

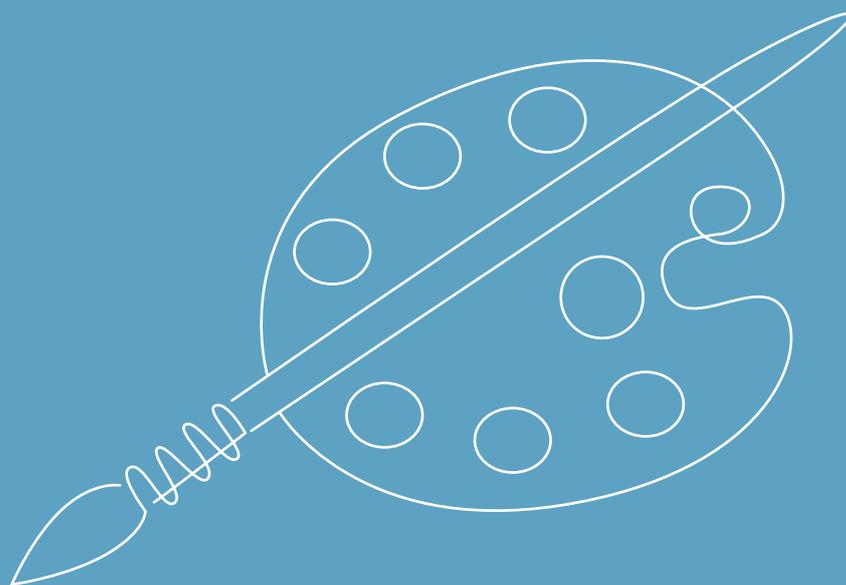
PRIMARY

Visual Arts

Guidelines for Teachers of Students with

MILD

General Learning Disabilities



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Rationale and introduction

The *Primary School Curriculum* describes the centrality of a visual arts education. The interplay of the senses and the need for sensory experience underpin the human desire to grow and develop intellectually, socially, personally, and emotionally.

The visual arts curriculum can play an important role in this holistic development.

Rationale

Through sensory exploration and interaction students learn to explore their feelings and confirm their understanding of the world through the senses. Arts education provides a means whereby the student can explore alternative means of communicating, understanding and interacting with his/her peers, his/her environment, and the wider world.

Students with mild general learning disabilities often experience difficulties with analysing, understanding and communicating. Decoding and finding meaning in language, social situations, and gestures are skills that may present difficulties. Developing expressive skills and receptivity in understanding oneself, others and the world is of crucial importance for these students. Interactive learning, as provided through visual arts activities, can develop the students' understanding of themselves and their world in a visual and tangible form.

Through its emphasis on the individuality and creativity of each student's work, the *Visual Arts Curriculum* serves to enhance self-confidence and self-esteem in the student. Instead of conformity, it encourages risk-taking and spontaneity, and so celebrates uniqueness. These guidelines aim to facilitate access to the visual arts curriculum and enable the student with mild general learning disabilities to explore and make sense of the world in a fun and enjoyable way.

Introduction

Like all students, students with mild general learning disabilities require a balanced curriculum that provides them with a broad range of learning situations, experiences and activities. These visual arts guidelines aim to show how a programme that meets the intrinsic abilities and varying circumstances of these students can be delivered through appropriate planning, differentiation of content, teaching approaches, and methodologies.

The concept of balance permeates the curriculum, with its carefully weighted emphasis on making on the one hand and looking at and responding on the other. Such a balance allows students to look within and beyond, to absorb, to perceive, and to assimilate concepts and skills, and by so doing to involve themselves in expressive and receptive dialogue with the world.

The visual arts curriculum provides structures through which the students are encouraged to learn about themselves and the world around them. It is organised in six strands:

- drawing
- paint and colour
- print
- clay
- construction
- fabrics and fibre.

Through the six strands, the student is offered the opportunity to explore qualities and characteristics of materials, find solutions to design problems, communicate, reciprocate, and make sense of experiences.

Strands

Drawing

The visual arts can be seen as a communication system in its own right. Drawing is central to the language of art. Mark-making is one of the first outward presentations made by most young children. The student who develops confidence in drawing and gains an understanding that graphic representations symbolise and convey meaning can enjoy the multitude of uses of this strand. Drawing can be employed as a means of expressing and recording ideas, experiences, imaginings, observations, and feelings. It may also be possible to interpret and use such expression.

Paint and colour

Colour pervades the world of the student. Perception is developed and broadened when the student learns to focus on the nature and dimension of colour. Discovering the spectrum of colours, the meaning and symbolism to be found in colour, and the potential for

finding pleasure in responding to and using colour can provide the student with essential lifelong skills. Paint is an excellent medium for such investigation. It is a catalyst for perceptual and conceptual learning.

Print

From footprints in the snow to photography to the money that we use to the design on the breakfast cereal box, printing encompasses the life of the student on many levels. The breadth of learning that can happen through this strand of the curriculum is vast. The process of print-making allows for the exploration of cause-and-effect, pattern, mass production, understanding of positive and negative, shape and line, and the creative potential of random marks. A wide range of techniques can be used, such as printing with found objects, relief prints, stencils, rubbings, monoprints, making patterned prints for wrapping paper, cards, and posters. (See the *Primary School Curriculum*.)

Clay

Clay offers the student a range of possibilities. Its malleable quality renders it ideal for the manipulation of form and the exploration of texture. In clay the student can find a springboard for creative expression that can liberate him/her from the purely conceptual aspects of the curriculum. This encourages greater perceptual learning. Clay provides clear opportunities for the student to learn about features of visual arts that pertain to the functional aspect of art, the expressive potential of art, and the importance of the processes of designing and making art.

Construction

In learning about construction the student is the architect of his/her own expression. Through this strand the student learns how things are made, how they balance, how things fit together, how things support each other, and how the environment is affected by architectural planning. He/she is encouraged to become aware of how some things enhance our environment while other things detract from it. The student is facilitated to find personal expression in constructing, inventing and manipulating in 3D. The qualities, limitations and potential of a variety of materials are explored. This strand is ideally suited to group projects and collaborative learning, and integrates extremely well with work in shape and space in mathematics or with work in designing and making in science.

Fabric and fibre

Through exploration of this strand the student is given opportunities to explore the structure of fabrics and fibres, and the processes involved in their development. He/she also explores the creative possibilities of making a new fabric. A variety of fabrics and fibres may be used to explore line and shape, colour, texture, pattern, and tone, and ultimately they may be employed in the production of expressive manifestations by the student. As with all of the strands, importance is given to the art of others who have used these media for functional, decorative or expressive production.

Skills and concepts: the visual elements

Seven basic visual elements are proposed as a focus for understanding art and how it is made. An awareness of these elements is developed as the student makes art and looks at/responds to the art of others. In exploring such aspects attention should be drawn to the elements in an informal, level-appropriate manner. The curriculum allows opportunities for the exploration of the various elements and encourages the student to experiment with and manipulate the variety of characteristics within each element. The interplay between the elements is also inextricably linked with the visual and tactile world. Awareness of the elements enables the student to choose, make decisions, alter, critique, and engage in art practice that is informed and informing.

Line

- is everywhere, forming shapes and patterns and implying movement
- is fundamental to the visual language of art
- has many forms, for example straight, wavy, thick, thin, continuous, dotted
- can symbolise, characterise, describe, record, create illusion, etc.

Shape

- Everything has a shape.
- There are different types of shapes, shapes within shapes, positive/negative shapes, etc.

Form

- is a 3D shape
- can be expressed in 2D shape
- can have alternative view points.

Colour and tone

- Colour can have symbolic meaning, for example white for purity, black for mourning, red for hot, and blue for cold.
- Colour can have particular associations, for example Christmas, the seasons, natural versus urban landscape.
- Change in colour can describe tonality.
- Tone conveys shape and form.

Pattern and rhythm

- include recurring lines and shapes
- can be found in nature and in the built environment
- can be decorative
- can create a sense of movement.

Texture

- is how things feel when touched
- can be created in two dimensions or three dimensions
- is everywhere.

Spatial organisation

- is how the world around us is composed
- is an important consideration in 2D or 3D artwork
- can create illusion, balance, tension, and aesthetically satisfying artwork.

Aims

The aims of the visual arts curriculum are to

- help the student to develop a sensitivity to the environment
- provide the student with aesthetic experiences that, in turn, develop understanding of universal and cultural concepts
- offer the student an alternative mode of expression, with its own visual, tactile and symbolic language
- enhance the student's understanding of art processes and responding to or 'reading' art
- provide the student with sufficient visual literacy skills so that exploration of materials and techniques leads to expression and inventiveness
- enable the student to experience the excitement and fulfilment of creative endeavour
- foster sensitivity towards and appreciation of the expressive, aesthetic and functional aspects of the visual arts through exploration of the work of artists and craftspeople
- promote the student's understanding of the concept that we are all artists.

School planning

As with all curriculum areas, the visual arts form an essential part of the school plan. The purpose of the school plan is to ensure that the most effective learning environment is established. This is achieved through direct consultation between the principal, teachers, and, where possible, special needs assistants, with input from the board of management and parents. Ultimately, the school plan states what is to be taught in the visual arts and how this teaching will happen.

What is to be taught is discussed in the section **Curriculum planning**, and the means by which the school provides this learning is explored in the section **Organisational planning**.

Curriculum planning

The *Visual Arts Curriculum* emphasises the importance of the creative process and accentuates the learning potential of such activity. This is of particular relevance to the student with mild general learning disabilities. For arts education to elicit creativity and to nurture the holistic development of the student, value should be placed on the process rather than on the product.

The curriculum should include a broad developmental programme that includes instruction, experimentation and application in the areas of the six strands. It should provide opportunities for the student to explore, manipulate and be sensitive to the visual elements. The school environment should also reflect the social importance of art. A common language around art should be used, for example in discussion around

- our gallery
- our exhibition
- the artists in our school
- our display
- our pictures/sculptures/murals, etc.

A balanced curriculum

Balance is at the heart of the *Visual Arts Curriculum* for the student with mild general learning disabilities. The following should be investigated when considering this aspect of the curriculum. Balance should be maintained in relation to the following:

- *receptive and expressive communication*: There should be opportunities for looking at/responding to the art of others, the environment and to the work of artists, craftspeople, designers, and architects. The student should explore and manipulate media in the making of art.
- *two-dimensional and three-dimensional work*: Art can be on a flat surface (pictures, collage, etc.), in relief (textural collage, carving on plaster, etc.), or in the spatial realm (sculpture, mobiles, etc.).
- *media*: Ample provision should be made so that the student experiences a variety of materials, creative processes and techniques (wet/dry, using tools/using body, 2D/3D, etc.).
- *the use of Western and world art images*: The student should have the opportunity to explore a variety of cultural expression.
- *the abstract and the naturalistic in the visual arts*: Art can take many forms, even representational art can have abstract qualities.
- *students' art and art by grown-ups*: It is essential that the work of the student is valued; it is a valid resource in terms of responding to art.
- *fine art, craft and design*: The student should be presented with a diversity of creative activity and should be introduced to a variety of people who involve themselves in artistic processes, such as painters, sculptors, textile/fashion designers, ceramists, architects, designers.
- *male and female art*: It is important to provide access to the work of a balanced cross-section of artists.
- *the use of traditional media and photography, and information technology*: The student will benefit from discovering the possibilities for artistic expression in electronic media.

- *proprietary materials and found or recycled objects*: While the student should have access to good quality equipment, there is value in identifying potential in used goods. The salvaging of objects provides opportunities for the student to value materials and to recognise the broader issues relating to cost, pollution, recycling, and the environment.
- *works by old masters and contemporary artists*: The student should be afforded the chance to compare and contrast, and also to view art contextually.

Organisational planning

In forming an effective plan to deliver a visual arts curriculum to the student with mild general learning disabilities it is necessary to look within and beyond the school.

Within the school

While there is no need to be an expert, it is important to recognise that expertise in particular areas of the *Visual Arts Curriculum* may exist among staff members. Some staff members may have expertise in particular areas of the *Visual Arts Curriculum*, while others may be keen to learn new skills and strategies. These staff members are a valuable resource in terms of

- teaching new skills and strategies for both teachers and students
- sharing ideas and useful information on materials
- identifying, making and sharing resources
- their role as information agents
- their key role in any discussion that examines the needs of the student with mild general learning disabilities in relation to the *Visual Arts Curriculum*.

