a fine FACTA

Newsjournal of the Fine Arts Council
The Alberta Teachers' Association

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100 years
Learn from the past. Inspire the future.

Cover art: The cover art was developed by Karen Tamminga-Paton, a high school fine arts teacher who lives in the Crowsnest Pass in southern Alberta. This image, and others, adorned the pages of the final curriculum prototyping documents produced by the Calgary Board of Education and its network of partner districts in 2015. This artwork is reproduced with the permission of the artist and remains the property of Karen Tamminga-Paton. Further reproduction or use is prohibited without the prior written consent of the artist. Please visit Karen's website, www.tammingapaton.com.

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The Verdict Is In!

CHILD ART CLASSES AS A CHECK ON DELINQUENCY

Reports from Judges of Juvenile Courts from many quarters point to the value of music and art as deterrents of delinquency. Children's classes in the Art Gallery, Toronto, have reached the peak of attendance, where 523 eager young artists devote themselves to the fine arts. Judge Mott of the Juvenile Court, Toronto, says that his Court would be empty if boys and girls learned to use some of their energy in picture making and art study. Art, in his judgment, is the best emotional outlet, and the boy and girl who enjoys using pencil, paint and other art mediums, seldom gets into serious trouble.

—*Canadian School Board Journal.*

Article from the front page of the *Alberta School Trustee's Magazine* volume II, number 8, as printed in the November 1932 issue of the *ATA Magazine*.

Letter from the Editor

Renee Dowling

Dear fine arts teachers

Change seems to be the word that represents our world. There have been a lot of changes in our community, school districts and governments, and the world at large. Attitudes about education, people and the world keep changing. Sometimes the change involves new ideas and moves us forward; sometimes the changes seem to be new ideas, but are really revisiting old ideas under a new name. Suddenly there is a new trend, but is it really new?

As educators, it seems that every year there is a new buzzword for us, and we are asked to jump on a new bandwagon. Most wagon rides are relatively short, and before long another wagon crosses our path and off we go in a new direction. As our educational landscape continues to shift, we will continue to travel in uncertain directions and hop wagon to wagon because we believe that, despite the confusion, the near-constant change and the dust that gets kicked up, in the end public education will end up in a better place.

This year, the Alberta Teachers' Association is celebrating its 100th anniversary. Over the past century, the fine arts teachers who came before us experienced change that is remarkably similar to what we face now. This edition of *a fine FACTA* is inspired by the motto that accompanies the Association's 100-year anniversary logo: "Learn from the past. Inspire the future." We'll begin with a selection of quirky, timeless and inspirational articles drawn from archived Association and council publications. We'll follow up with contributions from colleagues currently working to teach and promote the arts in Alberta's classrooms. I think you'll find that regardless of the time, Alberta's teachers have always been passionate and creative stewards of the fine arts.

Weebit
Artist:Renee Dowling
Personal photographs help students to add details and paint with realistic colours and shadows.

Dear readers, the fact that you have joined our specialist council shows that you know the impact of the arts on students. On behalf of the Fine Arts Council executive, thank you for being dedicated champions

for the arts, and for advocating for all your students. What you do is important, especially in these times of seemingly constant change in our schools and communities. Keep exploring new ideas, reflecting on your practice and encouraging the creativity of your students.

Sincerely
Renee Dowling

Renee Dowling teaches Grade 1 at River Heights Elementary School in Medicine Hat, in the Medicine Hat School District No 76. She is participating in the district's technology committee's Fresh Grade Portfolio pilot and is also taking local and online art courses. She creates art using acrylic paint, mixed media, watercolour, photography and, occasionally, sculpting. She loves nature, photography, art journalling, dancing, music and kayaking. Look for her blog at reneelovesart.blogspot.com.

Artist: Renee Dowling, mixed media, SEATCA art session instructed by Rita Wildschut from Red Roof Studio, Duchess, Alberta

Message from the President from the First Issue of the FACTA Newsletter

This article was originally published in the first FACTA Newsletter, *February 1965, pp 1–2. Minor amendments have been made in accordance with current ATA style.*

Message from President James Simpson

The Prejudiced Senses

When we speak of ourselves as *fine arts teachers*, what precisely do we have in mind?

All too often, I am afraid, we become so enmeshed in the sedulous charms of equipment and technique, of product and performance, that it becomes very easy to lose sight of the importance of training the senses that temper the skills.

Ours is becoming an increasingly prepackaged culture. The senses are constantly bombarded with ready-made images of all kinds, in such quantity and of such alluring verisimilitude that genuine personal responses to any situation become more and more difficult to maintain.

The great mystery is not that we should have been thrown down here at random between the profusion of matter and that of the stars; it is that, from our very prison, we shall draw from our own selves images powerful enough to deny our nothingness.

–Andre Malraux

Like sophisticated jackdaws, teachers and students alike often become adept in sifting through ready-made images and selecting whatever style or posture seems most fashionable, desirable or obscure.

In this direction, I believe, lies the road to prejudice—prejudice of the senses. We need to maintain a sober, careful examination of the basic principles of seeing, hearing, feeling. We need to place less emphasis upon training students in painting, singing, and acting, and more upon training students in living.

To take what there is, and use it, without wanting forever in vain for the preconceived—to dig into the actual and get something out of that—this doubtless is the right way to live.

–Henry James

Message from the President

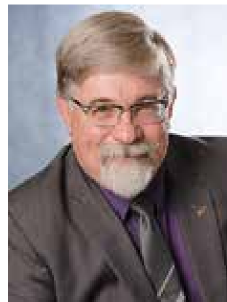
Ahead by a Century: Learning from the Past, Inspiring the Future

The important work of fine arts teachers often goes unrecognized. The results of your work are not easily captured by the battery of standardized tests to which your students are subjected. Arts education is almost always overlooked by the pundits and opinion columnists who so eagerly weigh in on the work of teachers. As our education system feverishly seeks to improve student literacy and numeracy, there is no parallel initiative to improve student creativity. To paraphrase Sir Ken Robinson, arts education emphasizes diversity and individuality, not standardization. It's about awakening students, not measuring and categorizing them.

Employers increasingly value the imaginative and interpersonal capacity that students of the arts bring with them to work, but learning to sing, dance, paint and act are not just employability skills. Artistic development promotes wellness, resilience and self-actualization. The fine arts are a fundamental element of a balanced K–12 education, not a useful by-product.

The Alberta Teachers' Association has a storied past. Over the last century, our members have demonstrated their constant creativity, ingenuity and compassion and have helped to elevate the reputation of Alberta's public education system and its teaching profession to a level of excellence that is the envy of international jurisdictions. As the Association celebrates its centennial, I encourage you to take a moment to reflect upon your own educational journey and to celebrate your many successes. Through your efforts, Alberta's students, families and communities are vibrant, joyful and full of creative potential.

All the best
Greg



Greg Jeffery is the current president of the Alberta Teachers' Association. He has taught junior high math and music in Fort Saskatchewan since he started his teaching career in 1984, and has directed community choir programs for the past 22 years.

Fine Arts—Future Prospects

Richard A Morton

This article was originally published in fine: The Journal of the Fine Arts Council, *winter 1968–69, pp 34–42. Minor amendments have been made in accordance with current ATA style.*

The Canadian community gives the responsibility for what shall be taught in schools to the provincial governments. Legally, it is the minister of education who prescribes the program of studies and authorizes the textbooks to be used. In practice, in Alberta, this task is given to the Curriculum Branch personnel who, in turn, call together teachers and other professional people to develop the actual outlines and prepare the guides. Thus, in fact, courses of studies in the fine arts are written by you and your colleagues. I am sure you are aware that the authorized outline is a brief statement of rather general objectives and content headings within which each teacher has a high degree of freedom. This is particularly true of the fine arts subjects, because these have never involved external examinations. Curriculum subcommittees may also prepare what is usually referred to as a teacher guide, which enlarges on the content headings and provides ideas and suggestions to teachers to help them carry out the objectives of that particular course. We refer to these as "service" bulletins, and they do not carry any legal weight as far as the department is concerned.

Now, school systems have the opportunity to use texts that are different from those authorized; they also have the right to use a vast array of other materials upon which the department may not have put its stamp of approval. The responsible authority here is the local school board. In practice, in fine arts teaching, there has been a great deal of flexibility. It would be fair to say that in many instances this freedom has been used to advantage; in other cases, it probably has been detrimental to good teaching. The important point, particularly for those of you who are members of this council and who are actively teaching one or more of the fine arts subjects, is that the onus not only for the teaching of the curriculum but for its development as well is in your hands.

So far, I have outlined the legal framework through which courses of studies come into being.

Another aspect of the context in which courses of studies are evolved is the nature of that society itself. It is quite possible to develop objectives, to outline content and to teach that content in the schools with little or no reference to the society which that school is supposed to serve. I submit that in fact this has happened. In the past, there has been what might be termed school art, or school music or school drama. Children learned to sing songs that the teacher wished them to sing but were all forgotten outside. Much the same was applied to art. There was an accepted body of school art theory and school art practice, and very little of it was related to any art the children might have seen or touched outside of school.

I have used the past tense in my last few sentences not because I think that these attitudes have disappeared but because I know that we are making some attempts to remedy the situation. *Relevance* is a key word these days in curriculum and teaching. If education is to relate to society, one of the essential points made by John Dewey must be kept in mind. Figuratively, if not actually, the walls of the classroom must come down. When they are down, the community tends to come in to the school and the school tends to move out. There is a reciprocal action, which means that the old notion of an

instructional cell in which students and pupils are confined for a certain number of hours each day has gone.

In his book *Education in the Modern World*, John Vaizey, an economic consultant with the United Nations, states that

> … we are in the midst of one of the most striking periods of changes in the way in which education takes place that the world has ever seen. What will the new schools in highly developed countries look like? That is really the question that we have been asking ourselves. The answer appears to be that our old idea of the school, isolated from the rest of the community, will no longer serve.
>
> In the first place, schools will become very much more open to the rest of the community. The school buildings could conceivably be the community center, open all day, every day, not only for the teaching of children but for the classes for adults in vocational and recreational subjects with gymnasiums, playing fields, swimming pools, libraries, cafeterias, all available to the local neighborhood for full and intensive use.
>
> Secondly, I think within the schools themselves we shall see a growing informality and a break away from the system of individual classrooms towards a range of rooms of varying sizes, very often with movable walls which can be re-grouped as the needs of the school develop. The informality of modern architecture and the arrangement of architecture designs in such a way that they fit the children is perhaps one of the biggest breakthroughs of the last quarter of a century.

Certainly, one of the problems or challenges that teachers of the fine arts must face is that of operating in that kind of open environment. An excellent argument could be presented that of all the subjects in the school, the fine arts have been the least introverted. Both music and drama demand performance, usually very public performances. No school work is as thoroughly exposed to public inspection. This is also true of art that goes on display. Not only the pupil's picture is judged, but the quality of the teaching as well.

Having said this, I should add, on the other hand, that the future educational environment that Vaizey and others talk about is very much two way. The classroom not only goes out into the community, but the community comes into the classroom. We used to say that the "whole child" came to school, in the days of progressive education, and this notion was laughed at by critics who claimed that educators were trying to take over all parents' responsibilities. Of course, [what this meant was] that the child who sat in the seat in front of us was not simply bringing a mind to be filled but was indeed a whole person who lived in a certain kind of home with certain kind of parents in a certain kind of community. These were as much a part of the child as his brain. Today, I think we must go further. Not only does the "whole child" come to school, but in a real sense he brings all of society with him. He brings with him what he knows of the community, its celebrations and sorrows, its charms and its scars, its conflicts and its achievements. This fact, too, is vital when we are considering the context in which we teach.

At this point I cannot resist quoting from an article in *Arts Canada* by Marshall McLuhan. No speech would be complete without one reference to the high priest of media.

