



# Intro to Visual Arts Education

## Ministry of Ed's Main Objectives of Art Education:

- develop students' creativity
- visual literacy: develop students' ability to communicate through visual images
- cultural literacy: develop students' ability to understand personal, local and global culture
- encourage students to make connections (between cognition and affect; themselves and others; art and other subjects)

## Key Components of the Ontario Curriculum:

- The Creative Process
- The Critical Analysis Process

## Three Components of the Visual Arts Curriculum:

1. **Creating and Presenting** –
  - making art and sharing their art with others
2. **Reflecting, Responding and Analyzing**
  - looking at art and visual culture and responding to it
3. **Exploring Forms and Cultural Contexts** -
  - understanding how and why art and visual culture are made

## Reasons to Teach Art:

- art ed develops visual literacy (skills of observation, interpretation, perception, analysis, etc.)
- art ed develops cultural literacy (exploration of historical and cultural issues, promotes understanding of diversity and multiple perspectives)
- art ed develops skills for life-long learning (eg. interpreting, problem-solving, creative thinking, intelligence of feeling, etc.)
- art ed stimulates personal development (develops creativity, empathy, self-esteem, cultivates emotional and spiritual well-being, helps in making meaning of our lives and the world around us)
- art ed can assist in career education (according to Stats Can, work in the visual arts and related fields is growing at twice the rate of the work force in general)
- art ed can help to retain students in schools as they appeal to a wider variety of learning styles and intelligences; it also provides a more engaging way to learn
- MOE says you have to; art ed is mandatory part of the Ont. curriculum guidelines

## *Strive for Great Art Education...*

- Connect your program to the life experiences and interests of your students (& yourself ) = real world learning;
- Build aspects of art production, art history, art criticism and aesthetics in your curriculum;
- Integrate the visual arts with other subject areas;
- Focus on the hows and whys of art (eg. not just how to make art but also why it was made);
- Make it developmentally appropriate, experiential and fun;
- Vary the materials, techniques, and images used (create a variety of 2D and 3D artworks using realistic and abstract styles);
- Allow students to construct their own knowledge as well as discover existing knowledge;
- Create a safe environment where creativity and risk-taking are encouraged;
- Challenge students (and yourself) to stretch to new levels of perceptual ability, skill, and thought.

## *The Four Disciplines of the Visual Arts:*

Art Production – learning how to express yourself through images

Art History – learning about the history of images

Art Criticism – learning how to look at and understand images

Aesthetics – considering ‘big’ questions in art (eg. what is art? what is a masterpiece?)

## *useful Contacts:*

Arts Junktion

380 Ossington Ave. 416-393-0894 (call for hours of operation)

Ontario Arts Council “Making the Case for Art Education” Guide:

<http://www.arts.on.ca/Page48.aspx>

OAC Artists in Education Program Roster:

<http://www.arts.on.ca/Page631.aspx>

Palmer Group for fabric paper and food dyes

<http://www.palmerkids.com/main.htm>



# Elements and Principles of Design

*Like writing, art is a form of communication. But instead of using words as the basic units of communication, art has its own visual language made up of the elements and principles of design. The following is a summary of these units.*

## *Elements of Design*

The elements of design are the basic units of communication in art, like words are to writing. They can be used singly or in combination to send a variety of messages. The following make up the basic vocabulary of the language of art.

**LINE** - is the mark left by a moving point in space. The main kinds of lines are horizontal, vertical, diagonal, zigzag and curved, however lines can also vary depending on length, thickness, direction, intensity, continuity and medium.

**SHAPE/FORM** - a shape is made by joining the two ends of a line to define a two-dimensional area that has a length and width. A form is a shape that is three-dimensional with a length, width, and depth. Both can be categorized as geometric (those which are regular and even, and look human-made) or organic (those which are free-form or irregular, typically found in nature.)

**COLOUR** - is what our eyes see when light is reflected off of an object. It has three properties:

*VALUE* - the lightness or darkness of colour, which can be changed by adding black or white.

*HUE* - is the common name of a colour, such as red, yellow or blue.

*INTENSITY* - is the brightness or dullness of colour.

Colour is arranged in schemes by artists to create different effects. Some of the common types of colour schemes are monochromatic, analogous, and complementary, neutral, warm and cool.

**TEXTURE** - describes the way that things feel if touched. It can refer to an actual texture of an object, or its visual texture, which is how it looks it might feel. Some of the words used to describe texture are: rough, smooth, silky, soft, prickly, fuzzy, and hard.

**SPACE** - refers to the distance or "air" around, between and within things. Space can be a 2D flat area or a 3D volume, defined by its orientation and scale. In art space can be actual or implied, and positive (occupied by something) or negative (empty.) In 2D artworks, a sense of space is usually conveyed through the use of perspective.

# Principles of Design

The principles of design are the ways in which the elements of design can be arranged by artists to communicate with viewers. If compared to writing, the principles are like the rules of grammar - they guide the organization of the elements in an artwork.