Small strategic steps can be taken that encourage enthusiasm among staff:

- Opportunities for art skills and knowledge development should be made available.
- Adequate provision of a wide range of materials will promote interest.
- If the school does not have an art room, an area in each classroom or a general area should be set aside for the storing of paper, paints, clay, etc.

The principal, in consultation with staff members, should co-ordinate and lead the whole-school programme.

Outside the school

There is a wealth of useful resources and personnel outside of school. By identifying these at an organisational level the school can build up a veritable bounty of support. It is worth remembering that students with mild general learning disabilities often do not have the same interaction with the community as their peer group. Therefore, it is important to extend the learning environment beyond the classroom. Possibilities include the following:

- *art galleries:* Most of the larger galleries have an education department, often with some expertise in the needs of the student with disabilities. Some will provide guided tours of the gallery and workshops for the class and/or the teacher. Building relationships with local galleries should also be considered.
- *artists in residence:* The Arts Council and local councils fund various artists-in-residence schemes for schools.
- *craft-centres and local artists' studios:* Some craft-centres are staffed by people with disabilities and, if contacted, most centres are happy to show classes around. A local artist's studio may be worth a visit. It is an invaluable experience to see how an artist plans, executes and displays/sells work. It is also important for the student to see that art can have monetary value.

- *gardens and parks:* There is much of value to the student in the local environment. In terms of responding, the flora and fauna provide great interest. Some gardens have a multi-sensory dimension that allows for perception through different sensory channels. The garden is an excellent starting point for art production.
- *television, video and CD-ROM:* These have the potential to transport the student to different worlds, as well as to demonstrate techniques and illustrate the work of artists. However, the potential for learning through these media depends on the input and guidance of the teacher.

School culture and the visual arts curriculum

It is not sufficient for art to be confined to the classroom walls. The visual arts should pervade the school environment, signifying and confirming the importance and value of art. Art is equally at home on the ceiling or in the windows. It can be a curtain or a division. It can be in the playground. In fact, art can be anywhere. Like a film, a book or a conversation art is communication. The whole school community needs to be mindful of the dialogue in which one engages when art is made or responded to.

The school

The school should highlight the fact that each individual is an artist when art activity is entered into. The student's work can share the same space as the prints of paintings by Van Gogh or da Vinci.

The teacher

The role of the teacher as artist is also fundamental in the teaching of visual arts. Art is a language in its own right, a visual/tactile language of communication. In the same way that the student learns oral language, the teacher has a modelling function. This is especially true of the student with mild general learning disabilities, as the facility for seemingly automatic learning is usually impaired to some degree.

School community

The school community should

- use the decorative quality of some artwork to enhance the aesthetic character of the school
- respond to the expressive aspect of art
- communicate with art
- record events and happenings through art
- emphasise the potential for learning using art processes
- use the student's art for graphic purposes in newsletters, the school calendar, on handbooks, and in school greetings cards
- foster the spiritual/moral development of the student by using students' art for religious ceremony and other celebrations.

Enhancing self-concept

The visual arts curriculum provides the student with mild general learning disabilities with opportunities for enhancing self-concept through self-perception and discovery. Of vital consequence to the student's achievement is the esteem-enhancing aspect of art that allows for a variety of responses and which, in turn, allows for communication and positive experiences.

Visual art is an integral component in all our lives. It is in the setting of a table, in the presentation of food, in the way in which we choose to decorate our living spaces, and in the way in which we respond to the environment. It could be said that many of the choices that we make for living are influenced by our aesthetic sensibility and our awareness of functionality and self-expression. Such edification needs to be nurtured and developed. The student with mild general learning disabilities will require structured and considered facilitation in learning skills and knowledge that have the potential to enhance the quality of everyday life. Having the ability to control one's environment and one's communication offers empowerment to the individual.

Classroom planning

The classroom planning challenges for the teacher in relation to the *Visual Arts Curriculum* for the student with mild general learning disabilities are significant. Again, the essence is to establish a balance of approach. For the student with mild general learning disabilities, the therapeutic value of art has long been recognised, as have the associated social, emotional and communication difficulties that may be experienced.

However, for the visual arts to be truly enabling, the student should be taught art as a subject in its own right, with its own potentiality for diverse learning.

The teacher should be familiar with the basic concepts involved in understanding

- the elements, strands, contexts, and conventions associated with the teaching and learning of art
- the stages of the child's development in art (See Approaches and methodologies.)
- the learning needs of students with mild general learning disabilities in relation to the visual arts. (See Approaches and methodologies.)

Planning for differentiation in visual arts

The successful art learning experience requires considerable organisation and planning. At this stage it is worth reiterating the variety of environments that may stimulate art learning, such as galleries, the local area, and so on. This section deals specifically with planning concerns, with a special emphasis on differentiation within the classroom. It is necessary to plan just what is to be learned and how the learning will happen.

What is to be learned and how this learning will be achieved involves the interplay of

- the stage of development of the student
- the elements of the curriculum that are to be addressed
- the stimulus from which learning is to happen
- the strand that will be explored
- the context in which the learning will happen.

Development of visual literacy through the strands

Stages of development in art

The acquisition of visual imagery skills by the student is a developmental process. For this reason it is seldom useful to focus on the student's development in terms of age or class grouping, especially in relation to the student with mild general learning disabilities. Indeed, to force the student towards art concepts that are incongruous to the student's own schema or stage of visual image development could prove counter-productive to a positive art experience. (See Approaches and methodologies, page 16.)

The stimulus

When planning an art lesson, just as in planning an oral language lesson culminating in a written piece, it is appropriate to take a starting point. From this, the student is stimulated by the concrete world and can explore ways of deconstructing and reconstructing concepts in truly creative ways. The teacher should decide what the stimulus is to be.

Possibilities include:

- *oral language*: This can provide descriptions of characters and events, both imaginary and real, in the form of news, song, story, etc.
- *the world around us*: The environment provides the student with a wealth of information, diversity, manifestation of the visual art elements, and so on that may be explored in the student's own art.
- *observation*: By examining animals, objects, people, nature, etc. the student enhances his/her knowledge of the world and the relationships within it.
- *use of a theme (such as farm, zoo, family, our school)*: This approach allows for a high degree of linkage with other areas of the curriculum and opportunities to revisit concepts and skills. (See Approaches and methodologies.)
- *materials as stimuli*: The student's experience of the qualities and characteristics of a particular medium or set of media can evoke a creative response.
- *the work of artists, craftspeople and designers*: This can be used to help the student to focus on the elements of art and the possibilities of materials, thus providing a useful starting point for the student's own art.

When considering stimuli for visual arts learning for the student with mild general learning disabilities, there is not as much emphasis on using the imagination or personal experience as a starting point as there is in the mainstream curriculum. Very often these students have difficulty with long-term memory. This can create anxiety if the student is required to recall events and process them in order to find stimulation for the art process. Similarly, the student may find it arduous, and in some cases impossible, to express an imagined response, since the imagination depends upon experiences that are consigned to memory and can be deconstructed and reapplied to a different situation.

The six strands

The six strands provide the student with opportunities for essential learning, skills development, and artistic expression. They offer scope for diverse learning experiences and for the student to become visually literate.

The elements of the Visual Arts Curriculum

In planning an art lesson, the teacher should identify those elements to be explored by the student. A starting point for this could be a discussion around the work of an artist/craftsman or the environment, where the elements to be examined are indirectly emphasised. It is useful to compile portfolios, folders or files of images that support and act as visual aids to teaching. Objects are also of value for this purpose. The student with mild general learning disabilities, in particular, will benefit from teaching that is multi-sensory. This can be achieved by the combined use of

- oral instructions and information, or sounds and music to facilitate auditory learning
- visual cues, images, simple diagrams, and illustrations for visual learning
- textural experiences that encourage tactile learning.

The aim is to enable conceptual learning through perceptual learning.

The teacher may need to spend time demonstrating techniques for incorporating the elements. Just as the student is an artist, so too is the teacher. The modelling that happens when the teacher paints, draws or models clay is crucially important to the student with mild general learning disabilities. Through such activity he/she learns strategies for overcoming one of the main problems for those with a mild general learning disability, the fear of attempting something at which they may not be automatically successful. The teacher needs to model experimentation processes, and trial and error, for the purpose of learning rather than product. Essentially, the task of the teacher is to develop in the student a sense that art does not offer a singular, standard and correct response, but rather a myriad of personal responses.

The context

There are many contexts in which art may be learned. This is a very important consideration for teaching the student with mild general learning disabilities. Art has many functions. A curriculum for the visual arts should allow the student to partake in, and learn to understand, the various applications of art. The visual arts can be used for

- communication: saying something
- narration: telling a story
- recording: describing and commemorating
- decoration: pertaining to the aesthetic elements of the visual arts
- problem solving: examining materials and their limitations and applications
- construction: making and building
- information giving: maps and signs
- play: a safe forum for *'what if?'* transference and discovery
- exploring self-concept: discovering oneself
- community development: group work, our environment
- cultural purposes: relating to our sense of who we are as a people, and understanding other people
- spiritual purposes: depicting religious scenes, characters, symbolism
- graphic design: magazines, posters, flyers, greeting cards
- fashion: jewellery, clothing, millinery
- theatre design: costumes, sets, props
- architecture and industrial design: design for living
- functional design: making objects for use
- language development: a wealth of receptive and expressive language about art and around art process
- enhancing our environment: art learning influencing our decision-making in relation to the environment
- site-specific enhancement: art that is designed with sensitivity to the social, cultural and locative aspect of the space, building or environment for which it is intended.

The functions of art are numerous; the above is by no means an exhaustive list. What is important is to recognise that, for the student with mild general learning disabilities, these functions are not always detected in the same seemingly incidental manner. Aesthetic considerations influence decision-making. How a dinner table is set, how food is arranged on a plate, what we choose to buy are all linked with aesthetic sensibility. Therefore, a visual literacy is also about life-skills.

Materials and space

In terms of planning, the media, skills and techniques to be employed warrant practical and detailed organisation. It is essential that tools and materials are efficiently managed. Where possible, art materials should be available in the classroom in a specially designated area. An attitude of respect for the materials and tools should be engendered. Recycling should be a fundamental theme across the curriculum. The challenge for the teacher is to find the balance between fostering regard for the media to be used while creating an environment that allows for experimentation with and exploration of paint, clay, chalks, etc.

When planning visual arts lessons, considerations (some of which are general and some of which pertain particularly to the student with mild general learning disabilities) may include the following:

- **using clay:** A natural clay should always be used. Check the amount of clay and, perhaps more importantly, the condition of the clay. If the clay has not been used recently it may have become dry, hard and non-malleable. Ensure that the clay is plastic enough to model with. Have wooden boards or cardboard for the student to work on as clay has a tendency to stick to desks and paper. Protect flooring with newspaper. Be prepared to demonstrate, make and correct errors, and model experimentation and *'what if?'* behaviour. Allow time for making and responding. Provide a variety of visual aids and tools for exploring cutting, texture making, and so on. The student will need to be shown how to organise the workspace and how to attend to cleaning up, choosing what can be thrown out and what can be recycled. The student will learn about the qualities of the clay through the handling and manipulation of the material. Experimentation and risk-taking should

be encouraged. However, the student with mild general learning disabilities will need some direct teaching about how, through examining animals, objects, people, nature, etc., his/her knowledge of the world and the relationships within it can be enhanced. For various reasons, the student may find it difficult to control the medium and therefore direction should be given about wearing protective clothing, using tools safely, and taking responsibility for one's own work and workspace.

- **using paint:** As with using clay, consideration should be given to teaching the student about preparing the workspace, ensuring the protection of clothing and the techniques involved in the process of painting. The care of materials and the correct use of brushes, tubes of paint, etc. should also be taught by direct instruction. It cannot be assumed that a brush will be held properly or that the student understands the process of washing a brush after using paint of one colour and before dipping it into another. It is important to ensure that the surface/paper to be painted is appropriate to the type of paint being used. For example, paint that is very liquid requires paper that is absorbent. It is important for the student with mild general learning disabilities to have his/her artworks exhibited for all to see. This is vital for the development of self-concept and self-esteem. On a practical note, while the student is generally proud of an artwork it is important to encourage him/her to label all work with his/her name, as there is often confusion about the ownership of artworks.
- **using construction and textiles:** For work in these areas, there should be an emphasis on recycled objects and materials. The student should be encouraged to shred, tear, cut, and use various methods of adhesion. Recycled items are an excellent resource for visual arts learning but require economical use of space. This can be in the classroom, a store room or a shared area, and will require a policy dedicated to organising, supplying and maintaining the materials for use across the curriculum. The student with mild general learning disabilities will need to be shown ways of manipulating the materials in order to create something new. Methods of binding, sticking and joining will need to be demonstrated. The qualities, characteristics and limitations of materials, papers, cards, tubes, boxes, and fabrics should be explored.