> In our time we can see that pop art consists in taking the outer environment and putting it in the art gallery, or indoors somewhere, suggesting that we have reached the stage where we have begun to process the environment itself as an art form. We may be catching up with ourselves. When we begin to deal with our actually existing new environment as an art form, we may be reaching that stage the planet itself seems to have reached.
>
> If the planet itself has thus become the content of a new space created by its satellites and its electronic extensions, if the planet has become the content and not the environment, then we can confidently expect to see the next few decades devoted to turning the planet into an art form. We will caress and shape and pattern every facet, every contour of this planet as if it were a work of art, just as surely as we put a new environment around it. Even as the Romantics began to deal with the old pastoral, agrarian world as an art form when machinery was new, so we will now begin to deal with the planet itself as a work of art.

In another article from a June 1967 issue of *Saturday Review*, Edmund Feldman of the art department, University of Georgia, makes the point that the dialogue of teaching and learning is important for teachers

of art. In simple terms, we ask questions of a work of art and carry on a dialogue with it. Later in his article, he asks whether this dialogue idea of art has any implications from a curricular point of view. He sets aside the notion of chronological teaching of the arts as being out of step with today's world and moves into these observations:

> We might consider anthropology as a source of useful curricular categories. It studies the tools and rituals man uses to satisfy his persistent needs. They are classified according to the cultural and biological crises he must pass through conception, birth, puberty, marriage, nurture of the young, aging, death, burial, rebirth. These crises have their associated art objects; industrial man has even developed some new ones—ennui, anomie, alienation, and mass hysteria.
> ... In planning instruction in the humanities we should start with life as it is felt and as we see it lived. Then we can proceed to find out how organized knowledge and the vast body of created art illuminate life.
> We ought to remember that artistic form is a language which documents merely echo; for those who are initiated ... materials speak. The materials shaped by our hands, or by the tools our hands and minds devise, always testify to a human dialogue between man-the-maker and the world he discovered but did not make, the world not quite to his liking. The humanities ought to be an account of the world we try to change through that agency of real and symbolic action called art.

This observation of Feldman's brings me to our own curricula and what the future holds.

Steps are being taken to revise fine arts courses in the schools of Alberta. Elementary music and elementary art have been completed and were introduced this fall. A new Grade 10 art course was initiated in September. A committee is now at work on junior high art. We have set up a major committee covering the fine arts in Grades 7 to 12. Under it, various ad hoc committees are undertaking revisions so that by next year all visual arts courses from 1 to 12 will be revised, and by the following year music and dramatics will have been completed or well along.

What will all these revisions in fine arts curriculum mean? As I intimated earlier, the real initiators of curriculum are teachers and not the Department of Education. Many of your colleagues are involved in the preparation of courses of studies, but all of you will be directly concerned with making the curriculum work.

It is at this working stage, this face-to-face encounter with pupils, that some of the things I said earlier will have to be achieved. What kind of influence do you hope to have on the students who make the choice of one or more of the fine arts subjects? Certainly, you are going to have a very mixed group. Some of you, I know, would much rather have a small number of enthusiastic students with native ability, for there is a great deal of satisfaction in helping the cream of the crop. But, if our fine arts courses are going to have any relevance to society, or if society is going to be involved in our fine arts courses, then it is important that a much wider spectrum of the youthful community be involved.

We must avoid the danger of creating an elite clique that may know how to talk to itself but does not know how to talk to anyone else and, perhaps more important, does not care. I meet this attitude every once in a while. It says in effect that there are only a few artistic souls who are worth bothering about. The rest are and will always be the great grey inconsequential *they*. This snob–slob dichotomy is held by some intellectuals, some politicians, some scientists and some artistic persons. Let it be said that the fine arts classroom is not the place to recruit the future fine arts elite.

To this end, I see a broadening of objectives in curriculum planning. It is expressed in the much wider choice of activities. This is true in music—we have gone beyond singing to instrumental and rhythm activities. In art we have extended activities beyond the traditional media to many and varied craft activities. Drama is more than play making, and more than the natural-born actor can profit from it.

I like the concept that was presented by Dr Vincent Lanier in the winter issue of this magazine, *fine.* The concept, as you remember, takes youngsters where they are with the sensitivities and skills they have and canalizes them into a greater understanding of aesthetic values. Within some of the ideas listed in newer curriculum in fine arts, teachers will be able to carry out his suggestions.

This brings me to another point about the future of the arts in the schools of Alberta. A premium will be placed on experimentation and the development of new

ideas. I should hasten to add that while previous curriculum outlines have permitted much more leeway than most teachers took advantage of, future courses of study will be less prescriptive and will, we hope, encourage professional people who have good ideas to try them out. I would repeat here something that was said earlier: while the outlines in the programs of studies do have the legal sanction of a prescribed curriculum, the objectives and the content headings are stated in broad enough terms that there is a very large amount of elbow room. The teacher guides that are prepared for the department by your colleagues are intended to be just that, namely, guides for teachers. We realize that this places much more responsibility upon the fine arts teacher, but it is our feeling that teachers are quite prepared to accept, many eager to accept, that responsibility.

Another facet of this particular philosophical position is that we are moving away from the single textbook or single authorization in any of the fine art subjects. As a matter of fact, there is no authorized textbook at all in Arts 10. In place of the text for every student, the subcommittee is recommending a group of resource books. These are for both student and teacher, and the recommendation says that they should be in the art room and not in the library. The idea is that these books are as much part of the art room as the furniture and the materials that are necessary to carry on the program.

And while we are on the subject of materials and furniture, there is no doubt that we are moving in the direction of more and varied materials as well as suitable equipment storage and work areas. Unfortunately, in the fine arts area there are no grants from the federal government to cover these items as there were for vocational education. Furthermore, the Department of Education is moving away from incentive grants or special equipment grants and lumping the entire contribution of the province to education in any jurisdiction under the terms of the Foundation Program. In effect, this means that the fine arts department or the fine arts teachers in any school district have to fight their own battles for their share of the tax dollar. And while it can be said that there is much more sympathy for fine arts programs than ever before in this province on the part of school administrators, there is still a long way to go. What is more, I cannot promise you that the situation will be any different in the future. We are all faced with limited budgets this year, and next year will likely be more of the same.

Let me return briefly to trends as I see them ln the fine arts curriculum. My bias may be showing, but I am sure that more attention is being paid to the use of educational media in the teaching of the fine arts. I have used the term *media*, but realize at once that when one talks about media in the visual arts, one is talking about something very definite: crayons, water colour, oils, and so forth. In drama, the term *media* might refer to mass media like radio and television and how drama is related to this. I am sure you realize that my reference is what has been termed *audiovisual aids*. This is a bad phrase among media specialists these days and does not seem to cover the full range of equipment or materials. I am not really talking about aids, but necessities.

I cannot see how it is possible to teach either music or drama without a tape recorder, or art without a slide or film strip projector. The overhead projector is useful in teaching all the arts. The 16 mm motion picture reservoir of material has never been so rich or so diverse for each of the fine arts subjects. I regret very much that our own library at the Department of Education has only recently begun to keep pace with increasing interest in the fine arts. New 8 mm film loops are coming out all the time—good ones and bad ones. A new set that came to my attention just a day or two ago includes loops on stretching a canvas, simple framing, brush strokes, cutting a mat and much more. It might be argued that these materials are not really curriculum, but the trend is more and more to recognize such resources on the same level as reference books and other print materials. To carry this a step further, we have begun some investigation, on the advice of the Secondary Fine Arts Committee, into the possibility of a general arts course—a humanities course for junior high school students with media at its core. By arranging the wealth of materials that are available to us and by turning this over to a teacher who is competent but not necessarily in all the fine arts, we may be able to provide for students a rich and vital experience that could have a profound influence upon their lives.

To go on with still another trend, it seems clear to me that there is now among those who advise us in this field a greater emphasis upon artistry. While creativity and freedom of expression are still vital, especially in

the elementary grades, more is being done to encourage children to develop skills. This trend is in keeping with what is happening in other subjects. In social studies and science, much is made of process skills or work study skills. If a student is able to get a good grasp of these, he is able to look for information, process it and make use of it. The physical education people take the same point of view. The school years, they say, are best used to develop a basic set of physical skills that the student can use in any kind of athletic activity he may choose to follow later on. In the fine arts, this is made manifest in many types of activities that lead to artistic skills within the competence of the individual child. To me, the sense of accomplishment that this approach engenders seems to encourage creativity rather than stultify it.

One more trend finding its way into our curriculum is reflected in the feeling that the fine arts curriculum must have academic respectability. This has come to the fore since the universities announced that third-year fine arts courses would be accepted as part of the admission requirements for certain faculties. Some have felt that the present "30" courses in the Fine Arts are perhaps too "thin," at least when compared to the tougher, more intellectual science, mathematics and English courses. Curriculum committees are going to look at these senior courses very soon with a view to revising them. As a purely personal view, I would be unhappy if these courses became highly theoretical and designed only for the student who is going on to the fine arts pattern in university.

In summary, the fine arts are achieving a status in the total program of studies that they have not had in this province before. Whether this trend continues depends to some degree upon the quality of the courses of study that are developed within the next year or two. It will further depend upon the willingness of school administrators and school boards to provide the fine arts teachers with facilities and equipment that will enable them to do a better job. But, more important, it will depend upon the quality of teaching and the results of that teaching as they are made apparent in the students and the effect they have upon the community.

Art and the Classroom Teacher

Children's Art is Creation

Jessie Todd

An Education Communications Service feature

This article was originally published in the ATA Magazine *December 1954, pp 12–13 and 56–57. It has been edited for length, and minor amendments have been made in accordance with current ATA style.*

Since art depends upon enthusiasm and since enthusiasm in the classroom is contagious, the classroom teacher plays a vital role in any school art program.

Spelling and reading programs will not succeed if these subjects are disregarded in areas not labelled *spelling* and *reading*. So it is with the art program, which cannot succeed unless every possible opportunity to make use of art in the school is carefully considered. Every teacher should realize, for example, that simply copying a picture

requires no originality or thought and, therefore, is not art. "But we don't say it's art—we're doing it for social studies." The answer, of course, is that we must consider the child in relation to the total school program.

Much of the success of an art program will depend upon the classroom teacher's understanding of its aims and purposes. This is perhaps more true in schools with special art teachers than in schools where the classroom teacher has full responsibility for the art program. In either situation, however, the day-by-day carrying out of the art program rests with the classroom teacher. Without her help and interest the art program will fail.

Working Together?

Several examples will illustrate. The art teacher had made great effort to build up the confidence of a boy in her class. Day after day he had been saying, "I'm no good. See, I try to model a dog and it doesn't look like a dog."

"I think it does," the art teacher said. Just then the classroom teacher stood beside the boy and in a flippant way said, "Is it a dog or a horse?"

The boy turned to the art teacher. "I told you it was no good; Miss Brown doesn't even know it's a dog."

It was a simple mistake, but the classroom teacher who understands the aims of the art program knows that it is best not to ask what a drawing or modelling is. Usually the child will tell. A book could easily be written on how to look at children's art.

The boy had done a solid piece of modelling. He had made an artistic shape. To the artist, whether it was a dog or horse was of little importance. The boy needed his self-confidence built up by praise. This fact was very important. Miss Brown, by one remark, had spoiled what the art teacher had accomplished with time and effort. The boy was back where he started. He mussed up the dog.

Another illustration. The classroom teacher brought her first-graders to the art room to do finger painting. The children were so enthusiastic about finger painting that many of them made five finger paintings in one art period. Since another class was arriving in the art room, the first graders had to take their finger paintings back to their room to dry. They made many trips.

The next day when the first graders came to the art room to make more finger paintings, the classroom teacher announced, "Work on the same finger paintings for the entire period." This was poor practice, but the art teacher could not contradict it. The finger painting paper became too dry as the children worked. The children felt that it was not successful. On the previous day the children often mussed up the finger paint several times on each paper but did this quickly and called the finger painting done when they arrived at a result they liked.

