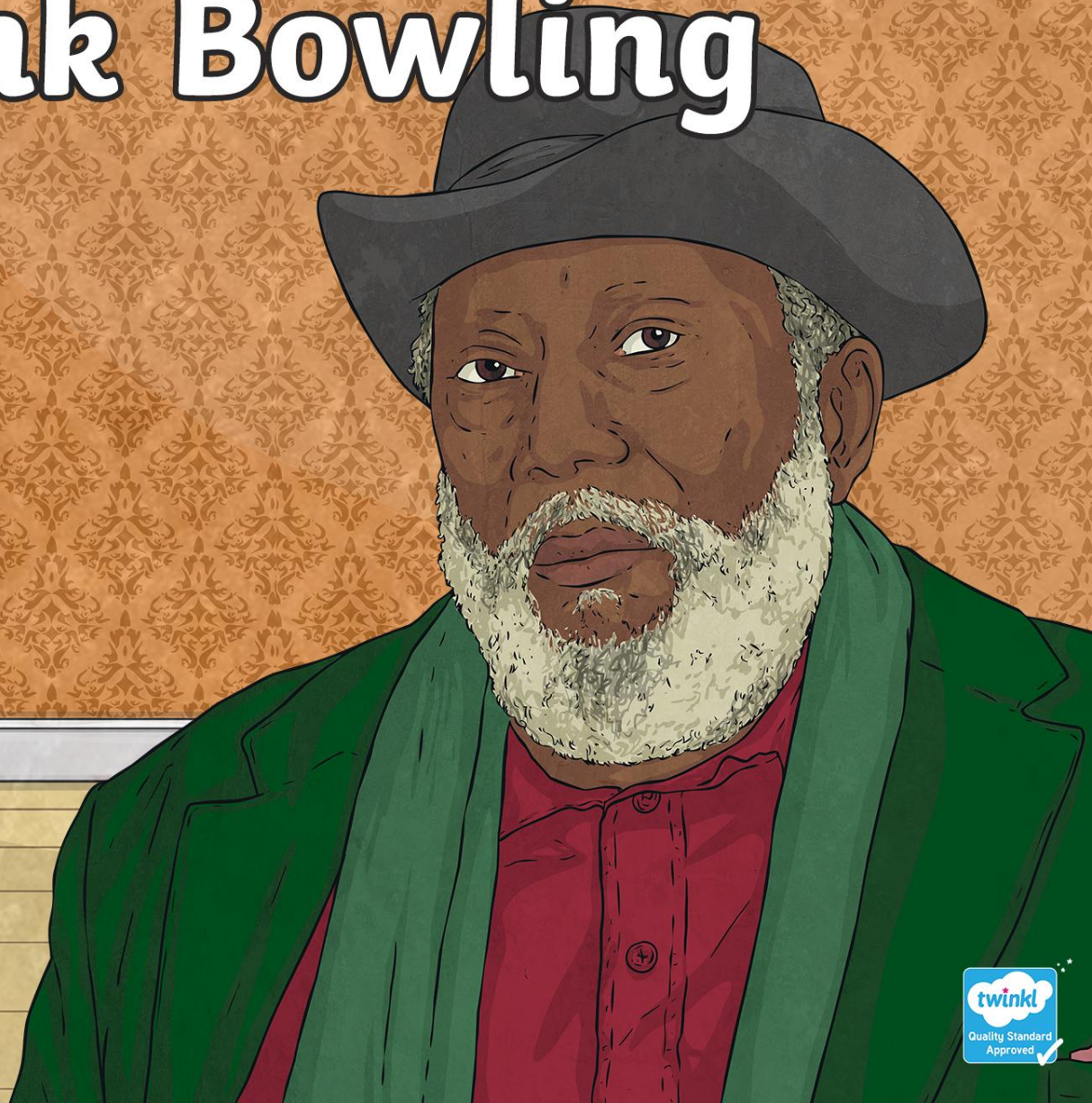


All About...