Paper clips, P.V.A. glue, sticky tape, stitching, and the use of slots and folds for joining objects should be explored in relation to the most appropriate method of adhesion for a given material. For some students, basic cutting using tearing and scissors will need to be practised.

Oral language and the language of the visual arts

Practically every student with mild general learning disabilities experiences difficulties or delays in the acquisition of oral language. The visual arts offer the student unique experiences that can contribute to and/or enhance the development of communication skills.

- The visual arts present the student with an alternative mode of communication with its own visual vocabulary and symbols. This language of art is universal, although culturally diverse, and has many social functions.
- The visual arts, as with oral language, is a channel through which conceptual learning can happen. Much learning happens through discourse, questioning, perceiving, and responding.
- There is a wealth of opportunities for oral language development both in the making of art and in looking at/responding to art.

The student can learn the oral language that is used when exploring materials, observing, using thematic/guided discovery, and so on. The language around describing, quantifying and responding to, together with discussion about the elements and processes involved, affords the student opportunities for enhancing vocabulary.

Approaches and methodologies

The art of students with mild general learning disabilities indicates a similar pattern of development to that of their mainstream peers; however, the actual ages at which changes occur may vary considerably.

Potential areas of difficulty for students with mild general learning disabilities

Learning opportunities for the student with mild general learning disabilities should take into consideration the individuality of the student. Attention should be given to the way in which the student learns best. Art can be a particularly fruitful area, with its emphasis on process and perceiving. There are many solutions or responses to any given task or project.

There is no singular, definitive profile for the student with mild general learning disabilities. Each student within this category will present with a set of individual strengths and needs that creates, for each student, a unique learning style and some special educational requirements. However, some potential areas of difficulty can be identified. An awareness of these can inform teachers working with these students. See pages 21-26 for more explicit detail on possible strategies to help minimise these difficulties and allow access to all strands of the visual arts curriculum.

16

Stages of development

In order to form a pedagogical starting point for the student's learning it is necessary to be aware of the developmental stages in art and image-making. As the student's initial experiences of making images involve drawing media, such as pencils, crayons, etc., many studies have focused on drawing. The following pages outline the normal developmental stages of image-making in children.

Stages of development in art

LEVEL 1

Early scribbling stage (6 months to 2.5 years)

- This is characterised initially by indiscriminate mark-making.
- Eventually, an emerging awareness of pattern is shown.
- There is increasing evidence of hand-eye coordination.
- Drawings usually involve whole arm and shoulder movement.
- There is a spasmodic approach and poor attention to the drawing plane.
- These scribbles are not representative.



LEVEL 2

Later scribbling stage (2.5 years to 5 years)

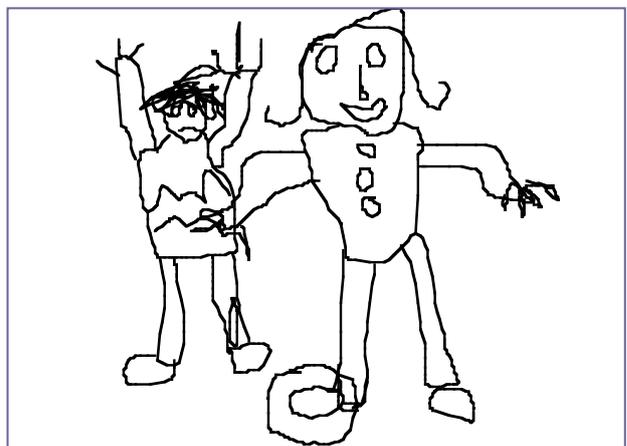
- The child begins to see drawings as being representative of something.
- Arm movements become more controlled, and the child uses mainly a palmar (fist) grasp.
- The child becomes aware of the effects of mark-making.
- Drawings are based on simple schema (shapes/symbols), such as enclosed circle shapes, wavy lines, etc.
- Marks take on meaning and symbolise people and objects.



LEVEL 3

Pre-schematic/symbolic stage (5 years to 7 years)

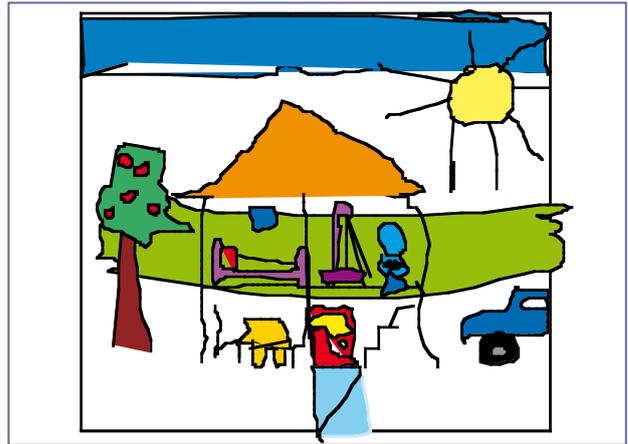
- Drawings are representative of people, places and events.
- A pincer grip is well established and helps the child to manipulate the drawing tool purposefully.
- Figures are composed of limbs attached to a main body and have features.
- The child is drawing what is known or understood.
- Note that the foot is seen behind the ball in the drawing opposite.



LEVEL 4**Schematic/emerging analytic stage**

(7 years to 9 years)

- The child endeavours to show depth and perspective in drawing, and relationships between objects.
- There is greater emphasis on stylised use of colour—sky is blue, sun is yellow, etc.
- Drawings often lack a horizon point where the sky and ground meet.
- More attention is paid to details that the child considers to be important.
- Spatial representation may be somewhat confused, resulting, for example, in drawings that may show the inside and outside of a body, a building, etc.
- The child's drawings are based on what he/she knows.

**LEVEL 5****Visual realism/analytic stage**

(9 years to adolescence)

- An emerging self-consciousness causes the child to be more conventional and inhibited in his/her drawing.
- Increased awareness of perspective, movement, and the construction of objects coincides with an increased knowledge of the world.
- The child at this stage may become easily frustrated in his/her attempts to create images that are realistic and accurate.



The importance of knowing the stages of art development in the child

As with any teaching, it is necessary for the teacher to be aware of the usual developmental route for learning. Using this information, the student's present learning stage can be determined and his/her learning needs can be established and catered for. The student with mild general learning disabilities frequently will not develop at the same pace as his/her mainstream peers. However, the various strands of the *Visual Arts Curriculum* and the elements involved can be accessed by the student when the learning task is adapted to meet his/her current stage of development. To facilitate development in the visual arts effectively, the chronological stages described above provide a useful baseline tool for understanding where the student is in his/her development. Interestingly, the stage at which the student functions in terms of drawing offers the teacher a wealth of information about the student's general learning, as drawings reflect the student's level of understanding of the world.

In investigations of children's visual arts development the emphasis has generally been on drawing. However, the teacher can readily apply that information to other strands in the curriculum in order to obtain information about the student's functioning.

Talking about art

There are clearly important links between thinking about art, making art, and talking about art. Talking about art develops learning, clarifies meaning, and is important for responding.

Oral language has a role in developing ideas, in clarifying experiences, and in suggesting ways in which one might proceed with an idea. The *Primary School Curriculum* prescribes guided discovery as a means of encouraging the student to discover the expressive possibilities of a variety of materials and tools. Teacher talk is an essential component of the guided discovery process. By identifying the student's developmental stage the teacher can place verbal emphasis on areas that will help the student to explore fully the potential of the stage that he/she is at, and so pave the way for sequential development.

For example, the student who is functioning at the later scribbling stage might be encouraged to communicate about the content of a drawing, as this is the stage when he/she begins to be aware of the communicative aspect of art and the symbolism ascribed to shapes and lines.

As the student progresses through the stages, and for some students this can take a very long time, the teacher should tailor discussion around the student's artwork in accordance with the focus of the particular stage, working through the concepts to be learned. It is important that probing of this nature is open-ended, and is a discourse in which the teacher facilitates learning through gently eliciting from the student information about the process, content and meaning of the work. By talking about his/her work the student is learning about his/her creativity and how he/she perceives the world.

It is important to bear in mind the need for clear and concise verbal instruction in demonstrating techniques or the use of tools, in describing situations, objects or tasks, and in responding to the work of others. For some students, a task will need to be broken down into short sessions of instruction. Reinforcement of the ideas discussed and the elements explored will also be important.

Emphasise the language of responding

The language needed for looking at/responding needs to be focused upon and constantly revisited, using a variety of contexts. Such language is invaluable in its potential application, and the concepts that underpin it form the basis for living skills. *'What I like'* and *'what I don't like'* are fundamental to self-concept and aesthetic sensibility.

Strategies for dealing with potential areas of difficulty

The student with mild general learning disabilities has much in common with his/her peers. However, he/she may learn at a different pace, have particular difficulties in some areas of learning, and have idiosyncratic learning needs. The following is a list (by no means exhaustive) of areas of difficulty that may affect the student's learning in the visual arts and across the curriculum. For each area, the possible effect on visual arts learning is described, and strategies are given to help the student to overcome the difficulty. The student with mild general learning disabilities may present with one or more of the following areas of difficulty. These are intended as a diagnostic guide for the teacher.

Addressing potential areas of difficulty for students with mild general learning disabilities