When they had to work on the same finger painting for an entire period, they had to muss up a design they liked because they had to keep on using the same paper. Since they had to work on the same pictures for the entire period, they stirred all of the bright colours together as they worked over and over on the only paper they could have. All results were a gloomy greenish black and they were so dried up that no little wiggles showed. The children were disappointed.

In both of these cases, the classroom teachers and the art teacher had not worked together effectively. Obviously the art teacher cannot succeed in bringing creative work out of children when the classroom teacher finds fault where the art teacher gives praise. The two must not have opposing aims.

Understanding Art

Children's art is wonderful. It hasn't been spoiled by too much academic teaching. It is often close to the work of artists. The little white clay cat with huge pink sunk-in eyes and expressive tail fastened solid as it curves around his body is a work of art. The classroom teacher who prefers a naturalistic cat needs to read some books about contemporary art. The child who made the cat used imagination in colour and in shape. The shape was very solid and simple. The result was most appealing.

Another child painted a very expressive man. The classroom teacher who says, "But the head is much too large," needs an understanding of the aims of art. The child's painting was full of rhythm and expression. It was of little importance that the head was too large to be naturalistic.

When the classroom teacher is with her children in the art class, she and the art teacher can supplement

each other and provide a more coordinated school program for the child. If the classroom teacher helps to pour paint from the quart bottles to the little bottles, she is a part of the whole creative process.

However, if the classroom teacher corrects papers during the art class, it would be better if she went to another room. Her nonparticipation puts a damper on the art class, for someone is present who is not entering into the spirit of the class.

If she helps the art teacher assist some child who knocked over his paint bottle, she is part of the group, for paint needs to be cleaned up and some small children's hands are not strong enough to squeeze water out of a rag.

The classroom teacher who does not spend time as a participant in art activities with her students cannot have the insight that is essential to any effective art program. Teacher participation is the most important element in the art program.

Other Prerequisites

There are, of course, other prerequisites to this program that should probably be more generally understood by classroom teachers and administrators. High on this list of prerequisites are space and material. Children need paint and clay, their favourite materials. They need large pieces of paper and bottles of paint with large brushes. Large quantities give them freedom.

Obviously they need table space or floor space in order to spread out the papers and set the paint bottles close by. If the school lacks this space, some children may read while others paint.

The importance of exhibiting children's pictures cannot be over-estimated. Large bulletin boards in rooms and many bulletin boards in the halls are needed. Pictures are not painted to stack in piles. Children like to see their work and the work of others. An exhibit put up once a year for the parents is not the solution. Sending an exhibit to the central office is not the solution. These exhibits should be on the hall

Enthusiasm and Participation

bulletin boards at the end of the first week of school. They may not be good, but as the weeks go by the pictures will be better. Some pictures may be taken down when others are ready to put up. The exhibit is, therefore, continual. To list all of the things the children learn from such an exhibit would make another article.

These exhibits have many secondary values. They enlist the interest of parents and superintendents. They enlighten the parents and superintendent as to the aims of the teachers and the art accomplishments of the children. They give the superintendent concrete evidence to guide him in evaluating, and the criticisms may give the art teacher the opportunity to explain the program to him or to enlist his support in getting more supplies or space.

Enough Time

Last but not least in importance is the matter of time. The art period must be long enough to get something finished. With the exception of Grade 1, the art period should be no less than 50 minutes for painting and clay work. A 60-minute period is more satisfactory, since children need to get out paints and mix colours for their special needs. After the paint is mixed and all is ready the child must have time to paint.

When working with clay, boys and girls need time to finish what they start. Children like the kind of clay that hardens. They cannot work on it a second day, for it hardens over night. If they cannot finish in one art period they have to muss it up and start all over the next day. Children can, of course, bring tin cans with covers and keep the clay object soft in this can from day to day, but most children younger than Grade 7 don't care to do this. They like to finish in one art class so that they can paint the clay the next day.

We must do nothing to cramp the size of modelling as well as painting and other art forms. As stated before, children are more free when they make things large, when they have plenty of time and when they work in an atmosphere of enthusiasm. Keep in mind that freedom is the essence of children's art.

Drama: A Little Bit of Magic

James J Dunne

James Dunne [was] a teacher at St Andrew's Elementary School in Calgary.

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People in education need propaganda pieces written by enthusiastic fanatics. They need papers of commitment, of causes and of carefree expressions of human dynamism. Batteries need continually to be recharged for the sparking process that is the teacher's calling. A paper that brings back a smile, or brings a new conviction, is worth writing. Enthusiasts write propaganda pieces. This is one of them.

I enjoy producing plays. Plays are good fun and so is the business of producing them. I would prefer to base a belief in the merit of drama as a human activity on these simple facts rather than on myriad learned studies and quotations.

I believed, however, that research into "the sources" would provide me with an adequate justification for this enjoyment of drama and indicate why it was good.[1] My research was very discouraging. I found that the kind of work I had been doing with young children was not worthwhile, positively harmful or absolutely impossible. It was a great shock.

Then the penny dropped. Each author was deeply involved in his or her own experience and was writing with this in mind. I would have to do the same. The "justification" that follows is not quite in the great tradition of educational rationalizations. It is the work of a novice who has not yet learned to cloak personal opinions and experiences with an aura of logic and erudition.

1 Justification after the fact is a universal phenomenon in education. Thus, not only must schools or plays or creative writing be good and enjoyable, but a rationalization of these activities must be proposed so that they are seen to be beneficial and educationally sound before the court of the taxpayer or the university professor. In this respect, education is almost unique in demanding more than enjoyment as a reward for its activities.

Storytelling and mime are related activities that, both separately and in their union as drama, have a history as old as civilization. The storyteller was the first entertainer. Later his art was complemented by committing the oral tradition to writing. The power of the spoken word remained paramount but it was added to when man began to act out the situations of which he spoke. We see this development with regard to the chorus in Greek drama. The story-telling poets of ancient Greece were hailed as the great educators of their nation. Great teachers have always avoided specific "do's" and "don'ts," and have instead taught by example or by parable. Christ refused to tell the masses the meaning of his parables. The power of the story as a real educator has always been paramount.

The example of these eminently successful teachers indicates that a human being takes from a story something that in a special way elevates, educates or tranquilizes an important part of his being. It indicates that story telling, in whatever form, is good for us and benefits those important areas of human development that we refer to as maturity, emotion and mental health. Every successful story gives us a slice of life, and life is the great teacher. Until the modern age (which began 10 years ago), the weight and wisdom of a man's words depended on his age, his experience. Story telling remains one of the few ways in which we can cheat time by compressing life's experiences into small vials that can be handed to those who want to know.

Children want to know. From an early age they want to watch stories, hear them and act them out for themselves. In this way they can confront the problems and solutions that this world will present. This constant occupation of the young child is referred to by the experts as *imitation* and *role playing*. Psychologists tell us that the more insecure and fear-provoking situations can only be confronted by the subconscious and that dreams are our window on this part of our natures. It is significant that they, too, take the form of dramatic stories. The unquenchable thirst of young children for fairy tales shows most obviously how, in story, they confront various facets of life. The good, the bad and the ugly are shown simply and vividly. Happiness and sadness, success and failure contrast with each other and there is always the comfort of a happy ending. Fairy tales are to the young what western movies are to the old.

If our school system were serious about educating the total personality of its students, then drama, as the most effective form of story-telling, would comprise a very large part of the education of elementary school children. The current popularity of creative drama in places of teacher education must soon combine with the natural instinct of children to make it the rule rather than the exception. This is an excellent base from which to begin upon a formal drama project.[2] The two must be seen as complementary rather than exclusive, which is the current fashion. Creative drama only just stops short of performance, and formal drama at its best borrows some of the emotional involvement of its less structured counterpart. Creative drama, when expertly taught, involves the participants in a depth and intensity of personal involvement that a school play can seldom match, yet the formal drama work can adopt a broader aim by attempting to embrace the whole school community and the totality of its educational activities.

Good teaching today demands that we recognize that, for the student, classifications of knowledge and experience into separate subject areas are simply unreal. The possibility of involving large areas of school work and different parts of the curriculum in the production of a school play gives us an opportunity to recognize the existence of this reality. It must be obvious that much of the preparatory work for a play can be carried out, and justified, as most effective curriculum material. It is all the more effective because the student can see a real and immediate goal for his activity. He must learn to read the script so that he can speak it. He must read it intelligently and speak it well so that the meaning and emotion of the words will carry to the audience. Art classes should be responsible for as much of the physical requirements of scenery and costume as is within their ability. Music classes will be provided with songs and music and perhaps a real reason for attaining a high standard of performance. As well as these lead-up activities, a school play can act as a stimulus to further work in these areas that might follow the production. Ray Mitchell in his book, *The School Theatre*, speaks of the effectiveness of learning in the arts, where children are allowed to participate actively and involve themselves rather than watch or listen:

2 The description *formal* is in no way connotative with serious. In the elementary school, formal drama will often involve situations and activities that are fantastic or farcical, and comedy is almost a necessity. The formality derives from the fact that some kind of planned or scripted performance is one of the aims of the exercise.

> No lecture can transmit their magic. They must be taught by some kind of apprenticeship. Song is learned by delight in singing ...

Of course, Mitchell is not thinking of 10-year-old students when he writes this, nor later, when he gives this summary of chapter 10:

> Features favorable to personal and social growth ... Highly individual, highly social ... Competition minimized ... Project Type program ... Intergroup and community relations cemented ... Social action stimulated ... Stereotypes broken down.

The teaching of healthy social attitudes and of group cooperation is, however, one of the main aims of the elementary school. We think of this concept of the school community as applying to the students only, but it should be extended to encompass the teachers—and even the parents. The production of a school play must centre on one person but it should not and, in the small school situation, cannot happen without the cooperation of all members of staff. Teachers emerge from their classrooms in order to cooperate in organizing the work. Constant and satisfactory communications are required so that there is a minimum of disruption and a maximum of effective participation. On another level, teachers and students will begin to see each other in a different light. The informal atmosphere allows people to emerge from their little cocoons of rules, roles and restrictions. The production of a school play is a kind of trial from which the school as a social unit should emerge more open and cohesive.

On the level of the larger community, an opportunity is presented to include the parents in school activities. This may appear idealistic, but I know that in some situations it is possible and beneficial. At a minimum, parents will become involved because their son or daughter is involved and this, in any situation, is a valuable rarity.

This is an age of opportunity for our elementary schools. The "system" is no longer as pressing as it was, and some supervisors have cast off their wolfish masks. Teachers who have initiative, and the strength and courage to use it, can rise above the level of carrying out the instructions in the curriculum guide. Schools now have enough physical equipment, space, money and trained personnel to produce successful plays of all kinds. Over-organization is one of the great enemies of our education system. Routine is necessary and comforting, but only as something to fall back on. It should not be allowed to take the place of worthwhile aims. The production of a school play in a small school is aroutine and acurricular in every sense of the word, for both teachers and students. In my estimation this is a merit rather than a drawback.

I must conclude with the idea that began this essay. I have seen 100 children watch the rehearsal of one scene 10 times and still they were not bored. They enjoy stories. I have seen 100 children take part in the staging of a musical fairy tale. They enjoy plays, enjoy doing them and benefit from the activity. I have seen parents and teachers watch children rehearsing and staging plays. They enjoyed watching. There is no possibility that a school play can be a failure because everyone is involved with its success. John or Mary as son, daughter or student is bound to please by their performance and so their success is assured. And nothing succeeds like success.

The Invention of Mind

Technology and the Arts

Elliot W Eisner

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Elliot W Eisner (1933–2014) is one of the most respected and influential curriculum scholars in recent history. Many of his articles and books remain required reading for graduate students to this day. This article was adapted from a speech that Eisner gave at a conference celebrating the Edmonton Public School Board's 100th birthday, in September 1982. At the time, Eisner was a professor of education and art at Stanford University, California.