Sir Frank Bowling

June
Artist of
the Month



Family

Sir Frank Bowling was born on 26th February 1934. He was born in what was then called British Guiana but is now called Guyana, in South America.



Bowling's mother was a seamstress and milliner (which means she made hats). She set up her own dressmaking shop and the family lived above it. Frank helped out in the shop when he wasn't at school.

When he was 19 years old, Frank moved to London to live with his uncle. He signed up to national service and joined the Royal Air Force (RAF). It was during this time that his life took a different path.

The Study of Art

Frank made friends with an aspiring artist, Keith Critchlow. Critchlow took Frank to see art in the National Gallery and the Tate Gallery. These visits sparked Frank's interest in the artwork of British artists, such as Constable, Turner and Gainsborough.

Frank decided he wanted to study art so he studied at three different art schools before winning a scholarship to attend the Royal College of Art (RCA).

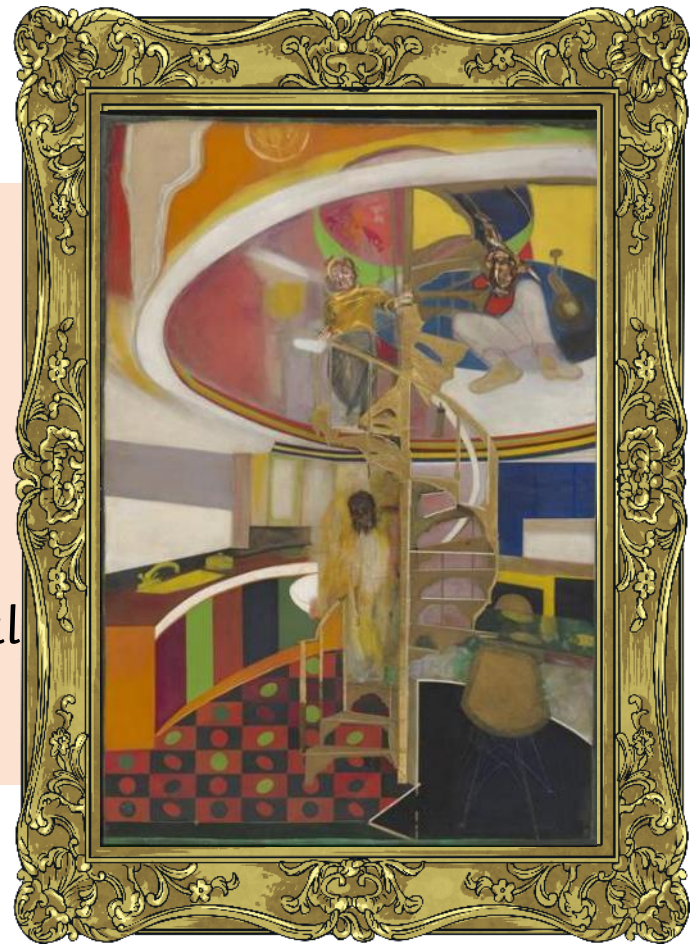


Frank graduated from the RSA in 1962 with a silver medal.

Changing Art

At the beginning of his art career, Frank painted pictures of figures - people in different poses.

However, a few years later, Frank had a discussion with other artists about geometry, architecture and colour. His artwork took on a different style as he worked on paintings which became more abstract, full of colour, shape and personal memories. This led to the painting, Mirror (1966). It is a very large painting, measuring over approximately 3 metres tall and 2 metres wide.



Mirror



Mirror

Sculptural Paintings

After teaching art for a few years in London, Frank went to the USA and developed a style of painting which included elements of sculpture.

He began to include objects, materials and thick acrylic gel to create his paintings. He has occasionally stuck objects, such as shells and plastic toys, into the actual paintings.

Here is an abstract painting named after one of Frank's three sons, Sacha Jason.



