

**AXE 3**

**UNIT 8**

**SHORT CUT**

# PORTRAITS OF THE VOICELESS

*Is art a form of political counter power for the voiceless?*



**WE CAN'T FEED THE POOR BUT WE CAN FUND A WAR.**



## YOUR PROJECT

Select two pieces of artwork to be part of an exhibition honouring the Have-Nots. Justify your selection to the museum committee!

Au menu de cette unité :

### DÉCOUVERTES CULTURELLES

- ✊ La pauvreté à l'ère victorienne
- ✊ L'apartheid en Afrique du Sud
- ✊ L'envers du rêve américain au XX<sup>e</sup> siècle (ouvriers, migrants, hoovervilles...)
- ✊ Des photographes engagés (Lewis Hine...)

### OUTILS LINGUISTIQUES

- ✊ Les pronoms relatifs
- ✊ Les deux présents

## BEFORE CLASS!

Flash to watch!

Watch the trailer for Ken Loach's *I, Daniel Blake* (2016) and be ready to talk about it in class!



# 1 The Have-Nots in Victorian England

*How did artists reflect social inequalities in 19<sup>th</sup>-century England?*

## 1 “The Blind Girl”

- A. Observe the painting. Describe it briefly, focusing on the light, the scenery and on the characters' attitudes.
- B. What emotions does the painter want to convey?
- C. Read the article on [Worksheet n°25](#) to learn more about the painting.
- D. **Have your say.** Do you find this painting optimistic or pessimistic? Justify.

### HELP!

#### Nouns & adjectives

- field
- beggar
- rainbow
- shawl /ʃɔ:l/
- social class /səʊʃl kla:s/
- the have-nots ≠ the haves
- blind ≠ sighted
- hopeful ≠ hopeless
- worn-out (clothes) = rags

#### Expressions

- be down and out
- beg for money
- live on the streets
- feel pity for sb
- find shelter
- bow one's head = courber la tête
- play the concertina /kɒnsə:tɪnə/ = accordion /əkɔ:dən/



*The Blind Girl*, John Everett Millais (British), 1856



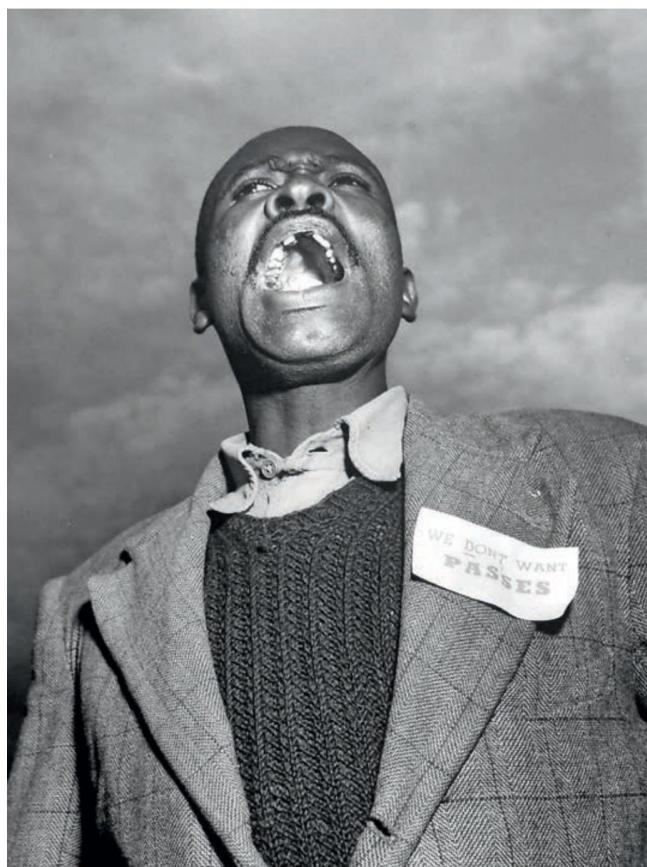
*Applicants for Admission to a Casual Ward*, Luke Fildes (British), 1874

## 2 Begging for work

- A. Observe the painting. Describe it briefly, focusing on the light, the place and on the people's attitudes.
- B. Imagine the reason(s) why Luke Fildes chose to portray entire families together.
- C. Read the article on [Worksheet n°26](#) to learn more about the painting.

## ② Fighting Apartheid with a Camera

*Has photography helped to make a change in South Africa?*



**Native carpenter Phillip Mbhele,**  
Margaret Bourke-White (American), 1950

### Cultural fact

Pass laws were designed to control the movement of Africans under apartheid. [...] In 1952, the government enacted an even more rigid law that required all African males over the age of 16 to carry a "reference book" [...] containing personal information and employment history. Africans often were compelled to violate the pass laws to find work to support their families, so harassment, fines, and arrests under the pass laws were a constant threat to many urban Africans. [...] In the 1970s and 1980s, many Africans found in violation of pass laws were stripped of citizenship and deported to poverty-stricken rural "homelands." By the time the increasingly expensive and ineffective pass laws were repealed in 1986, they had led to more than 17 million arrests.

[overcomingapartheid.msu.edu.](http://overcomingapartheid.msu.edu)

HELP

### Frame

- wide view: vue large
- close-up: gros plan
- high-angle: plongée
- low-angle: contre-plongée

## 1 “We don't want passes!”

- A. Observe the photograph. Describe it briefly, focusing on the man's attitude.  
B. Imagine what the man is protesting against.  
C. Read the article on [Worksheet n°2](#) to find out about the historical and social context.  
D. **Have your say.** What strikes you about this picture? Do you think that such pictures can help to fight inequalities?

## 2 Show me your pass

- A. Read the *Cultural fact*, then observe the photograph below and guess what is happening.  
B. What angle is used by the photographer? What impression does it create? Justify.  
C. **Have your say.** Compare the two photographs, with the help of both captions. Which one is more powerful in your opinion? Why?



**Showing the pass,** Ernest Cole (South African), circa 1960