To plan for our future without some attention to the arts intuitively does not seem quite right. We somehow feel that a life in the future that would not provide a place for the arts would be something less than human.

During the period in which a school district celebrates its past, contemplates its present and speculates upon its future, it is fitting that somewhere in that contemplative state the role of the arts in that future should be considered. Yet, it is science, not art, that is first brought to mind when one speculates upon the kind of future we will have 30 or 40 years from now. Whatever that future might be, for most of us, it will be primarily the product of science, the offspring of the scientific imagination, the achievement of a scientifically based technology.

Yet to celebrate our educational past and to plan for our future without some attention to the arts intuitively does not seem quite right. We somehow feel that a life in the future that would not provide a place for the arts would be something less than human; we fear it would be mechanical and overrationalized, paying too little attention to the life of feeling. Even in the future, our sentient nature needs to be cared for.

We all seek a full life, one with a semblance of balance for ourselves and for our children, and the intelligent pursuit of such a life properly requires a place for the arts as well as for technology and the sciences. Perhaps even more important, it requires some thoughtful reflection about how the arts, technology and science might collectively be used to shape the future we wish for our children. It is these relationships and, more particularly, the role that art and technology can play in the invention of mind that I wish to address.

The Relationship Between Technology and the Arts

Although technology is frequently regarded as antithetical to the arts, in fact the relationship between technological progress and invention in the arts has been an intimate one.

If we conceive of technology as the ensemble of practices by which one uses available resources in order to achieve certain valued ends, it becomes clear that throughout history tools have affected not only what artists have been able to make; more importantly, tools have affected what artists have been able to conceive of making. The invention of paint, for example, not only made the creation of public images possible, [but] the *idea* that such images might be produced was stimulated by the realization that coloured liquid could be used to make public what had been only in the mind's eye or in nature. The invention of the acetylene torch, used as it initially was for purposes of construction, was taken over by artists such as Brancusi, Giacometti and Henry Moore to create forms that even Praxiteles and Michelangelo could not have imagined. The use of neon in lighting has made neon sculpture possible. The production of nylon enabled a Bulgarian artist by the name of Cristo to realize his ambition to convert the natural landscape into an art form by draping it with hundreds of thousands of yards of synthetic fabric.

Not only do such technological resources help artists create what they have imagined, what artists imagine is itself influenced by what the technologies at their command stimulate. The existence of neon lighting suggests the possibilities of neon sculpture. The availability of the microcomputer and the possibilities of the images that it can produce give rise to computer art. The invention of corten steel makes new visions of sculpture possible. In short, the traffic goes both ways, from idea to the selection of technological means and from technological means to the generation of the idea to be created. Given this view, technology is not an adversary of the artist or of art but one of their necessary resources.

To view technology as a necessary resource for art does not yet tell the whole story. As teachers we are interested not only in art and technology per se, but we also have a special interest in the educational utility of science, art and technology. We want to know something about their relevance for the special professional tasks we have undertaken; we want to understand their potential contribution to the education of the young. Here, too, the relationship between technology and the arts is an important and intimate one.

Just as the technological achievements of a culture make it possible for artists to create new images, the same technological achievements present to artists new challenges. It is in the nature of these challenges that the educational significance of technology and art is most acute. The availability of a new set of tools not only makes it possible to conceive of new ends, it also demands that people think within the possibilities and constraints of the technology as an expressive medium. Thinking within a new medium presents the occasions for the development of new modes of thought,[1] the problems encountered are new ones—old solutions will no longer do. The limits of the new medium have not yet been explored. The demands that the new medium make differ from those made by the old. New skills must be developed to control the medium. New ways of processing the material need to be employed; new forms of representation, constrained by the particular characteristics of the medium within which one works, require the invention of new imagery or the new adaptation of old imagery if an idea is to be carried forward.

The formal arrangements that once fixed the grammar of known forms will now no longer do; hence, new grammars must be invented. Such tasks challenge the ways in which people think. The results of their inquiries are manifest in what we typically refer to as works of art. Works of art—whether in the Edmonton Art Museum or in a Grade 5 classroom of an Edmonton school—are the products of someone's thought. The level of intelligence employed during the process of its construction is embodied in the character of the solution. Because new technologies when used in the construction of images make new demands upon thinking, those demands have something important to do with one of our most significant educational concerns, the invention of mind.

The Invention of Mind

Mind is usually thought of as a biologically given entity, not something that one invents. Why should I then use the phrase *the invention of mind*? I did this not simply to be provocative but to express publicly what many educators have felt in their heart of hearts and what anthropologists and students of the mind and

1 For a discussion of the relationship between mental processes and the tools used for expression, see Rudolf Arnheim, *Art and Visual Perception* (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press 1954) and Elliot W Eisner, *Cognition and Curriculum* (New York: Longman 1982).

brain are increasingly coming to recognize. The kind of mind we come to own is profoundly influenced by what we have had an opportunity to learn and to experience. The mind is, one might say, a vast potentiality. The course of its development is not simply a function of some ineluctable genetic unfolding, it is shaped by use. Use, in turn, is shaped by the conditions of the culture in which one lives. Consider, for example, that kittens who were born normally sighted but who have had their eyes occluded between the ages of 2 and 12 weeks will be blind when those occlusions are removed.[2] Not having access to light during a particular critical period, their capacity to see is irrevocably terminated; they will not see even when light is present. One might say that light is a necessary condition for one part of their mind to function. Culture itself can be regarded as the condition a context affords an individual for the invention of mind. When one shapes the culture—and schooling is precisely that, an intentionally shaped culture—one provides direction to the invention of mind.

Technology Provides New Challenges

What has all of this to do with technology and the arts and the future, and what is its relevance to education? Technology as an array of tools provides adults and children with a new set of challenges—challenges that we must think through if we are to use these tools productively. It is precisely through these new challenges, born of human imagination, stimulating new thinking and resolved through human intelligence, that minds are developed. Looked at this way, the arts, the sciences and technology are mind-altering devices. They are the resources that we educators must rely upon in order to do our work. The direction mind will travel will itself be influenced by both the character of the new techniques that become available and the access to them that those of us in education give the young.

What is it about technology that haunts us? Are we mistaken, or are there grounds for our unease? What is there about the image of "technological man" that generates a chill that many of us still feel, despite reassuring remarks about technology's positive potential? Perhaps the nagging doubt that haunts us is the recognition that technology writ large not only creates new opportunities for the development of mind, but it also can lead to a sense of mindlessness born of both routine and standardization. Some technologies, like brush and paint, the telephone and the bicycle are what Ivan Illich calls "convivial tools" (Illich 1973). They are tools that expand freedom because they enlarge options, impose few constraints and demand little or no standardization. Other technologies, like the automobile, the airplane or the prepackaged TV dinner, while providing new opportunities are, in Illich's view, overbalanced in the direction of constraint and standardization. As a result, they are anticonvivial. Although these tools make it possible to achieve many things, their ancillary effects often come to influence our lives in ways we do not cherish. They often create a sense of depersonalization because they operate by rule rather than by judgment. They place little or no premium on the idiosyncratic or the personal. They employ standardized means to arrive at standardized ends, to be appraised by standardized criteria. As a result, collectively, they sap zest from life and replace it with cool, distant efficiency. Who wants to live in a culture where efficiency is such a dominating value that the qualities of the particular are never savoured? Who wants, as Jacque Ellul put it, a technological society that tends to treat both men and machines as mere instrumentalities (Ellul 1967)?

There is another concern that most of us also recognize. In the bygone days of the handmade object, a mistake made on a particular object had relatively little consequence, but today, given mass production, one mistake can have enormous consequences. The mistake is multiplied a thousandfold. Mistakes can also be made on the mass-produced message. Consider the electronic technology that bombards our psyche and the fact that we have little power to control what has become a one-eyed hypnotist sitting in our living room. Television has the power to lull us to sleep, to distract us from what is socially or economically important and to thrust us into a fantasy land in which all is wine and roses. While the world burns, millions of us watch *As the World Turns*. We realize on one level that we have only one life to live. Yet, ironically, we spend a significant portion of that life

2 See Steven W Kuffler and John G Nicholls, *From Neuron to Brain: A Cellular Approach to the Function of the Neuron Systems* (Sunderland, Mass: Sinover 1956), especially chapter 19.

watching what? *One Life to Live*. Our technological, electronic, one-eyed hypnotist fills our children's heads with the fluff of *Fantasy Island*, *Love Boat* and *Flamingo Road*, yet we find it hard to tear either our children or ourselves from the images these programs convey. These images reassure us that problems can always be solved, that for every question there is an answer, that solutions to problems require little work and no imagination, and that the ending is always a happy one.

The Arts Can Make Important Contributions

It is precisely in this realm that the arts can make one of their most important contributions. They do so by expanding our consciousness and, through it, our freedom. Since the cultivation of consciousness and the creation of a free society are two of education's ultimate aims, understanding how the arts can help us achieve such ends is particularly important.

How is it that the arts serve our intellectual and social interests? Think for a moment about films like Chaplin's *Modern Times*, books like Steinbeck's *Cannery Row*, plays like Miller's *The Silver Chalice*, paintings like Francis Bacon's *The Man in a Box*. What all of these works have in common is that each of them illuminates aspects of our social world that had been only dimly seen prior to the light that these works shined upon them. Even before political scientists, sociologists and economists were attempting to explain the new lifestyles people were leading, before they discussed in learned journals the routines and controls of organizational life, Jack Kerouac was writing *On the Road* and William White, *The Organization Man*. Through their sensitivity to the culture and their ability to transform their experience and insight into a public image, artists have helped us see the world free from the conventional blinders that accompany the process of acculturation. Such contributions in an age when technology allows us to live so effortlessly and so uncritically are of central importance in maintaining our own freedom. The possibility of being psychologically rocked to sleep by "the media" on the one hand or, [on the other,] treated like cogs that have no capacity to alter the course of an electronic machine that is larger than life itself is increased in a society redolent with technological niceties. When efficiency becomes a primary virtue, those who raise questions are regarded as noise in the system. And in any case, the system does not allow much deviation from standard expectations. "The computer made an error" is a phrase that reveals more about our loss of control than about the source of the problem. Artists who create forms that awaken us from our slumber, who pique our curiosity and stimulate our imagination, who heighten our sensibility so that the ability to see and feel the world around us contribute mightily to our freedom.

But artists themselves are not beyond using their skills to heighten the very dependencies I described earlier. Being able to use the arts to capture attention and move people is a skill that defines someone as an artist. But such an ability provides no assurance that the ends toward which it is used will be virtuous or humane. After all, the Nuremberg rallies, orchestrated as they were with ritual, symbol, music, torchlight and intoxicating rhetoric, were artistic constructions.

The arts that persuade us to wear the right clothes, drink the right booze and smoke the right cigarette are all ingeniously conceived and artistically executed. Indeed, artists can be dangerous people. Totalitarian regimes recognize their danger, and so they are among the first to be jailed or to have their art brought under control—witness Russia and China. And they can be dangerous in a democracy that allows those who control the media to use the power of the arts to capture and manipulate the rest of us. It is precisely because the arts are powerful that their potential to free or enslave is derived. Our task in education is not to bypass this potential but to recognize the capabilities of the arts and to help people make and use them in a way that enhances rather than diminishes the quality of their lives.

What Is Needed

What is required for such lofty ends to be achieved? First, if students are to develop their minds through the arts and through the technologies that can be used within the arts, a program in arts education needs to be available to students as an ongoing, important part of the school curriculum. To provide educationally effective programs that include the arts will require the creation of arts programs that have point, that are taught by those who know how to teach them, that

provide a sense of continuity and purpose. Furthermore, the means or technologies to be used in such programs should be those that promote the kind of challenges to thinking that I spoke of earlier. This requires that conventional means employed on conventional problems need to make room for the new means that are rapidly appearing. The microcomputer, for example, will give students fresh challenges for conceptualization and execution. Curricula that exploit the potential of different technologies for representing ideas in a range of curriculum areas should also be explored. For example, how can visual images produced on the computer represent the political evolution of Canada, or of Europe or of the Roman Empire? I do not know the answers to such questions, but they are questions worth asking, for they challenge students to think about important ideas in imaginative and interesting ways. Schools of the future should make such opportunities an ongoing part of what they do.