Sacha Jason Guyana Dreams







Honours

In 2005, Frank became the first Black artist to be elected as a Royal Academician at the Royal Academy. The Royal Academy is similar to an art gallery or museum. A Royal Academician must be a practising artist and is voted for by fellow artists.

In 2008, Frank was presented with the Order of the British Empire, or an OBE, which the monarch awards in recognition of someone's contribution to a particular area, such as the arts.



Paintings

Sir Frank Bowling often names his paintings after friends and places that have meant something to him. He says his paintings are like diaries and he is reminded of those experiences when he looks at the paintings.

‘I don’t have any pre-planned idea about how I’m going to make a painting.’

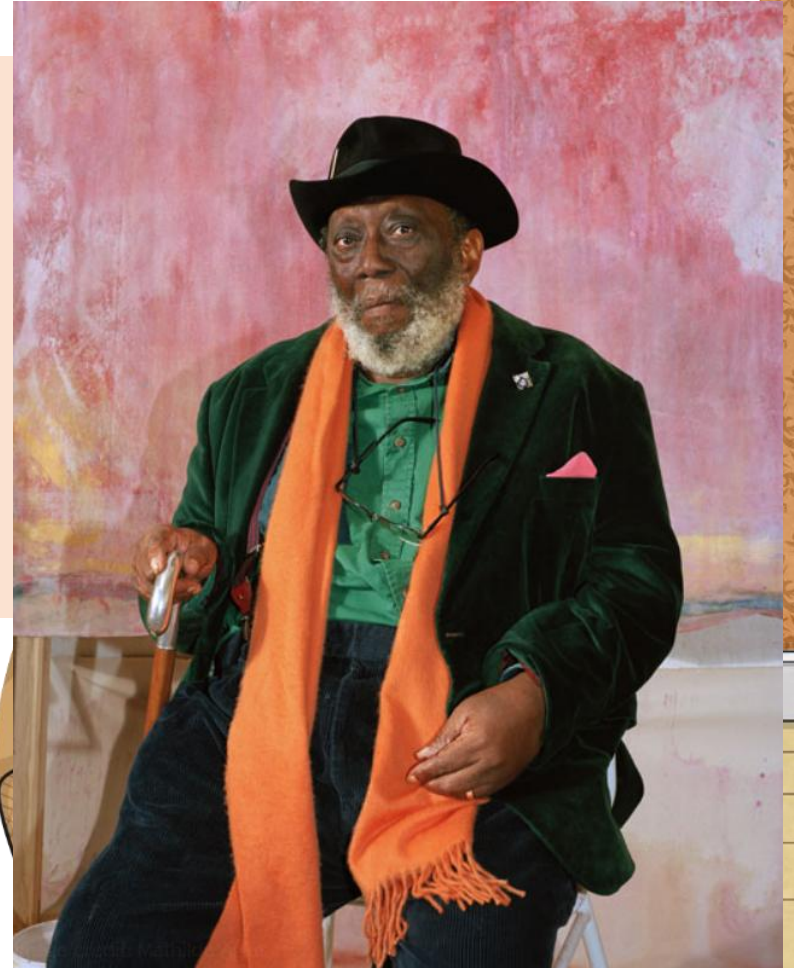
- Sir Frank Bowling



A Legacy

Sir Frank Bowling is now in his 90s and isn't able to complete paintings himself. Instead, he has people to help him and he directs them as to where he wants them to paint.

Still a keen artist, Frank continues to experiment with colour, geometry and effects. A man who has had over six decades of creating bold and exciting art, Sir Frank Bowling's main aim as an artist was just to 'create some good art'.



June Art Task

Can you paint like Frank Bowling?
Create a painting and stick things on it
like shells or other parts of nature?
What about Lego or old buttons?

