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## St. Martin-in-the-Fields – William Logsdail (1888; Tate)

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/logsdail-st-martin-in-the-fields-n01621>





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- Who is the main subject of this painting? How do you know? **The girl selling flowers is the most prominent person in the painting. She is at the front in the middle and looks straight at us.**
- What can we tell about her? **She is clearly very poor – possibly homeless. Her clothes and hair are scruffy and she is standing outside on a cold rainy day selling flowers.**
- Does anyone else in the painting interact with the girl? **In general life carries on with no one paying any attention to her. But there is a rich looking lady with a red fur-lined coat who looks as if she is deliberately avoiding getting too close to her. She seems to be trying to shield her smartly dressed child from her.**
- What do you think the lady in the red coat is saying to her child?
- How has the artist shown us what the weather is? **He has painted streaks of white on the ground to make it look like it's recently been raining. The rich people's coats suggest it is cold. The artist apparently hired a carriage to paint from (although the girl would have been a model who posed in his studio) and he was so cold that he stuffed straw inside his shoes.**
- If you were the girl and had to stand there all day long making next to nothing – while possibly hearing people like the mother talking to her child – what would you be thinking and feeling?
- What sounds would we be able to hear if we were there?  
Ideas include:
  - Carriages' moving wheels on the wet road
  - Horses' hooves
  - People's footsteps
  - Shouts of street sellers
  - A whiny dog?
- Imagine you are the girl. Try to convince a passer-by that they should buy one of her flowers.
- Where do you think this is set? **It's in Trafalgar Square in the centre of London. The church is called St-Martin-in-the-Fields and, with the exception of the vehicles and fashions, the view has not changed a huge amount.**
- Show the modern photo of the same spot. What is different and what is the same?



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### *Follow-on ideas*

- Imagine the girl could read and write (she probably could not) and write her diary entry that evening, having spent the day standing outside in the cold and rain.
- Take on the role of a magazine editor writing an article about homelessness. Using the painting as a starting point design the front cover taking into consideration the headline and main talking points.
- Life in Lockdown discussion: Trafalgar Square is usually one of the busiest places in London. What do you think it looks like at the moment? Which is the place that is usually really busy that you are looking forward to going back to the most?

### *Topic Links*

- History: The Victorians
- Childhood
- Current affairs: Homelessness
- Architecture/Cities/London