I said earlier that the skills of artistic creation do not ensure that such skills will inevitably be used to achieve the social or ethical virtues to which we subscribe. The implications of this observation are that those who create artistic images, as well as those who consume them, need to be educated critically and broadly. The great ideas that have shaped Western thought, if not world thought, should be no stranger to students leaving the public schools. I do not think that, even with all of the potential in the technologies that will surely emerge during the next decade, the truly great works of the past—the work of Aristotle, Shakespeare, Bach, Marx, Freud, Darwin and people of such quality—are likely to become obsolete. People such as these have given us the very categories and assumptions with which we think about our world. Their contributions have made our perceptions more acute and have deepened our understanding. Both the creation and the perception of art profit from the ability to use the ideas such people have created. But even here, the examination of the greatest of ideas provides no assurance that moral virtue or humane relationships will prevail. Students also need people they can emulate.

Emulation must take place not with machines but with live, feeling, sensitive human beings. This leads me to the last and perhaps most important point I wish to make. Human virtues must be modelled by teachers who inevitably teach not only subjects—they also teach themselves. What one wants are people who not only have the capacity to imagine and to feel, but who also have the critical powers to appraise and to choose. One wants people perhaps most of all—and this may seem hackneyed to say—one wants people who can love. Yes, above all, one wants people who can love.

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New Ideas for Elementary Art

Renee Dowling

This year I have tried some new things regarding art. I showcased my Grade 1s' art in a digital portfolio called Fresh Grade. I took a video of the students talking about their art and the criteria. Because Grade 1 science has a whole unit on colour, their dialogue helped me to discover what the students really knew about mixing colours and making tints and shades. The digital portfolio allowed me to see progress from the beginning of the year, set goals for the remainder of the year and also informed the parents about what we were doing.

Every February, I usually participate in an online drawing challenge called 29 Faces (http://29faces.blogspot.ca/). My goal is to get better at drawing realistic faces. I mentioned the drawing challenge to my students, and they felt that they wanted to be better at drawing faces, too! In February, we filled our visual journal with February Faces. During the last 15 to 20 minutes of every day we would draw a new face. We learned about face proportions, shape, and details such as noses and ears, and we also worked on showing emotions.

I used a document camera to demonstrate and to share possible ideas. I challenged the students to use only a permanent fine-tipped pen. They were also allowed to use coloured pencils and wax crayons. We learned how to make flesh tones with a simple pack of pencil crayons.

Some days we would draw ourselves by looking in the mirror and then drawing. Sometimes we would draw ourselves showing the emotions we experienced when reading a certain part of a book. We drew faces out of hearts for Valentine's Day. We tried different styles. We used Julie Herman's Picasso Faces idea from our fall 2015 issue.

I also challenged the students to draw faces of different genders and ages. We drew beards, moustaches, long hair, short hair, people with glasses, even balding people. Sometimes we used our imaginations, and other times I gave them photographs to use as references. When we were finished, we added background details and a watercolour wash.

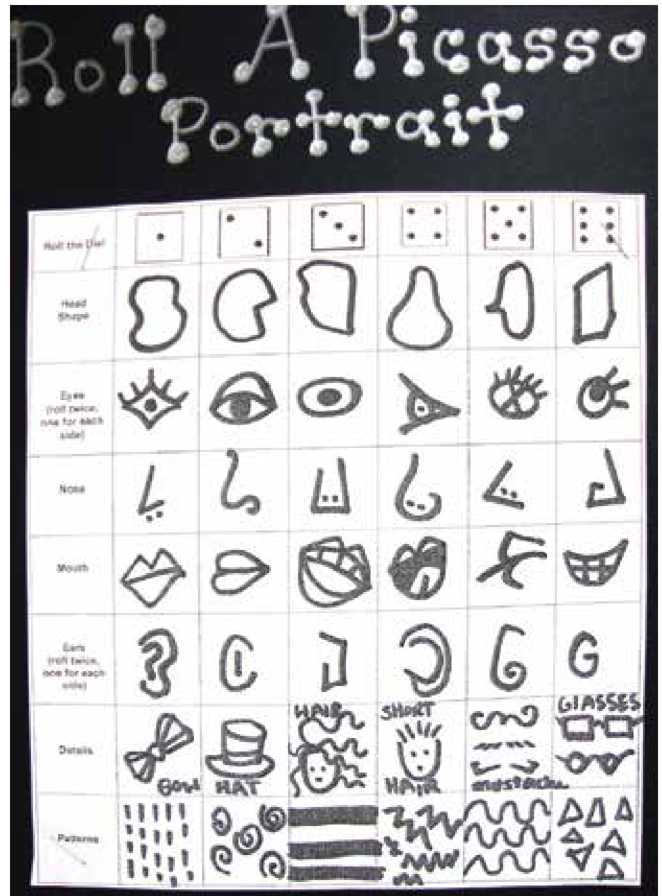
At the end of each drawing session, we did a quiet gallery walk. It was hard for us to not make comments because we were so impressed with the growth and diversity many students had shown.

When we were finished, we showcased our February Faces in a Learning Exhibition. The parents and siblings couldn't believe what they saw. Older siblings said that they couldn't draw as well as their Grade 1 brother or sister.

At my school, we strive to integrate the arts into all subject areas. We visited our local high school to learn more about storytelling, crafts, dancing and singing from Debra Lloyd, our district's First Nations, Métis and Inuit education specialist. We continued our art journey by participating in activities at our local Inspire Café and Art Studio for a morning of drawing in the café, eating a café snack and making bison sculptures using Sculpey. The students were so excited to work with Maureen Newton, a "real, live artist." We created a bison diorama for our Pioneer Celebration. We also integrated math into our art by drawing and painting a life-size bison.

I hope that you can adapt some of the ideas above for your own classrooms. If you have any lesson or unit ideas of your own, please submit them to the Fine Arts Council so they can be shared in the next issue.

Gage B, Grade 1, artist



Julie Herman

Renee Dowling

Integrating Mathematics with Drama—James and the Giant Peach

Dawn Marshall

With cross-curricular teaching and the curriculum working groups thinking about how to continually ensure that teachers think about how to infuse math, and Indigenous perspectives, and the French perspective and … I often feel bombarded about how I can do this in drama class.

My students have always been in charge of all aspects of my fall production. Whether they are involved on stage or backstage, they are usually in charge of costuming, prop creation, and set construction and painting. This past fall I saw an amazing opportunity for students to use some math skills in the creation of the set for our production of *James and the Giant Peach*.

We needed a large peach that was also transportable, so the challenge was set. I had a brainwave to create a fan that could work as our inner peach and one of the main acting spaces on stage. I bought the materials: lots of different hues of peach material, thin wooden baseboards and some hardware. Then I presented the class with the challenge of how it should be created.

It was amazing to observe how students approached the task. Some students got out paper, protractors and pencils and started creating mathematical equations. Others needed to create models, get supplies out and actually manipulate the materials.

I saw students with very different learning styles think about using a subject area that they don't often use in drama. I saw students problem solve and work together—a very satisfying result.

Dawn Marshall has been teaching drama for 16 years in many places, from Northern British Columbia to New Zealand, and currently teaches at Wetaskiwin Composite High School, in Wetaskiwin, Alberta. She is the drama representative on the Fine Arts Council executive and the past president of the Alberta Drama Festival Association. She lives in Wetaskiwin with her family.

The Value of Hello Songs in K–2 Music Classes

Carly Hess

Prior to teaching music in the public school system, I taught a variety of early childhood classes. One of the many things I learned from teaching young children is the value of routines and, in particular, the value of hello songs. I call them *hello songs*, but if you are on the search for one, you may also want to search welcome songs, gathering songs or opening songs.

I begin each kindergarten to Grade 2 class, Division I music club and Division II choir with a hello song for many reasons. First, the students expect it as part of our class routine. Routines, as we all know, are invaluable for the education setting: they bring predictability, structure and familiarity to the lives of children. With predictability, I believe, comes a sense of security and an increased sense of confidence. Students know what to expect from the moment they walk through the doors of the music room. The moment my students come into the music room, they must find their own special spot to sit and then we sing the hello song. Every time. It is the most predictable part of our class.

At the beginning of the year, we begin by singing and waving hello. I will then add in some actions such as clapping, patting, stomping and so on. The students are immediately engaged by singing, moving and listening, setting the tone for the entire music class. Many teachers also choose to add in students' names, but I find this to be too time consuming.

Once the hello song is familiar and the students know it well, I allow the students to decide on the actions we will do. Depending upon the class and the activity level of the students, I put criteria on the type of actions that are allowed. Each class is different and each class has different needs. For example, some classes need to get their wiggles out, so only locomotor actions are allowed to be chosen. On the other hand, some classes need the quiet focus, so only sitting, nonlocomotor actions may be chosen. Either way, the students enjoy having a say in what we do and feel proud of their ideas.

Some other ways the students enjoy contributing ideas for the hello song are from seasonal activities and holidays. These ideas are fun because many different ideas are introduced that we would not normally do during other parts of the year. Flying on a witch's broom, wrapping presents, jumping in puddles, and zombie walking are just a few imaginative ways we have sung hello!

Another reason I use hello songs is that they are a great tool for introducing new ideas, reinforcing previously learned concepts and assessing some of those concepts. In kindergarten, one of the most important concepts is understanding steady beat. The hello song is an easy way to reinforce the idea of beat as well as to assess it. Once I label the term *steady beat*, we label it in our hello song for the remainder of the year. The hello song I use most is sung to the tune of "The Farmer in the Dell." Prior to labelling the term *steady beat*, we sing it like this, for example:

Let's sing and clap hello.
Let's sing and clap hello.
Heigh-ho, the derry-o.
Let's sing and clap hello.

Once we have labelled the term *steady beat*, we sing it like this, for example:

Let's clap the beat hello.
Let's clap the beat hello.
Heigh-ho, the derry-o.
Let's clap the beat hello.

Some other concepts and skills we explore with our hello song in various K–3 classes are dynamics, tempo, listening, watching the conductor and practising levelled body percussion patterns. I have a "What Do You Hear?" wall, and the students get to choose from specific areas on the wall. For example, I will ask the students what tempo from my posters they want to sing or how loud they want to sing. It is another way the students enjoy contributing to the song.

Sometimes the students need reminders as to what the hello song focus is, because they get so excited to "ninja hello," for example, that they lose focus as to what we are supposed to be practising. Sometimes, on the other hand, maybe the hello song is the focus in itself and it doesn't matter if they are not singing or moving to the beat—they can enjoy the song for what it is, a great way to gather and bring the class all together. The flexibility of the hello song is one of its greatest aspects.

At the time of writing, my Division I students were working hard on preparing for their spring concert. I used the hello song as an opportunity to practice our skills specific to the pieces we were working on. Some classes needed to work on intonation, resonance and phrasing, while other classes needed to work more on blending their voices or watching the conductor for various cues or actions. I asked the students questions such as, "Can you hear all the students around you?" "Are you matching your voice to those around you?" and "Are you watching the conductor the entire time?" The hello song was a fantastic way to prepare the students to be mentally focused for practising their concert song(s).

Routines are invaluable, and goodbye songs can be just as meaningful as hello songs. I do admit, however (and I'm sure my colleagues can attest to this), that the end of my 30-minute classes often sneaks up on me too quickly and therefore I miss the opportunity for a closing song, so this is definitely an area I am hoping to work on in my teaching practice.