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Communication and language difficulties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may experience a delay in the acquisition of oral language skills. • The student may be unable to express himself/herself and may have difficulty with the concept of conveying thoughts through a medium, that is through oral language or art activity. • The student may have difficulty understanding instructions and therefore may not be able to work through a given task. • The student may have trouble in expressing difficulty, and this can result in refusal to attempt a task.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work on the concept that a picture is <i>'talking'</i> to us, as in an advertisement, a sculpture, etc. ■ Instructions should be clear and the teacher should ascertain that the student has understood. ■ Activities can be broken down into step-by-step stages that are described and demonstrated by the teacher. ■ Anticipate difficulties and intervene using positive interjections, such as <i>'That's coming on, do you need a little help?'</i> ■ Create a warm classroom environment that fosters respect for one another and that encourages the student to take risks with his/her artwork. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Lacking confidence and self-esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may be reluctant or refuse to involve himself/herself in the art process. • Pages may be torn up, sculptural work may be smashed or dismantled in frustration. • Work that does not achieve naturalistic realism is not considered worthy of presentation. • The student may <i>'act out'</i> to avoid an activity.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Work through programmes that develop self-esteem. ■ Enhance the student's self-concept by using the body as a resource for direct mark-making, hand/feet painting, etc. ■ Focus on 'doing an experiment' or 'making marks' using paint or other media, rather than the daunting task of <i>'making an artwork'</i>. ■ Model being an artist and making artist's decisions with the student, making 'mistakes' and illustrating to the student how you can rectify the mistake or how you would do it differently next time. ■ Validate the student's work by creating an environment that is nurturing. Find something positive to say about the student's work. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Short-term memory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may have difficulty remembering the different stages of more complex processes. • The student may be unable to remember the names of tools, materials or concepts discussed earlier. • There may be some problems with recalling events and experiences that, in turn, can affect the student's ability to imagine.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe and carry out more complex tasks one step at a time. ■ Allow the student enough time to finish each stage and provide plenty of opportunities for reinforcement. ■ Use images, objects and word cards where appropriate. ■ Use story, songs, poetry, and images to help the student to recall and visualise scenes, people, places, and creatures as subject matter. ■ Remember, the imagination is fuelled by experiences. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Short attention span	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasks may be abandoned in an unresolved state. • In his/her urgency to finish a task the student may not allow time for exploration or experimentation, thus causing him/her to miss out on perceptual and conceptual learning. • Art activity time may become a time of disruption.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Break down tasks into a series of stages. ■ Visit the student during each stage and probe the students about what they are doing, asking them to explain what they are making, how they are making it, etc. ■ Ask the student to look at other students' work with you, and ask him/her to comment on it. ■ Show his/her work to the class and ask him/her to talk about it. ■ When the student is at the point of giving up encourage him/her to talk about, add to, or help mount/frame/exhibit the work. ■ Tailor the task to the student's attention level, working on a smaller scale or involving him/her in a group. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Spatial awareness	The student may present as being clumsy or awkward.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Enhance self-awareness/self-concept through direct exploration of self, through dance and movement and by examining 'Who am I?' and 'What I can do?', using photographs, life stories, life line, projects on 'me', etc. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Spatial awareness	Artwork may lack spatial awareness commensurate with class level.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Give the student plenty of opportunities for multi-sensory stimulation and learning. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Spatial awareness	The student may experience difficulties when conveying 3D objects onto a 2D plane.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ When teaching about 2D and 3D shapes, provide the student with tangible examples. ■ Examine pictures with the student and ask questions such as, 'How do you know the boy is far in the distance?' and 'Who is nearer, the boy or the girl ... ? How do you know?' ■ Teach the vocabulary of space, such as wide, behind, in front of, beside, underneath, between, etc., and use images and objects to support this learning. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Social skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may have difficulty working in a group situation. • The student may experience low self-esteem and feelings of non-acceptance or isolation.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The teacher should provide opportunities for success and self-esteem building. ■ When assigning a student to a group for art, it is useful if roles and boundaries are clearly defined for the task. ■ The teacher might sit in on this group to begin with, revisiting periodically. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Social skills	The responses of the student may be inappropriate, for example being antagonistic to others or anti-social in nature, causing disruption.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Advise the student to examine his/her responses before making a comment. ■ Help the student to reflect on the consequences of his/her actions and words. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Perceptual-motor skills and spatial awareness	Visual art images may appear incongruous to the student's general functioning.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage the student to think about his/her own thinking. ■ Enable the student to think more carefully about the shapes, forms and so on that he/she wishes to make by visiting the content orally, by talking about what the student will draw/make, and by discussing the details and context. ■ Ask questions that help the student to think more clearly about his/her artwork, for example <i>'Which is bigger, the man's head or his tummy?'</i> or <i>'Is there a pattern or buttons on the clothes?'</i> 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Emotional immaturity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may appear restless or may be disruptive. • The student may present with attention difficulties. • Motivation may be poor. • The student may obsess over details and can sometimes focus only on the end product.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Be conscious of areas of sensitivity for the student, such as a bereaved parent, familial difficulties, etc. ■ The classroom can be a safe haven for this student if a culture of mutual respect pervades. ■ Focus on themes of special interest to the student, for example horses or a favourite pop group. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Emotional immaturity	Self-esteem is generally underdeveloped and this often results in inhibited learning behaviour.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Explore ways of developing self-esteem. ■ Create situations of success for the student, for example displaying his/her work in a manner that validates it. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Visual perceptual discrimination	The student may have difficulties, generally, with academic learning.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer the student a multi-sensory approach to learning about shapes, including 2D and 3D. ■ Focus on a particular colour and its various shades and tones, and provide plenty of reinforcement. ■ Have a green (or any colour) table or classroom for a week. ■ Ask the student to mix as many shades of green as he/she can, and count them. ■ Sing songs, write poems, cut out pictures that are all about green. ■ Have a green day and dress up in green clothes, eat green food, make a green drink, etc. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Visual perceptual discrimination	There may be some difficulty in identifying shapes and colours, and in perceiving pattern.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify shapes in pictures, in nature, in the class, using word cards for reinforcement. ■ Create cards with geometric shapes drawn onto them, asking the student to match cut-out shapes to the drawn shape. ■ Have the student order shapes according to size, for example taking a variety of different sized boxes or jars and asking the student to place the correct lid on each one. ■ Use printing as a medium for exploring pattern, such as repeating patterns, mirror patterns, etc. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Visual impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student may not attend to the teacher and the learning situation, as difficulties with vision may isolate the student. • The student may become frustrated if his/her needs are not being addressed. • If the correct provision is not made the student's channels for perception are severely impaired and limited.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that the student's eye-functioning is assessed appropriately. ■ The student should be seated in the best possible position for viewing the teacher/visual aids/ demonstrations. ■ Use pointing and other cues when possible to best illustrate learning. ■ Allow opportunities for the student to access information and understanding through auditory, tactile and kinaesthetic perception. ■ Provide a balanced visual arts curriculum that emphasises process and allows for tactile and kinaesthetic learning. 	

▲ Potential area of difficulty	= Implications for learning
Challenging behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student does not attend to the learning situation. • Other students are disrupted by the inappropriate behaviour of the student. • The student may become over-stimulated in a less structured situation. • Scissors, burners, knives, and other potentially dangerous equipment can become a safety risk.
+ Possible strategies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The teacher should ensure that he/she has the attention of the student, with the student seated close to the teacher, for optimum learning, as opposed to where he/she chooses. ■ Check that the student is attending by reinforcing and questioning. ■ Involve the student by allowing him/her to help in demonstrating, etc. ■ Encourage the student and ensure adequate opportunities for success. ■ Count all dangerous tools and double check after lesson. If appropriate, give the student a special responsibility for distributing and collecting tools. ■ The key is to find a balance between creating an environment that encourages experimentation and risk-taking in terms of work, and one which is structured. 	

Working thematically

There are many advantages to using a thematic approach to learning for the visual arts. The potential for integrating the curriculum using a theme has the advantage of enabling the teacher to make explicit the connections between different areas of knowledge/learning. Planning on a thematic basis is also an effective way of ensuring linkage between the six strands of the curriculum. It is important to remember that, while the visual arts offer opportunities for illustrating and recording learning in other subject areas, the visual arts should be taught as a core area in its own right. For the student with mild general learning disabilities, a comprehensive visual arts education can play a substantial role in his/her cognitive and emotional development. (See Thematic exemplars.)

A theme can provide the stimulus for a whole body of work in a variety of subject areas. The theme can be suggested by an event, a book, a television character, or by an incident in the school day. Learning in areas like history, geography and science can be enhanced through integration with the visual arts and other subjects. Equally, the student's life and the world in which he/she lives can be the catalyst for work that not only develops cognition but also enables the student to explore 'the self' and thus develop self-concept, self-esteem and meta-cognitive skills.

Working in groups

The visual arts curriculum provides much scope for collaborative work. There are many positive dimensions to such an approach for the student with mild general learning disabilities.

The student may experience difficulties socially; in which case, group work gives him/her opportunities for social interaction that he/she does not have to initiate.

- The student develops a sense of responsibility to the team.
- The student works with his/her peers towards a common purpose.
- Teamwork can engender a positive sense of self-esteem.

- A group of students working together allows the student to undertake an area of the work that is commensurate with his/her level of functioning.
- When students create composite elements of an artwork, whether it is in 2D or 3D form, the student should scrutinise the formal elements of visual arts.

Creating real contexts for learning through art

The student with mild general learning disabilities needs to have the basics of communication and learning explicitly presented to him/her, and needs to be afforded maximum opportunities for learning. In practical terms, the teacher should concern himself/herself with creating contexts for art learning that are relevant to the student's overall learning and that also allow the visual arts to inhabit the domain that is embodied in the phrase art for art's sake. In the same way that words are all around us, so too are visual images.

- The graphic quality of art can be explored in the making of books, posters, magazines, and greetings cards; and in responding to advertisements and a variety of media.
- By making art and looking at/responding to art, the communicative and expressive characteristics of it are understood; art is a visual language in its own right. It is imperative that the student develops visual literacy skills and assimilates the symbolic nature of visual art, so that he/she may interpret the world around him/her and be able to communicate, even when oral or written language do not provide effective communication options. By providing access to a complete visual arts curriculum, the student is enabled to decode and find meaning in colours, visual conventions, and graphic written language representations that he/she may not be able to read literally. For example, by training the student to assess typefaces and lettering styles the student can know a comic book from a book of prose. By understanding the meaning attached to graphic images he/she can know signs/posters that indicate danger and can get excited by the poster or book about the circus.

- The student will need to learn that visual imagery is everywhere, that it is a critical component of living, and that making aesthetic decisions is an important aspect to living and affecting quality of life. There are artistic choices to be made in arranging food on a plate, in setting a table, in choosing furnishings, and in presenting oneself. Explore the social aspect of art by tuning into art projects in the student's community. Examine how art is used to enhance the environment and how it empowers people. Look at/respond to the art of disabled artists and art/crafts from the travelling community, etc. Examine the cultural dimension of art by comparing, contrasting and experimenting with the art of different peoples. Explore Aboriginal/African/Native American imagery, etc. Look for examples of traditional Irish imagery in the work of the past and in contemporary art, for example in Celtic motifs, landscape, and the craft tradition.
- Focus on the historical element of art, linking events to art production. Examples might include the recent upsurge in commissioned public sculpture, the prevalence of portraiture in continental Europe amongst the bourgeoisie in the 16th and 17th centuries, the dearth of native Irish art during the famine, etc. Discuss art through the ages, analyse paintings, sculptures and buildings, and consider what they tell us about life in those times.
- The art process is an ideal forum for an exploration of self-concept and the concept of individuality; the student with mild general learning disabilities often has difficulties in these areas. Lack of confidence and low self-esteem can cause feelings of inadequacy. Art activities should focus on process and can be open-ended in terms of product, allowing for difference and a variety of possible personal responses.

Exemplars

The potential for creating learning opportunities in the area of visual arts is virtually endless and a myriad of approaches may be taken. As has been stated earlier, the thematic approach to visual arts learning is very useful, allowing for differentiation, linkage and integration.

Potential areas of difficulty for students with mild general learning disabilities

For the purpose of providing appropriate and practical exemplars that span the various strands, theme-based units of work have been developed for use with students who function within the mild general learning disabilities range, beginning at level 1.

This level will probably include most students with mild general learning disabilities as they enter formal schooling. However, it is necessary at this stage to point out that some students' learning needs may require that they revisit the learning concerns of this particular stage for longer periods of time than their peers. For some students, learning may happen at level 1 for several years in one or in many areas of the curriculum. Similarly, some students with mild general learning disabilities may be able to work at a higher level during their first year at school. The levels set out in the following exemplars reflect different stages of development in art.

Exemplar 1: Visual Arts

Strand: Drawing

Theme: Exploring and experimenting with drawing tools and with mark-making

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the early scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- see the cause and effect of mark-making
- become more aware of line, shape, texture, and pattern in his/her drawings
- make a variety of marks, such as dots, lines, dashes
- explore and experiment with a variety of drawing tools
- use these drawing tools on a range of surfaces.

Stimulus

- Different drawing tools are presented to the student.
- The teacher discusses the different marks that can be made and the different types of lines that can be produced, for example wavy, straight, dotted, zig-zag, thick, thin.
- The students look for, talk about, and name the lines that they can find in the classroom, in the school, in the outdoor environment, etc. There are lines everywhere, on the tiled floor, the window frames, the table edges, the edge of a press, in plants in the garden, on the barks of trees, etc.

Language

- Drawing—naming different drawing tools, such as pencils, crayons, markers, chalk pastels, charcoal, etc.
- Movement—up/down/around
- Words that describe line—swirly/wiggly/dotted/straight/rounded/ziz-zag/curved/wavy

Exemplar 1: Visual Arts

Activity

- Allow the student time for exploring and experimenting with drawing media. At this stage there is not an emphasis on representational drawing.
- Using large sheets of paper, pinned to a board or other smooth surface on the wall (at student's height) or to a table, the student can further develop his/her understanding about the nature of drawing (mark-making) by creating marks that are large scale. It is useful to tape a pencil/crayon to a 2cm dowel rod in order to encourage drawing that is loose and spontaneous. This is particularly beneficial for those students who have not yet developed the pincer grip. Working on this scale can help to enhance awareness of pattern and hand-eye co-ordination.
- Try making different types of lines on the playground with chalks. Make a trail using all the different types of line you have discovered, walking, skipping, marching around your trail.
- Choose your favourite type of line. On a piece of paper draw a series of your favourite lines and fill the spaces you have created with colour.

Assessment

- Is the student making a variety of marks?
- Is the student becoming familiar with the different drawing tools and the different types of effects they create?
- Does the student have the language to describe the marks made?
- Can the student collect some of the drawings he/she has made in a portfolio?
- Can the student select some favourite drawings for display purposes?