**BALANCE** - refers to the arrangement of the elements of design so as to create a feeling of equality in weight, attention or attraction. Three types of balance exist: symmetrical (similar on each side of the work,) asymmetrical (unlike elements appear equal,) or radial (stemming from a central point.)

**RHYTHM** - describes the repetition of the elements of design to create a beat or flow in the artwork. Like in music, visual rhythm can be manifested in many different ways, including regular, alternating, progressive, flowing, or choppy.

**MOVEMENT** - is the sense of motion created by the arrangement of the elements of design that create a feeling of action (or inaction) in an artwork. Different types of movements communicate different feelings; for example, horizontal images give a sense of stability and calm; vertical images feel uplifting and positive, and diagonal images give a sense of dynamism and action.

**PROPORTION** - concerns the relationship of one part of an artwork to another and to the whole. Most often manipulated by size, proportion can also be affected by the colour, shape or repetition of an image. It is usually referred to in terms of normal, exaggerated or idealized.

**EMPHASIS** - refers to the way in which the elements of design are used to make certain parts of an artwork more important than others. It can be created by contrasting colours, lines, shapes, textures or space to focus attention on a focal point or centre of interest.

**PATTERN** - is the repeated use of an element of design to create visual interest. Patterns can be regular or irregular, and localized (found in only one area) or all-over.

**UNITY** - is the feeling of wholeness or completeness created by the interconnection or coherence of the parts of an artwork. The opposite of unity is disunity.

**VARIETY** - is the use of contrasting or differing elements of design to create visual interest. An artwork lacking in variety can be seen as boring or uninteresting.



# Resources for Teaching Art

## People

- In your School (colleagues, parents, volunteers, etc.)
- In the Neighbourhood (local artists, dealers, collectors, art supply stores, companies)
- In the Arts Ed Community (Board Staff, Artists, Art Educators, OSEA, CSEA, Ontario Arts Council)

## Places

Art Galleries/Museums/commercial galleries

Art in Public Places (parks, restaurants, storefronts, offices, etc.)

Natural Spaces (parks, gardens, forests, ravines, etc.)

## Stuff

### Art Works

- Originals made by professional artists (look in the school, the Board offices, local restaurants, parks, murals, public sculpture, etc.)
- Originals made by students
- Reproductions: postcards, calendar images/prints, posters, slides, videos, digital ones on the Internet

### Basic Art Supplies:

- Set-Up: newspapers, sponges or rags, dish soap, yogurt-type containers (small, medium and large,) broom, bucket, recycling bin, paper towels
- Basic Tools: scissors, rulers, white glue, glue sticks, masking tape, compasses, protractors, metre sticks, stapler, 'cold' glue guns, erasers
- Drawing: pencils, markers, crayons, pastels (chalk and oil,) papers (newsprint, cartridge, etc)
- Painting: tempera blocks or liquid, watercolour palettes, brushes in a range of sizes, painting paper, kraft paper (for murals,) styrofoam meat trays (or palettes for mixing paint)
- Sculpture: plasticine, a range of papers (including construction paper, tissue paper and Bristol board,) string, yarn, wood scraps, buttons, old magazines
- Printmaking: tempera paints or water-based inks, styrofoam meat trays, brayers (rollers,) lino and lino cutters, string
- Misc.: wallpaper books, fabric and paper scraps, natural objects, etc.

**'Beyond the Basics' Art Supplies:** drawing boards (for working outside), food colouring, plexiglass sheets (for rolling inks for printmaking,) clear tape, exacto knives, conte (for drawing,) pen and ink, clay and clay tools, plaster of Paris, light sensitive paper, fabric paper, wire, blue box materials, corks, wrapping paper, acetate sheets, acrylic paints, etc.



# Stages of Artistic Development

The Scribbling Stage	approx. ages 1-4
• Disordered Scribbling; Controlled Scribbling; Named Scribbling	
The Pre-schematic Stage	approx. ages 4-7
The Schematic Stage	approx. ages 7-9
The Dawning Realism Stage	approx. ages 9-12
The Pseudo-Naturalistic Stage	approx. ages -14

For more info:

[http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/rt\\_room/teach/young\\_in\\_art/](http://www.arts.ufl.edu/art/rt_room/teach/young_in_art/)

<http://www.d.umn.edu/~jbrutger/Lowenf.html>

## Assessment in Art Education

### Key Points about Assessment:

- assess the achievement of the expectations
- make it multi-layered (gathers a variety of types of info over time)
- focus on *products* and *processes* of learning
- make it collaborative (involve student, peers, teacher, parents)
- reflect tasks that students do in the 'real' world
- establish the criteria of assessment at the beginning of the activity
  - establish criteria with the students themselves
  - make criteria easily accessible to students at all times

### Assessment Strategies:

- Portfolios of artworks
- Sketchbooks/Visual Journals
- Critiques/ Group Discussions
- Self or Peer Assessment
- Integrated Performances
- Writings

For more info:

Beattie, Donna Kay. *Assessment in Art Education*. Davis Publications, 1997.