Along with having a consistent goodbye routine, I am also pondering how I can connect with Division II and III students at the beginning of class. I recently watched a video in which a teacher welcomed each of his students as they entered the classroom with a secret handshake of each student's creation. I currently use secret handshakes with my Division II students as part of their study on rhythm, but trying to incorporate handshakes to the beginning of every class or even the start of every week would consume too much time—which leaves me still on the lookout for quick and meaningful routines for older students. I am also curious to know what other routines or procedures are in place in other music classrooms. I am always open to hearing what others are doing and would love to hear what routines and procedures you have found useful in your music classroom.

Carly Ness is a music specialist with the Edmonton Public School Board and is the current music representative on the executive of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association. She would love to hear from you regarding any ideas relating to music education; contact her at carlytadams@gmail.com.

Improving Children's Singing Through the Song Teaching Process

Kathy M Robinson

Singing is the most popular form of music participation in the world; more people experience music by singing than by any other means (Freer 2012; Chorus America 2009). People sing for many different reasons: to make music, to communicate, to feel, to celebrate life, to share cultural characteristics, to create community, to develop skills, to learn more about themselves and others, to enhance the quality of their lives, and many more. Singing is a natural and spontaneous expression for almost all young children, as evidenced in their creative play. Nearly every time I go to the grocery store or the dollar store, I am witness to the sing-songy tones of young children creating their own songs (most often in a high voice!) or singing those they've heard, as their parents shop.

Many of the aforementioned reasons are important in the formation of a rationale for the inclusion of singing in the elementary school curriculum. The development of singing skills is an important component of Alberta's music curriculum (Alberta Education 1989), with specific outcomes listed for students from Grades 1 through 6. Singing is the most effective means of music performance for young children. It is also the primary means of learning about the elements of music—rhythm, melody, form, timbre, harmony/texture—and concepts such as high and low sounds, fast and slow, loud and soft, and beat, among others.

Finding and Teaching a Song

As an educator charged with leading singing with children, you might first find a song that you love and one that you are convinced the children will love as well. You teach the children your beloved song, but after that process you are disappointed; the results were less than satisfactory. Your beloved song may have been sung by the children with an incorrect melody, unintelligible words, a less than pleasing sound (especially on the high tones of the song) and some lack of interest from the students in the back of the classroom. You may be tempted to abandon the song, or believe that if you repeat the same process in a few days the song might sound better— or not. What can you do to improve the children's singing of this song? First, I'll make some suggestions about the teaching process that can make a *huge* difference in the quality of the singing and then some suggestions for longer-term growth, so that when you and the students come together to learn another song there will be marked improvement. In the teaching process for a song that students learn aurally from teacher modelling (a rote song) there are four items that can transform the children's performance.

Focus

First, make sure that the students are *focused*—that they are physically and mentally prepared to receive your song. Give them something to listen for in the song: How many times did …? What was the name of …? What happened first to the main character? When did this event occur? Ensure that the students know what the song is about and find a way to connect it to their lives in the first or subsequent interactions with the song. In addition to the cognitive focus on the song, check that students are physically prepared to learn the song in an echoing fashion: their posture is tall, their bodies and faces are energized and they take ample breaths to support their singing voices. Echoing phrases or small chunks of a song is a good way to begin the song teaching process. Take care to make these chunks manageable for the students. If the portion of the song students are to repeat is too long, they won't be able to retain all the words or the melody, which can be discouraging for them. It is easier to put smaller chunks together than to have to redo a large chunk of the song because students are having difficulty. If a portion of your song has a challenging text or is in an unfamiliar language, has a tricky rhythm or melody, or moves very quickly, you might want to consider having students repeat a smaller chunk of the song, or you may just isolate the challenging portion and clap that tricky rhythm or repeat those unfamiliar words a few times before putting the chunks all together.

Tone

Following focus, providing a *starting tone* is the second item that can have a huge impact on children's singing. Imagine taking a test or running a race and having participants choose whenever they want to start, but still holding them accountable for successfully completing the event. This would not be fair to the students, and it is analogous to starting a song without letting the students know on what tone they are to begin to sing. Half of the battle is getting started, and this is an area where children desperately need your leadership. You can sing (or play on recorder, piano or xylophone) the starting tone at the appropriate speed of the song on words like "Ready, sing" or "One, two, here we go" or "Here's your starting note." Giving the starting tone at the beginning of the song or every chunk of the song that students are to echo, and then ensuring that students match that tone and begin singing there, will make a huge difference in the quality of the children's singing.

Have you ever noticed that when young children speak, their voices are quite a bit higher than those of adults? Their singing voices are in a higher range than adults' as well, and when teaching a song you must account for this. If you begin a song in the range in which an adult sings, children may not be able to sing those low tones, but they will try, which will result in children chanting that part of the song on the lowest tone they can produce. How discouraging for the children! What is a good singing range for young children? While young children are capable of making sounds in a wide range (remember those high-pitched squeals of delight or cries from the very young?), the "use of that range requires years to develop into a singing voice that exhibits tuneful singing," says Debra Hedden (2012) in her review of the research on children's singing (p 53).

Research seems to suggest that young children (kindergarten to Grade 1) will be more accurate singers if their songs do not go below D or middle C on the piano and are not higher than C an octave above that (Goetze, Cooper and Brown 1990; Hedden 2012; Kim 2000). A child's range expands outward, getting higher and lower with maturation and guidance, and by Grade 6 could reach two octaves (G below middle C to G above the staff). While scholars differ on the specific tones children should be able to reproduce tunefully and healthfully, I suggest choosing songs that use the lower and higher limits of the voice sparingly and constantly monitoring students' singing to detect straining to reach higher tones or "chanting" on the lowest tones of the song.

How does this information on children's singing ranges affect your beloved song? To avoid children straining their voices or unsuccessfully trying to sing outside of their comfortable range, you may have to adjust and place your song in a higher key or range for your students; or, if the range of the song is too wide for your students, you might have to consider having them sing only the manageable portion of the song while an adult or older children sing the remainder of the song. If you are unsure of where to find songs with appropriate singing ranges for your students, try searching music education materials at your local library or at the Coutts Education Library of the University of Alberta in Edmonton or regional colleges like Keyano, Grande Prairie and Medicine Hat. Each of these colleges and universities has a large collection of singing materials appropriate for children; many of these resources come with CDs to help you teach songs and accompaniment tracks that could be used for performances. Other excellent resources are blogs of well-established music teachers, such as those of Beth (www.bethsnotesplus.com) and Tanya (http://tanyaelementarymusic.blogspot.ca), who share freely their song repertoire and music class lessons and activities.

Gesture

Knowing exactly *when* to start singing is the third item that can greatly affect the quality of children's singing. Giving a clear gesture or an invitation with your hands or a nod of the head when children are to start singing will give your singers confidence. Keeping your palms out in a "stop" gesture or not lifting your head and making eye contact in a performance setting can also help the singers know that it is not yet time to sing; this is especially helpful when there is a longer introduction to a song. If the invitation gesture can be preceded with a physical reminder to take a breath before singing, that is better yet and can result in a rounder, higher-quality sound.

Listen

Once the children are focused, have their starting tone and know when to sing, it is time for the leader to *listen*, the fourth and final item in the song teaching process. Listening to what the children are singing helps us determine their accuracy and where there are challenges in the song and what those might be. Are children stumbling over the text? If so, you might want to have them speak that challenging text a few times before singing again. Are the children running out of air before they get to the end of an important phrase? If so, help them take a deeper initial breath or have them sing only the second half of the phrase with a good breath so they can hear what it sounds like when not trying to eke out the final tones with depleted breath. Many times we want to sing that beloved song along with the students, but standing back and listening can reveal much that can be addressed to make the song better.

Singing Model

If you have paid attention to each of these four items in the song teaching process and children are still not sounding as you would like, you might think about the singing model that is present for the children. For children, becoming an accurate singer has much to do with your singing model; they need to see and hear from you what is expected of them in the singing process. What should their face look like? What is the appropriate tone quality to use? If you sing with energy and enthusiasm, you will probably be met with an energetic and enthusiastic response. Conversely, if you sing with a nasal sound, or strain or struggle to reach the high tones of your beloved song, or run out of breath on a long phrase, your students will probably sing like this as well. Students will imitate everything!

For students to easily sing the melody of a song, it should be pitched in their range and the model that they hear should also sing in that range (Goetze, Cooper and Brown 1990). A melody sung in a child's voice or a woman's voice is easiest for the students to imitate. When men provide a model in their voice range, which is often much lower than that of students, children will try to match that low voice, which they cannot accurately do. As a man you might provide a beautiful rendition of the song with a lovely tone, adequate breath, and much energy and enthusiasm, but if you don't provide a starting tone in the student's range (by singing it or playing it on the recorder, piano or xylophone) and remind them of the difference between their voices and yours, they will have difficulty singing the song accurately. Any model who sings a song or a chunk of a song for the students to echo should try to keep the tone quality clear and relaxed and sing with little vibrato so that the exact tones of the song are crystal clear. Song teaching is not the time to bring out your inner opera diva!

Conclusion

Improving the accuracy and quality of children's singing is not a small task, but by paying attention to focus, tone, gesture and listening, and thinking carefully about the range of the song and your model, your children's singing can improve significantly. Much of the ownership of how well students sing depends on the teacher. I hope that some of the information outlined here will support your efforts to nurture your students' singing development.

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Winter Landscape

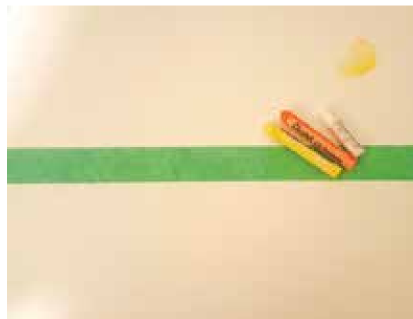
Christina Dixon

Supplies

- Watercolour paper
- ¾” flat brush (or a big brush)
- #0 round brush for adding details
- Painter’s tape
- Liquid watercolour paint—yellow, orange, blue, purple, brown
- Oil pastels—white, yellow, orange (optional)
- Small circle to trace (a coin can be used, too)

Process

1. Use painter’s tape to divide the watercolour paper in half.



2. Trace the circle for the sun using a coin or a cut-out shape. You can leave the sun white for now, or you can use oil pastels to colour in the sun. If you are using oil pastels, start with white and add some yellow and orange tones following the circular shape. Also, use a paper towel to cover your work area to prevent the smudging of oil pastels on white paper.

3. Use the flat brush or a big brush to cover the top area with clean water. You have enough water on your paper if the paper shines when you look at it from the side. Drop in big drops of yellow liquid watercolour paint. If you left the sun white, try to go around the sun with the paint. If you used pastels, the oil pastels will resist the liquid watercolour paint.

4. Add big drops of orange, blue and purple. You can also use only yellow, orange and blue for a simpler project.

5. Move the paper around so the colours blend with each other. If the sun was kept white, try to avoid that area. Use a crumpled Kleenex to create texture by lifting some paint from the sky area.
   Now let the artwork dry and continue the project later on or the next day. Remove the painter's tape from the paper.

6. Use the flat brush to add clean water to the bottom of the page. Once again, make sure you use lots of water! Drop in some very light blue and purple paint and move your paper to blend the colours together.

7. Cut a small strip of watercolour paper to use for creating the fence posts.

8. Place the edge of your paper strip in brown paint.

9. Scrape the watercolour paper with the brown edge of your paper strip to create the fence posts. The posts closer to you are bigger and taller, while the ones in the distance become shorter and smaller. Cut your paper strip shorter after each use to achieve shorter fence posts.

10. Use the corners of your paper strip to trace the barbed wire in between the fence posts.

11. Add small barbs on the wire, once again using the corner of your paper strip.

12. Use the flat brush to add shadows under the fence posts and the small round brush to add extra details to complete the artwork (grass, twigs and so forth).