Exemplar 2: Visual Arts

Strands: Paint and colour/Print

Theme: Making marks

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the early scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with paint in primary colours
- use paint on a variety of surfaces
- identify and name the primary colours
- see that some colours are made by mixing two colours together
- begin to understand the consistency and characteristics of paint.

Stimulus

- Talk about the colours we see around us everyday, such as colours we like to wear, our favourite colours, colours in food, etc.
- Create colour displays in the classroom.
- Play colour sorting games.
- Organize colour days, for example a day when everyone wears red, a day where all our writing must be in red, a day when everything we eat must contain something red.
- Read stories and poems about colour.

Language

- There is a wealth of language development possible in this area. Naming, sorting and matching colours require quite specific language from the student, for example
 - the colour of objects
 - the names of the primary colours
 - different kinds of (tones) of one colour
 - colour association, for example red as the symbol for danger.

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Activity

- Fold a sheet of paper in two and open it out again.
- On one half of the page the student can paint thick blobs of paint/printing ink or can squeeze out drops of paint/ink from the container.
- Fold the page over again and rub the two halves with the back of a soup spoon or with a roller.
- When the page is reopened the paint blobs will have merged together and will create a mirror image.
- Talk about the colours and shapes you have created.
- Talk about what your picture reminds you of.

Assessment

- Can the student name the colour of an object?
- Can the student name the primary colours?
- Does the student understand that mixing colours makes a new colour?
- Can the student select some favourite samples of his/her fold over paintings/prints for inclusion in a portfolio or for display purposes?

Exemplar 3: Visual Arts

Strand: Print

Theme: Making marks

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the early scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with printing ink on a range of surfaces
- make a print
- understand the printing process at a basic level
- enhance his/her knowledge of colour.

Stimulus

The teacher discusses with the class differences that can be noticed in each and every one of us:

- Everybody is different.
- Everybody's hand/foot is different—different size/shape/skin, etc.
- When we roll printing ink on something we can print with it.

Language

The teacher explores with students the language of colour, ensuring that the level of difficulty is appropriate to each student's needs:

- the language of colour
- *'making a print'*—describing the stages in printing
- the vocabulary of printing—rolling, spreading, pressing, etc.

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Activity

- Using a selection of suitable found objects, such as spools, a half potato, apple or orange, a potato masher, bottle tops, etc., the student can spend time making simple direct prints, by rolling printing ink onto them and then pressing the objects onto papers/fabrics.
- The student makes a print of his/her hand onto a piece of paper. This can be repeated using different colours.
- The class can discuss the prints in terms of difference, such as small hands, big hands, long fingers.
- This technique may be used to create bigger scale group pieces.
- Try some overprinting activities by allowing a printed page to dry and using a different set of objects to print again.
- Try making a patterned print using two found objects and two colours.

Assessment

- Can the student take an object, apply printing ink, and make a print of that object?
- Can the student describe the stages in making a simple print?
- Can the student select some printed pieces for inclusion in a portfolio and/or for display purposes?

Exemplar 4: Visual Arts

Strand: Clay

Theme: Making marks

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the early scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with clay and with simple clay tools
- feel and see the effect of his/her mark-making on and into the surface of clay
- gain an understanding of the qualities and characteristics of clay
- explore the decorative possibilities of pattern through imprint
- make a clay plaque decorated with impressions.

Stimulus

- Hands are unique and everyone is different. (This can include the previous handprint activity.)
- We can make marks that are different from everyone else's marks.
- Find and collect textured (not smooth) objects for class displays—bark on trees, orange peel, shells, pinecones, etc.
- Find and make collections for display of some patterned/textured pottery, carved wood, etc. for students to handle and examine.

Language

- The vocabulary of texture—smooth, rough, bumpy, etc.
- Describing what clay feels like
- Describing what actions we can perform with clay—pushing, pressing, scratching, rolling, squeezing, etc.

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Activity

- First, the student is given a piece of natural clay (terracotta or buff) for rolling out, and a rolling pin. The clay is rolled flat to form a tile/plaque onto which the student can make marks (approximately 1cm thick).
- The student can begin to decorate the tile by pressing his/her hand into the clay and making an imprint of the hand.
- Other similar activities that can be incorporated into this activity include making a pattern with found objects such as forks, lollipop sticks, bottle tops, marker tops.
- When dry, the clay may be painted and glossed if desired, remembering to leave a small hole in order to allow for a hanging string.

Assessment

- Has the student attempted to make marks onto the clay surface?
- What evidence is there of awareness of pattern?
- Can the student choose a favourite piece for display purposes?
- Could the student take a photograph of a completed piece for inclusion in a portfolio?

Exemplar 5: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Making marks

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with simple two-dimensional construction
- develop an increased awareness of pattern, shape, texture, and colour
- develop skills such as choosing, tearing, cutting, and sticking
- make a simple non-representational collage
- look at and respond to the work of artists.

Stimulus

- Look at how some famous artists have used the technique of collage, for example Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse
- Discuss the idea of regular and irregular shape. We can tear out interesting irregular shapes; we can use a scissors to cut regular shapes.

Language

- Regular and irregular shape.
- The language of sticking—adhesive, glue, paste, etc.
- Pattern—in a row, beside, around, on top of, under, overlapping, etc.

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Activity

- Provide the students with an interesting collection of papers—plain, coloured, crepe, tissue, tinfoil, patterned, magazine pages, newspaper, marbled papers, experimental print pages, etc.
- Tear/cut a variety of interesting shapes from a range of these papers.
- Play with these shapes on a backing sheet until you have created an interesting pattern or design.
- Use an appropriate glue to stick down your collage.
- This activity could be repeated in various ways, emphasising the use of cut regular shapes, from fabric/fibre activity, using shapes torn/cut from papers decorated with print patterns, etc.

Assessment

- Can the student tear?
- Can the student cut various shapes?
- Can the student complete the task of choosing and sticking?
- Does he/she have an awareness of pattern?
- Can the student select a favourite collage for inclusion in a portfolio and/or for display purposes?

Exemplar 6: Visual Arts

Strand: Fabric and fibre

Theme: Making marks

Level: 1

Information

A unit of work for students at the early scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with fabric and fibre
- become aware of the role of fabrics in everyday life
- deconstruct loosely woven fabric
- choose colour to change the surface of a piece of fabric
- explore simple weaving.

Stimulus

- Have an 'interesting clothes day'. Each child is asked to come to school dressed in interesting clothes chosen from his/her wardrobe. Clothes must be selected because they have interesting colours, shapes or textures. These ideas may need to be discussed as an initial step. Each child is asked to talk about the clothes they have chosen and about other children's clothes.
- Create an interesting dressing-up box for the classroom.
- Create a fabric display. Touch and feel different fabrics and try to describe them—hessian, canvas, cotton, silk, etc.
- Sort fabrics for texture.

Language

- The language of clothes and fashion
- Vocabulary for fabrics and fibres
- Language about what you can do to fabrics—pull out threads, weave through, add colour, etc.

Exemplar 6: Visual Arts

Activity

- Provide each student with a piece of hessian fabric. Talk about it. What does it feel/smell like? Have you ever seen a fabric like this before, if so where? Scrunch it up, smooth it out.
- Begin to pull fibres (introducing this language at this stage) from the edges of your piece, from the middle. What happens eventually?
- When your piece is totally deconstructed (and you are left with only the fibres) use the fibres to make a pattern.
- Look at other types of fabric using a magnifying glass. Do you notice anything?
- Place a sheet of paper over your fibre pattern and make a rubbing.
- Take rubbings from other types of fabrics.
- Take a second piece of hessian. Remove selections of the fibres to create fringes, openings, shapes, patterns, etc.
- Add colour to your piece using chalks, pastels or crayons.
- Can you thread some ribbons, wool, strings, or other fibres through your piece using a plastic bodkin.

Assessment

- Can the student discuss favourite clothes?
- Can the student identify colours, pattern, and/or textures in items of clothing and in different fabrics?
- Can the student use sight and touch to sort fabrics for texture?
- Can the student pull fibres in order to deconstruct?
- Can the student choose colour to decorate fabric?
- Can the student weave through?
- Can the student choose a decorated piece for inclusion in a portfolio and/or for display purposes?

Exemplar 7: Visual Arts

Strand: Drawing

Theme: Me

Level: 2

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with a variety of drawing tools on a variety of surfaces
- make a drawing from observation (a self-portrait).

Stimulus

- Talk about 'me'.
- Look at pictures of 'me'. Bring in a collection of photographs of 'me' as I grow and develop. (Integrate with work in SPHE and history.)
- Look what I can do with crayons/pencils/markers! I can revise the different types of lines, marks and shapes I can make with different tools.
- Each student looks at his/her face in a mirror and points to, touches and names various features of the face as elicited by the teacher.
- Make a process journal about portraits, for example cut out pictures of eyes from magazines, draw eyes, etc.

Language

- The names of the features of the face
- Talking about 'me' and 'my'
- Using adjectives that describe the face—colour of eyes, freckled, smiley, etc.
- The language of drawing and drawing tools

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Activity

- The student is presented with a variety of drawing materials and various types paper and asked to make a selection.
- The student is asked to draw a picture of himself/herself based on what is seen in the mirror.
- Card frames might be made and decorated in a variety of ways to display the portraits.
- Make a collection of artists' self-portraits for looking at and responding to.

Assessment

- Is the student beginning to move away from the scribbling stage?
- Is the student developing recognisable symbols for features?
- Can the student select a favourite self-portrait for inclusion in a portfolio and/or for display purposes?

Exemplar 8: Visual Arts

Strand: Paint and colour

Theme: Me

Level: 2

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with paint
- apply paint to a surface with increasing control
- further explore the mixing of colour
- make a self-portrait in colour.

Stimulus

- Use a palette of brightly coloured paint to elicit a response from the student about *'the colours I like'*.
- Relate this to the colours of the student's clothing.
- Look at pictures of different types of clothing from magazines or other sources.

Language

- Talking about *'me'*, *'what I like'*, and *'my favourite colours'*
- Naming clothes

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Activity

- Using a varied palette of good quality poster paint, brushes and paper the student is given the task of painting himself/herself in clothes that incorporate his/her favourite colours.
- The teacher asks what colour the various items of clothing will be: *'What colour are you going to paint the trousers?'* or *'Which colour is nice for a jumper?'*
- Work on a life-size painted portrait with a partner. Lie down on a large piece of paper laid out on the floor and get your partner to trace the outline of your body. Use paint and/or other coloured materials to create your portrait.

Assessment

- Is the student able to use the language of colour in a descriptive manner?
- Is the student able to relate colour to his/her own clothing?
- Is the student demonstrating an awareness of pattern and texture through the use of the brush and through colour?
- Is there a sense that the student is developing an understanding that marks made on a surface, such as paper, can represent an object or idea?
- Can the student display and discuss the finished self-portrait?
- Can the student select a favourite self-portrait for inclusion in a portfolio and/or for display purposes?

Exemplar 9: Visual Arts

Strand: Print

Theme: Me

Level: 2

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- illustrate his/her knowledge of the body in a print
- describe the print process in a simple sequence
- match prints to the original drawings on the tiles
- experiment with simple print-making processes, such as monoprinting.

Stimulus

- Following an investigation into the features of the body, using photos, pictures from magazines, and portraits by a variety of artists the student is encouraged to consider ways of representing himself/herself in 2D.
- Fingerprints and handprints are unique and develop an understanding of the print-making process and, as such, are a useful starting point for this activity.
- *'My body is unique'* forms the basis of this exercise.

Language

- Talking about *'my body'* is important, and it is important not to assume any great familiarity with one's own face or body, as others see it.
- Print language, such as *'is the same as'* or *'taking a print from'*, may be used.

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Activity

- Place a small amount of water-based printing ink onto a smooth washable surface—a smooth tile/a piece of acetate or perspex/a sheet of glass, etc.
- Allow the student some time to experiment with the ink and to become accustomed to the sensations and the possibilities of this medium.
- Lay a piece of absorbent paper over your experimentation, rub on the reverse with a clean roller and peel away to reveal a print.
- As a second activity the student draws/paints a picture of himself/herself (with fingers or with a brush) with the ink onto another tile/piece of perspex or acetate.
- A print is taken from the student's work.
- Experiment with what happens if you continue to take further prints.

