Unseen Moomin art to open in London

LEVEL A2/B1


Photo: Unsplash

I. WARM-UP

1. What story characters did you love as a child?
2. Have you visited an art exhibition? Where?
3. Do you prefer books with pictures? Why or why not?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

exhibition
a public show of art or other objects

illustration
a picture made for a book or story

sketch
a quick drawing with simple lines

draft
a first version of a text or picture

curator
a person who plans and looks after a show in a gallery

translate
to change words from one language to another

theme
the main idea in a book, film or artwork

remote
far from towns or people; hard to reach

III. READING

Unseen drawings by Finnish artist and writer Tove Jansson will go on show in London. The exhibition Tove Jansson and her Families opens in November at the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration. It is billed as the UK's first to focus on her illustrations.

More than 100 items will be displayed, including sketches, photographs, films and letters. Original art from her first Moomins book, The Moomins and the Great Flood, will appear in the show. Early booklets she made at age seven will also be on display. A new sketch shows Moominpappa with a giant shell.

It was a draft cover for Moominpappa at Sea, when the family moves to a remote island. Guest curator Paul Gravett and Jansson's niece, Sophia Jansson, say the themes speak to children and adults. Her Moomin books, made between 1945 and 1977, have sold up to 30 million.

They have been translated into more than 60 languages and inspired many films and shows. Fans can see how her ideas grew from simple drawings into famous stories.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Previously unseen drawings by Moomins...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where will the exhibition open?
2. When does the exhibition open?
3. How many items will be shown?
4. Which first Moomins book will show original art?
5. What does the new sketch of Moominpappa show?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Why do people still enjoy the Moomins today?
2. Which theme in the books do you like most? Why?
3. Would you visit this exhibition? What would you want to see first?
4. Should children and adults share the same stories?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

How questions

Use How + helping verb + subject + main verb to ask about the way something happens. Put How first, then a helping word (do/did/will), then the person or thing.

"**How did the artist draw** *the Moomin sketches?*"
"**How will the drawings be shown** *at the centre?*"

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option in each question.

1. Over the years, (her ideas did how / how did her ideas) grow? _____
2. If you go, (you will how / how will you) get to the centre? _____
3. In 1945, (how did she / she did how) make her first Moomin book? _____
4. In November, (how will fans / fans will how) view the show? _____
5. Today, (how do children / children do how) learn about Moomins? _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8 minutes vocabulary, 12–15 minutes reading and comprehension, 8–10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach names and terms: Moomins, Tove Jansson, exhibition, sketch, curator. Pictures of the Moomins help set context.
- Run the reading twice: first for gist (what, where, when), then for details (numbers, names, items). Pair-check before class feedback.
- Keep discussion concrete at A2 level. If students do not know the Moomins, allow answers about any childhood book or TV character.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit quick examples students know, then ask for one reason for their choice.
2. Board a few sample themes (friendship, nature, freedom) to support weaker speakers.
3. Set a 30-second think time; students list two items they would look for.
4. Take a show of hands, then pair opposite views to explain their reasons.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 70-word exhibition note for the Moominpappa shell sketch.

Presentation: In small groups, prepare a 1-minute talk on one exhibit mentioned and why it matters.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: How questions

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. Where will the exhibition open?
   At the Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration in London.
2. When does the exhibition open?
   In November.
3. How many items will be shown?
   More than 100.
4. Which first Moomins book will show original art?
   The Moomins and the Great Flood.
5. What does the new sketch of Moominpappa show?
   Moominpappa with a giant shell.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Choose the correct option in each question.

1. Over the years, (her ideas did how / how did her ideas) grow? **how did her ideas**
2. If you go, (you will how / how will you) get to the centre? **how will you**
3. In 1945, (how did she / she did how) make her first Moomin book? **how did she**
4. In November, (how will fans / fans will how) view the show? **how will fans**
5. Today, (how do children / children do how) learn about Moomins? **how do children**

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use How + helping verb + subject + main verb to ask about the way something happens. Put How first, then a helping word (do/did/will), then the person or thing. (Examples constructed.)

*"**How did the artist draw** the Moomin sketches?"*
*"**How will the drawings be shown** at the centre?"*