Christina Dixon has presented sessions for teachers' conventions, fine arts conferences, professional development days and private organizations/groups. As a teacher and artist, her main goal is to inspire others to love, appreciate and explore the artistic paths using a large array of mediums: oil pastels, watercolors, acrylics, ink, pencil crayons. Recognizing the importance of technique, her workshops incorporate teaching various techniques and individually applying them in creating art projects that can be used to address a variety of learning styles and instructions suitable to all grade levels.

An elementary teacher with Calgary Catholic School District, Christina Dixon feels fortunate to be able to empower students to create art using their unique gifts and talents.

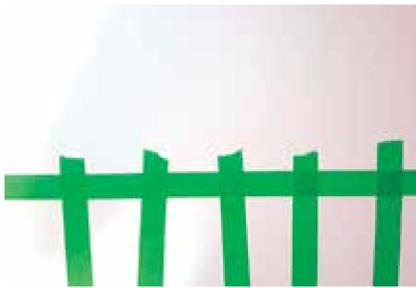
The Spring Garden

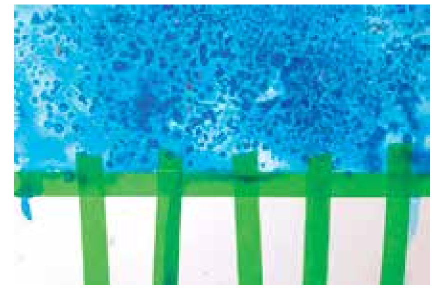
Christina Dixon

Supplies

- Watercolour paper
- ¾" flat brush (or a big brush)
- #0 round brush for adding details
- Narrow painter's tape
- Liquid watercolour paint (blue, green, yellow; other colours for the flowers)
- Spray water bottle (fine mist)
- Coarse salt (optional)

Process





1. Cut a piece of narrow painter's tape long enough to cover the width of the page twice (you can also use wide, but you will have to cut it in half to make it narrower). Use the tape to divide the watercolour paper in a 1:3 ratio (one-third for the ground and two-thirds for the sky). The remaining tape will be used for the fence posts (choose an odd number of fence posts).
2. Use the flat brush or a big brush to cover the top area with clean water. You have enough water on your paper if the paper shines when you look at it from the side. Drop in big drops of blue watercolour paint.
3. To make the sky more interesting, sprinkle coarse salt (pickling salt) on the blue paint. Have a water bottle handy to spray some of the paintings that appear dry. You must have enough paint to make the salt work.
   Now let the artwork dry and continue the project later on or the next day.

4. Use the flat brush or a big brush to cover the bottom area with clean water. Drop in big drops of green and yellow watercolour paint. Hold your paper in a vertical position, so the green and yellow paint mix together. Let the artwork dry and continue the project later.

5. Remove the painter's tape and use the liner brush to add details like grass and flowers. (Note: you can use poppies for a Remembrance Day project).

An alternative for the sky is to use just the liquid blue watercoloUr paint and no salt.

The Humble Ellipse Rules the Drawing World

Izabella Orzelski and Brenda K Savella

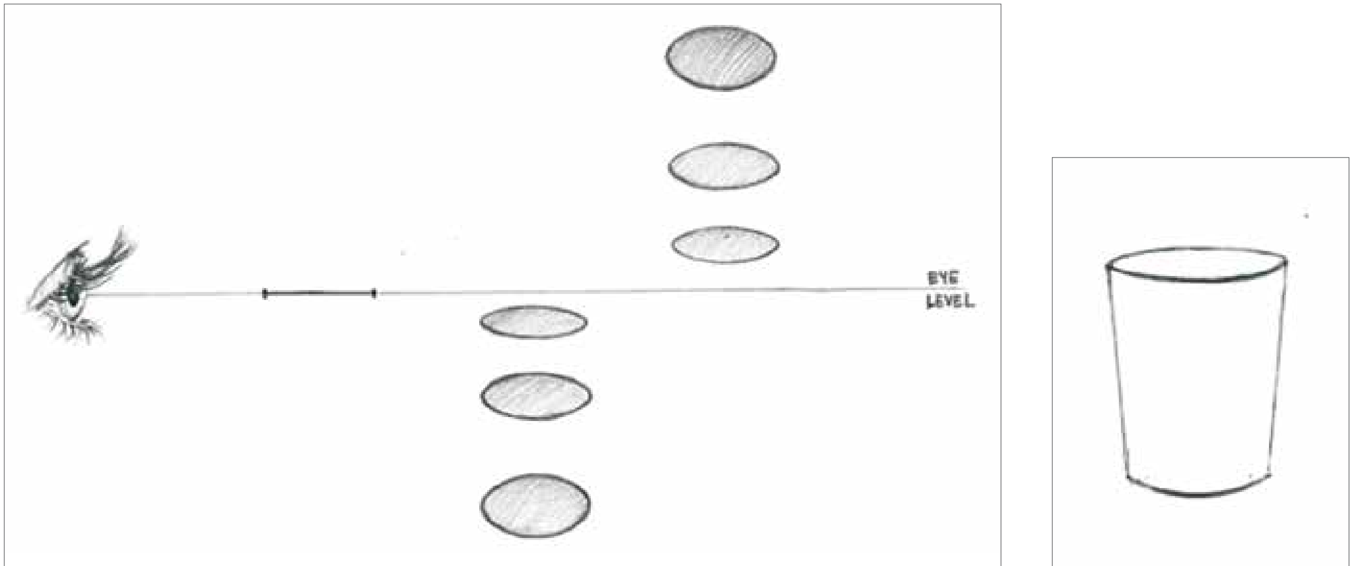
How many times have you heard, “I can’t even make a straight line, so I can’t draw”? The truth is that everyone can learn how to draw if they acquire the right skills and have a positive attitude. All of us want to be proud of the drawings we create, including our students of every age and grade. Interestingly, in terms of creative development, by age 15 young people have a strong need to create realistic drawings. Yet, without proper instruction that gives them the right tools, their work may remain quite immature. At the same time, they may become increasingly critical of their artistic abilities. This not only inhibits their creative production but also may make them give up.

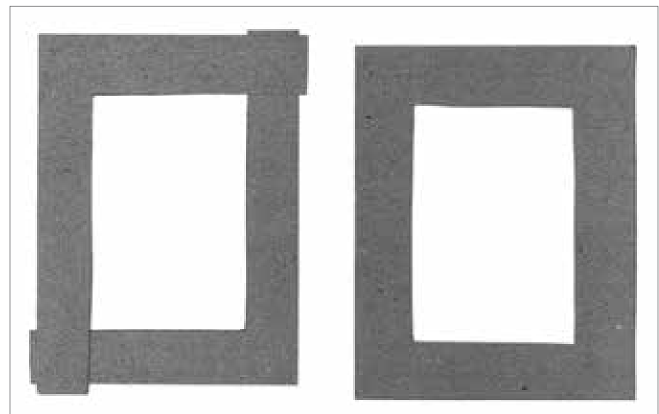
As art teachers, we find that building skill development is foundational to motivate and empower students, which deepens their love for visual art. When we demystify the drawing process and make it accessible to students, drawing becomes an infectious activity that students increasingly enjoy. There are many strategies for learning how to draw effectively. This article covers the importance of the humble ellipse to depict objects in our surroundings realistically. It offers teachers a step-by-step approach to help students achieve successful observational still-life drawings.

The first step is the selection of an object. We like students to choose a medium or large object that is symmetrical, such as a cup or bottle. On paper, students mark two points, one for the top and one for the bottom, to establish the height of the object. These two points are connected using a pencil (Staedtler HB or 2B is recommended). This is the vertical axis. Since the object is symmetrical, this line can also be regarded as a central line: the object’s left side mirrors the object’s right side. This notion is of great help in creating a realistic observational drawing. Students will now find the width of the object by measuring how many times the width goes into the height. To do so, they hold a pencil in their drawing arm extended straight in front of them toward the object and use their thumb to pinpoint the placement. They do this for both the top and the bottom width.

It is critical that students understand how ellipses change according to eye level:

- Neutral eye level position: horizontal line
- Below eye level position: from narrow to fuller ellipses as they go down
- Above eye level position: from narrow to fuller ellipses as they go up

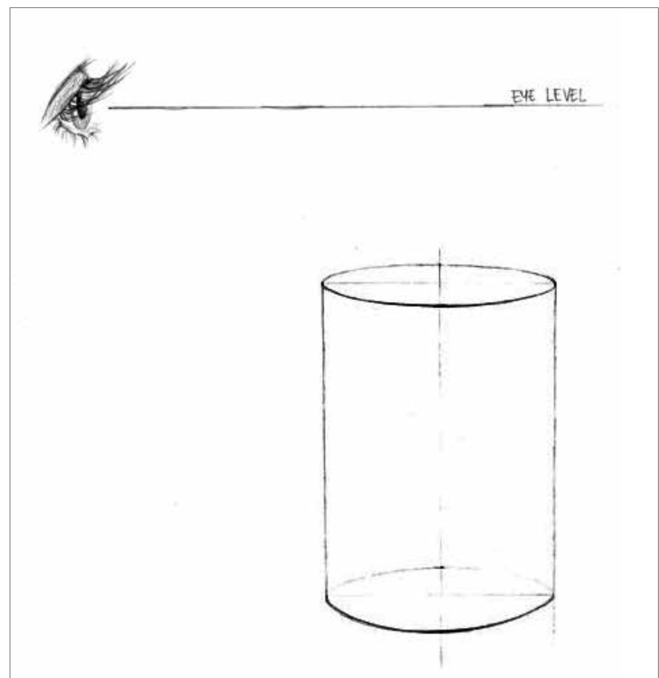


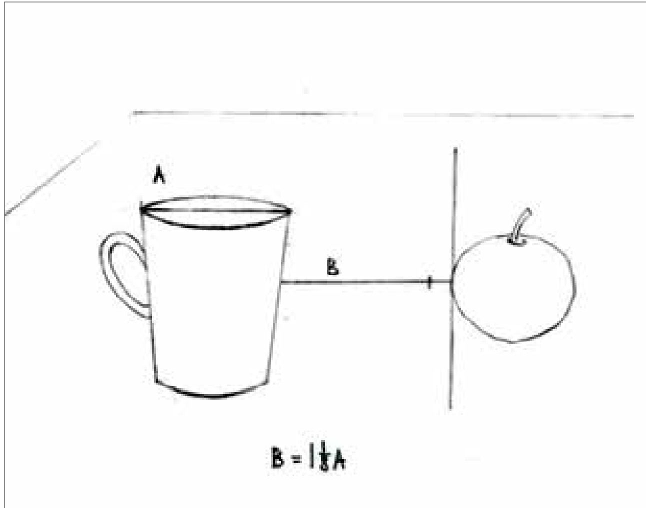


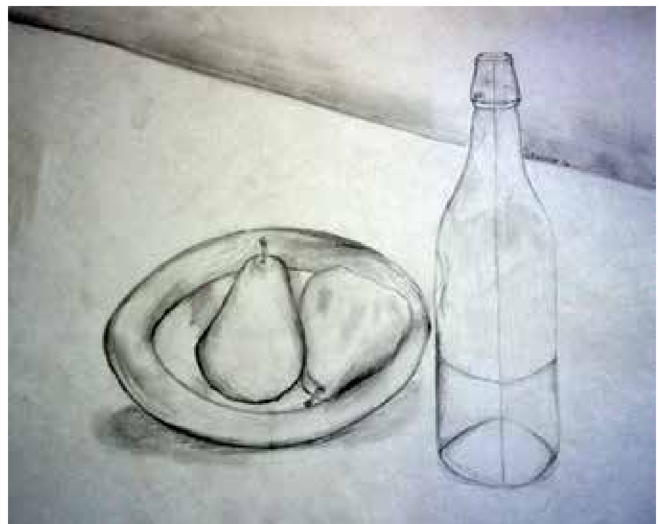
Once students understand how the law of ellipses works, they can create very realistic renderings. The next set is to draw the ellipses at the top and bottom of the object and to create the outline. Finally, have students vary the line weight to make lines heavier at the front of the object and lighter at the back, automatically giving a sense of dimension.