Assessment

- At the level 2 stage the student should be becoming aware of the representational quality of drawings.
- Hand-eye co-ordination should be developing and should result in more meaningful mark-making.
- Can the student describe the steps involved in making a basic monoprint?
- Can the student select favourite prints for display and/or for inclusion in a portfolio, giving reasons for this selection?

Exemplar 10: **Visual Arts****Strand:** Clay**Theme:** Me**Level:** 2**Information**

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with clay and clay tools
- manipulate clay to create a form that will represent observations of his/her own face
- name, point to, and represent the features of the face
- discuss the face and, when provided with a 3D representation of a face, point to
 - the parts that ‘stick out’—nose/chin/ears
 - the parts that ‘go in’—nostrils/open mouth
 - the rounded bits
 - where there is hair
- look for the various characteristics of the features of the face in his/her own face using a mirror.

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Stimulus

- Talk about ‘me’.
- Look at pictures of ‘me’. Bring in a collection of photographs of ‘me’ as I grow and develop. (Integrate with work in SPHE and history.)
- Look what I can do with crayons/pencils/markers! Revise the different types of lines, marks and shapes I can make with different tools.
- Each student looks at his/her face in a mirror and points to, touches, and names various features of the face as elicited by the teacher.
- Make a process journal about portraits, for example cut out pictures of eyes from magazines, draw eyes.

Language

- Action words—squeezing/pinching/sticking/scratching, etc.
- Location—at the back of/at the front/at the sides/on the top

Activity

- (For this activity, the student should have had ample opportunity to explore the quality of clay at a basic level, and should have had the experience of creating forms and textures using hands and tools/objects.) Refer back to previous clay exemplars.
- Each student is provided with a piece of clay roughly as big as a large orange.
- Some time is spent revisiting the manipulation of clay and the effects of pinching, squeezing, pounding, etc.
- The task involves the student modelling his/her face out of clay, including some discernible features.

Exemplar 10: Visual Arts

Assessment

- Can the student approximate a round head shape?
- Can the student translate learned information about the face into clay?
- Can the student discuss how many features of his/her face are included in the finished piece—eyes/ears/nose/mouth/hair?
- Can the student display and talk about his/her finished piece?
- Can the student use a digital camera to record the piece for inclusion in his/her portfolio?

Exemplar 11: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Me

Level: 2

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with a variety of construction materials
- use a variety of construction materials to create both non-representational pieces and representational pieces based on observation
- become familiar with the features of the face and name them
- see the relationship between the features of the face
- see the relationship between the actual face and their representation of the face.

Stimulus

- Play with a variety of found construction materials to make a non-representational structure.
- Look at 'my face', using photographs and mirrors.
- Consideration is given to scrap construction materials in the classroom and how they might be used to create representations of 'my face', such as thread/spools/corks/twigs. Discuss what found materials might be suitable for particular features.
- The student should be given opportunities to explore methods of joining and adhering card, paper and other materials using
 - paste and glue
 - masking tape
 - very basic tying and threading of yarn and thread
 - folding, bending and slotting.

Language

- The features of the face
- Language of location/composition— on/over/above/under, etc.
- Descriptive language—smooth, woolly, hairy, straight, round, etc.
- The language of construction

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Activity

- Scrap and/or other materials are arranged and attached to face shapes cut from card or other found materials to construct the features of the face.
- Wool, threads, or other materials can be used to construct hair.

Exemplar 11: Visual Arts

Assessment

- Has the student seen the relationships described above?
- Does the constructed face approximate to its intended form?
- To what degree has the student been aware of the features of the face and the composition of these features?
- Has the student been able to use a wide variety of the materials?
- Can the student display his/her constructed face and talk about how it was constructed?

Exemplar 12: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Me

Level: 2 (more advanced)

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with a variety of found three dimensional construction materials
- represent the human body using recycled and other construction materials
- personalise the work using detail and colour of his/her choice.

Stimulus

- Look at the body and at the limbs and how they move.
- Observe and talk about constructed body forms, such as scarecrows/puppets/dolls.
- Discuss what found materials might be useful/ appropriate for representing particular body parts.
- Opportunities to explore methods of joining and adhering card, paper and other materials should be provided for the student using
 - paste and glue
 - masking tapes
 - very basic tying and threading of yarn and thread
 - folding, bending and slotting.

Language

- Include a discussion about the parts of '*my body*'.
- Descriptive language—bigger/smaller/round, etc.
- Construction—sticking/gluing/making, etc.

Activity

- This activity can have a 3D or 2D focus. At this level, the 2D approach may be more suitable.
- **2D:** A card or stiff paper sheet is used as a base for the student's constructed picture. Pieces of card, fabric, and other various scrap items are arranged and stuck down to create, in this instance, a representation of the student. (Cutting may present the student with some difficulty and assistance may be required.)
- **3D:** The student will select a box, tube, or other object as the beginning of his/her construction. It is useful to begin with a form that represents the main body or torso.
- Other objects are selected that will form the arms, legs, head, etc.
- Details such as features of the face are developed as the student selects forms, shapes, textures, and colours to be added. (The student will require some assistance with the joining together of the composite parts.)

Exemplar 12: Visual Arts

Assessment

- Can the student identify/name the basic elements of the body?
- Has the student approximated the elements of the body in his/her representation of the body. Are there the appropriate numbers of legs and arms? Is there a head, a main body shape?
- Has the student used a wide variety of the found materials?
- Can the student display his/her piece of art and discuss how it was constructed?
- Can the student make a photographic record of his/her piece of art for inclusion in a portfolio?

Exemplar 13: Visual Arts

Strand: Fabric and fibre

Theme: Me

Level: 2

Information

A unit of work for students at the later scribbling stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with fabric and fibre
- make a non-representational piece of art using a variety of fabrics and fibres
- distinguish between and match textiles according to their visual and textural qualities
- choose, arrange and construct fragments of textile that reflect his/her own preferences.

Stimulus

- Look at a variety of textiles, taking note of the 'feel' (texture) of each one.
- Play blindfold games. Can you find two pieces of fabric that match simply through the sense of touch?
- Compare and match different textiles based on colour, pattern and texture.
- The student chooses textiles according to his/her own preference.

Language

- Descriptive—bright, dark, itchy, shiny, smooth

There is a wealth of language development possibilities in this exercise, such as the reasons for the student's choices, but discussion should be guided and expanded on by the teacher.

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Activity

- After the textiles have been examined and explored, the student will be given the opportunity to choose a base sheet of textile for the purpose of making a wall-hanging.
- The wall-hanging will reflect the theme to the extent that it is essentially about the individual student's preference in terms of colour/texture/pattern.
- Using glue, the student will attach other selected textile strips and shapes.
- The work may be finished by attaching dowel rods to the top and bottom, using a suitable adhesive.

Assessment

- Can the student choose two or more smooth/woolly/bumpy(rough) examples of fabric?
- Can the student say why he/she prefers a particular textile?
- Can the student display his/her work and discuss how it was created?

Exemplar 14: **Visual Arts****Strand:** Drawing**Theme:** Water**Level:** 3**Information**

A unit of work for students at the pre-schematic stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with new drawing tools
- learn about life on and in water environments
- learn about the varied forms, shapes, colours and textures, flora, and fauna that live in water
- through direct experience with the medium of chalk, attempt to represent a world about which he/she has just learned
- learn the properties and applications of chalk pastel, soft and can be smudged to create effect or to blend colours, etc.

Stimulus

- Stories, songs and poems about water environments:
 - *Noah's Ark*
 - *A Sailor Went To Sea-sea-sea*
 - *The Wind in the Willows*
 - *The Little Mermaid*
 - *The Whale's Song*
 - *Yellow Submarine*
 - *Duck's Ditty*, etc.
- A trip to a Sea World exhibition or a beach/river/canal/pond
- Look at life above and below the water, in posters, books, etc.

Language

There is a wealth of language around this theme, such as fish, shells, salty seawater, boats, sea plants, pond life. It is desirable at this level that the student will talk about his/her drawing as being representative of the subject matter.

Exemplar 14: Visual Arts

Activity

- At this level the student may have little or no direct visual experience of water life. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the student has had ample opportunity to learn about the types of creatures, colours and shapes of this theme.
- The student is provided with coloured sugar-paper and chalk pastels.
- The student is encouraged to draw a picture that depicts life that exists in water—fish, seaweed, shells, pondweeds, frogs, divers, water snails, etc.
- The drawings can be further embellished with glitter, paint, shapes. (See Level 3, Paint and colour and Print.)
- Finally, several drawings that have been completed on the same colour sugar-paper may be displayed together to form a frieze.

Assessment

- Does the drawing show that the student has attempted to represent the subject matter of the task?
- To what degree has the student managed to complete the task?
- Can the student display his/her work collaboratively and discuss what the work includes?
- Can the student further explore the medium of chalk pastel on other surfaces to create other images on other themes?

Exemplar 15: Visual Arts

Strand: Paint and colour

Theme: Water

Level: 3

Information

A unit of work for students at the pre-schematic stage

The student should be enabled to

- become familiar with the variety of appearance, shape and pattern of fish
- explore and experiment with a variety of paints and of painting skills/techniques such as blending, layering, and eliminating colour.

Stimulus

- Look at fish, their shape and colour, scales, fins, mouths and eyes.
- Discuss the pattern on the fish.
- Examine a bought fish or visit a fishmonger.

Language

- Descriptive—shiny, speckled, slimy, silvery, etc.
- Actions with paint—splatter, mix, scrape, scratch

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Activity

- Begin by looking at and discussing the general shape of a fish's body.
- Lightly sponge the general shape on a large piece of paper.
- Provide a variety of colours on a palette, and small and medium brushes. (Remember that the student may have to be shown how to clean brushes when changing from one colour to another.)
- Further work can be done using the blunt end of the brush or another tool to scrape away some of the paint to create texture.
- Old toothbrushes or nail brushes can be used to apply more speckled texture.
- Other colour materials might be added to create interest.

Assessment

- Has the student attempted to use the colour with discrimination?
- Has the student indicated any or all of the features of the fish through the use of colour, by scraping paint away, or by splattering?
- Did the student master the technique of splattering? (This requires quite complex activity, involving both hands.)
- Can the student display his/her piece of work and discuss the techniques used in creating it?

Exemplar 16: Visual Arts

Strand: Print

Theme: Water

Level: 3

Information

A unit of work for students at the pre-schematic stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with the print technique of rubbing
- become aware of the textural elements of the environment
- relate the texture of surfaces and/or objects to the surface texture of another object (in this case, the fish)
- develop skills in the area of making rubbings and using scissors.

Stimulus

- Looking at pattern and texture.
- Observe the pattern found on fish.

Language

- Descriptive—it feels lumpy, bumpy, has lines, etc.

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Activity

- Using white cartridge paper and pencils and/or crayons, the teacher demonstrates how a rubbing is made. Place the paper onto a textured surface or place low-relief textured objects such as coins or an embellished spoon handle under the paper and rub the pencil/crayon over it to create a pattern.
- The student is asked to create a range of rubbings on a range of paper types.
- Return to the theme of water. Choose a specific subject matter. Fish provide much scope for textural/pattern work. (See the previous exemplar.)
- Students are asked to create an outline drawing of a fish on a large sheet of paper.
- The student is asked to cut/tear up the rubbing pages previously created and to use these pieces to collage inside the outline drawing.
- The fish can be cut out using scissors and this gives an excellent opportunity to develop scissors skills and, in turn, improve the pincer grip.

Assessment

- Has the student mastered the task of making a rubbing?
- Is there a relationship between the texture and pattern of fish fins and scales and the rubbings made?
- Can the student use the scissors appropriately?
- Can the student display and discuss the finished piece?
- Can the student choose to save some favourite rubbings in his/her portfolio?

Exemplar 17: Visual Arts

Strand: Clay

Theme: Water

Level: 3

Information

A unit of work for students at the pre-schematic stage

The student should be enabled to

- use clay as a medium for representing the people and things around him/her
- develop clay manipulation skills
- gain a greater insight into the world of the sea and the fisherman.