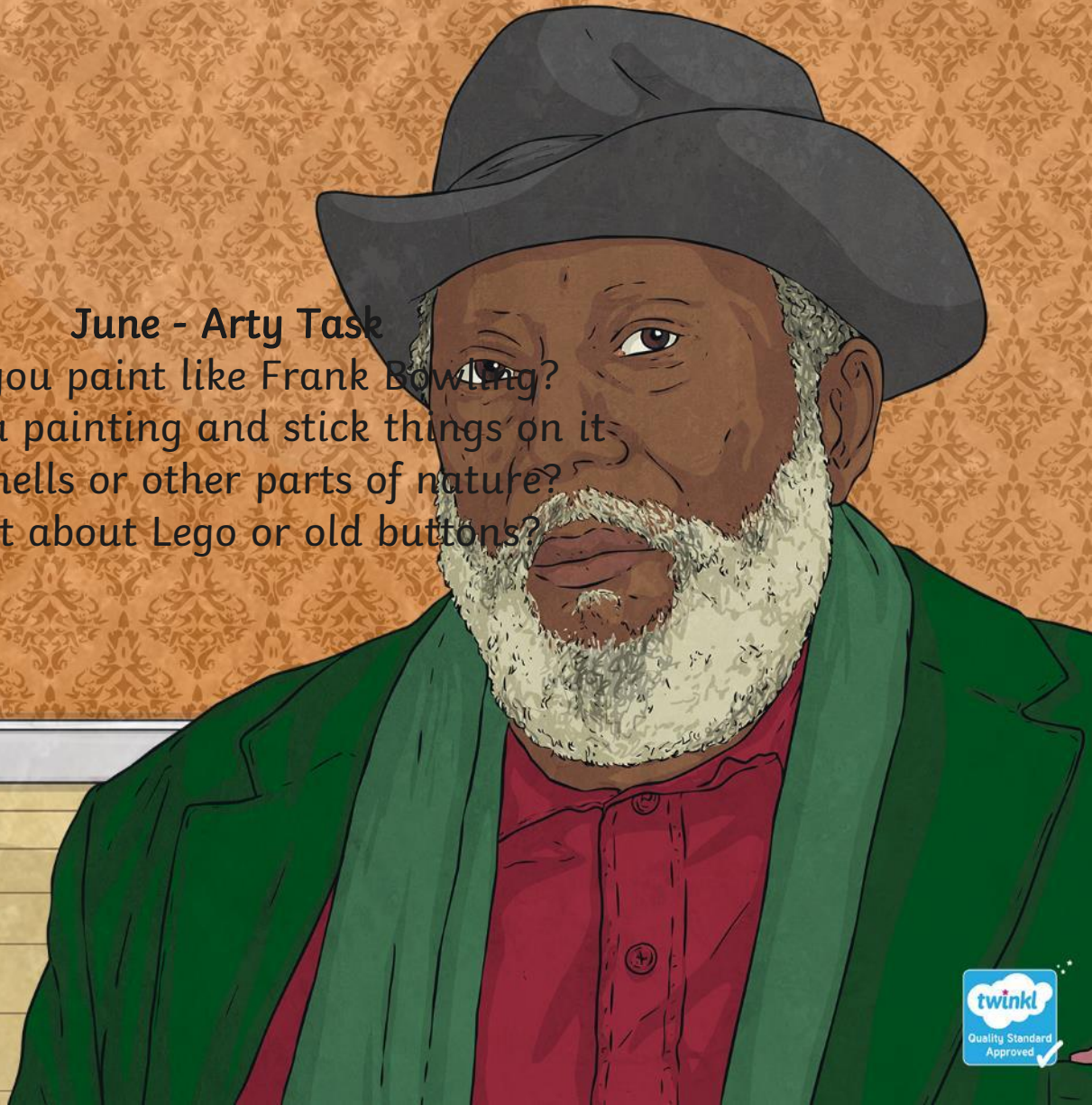




You could use colouring pencils or crayons.

Create a picture that is meaningful to you!.



A stylized illustration of an older man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a dark grey hat and a green jacket over a red shirt. He is looking towards the viewer.

June - Arty Task

Can you paint like Frank Bowling?
Create a painting and stick things on it
like shells or other parts of nature?
What about Lego or old buttons?