# Strategies for Interpreting Art

*There are many ways to interpret art. Try one of the following strategies to begin the interpretative process for yourself. Use these methods as ways 'into' the works - to begin building an understanding of some of their layers of meaning. Utilize other means (such as talks, readings, etc.) to deepen your understanding about the works and artists over time.*

## • COMPARE AND CONTRAST...

Begin with an art work you are interested in. Look at it carefully and consider the associations it raises in your mind. Then compare it to another artwork close by (or if none is available, compare it to another artwork you know well.) Build a description of **how** the two works are similar and different; compare them in terms of media, technique, imagery, form, and style. Decide whether they are more similar or different, and consider **why** the artists created them in this way. What did the artists intend? What do they have in common? How do their differences affect your interpretations of the objects?

## • DESCRIBE, ANALYZE, INTERPRET AND JUDGE...

Try Feldman's formula for understanding art. Begin by simply **describing** the artwork in terms of its media, technique and images. Then begin to **analyze** their relationship to one another: do the images relate to one another? how do the shapes/lines/colour relate to the images? Next start to **interpret** why the artist has chosen those particular media, techniques or images: what ideas are communicated by the artist's choices? what is the mood or feeling of the work? what associations are evoked? what does it mean? Finally make a **judgment** about the work: is it art? is it of high quality? is it important? is it making an interesting/enlightening/unique statement?

## • LOOK TO THE MEDIA, IMAGES AND IDEAS...

Begin by considering the **media** (or materials) used to make the work: are they traditional or innovative? what associations do they bring to mind? why did the artist choose these media or techniques? Then consider the **imagery**: is it representational or abstract? where have you seen images like this before? how have they been presented? what elements or principles of design predominate? why were these images selected? Let the answers to these lead you to consider the work's **ideas**: what associations/ideas come to mind when looking at the work? why did the artist use these media and images? what do they mean? why was the work created?

## • BE "SENSIBLE"

Use all of your senses to "read" the artwork. Your sense of touch can help to explore the tactile sensations of the work such as its texture, weight and solidity. Your sense of smell can help to learn more about its technique, age, or location. Your hearing can help with a work's media, density, or context. And of course your sense of sight can tell the rest - just give it the time to really look!

## • USE YOUR IMAGINATION...

Take a playful approach to interpreting art. Create a story or a poem that relates to aspects of the work. Link the work to music, a play or a book you have experienced. Step into the artist's shoes and imagine the process he/she went through to make the work. Or imagine that the object you are viewing has been sent to earth by an alien life form and you've been asked to figure out where it came from and why it's here.

# Want to Learn More about Art Education?

## Where to Go...

- OISE/UT Visual Arts Dept. Website < <http://home.oise.utoronto.ca/~arted/>>
- Additional Qualifications (AQ) Courses available in the summer at OISE/UT
- Museum and Gallery Workshops at the AGO, McMichael Canadian Collection, Gardner Museum, Museum for Textiles, Bata Museum, etc.
- Continuing Education at Art Schools (like the Toronto School of Art, Avenue Road Art School) Colleges, and the Ontario College of Art and Design (OCAD)
- Your Own Classroom!

## What to Read...

Barrett, Terry. Criticizing Art: Understanding the Contemporary. Mayfield Pub., 1994.

Bissell-Briggs, S. and J. Bunchman. Pictures and Poetry: Creative Activities for Integrating Art and Literature. Sterling, 1994.

Brook, S. and S. Senator. See the Paintings: A Handbook for Art Appreciation in the Classroom. Modern Learning Press, 1988.

Hobbs, Jack and Jean Rush. Teaching Children Art. Prentice-Hall, 1997.

Naested, Irene Russell. Art in the Classroom: An Integrated Approach to Teaching Art in Canadian Elementary and Middle Schools. Harcourt Brace, 1998.

Preble, D. & S. Artforms: An Introduction to the Visual Arts. Harper & Row, 1999.

Rodriguez, Susan. Art Smart. New York: Prentice Hall.

Smith, Annie. Getting into Art History. Barn Press, 1994.

Strickland, Carol and John Boswell. The Annotated Mona Lisa: A Crash Course in Art History from Prehistoric to Post-Modern. Andrews & McMeel, 1993.

Thompson, K. and D. Loftus. Art Connections: Integrating Art Throughout the Curriculum. Good Year Books.

Walker, Pam. Bring in the Arts: Lessons in Dramatics, Art and Story-Writing for the Elementary and Middle School Classrooms. Heineman, 1993.

## Where to Surf...

The Ontario Curriculum, The Arts

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/arts/arts.html#visual>

Learning Through the Arts educational videos on arts education

<http://resources.curriculum.org/arts/art.shtml>

KinderArt

[www.kinderart.com](http://www.kinderart.com)

Learning to Look Activities

<http://www.carleton.ca/gallery/schoolwork/activitieslearnlook.html>

Crayola

<http://education.crayola.com>

Art Attack

[http://www.hitentertainment.com/artattack/menu\\_artattacks.html](http://www.hitentertainment.com/artattack/menu_artattacks.html)