Stimulus

- Fishermen—Visit a harbour, learn about fishing, boats, etc.
- Clay—Afford the student the opportunity to explore the properties of clay.
- Boats—Comment on different sizes, colours.
- Songs, stories and rhymes, such as
 - *Three Men in a Tub*
 - *The Big Ship Sails Through the Alialio*
 - *Row, Row, Row Your Boat*
 - *Noah's Ark*

Language

- Fishing and boats—sailing on the sea, catching fish in nets, etc.
- Working with clay—squeezing, smoothing, pinching, etc.

52

Activity

- Each student is given a lump of clay (approximately the size of a grapefruit).
- The task for the student is to make a boat with figures in it. This task is twofold: to create a 'vessel' and also to incorporate a figure or group of figures.
- The vessel should be just that, and the figures should represent bodies, with some detailing such as limbs, etc.
- The emphasis of the activity is on form or three dimensionality.
- Some students may choose to create a base representing the sea.
- After the clay has dried the boat may be painted and glossed.
- The efforts of the group can be displayed to great effect on paper/fabric laid out to represent the sea. Ask students to invent a variety of ways to display their work rather than presenting them with immediate solutions.
- Note: The proper technique for joining one piece of clay to another i.e. scoring, using slip and moulding, should be introduced to students at this stage.

Assessment

- Can the student manipulate clay?
- Can the student represent objects through the use of clay?
- Can the student display and discuss the piece of work and record it in some way for inclusion in a portfolio?

Exemplar 18: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Water

Level: 3

Information

A unit of work for students at the pre-schematic stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with a variety of found construction materials
- use construction materials to record observations and experience
- process the 3D world around him/her and represent that knowledge in 3D form
- examine spatial elements such as perspective, composition and distance.

Stimulus

- The sea—This can include boats, lighthouse, fish, shells, water, sea-weed.
- Look at a diorama (a miniature three-dimensional scene such as a doll's house made from a box.)
What can we make with a box?

Language

- Words associated with the sea

53

Activity

- Using scrap materials, such as boxes, tubes, card, and cartons, the student will be involved in the creation of a diorama that is based on the sea.
- Note: This activity is particularly suitable for work in groups.
- A large box forms the 'showcase' for the work.
- Some 2D work using paint, print, rubbings, fabrics and fibres, etc. can be used to form a backdrop. (Similarly, clay fish, shells or rocks can be added.)
- There should be some discussion around the shapes and forms of the objects that are being made. A tube might approximate a lighthouse, a flat box might form the base of a boat, an orange net might form a fishing net.
- The student should have access to suitable adhesive, as heavier card requires stronger glue than, for example, tissue paper.
- The constructions can be painted and embellished with glitter, paper shapes, etc.

Assessment

- How many elements of the seascape has the student included?
- Can the students display and discuss their dioramas saying what is included in them and how they worked on the construction?

Exemplar 19: Visual Arts

Strand: Paint and colour

Theme: Home

Level: 4

Information

A unit of work for students at the schematic/emerging analytic stage

The student should be enabled to

- use paint and colour to describe the interior of a room
- begin to represent 3D objects onto a 2D plane, becoming aware of spatial elements within his/her art work
- investigate scale and perspective at a basic level.

Stimulus

- The student considers one room in his/her house.
- The contents of this room are discussed and the decor described.
- Make a drawing of a room in your own home as a basis for your painting.

Language

- Description of scale and location—large, small, behind, in front of, etc.
- Elements of a room—furniture, fittings and fixtures
- Colour and pattern—shades of colour, stripes, dots, circles, etc.
- Look at and respond to how some artists have used the theme of interiors in their work, for example *Bedroom at Arles* by Vincent Van Gogh.

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Activity

- The student is asked to choose a sheet of coloured sugar-paper, which corresponds approximately to his/her chosen room. (Black is not appropriate).
- Using good quality poster paint, the student paints a picture, which represents the room and which includes in it the various elements that the student has described.

Assessment

- Is the student controlling the paint and brush?
- Is the painting representative of an interior?
- How many interior elements are included in the painting?
- Does the student attempt to delineate the walls, floor, ceiling of the room?
- Can the student display and discuss the finished painting effectively?
- Can the student choose a favourite painting for inclusion in a portfolio?
- Can the student write a short descriptive piece to accompany his/her painting?

Exemplar 20: Visual Arts

Strand: Print

Theme: Home

Level: 4

Information

A unit of work for students at the schematic/emerging analytic stage

The student should be enabled to

- use abstract shapes to create a picture representing a street scene from his/her own experience
- learn about pattern, line and shape in the environment through the printing process
- be aware of the constituents of the urban landscape
- use the technique of printing with found objects to record observation.

Stimulus

- Look at a local streetscape, and discuss the types of buildings to be found and the uses of the various buildings— homes, shops, offices, parks.
- Look at the different shapes and sizes of buildings, doors, windows, etc.
- Look at imprints—the sole of a shoe in the mud, animal footprints in the snow, handprints, fingerprints, potato prints.

Language

- Descriptive—city, town, country, neighbourhood, busy, tall, small, etc.
- Naming the elements of the street—shops, offices, road, path, etc.
- Printing—dipping ink, picture, print, etc.

55

Activity

- Allow time for exploration of direct printing with various objects. The student dips the object (spool, small box, bottle top, etc.) into printing ink and makes a print of the shape.
- The student selects objects for printing that will form the elements of a streetscape, for example houses, roofs, windows, doors, trees, flowers, lamp posts, post boxes.
- The student creates a streetscape by dipping the objects into the printing ink and printing with them.

Assessment

- Does the student indicate an awareness of the streetscape? Has he/she included a road, a variety of buildings, people, other street furniture?
- Has the student used appropriately shaped objects in his/her print to convey the theme?
- Can the student display and discuss the print created?
- Can the student discuss the discrete stages involved in making a print?

Exemplar 21: Visual Arts

Strand: Clay

Theme: Home

Level: 4

Information

A unit of work for students at the schematic/emerging analytic stage

The student should be enabled to

- become familiar with and employ a variety of techniques for forming clay in three dimensions
- learn about the qualities and characteristics of clay. (For example, clay cannot support its own weight if it is too thin.)
- learn about the basic components of the house.

Stimulus

- How are houses made/built?
- Look at types of housing around the world—igloos, mud huts, barges, high-rise flats, thatched cottages.
- Read the story—*Three Little Pigs*.
- What are houses made of?

Language

- Using clay—rolling, slabs, coiling, joining, pressing, etc.
- Making the house—the base, the walls, the roof, the chimney, etc.

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Activity

- The task for the student is to make a house out of clay.
- The teacher demonstrates three basic techniques for working with clay:
 - A. Shaping the clay with the hands and creating form
 - B. Making slabs by rolling out clay with a rolling pin and cutting shapes for constructing together
 - C. Building up a form using rolled out coils of clay or small lozenge-shaped 'bricks'.
- The student is given a grapefruit sized piece of clay and a variety of tools for the purpose of making a house, a base for which will be created first using a slab of clay.
- The finished form can be decorated and embellished with paint and/or other objects such as matchsticks, or by creating texture with an implement.
- Note: As always, when working with joining clay it is important that the students use the score, slip, mould sequence.

Assessment

- Can the student complete the task? (This may take a number of sessions. Models can be covered with a damp cloth to keep them in a workable state.)
- Is there evidence of walls, roof, door, and windows?
- Can the student describe the process and the end product?
- Can the student display and discuss his/her completed clay piece?

Exemplar 22: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Home

Level: 4

Information

A unit of work for students at the schematic/emerging analytic stage

The student should be enabled to

- explore and experiment with a variety of construction materials and techniques
- work with construction materials to create a piece of 3D art based on the imagination
- consider the scale, layout and decoration within the room
- learn to approximate scale within the environment
- learn about the furniture and fittings through the manipulation of a variety of materials.

Stimulus

- Designing a bedroom—What would I like in my dream bedroom?
- Look at pictures from magazines.
- Draw/sketch ideas.

Language

- Furniture—bed, wardrobe, dressing table, etc.
- Fittings—lights, lamps, pictures, mirror, curtains, etc.
- Scale—too big, too small, it fits beside, etc.
- Construction—gluing, joining, placing, etc.

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Activity

→ The task is to create *'my bedroom'** or *'my dream bedroom'*. It is important to remember that some students with mild general learning disabilities may have difficulty with the latter option, as they may require a more concrete task. To take the theme *'my bedroom'* may be more suitable as the student can use his/her direct experience and knowledge and/or photographs of his/her room.

**Any room of the house can be used.*

- A cardboard box is used as the framework of this diorama, the base forming the floor and three sides of the box representing the walls.
- The walls and floor are painted or papered using scrap wallpaper, wrapping paper, or other decorative paper. Pattern may be printed on to collected scrap materials, smaller boxes, tubes and so on, all of which can be decorated with paint, collage, fabrics and fibres, foil and/or glitter, etc.

Assessment

- Does the student differentiate between the different planes within the construction—floor, walls, etc?
- Does the student attempt to create a broad range of elements in the construction?
- Does the student's construction approximate the furniture and fittings that are found in a bedroom?
- Can the student display, discuss and record the work in other ways, for example write a short description of the finished piece, write a letter to a friend telling him/her about it, make an observational drawing of the finished construction?

Exemplar 23: Visual Arts

Strand: Fabric and fibre

Theme: Home

Level: 4

Information

A unit of work for students at the schematic/emerging analytic stage

The student should be enabled to

- learn about the fabric of his/her built environment—textures, patterns, building techniques, architecture and design elements
- use 2D materials—fabric and other materials— to represent the 3D world.

Stimulus

- My home and garden
- Looking at the shapes, textures and patterns of houses—roof tiles, brickwork, pebble-dashing, etc.
- Take rubbings from the built environment.

Language

- Textures of the built environment—cement, tiles, wood, bricks, stone, etc.
- Textures of fabrics—ribbed, smooth, knobbly, fluffy, etc.

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Activity

- The student will begin by choosing a base sheet of fabric, onto which he/she will appliqué (apply) a variety of fabric shapes so as to form a representation of 'my home'.
- The fabrics provided for this task should be varied to include textures such as hession, felt, fun fur, corduroy, woven fabrics.
- Other textured found materials can also be used, such as netting, plastic bags, foil, feathers.
- The characteristic textures and patterns of houses are identified and the fabric selection is examined closely for corresponding qualities.
- The student should then choose the appropriate fabrics with which he/she can represent his/her own home.
- The fabric can be glued in place using an appropriate adhesive, and most students, when the technique is demonstrated, can use a plastic bodkin and thread to add shapes or to create further texture.
- The work can be embellished by the addition of beads, sequins, etc.
- Each completed panel can be mounted onto cardboard and made into an individual wallhanging using wooden rods at the top and bottom of it. Alternatively, all the panels can be sewn together to create a large-scale patchwork wallhanging, which may be used to reflect themes such as our community/our area.

Assessment

- Is it clear from the student's work that he/she can see a relationship between the built environment and the materials with which he/she attempts to represent it?
- Does the student select fabrics for shape alone or is he/she interpreting the theme in terms of pattern and texture?
- Can the student display and discuss the finished piece of work?

Exemplar 24: Visual Arts

Strand: Drawing

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- learn about the seasons and their effects on the environment
- learn to associate colours with seasons
- explore the natural world through observation and drawing, without the intimidating blank white page
- use this technique to create a drawing which uses colour in a somewhat incidental way, thus allowing for greater creativity.

Stimulus

- Autumn—return to school, end of the summer, harvest-wheat, barley, etc.
- Animals hibernate, weather gets colder, leaves change colour, berries on trees, etc.

Language

- Words relating to the seasonal changes
- Colours associated with the season
- Descriptions of leaves and their shapes/textures/colours

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Activity

- Discuss the colours of autumn.
- Take a newspaper and place it on the desk under a sheet of cartridge paper.
- Using a selection of wax crayons of autumnal colour—browns, reds, golds, oranges, rusts, and yellows—the student fills the page with random colour, ensuring to press hard on crayons.
- The newspaper is removed and a layer of thick dark brown or black powder paint is applied over the crayon. (Use powder paint mixed with a little washing-up liquid for best results.)
- Allow the paint to dry. The student can examine a variety of autumnal leaves in terms of shape, colour, pattern, and texture. Rubbings can also be made.
- After having observed the leaves the student draws them, their outline and veins, by scraping into the dried paint with the end of a small paintbrush and revealing the colour underneath. Thus, for the student at the emerging realism/analytic stage, there is not the same perceived pressure to achieve accuracy, since the emphasis is on revealing the colours as opposed to the student's actual drawing.