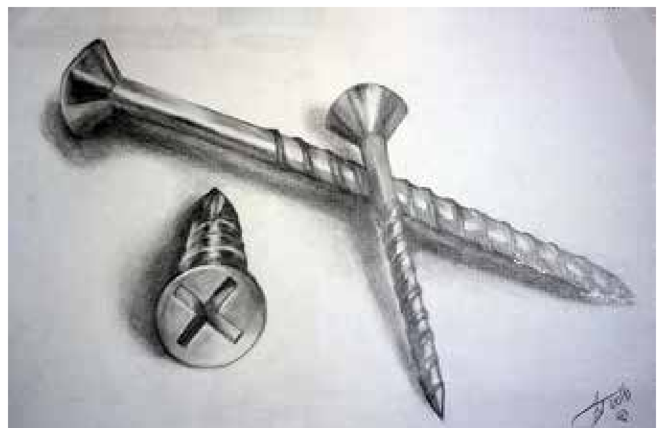
After students can draw a single object correctly, we concentrate on compositions with several objects. A strong composition, either vertical or horizontal, is based on the positioning of the still-life objects to suggest an intended mood. We encourage the use of a viewfinder to locate an interesting position of the subjects. Two useful examples are the use of two cropping Ls, easily adjustable to the size of the paper, or a window cut out of Bristol board that is of the same proportions as the paper.

The new goal in this more complex composition is to start with the most prominent, symmetrical object, which helps to establish distances and sizes of the other objects in the arrangement. The process is the same as drawing a single object. Students begin with top and bottom marks to locate the precise height and width of the dominant object. They connect them with a vertical line. Next, students apply the law of drawing ellipses. Ideally, the dominant object will be a bottle, a cup or a vase with a number of ellipses such as a top opening and a base. Before they begin to draw, students need to compare the object's position with their eye level. In most cases, the object will be placed below the student's eye level, which means that the top ellipse will be the narrowest and each ellipse will be fuller as it proceeds down the object.









Once all of the ellipses are correctly drawn, students will create the outline of the object. The initial object becomes a reference point to which the proportions and placement of the other objects are compared. In other words, the reference object's width and height are used to check the accuracy of the proportions in the entire drawing. For example, students may determine how many times the width of the reference object is present in the distance between two other still-life objects.

We find that these foundational sighting skills help to make students aware of the relationships between objects so that they create satisfying realistic work at any grade level. This basic drawing lesson can be extended into various subjects of increasing complexity and using diverse materials (eg, markers, coloured pencils and charcoal). It is also an effective precursor to the introduction of the use of value in drawing. Teachers will find that even elementary school children can explore these techniques to improve drawing skills.

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School Art 2017

Renee Dowling

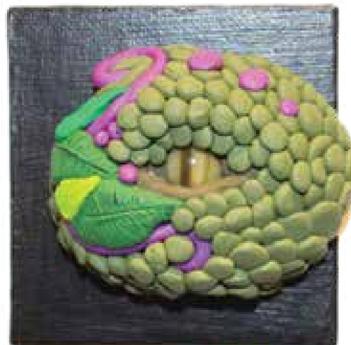
Each February, art jurors scour school hallways in Medicine Hat and surrounding areas for student art that will be selected for exhibition in Medicine Hat's art gallery The Esplanade.

For 39 years, talented artists from kindergarten to Grade 12 have had their art featured in this annual exhibition, which has grown from approximately 50 works to over 700 from more than 40 schools.

There is an opening reception with food and drinks, and then awards. Each award winner is showcased in a video presentation on the giant screen in the theatre. Local art groups and businesses sponsor the awards.

The School Art Exhibition ran from March 11 to April 29, 2017, providing many opportunities for the public and school groups to view the amazing art.

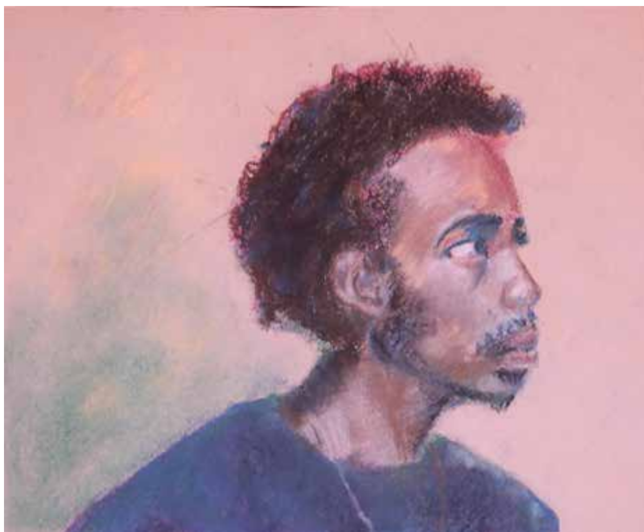
Sculptures of all sorts of media were selected.



Students incorporate photos from the Esplanade Archives in their art.

Renee Dowling's Grade 1 class earned a group award from the Medicine Hat Art Club. They mixed colours using only primary colours and white. The students worked together to illustrate a poem that they wrote together, called "How Cold Was It?" They earned some money to buy some new art supplies.

Crescent Heights High School Grade 11 student Aidan Barrett poses with his teacher Sumi Handley. Aidan received several awards for his outstanding portraits. Mrs Handley and the outstanding art program at CHHS were also honoured.



Thank you to all of the artists, jurors, art teachers, school districts, parents, and local businesses and art clubs for making this annual event such an outstanding success!

Conference 2016: An Arts Getaway in the Mountains

Renee Dowling

Your Fine Arts Council works very diligently each year to bring you high-quality arts professional development. In October 2016, we had a great conference in Kananaskis. Here are some sights and activities that occurred at and around the conference.

With the hustle and bustle of September, teachers often feel overwhelmed. What better way to overcome the stress than to journey to the mountains for a beautiful peaceful mountain view.

The forest brings all kinds of surprises.

W P Puppet Theatre Company's Wendy Passmore-Godfrey teaches teachers how to create puppets using inexpensive and readily available items. She also explains how to integrate puppetry into literature and music.

Teachers learn metal embossing from Elitia Hart (note that she has a YouTube channel).

Teacher Rosemary Lee learns metal embossing.

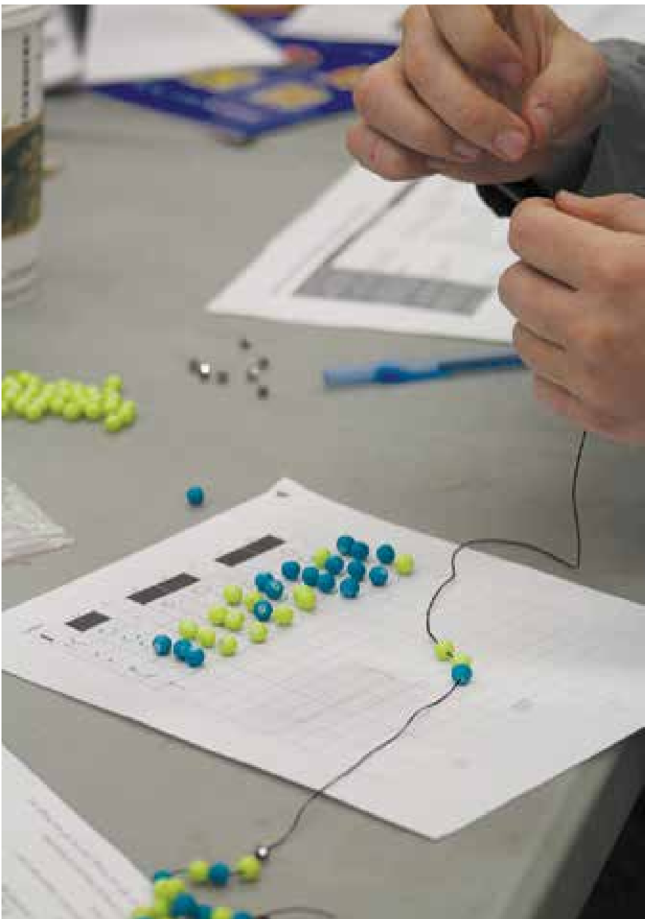
No conference in review would be complete without the resident squirrel saying good-bye.

Conference 2017

Joni Turville

Arts Across Alberta

The Fine Arts Council presented mini-conferences in Edmonton and Calgary on October 21, 2017. Sessions in Edmonton included printmaking, ukulele, singing games, and weaving First Nations dance and song with curriculum. Calgary sessions included metaphorical masks, art-centred learning, puppet making and musical moments with literature. Participants were enthusiastic about the quality of sessions and the ability to make connections with fellow fine arts educators from around the province.



Submitting to A Fine Facta

Add the goal of being published to your teacher professional growth plan and submit something to *A Fine Facta*! Submissions may include the following:

- Practical classroom tips, lesson plans and rubrics
- Resource reviews
- Movie and book reviews
- Personal reflections on classroom experiences
- Stories and poems by teachers, students and student teachers
- Student artwork
- A project or lesson that had an impact on students, the school or the community

Please include a short (three- to five-sentence) biography and your address so that a copy of the issue in which your work appears can be sent to you.

Submit signed permission forms for student work or photographs of students, as well as permission to use any photos that are not yours.

E-mail submissions to Brittany Harker Martin at bhmartin@ucalgary.ca.

Upcoming submission deadline: November 30, 2018, and February 28, 2019

Permission to Print Photograph/Student Work

Your child has submitted a piece of work or appears in a photograph that we would like to print in the next issue of *A Fine Facta*. *A Fine Facta* is a journal that goes to teachers across Alberta who are members of the Fine Arts Council of the Alberta Teachers' Association.

By signing below, I give permission for my child's work or photograph to be considered for publication in an upcoming issue of *A Fine Facta*. This permission form will be forwarded to the journal editor.

Parent/guardian name ______________________ Signature ______________________

Student name ______________________ Signature ______________________

Teacher ______________________ Signature ______________________

School ______________________ School location ______________________

Notes to teachers:

- Send the student work/photograph and the permission form to the editor of *A Fine Facta*, Brittany Harker Martin, at bhmartin@ucalgary.ca.

Save the Date!

Visit https://fac.teachers.ab.ca to register!

Register by June 15th for a free T-Shirt!

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Complete information regarding the Fine Arts Council executive is available on the council's website. Go to https://fac.teachers.ab.ca/ > About > Contact Us.

Publishing Under the Personal Information Protection Act

The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) requires consent to publish personal information about an individual. *Personal information* is defined as anything that identifies an individual in the context of the collection: for example, a photograph and/or captions, an audio or video file and artwork.

Some schools obtain blanket consent under FOIP, the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. However, the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and FOIP are ***not*** interchangeable. They fulfill different legislative goals. PIPA is the private sector act that governs the Association's collection, use and disclosure of personal information.

If you can use the image or information to identify a person in context (for example, a specific school, or a specific event), then it is personal information and you need consent to collect, use or disclose (publish) it.

Minors cannot provide consent and must have a parent or guardian sign a consent form. Consent forms must be provided to the Document Production editorial staff at Barnett House together with the personal information to be published.

Refer all questions regarding the ATA's collection, use and disclosure of personal information to the ATA privacy officer.

Notify the ATA privacy officer immediately of ***any*** incident that involves the loss of or unauthorized use or disclosure of personal information, by calling Barnett House at 780-447-9400 or 1-800-232-7208.

Maggie Shane, the ATA's privacy officer, is your resource for privacy compliance support.

780-447-9429 (direct)

780-699-9311 (cell, available any time)

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