Assessment

- Has the student chosen colours that reflect the theme?
- In drawing the leaves does he/she represent the basic shapes/textures and patterns of leaves, as observed?
- Can the student use this technique to create pieces based on other themes?
- Can the student choose some favourite pieces to include in his/her portfolio?

Exemplar 25: Visual Arts

Strand: Paint and colour

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- represent the environment, capturing a moment in time
- learn about the various compositional elements in a landscape picture—the sky, the foreground and the background
- produce a picture with an emphasis on using paint and colour rather than on drawing a picture using paint, which can be daunting for a student at this stage.

Stimulus

- The environment in autumn—leaves, the harvest, changes in the weather
- Art relating to autumn—Andy Goldsworthy's work (British sculptor and photographer), Monet's *Haystacks*
- Poems about autumn
- Collecting leaves
- Autumnal nature walk

Language

- Elements of autumn
- Describing the various elements of the picture and the techniques used

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Activity

- Group work: Make a large scale picture for the classroom or corridor.
- Following a discussion on the environment in autumn the composition of the painting is decided upon—the background, the trees, the leaves, the clouds.
- Each student is assigned a task, either individually or in small groups. This has potential for differentiation.
- Explore colour and texture.
- A notice board covered with a large sheet of paper forms the 'canvas' for this work.
- Dots of paint may be applied in the manner of the pointillists. The students should be encouraged to discuss what kinds of techniques might be appropriate for particular effects. For example, a haystack might be made by printing with straws dipped in yellow, brown and gold paint. Other elements may be added using a variety of painting techniques—splattering, sponging, etc. Real leaves, straw, wheat, etc. can be incorporated into the picture.

Assessment

- Does the student work well in a group situation?
- Is he/she creating the desired effect using the outlined techniques?
- Does the student show an understanding of the compositional elements of the picture?
- Can the group discuss its completed piece of work?

Exemplar 26: Visual Arts

Strand: Print

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- observe the effects of a variety of printing techniques
- use the printing techniques for the purpose of decoration
- explore the colours associated with a particular season.

Stimulus

- Autumn leaves—looking at shapes, texture, colour, and pattern
- Decorating our autumn scrapbooks
- Three types of printing

Language

- The language of autumn
- Printing techniques and materials

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Activity

- Each student is given a scrap book into which he/she will paste collected leaves, drawings and collage of autumnal pictures and colours.
- The scrapbook will be covered with a sheet of sugar-paper that is decorated with one or all of these printing techniques:
 - Rubbing—Using a wax crayon, place a leaf under a sheet of sugar-paper and make a rubbing. Cut out and use for decoration.
 - Direct printing—Roll printing ink on the under-side of a leaf and make a print from this.
 - Bubble printing—Mix half a tablespoon of washing-up liquid and the same amount of PVA glue with a quarter pint of water in a shallow dish. Stir in two tablespoons of powder paint and, using a straw, blow until the dish is full of bubbles. Place a leaf-shaped piece of paper onto the bubbles. The pattern that emerges can be seen to represent the texture on leaves. These printed leaves may also be used to decorate the student's scrapbook.

Assessment

- Is the student aware of the colours that we associate with the various seasons?
- Has the student used the techniques outlined to complete the task?
- Can the student select a number of favourite printed pieces for display, and say why he/she has chosen these particular samples?

Exemplar 27: Visual Arts

Strand: Clay

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- learn to represent natural life through the sculptural use of clay
- familiarise himself/herself with the form, texture and pattern of the subject matter
- explore the malleability and decorative qualities of clay.

Stimulus

- The shapes and forms of the season
- A visit to the park/forest/woods to collect things associated with the theme

Language

- Autumn woodland—chestnuts, acorns, bark, etc.
- Using clay—pinching, squeezing, pressing, etc.
- Descriptions—prickly, lumpy, bumpy, rough, etc.

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Activity

- Make a number of clay tiles as a beginning activity. Press some of the things you have collected into the surface to create texture.
- The task for the student is to choose one or more of the following and represent it in clay: a tree branch, leaves, acorns, or chestnuts.
- At first, the student is enabled to focus on the shape and form.
- The form is then given texture by pinching, or by manipulating with tools, or by pressing objects into the clay. Leaves may also be used.

Assessment

- Has the student created a form that relates to the subject matter?
- Can the student use textural effects to reflect the surfaces of the subject matter?

Exemplar 28: Visual Arts

Strand: Construction

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- learn about the sculptural and decorative qualities of natural objects
- learn about the spatial quality of 3D work.

Stimulus

- The natural world in autumn
- Mobiles
- A nature walk

Language

- Naming and describing the natural elements of autumn

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Activity

- The student collects a small branch with which to make the mobile.
- Using string and, where necessary, a darning needle, the student hangs found natural objects from the branch, for example
 - chestnuts
 - acorns
 - leaves
 - seeds
 - heads of barley.
- The characteristic elements of autumn can also be formed using clay and other materials.
- The student can add ribbons in the colours associated with autumn, for example
 - red
 - gold
 - orange
 - yellow.
- Other materials like foil, crepe paper and card can also be used.

Assessment

- Has the student selected appropriate objects with which to create the mobile?
- Can he/she complete the task?

Exemplar 29: Visual Arts

Strand: Fabric and fibre

Theme: Autumn

Level: 5

Information

A unit of work for students at the visual realism/analytic stage

An important consideration at this stage is the inhibiting effect of the drive for realism on the student's work. Experimentation with techniques and ideas can be difficult to sustain as the student strives to create accurate and naturalistic images.

The student should be enabled to

- learn to translate the natural world into something functional and decorative
- explore the design process from stimulus to going through the design process, and culminating in the finished product.

Stimulus

- Seasonal fashion trends—colour schemes for autumn
- Fantasy fashion designs—looking at magazines

Language

- Autumn—colours, tones, leaves
- Fashion—designer, drawing, style, material

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Activity

- The class discusses of colours, images, textures, and patterns based on autumn.
- The student draws some designs for clothing that incorporate the above activity.
- Fabric swatches, other suitable material, and other 2D objects can be stuck onto the page to form a 'story board'. For example, repeat printing from a leaf onto fabric can provide an idea for the design.
- If possible, the student or a group of students may actually create the fantasy fashion design. Fabric can be tacked, pinned or even stapled together. Any materials can be used—plastic bags, netting, felt, etc.
- The finished costume can be displayed on a hanger beside the storyboard, or the group may choose to have a fashion show. Hats, jewellery and other accessories can be created and added.

Assessment

- Does the student's drawing/storyboard reflect the theme—autumn?
- Does the completed costume have colour, shape, texture, and/or pattern elements that relate to the autumnal theme?

Appendix

Thematic development across the curriculum and across the strands

The following pages outline some ideas for the thematic development of visual arts both across the curriculum and across the different strands in the *visual arts curriculum*.

Gaeilge

- Cur síos a dhéanamh ar éadaí
- Nuacht, mar shampla ‘*Tá bróga nua agam.*’
- Lipéidí le haghaidh éadaí sa seomra ranga
- Pictiúir a tharraingt bunaithe ar éadaí
- Éisteacht agus leanúint treoracha, mar shampla ‘*Cuirigí dath gorm ar an gúna.*’

Visual arts

- Activities across the six strands on the following pages

Drama

- Dressing up
- Dramatising issues pertaining to clothes, for example peer pressure, shopping for clothes

Music

- Songs, listening to music, and composition

SESE

History

- Clothes through the generations—ourselves, our parents, our grandparents
- Clothes we wear at different ages as we grow up
- Clothes worn by early peoples and ancient civilisations—Stone Age, Bronze Age, Romans, Egyptians, Greeks, Normans, etc.
- Clothes in artworks of different periods

Science

- Distinguishing between natural and manmade fabrics
- Properties and characteristics of clothes
- Exploring and investigating materials that absorb water
- Environmental awareness and care—caring for our clothes, recycling
- Science and technology—washing machines, dryers, irons
- Describing and comparing materials according to colour, shape, texture, etc.
- Plant and animal life—how animals keep warm, clothes made from animal skins
- Materials suitable for making clothes

Geography

- Human environment—clothes/uniforms worn by people in our community
- Clothes worn by people in other countries and of other cultures
- Where are our clothes made?
- Trade—how our clothes are made
- How weather affects the clothes we wear

SPHE

- Myself—clothes I like to wear, developing skills in dressing, how families take care and support each other, how to care of my body, growing out of clothes, taking care of new life, clothes for special occasions
- Myself and the wider world—recognising people in our community by the clothes they wear, media and its influences on what we wear, peer pressure and clothes, what I need versus what I want, making decisions about what to wear

English

- Oral language development
- Listening to, reading, reciting, and writing stories, poems
- The language of clothes
- Debates



Maths

- Classifying, counting, sorting, and comparing items of clothing and fabrics according to colour, size, texture, etc.
- Solving oral problems
- Looking for shape and patterns in clothes
- Shopping for clothes, estimating the cost of clothes, rounding prices to the nearest €, €10, €100, converting into cent
- Measuring clothes
- Representing and interpreting data about clothes using pictograms, bar graphs, pie charts

Theme: Clothes			
Classes: Infants			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on experience.	Talk about your favourite clothes, what they are, their colours and patterns, how they feel, why you like them, etc.	Draw a picture of yourself in your favourite clothes. Add patterns or pictures if they appear on your clothes.
Paint and Colour	Make paintings based on the imagination.	Your favourite doll or teddy bear needs a new outfit. What would you like them to wear?	Paint a big picture of your doll or teddy bear in their new clothes. You might like to add patterns, shapes and buttons.
Print	Explore the effects of printing onto fabric.	Collect a variety of objects you can print with, for example bottle tops, corks, torn sponges, pieces of fabric, cotton wool. We can print on the fabric that some of our clothes are made from.	Make patterns in your favourite colour by printing with some of these objects onto pieces of materials we wear, for example old T-shirts, denim, shirts.
Clay	Make a clay pot and manipulate it to make a subject.	Look at pictures of hats and any hats the children have worn to school.	Make a simple pinch pot and turn it upside down to create a hat. Make impressions with buttons, pasta. Draw into it using an old pencil. Paint it in your favourite colours.
Construction	Design and make imaginative structures.	Read and recite poetry about tying shoe laces. (See Appendix.) (Children can bring in old shoes with laces or they can be bought in charity stores.)	Decorate an old shoe in your favourite colours. Use paint, add pieces of fabric, buttons, beads, coloured wool, and string/ribbons for the laces. Have fun making your very own unique shoe.
Fabric and fibre	Explore and experiment with a variety of fabrics and fibres.	Show a selection of different fabrics and fibres.	Talk about and sort fabrics and fibres according to colour and texture. What kind of clothes would these fabrics be suitable for? What clothes have you seen made from these fabrics and fibres? Have we tried printing on any of these fabrics? Draw a picture of a character from a nursery rhyme and colour it in using your assorted fabrics and fibres.

Theme: Clothes			
Classes: First and second			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Draw from observation.	Look at a selection of jumpers brought into class or pictures and paintings of people wearing jumpers. Look for texture, shapes, patterns, lines in the jumpers. Use a magnifying glass to see details.	Using a variety of drawing materials, draw as many of the lines, patterns, shapes, and textures as you can see in the jumpers.
Paint and Colour	Look at and respond to the work of another artist. Paint in the style of another artist.	Look at a selection of paintings by Henri Matisse, for example ' <i>Le Rifain Assis</i> ', ' <i>Mme Matisse</i> ', ' <i>Robe Violette et Anemones</i> '. Discuss the patterns, bright colours he used, the textures and shapes.	Paint a picture of someone in bright clothes in the style of Matisse. Notice how he used patterns in clothes. Note to the teacher: See ' <i>Meet Matisse</i> ' lesson plan on the PCSP website at www.pcsp.ie for ideas.
Print	Explore and experiment with printing materials and making patterns.	Look at pictures of swimsuits and get the children to bring in their own swimsuits. Talk about the shapes of the suits, the patterns on them, the colours used, etc.	Draw a large outline of your swimsuit on a piece of paper. Design and cut out one or more stencils for your swimsuit. Place the stencils on your swimsuit and spatter the paint using old toothbrushes. Repeat to create a pattern on your swimsuit. When dry cut your swimsuit out and display it on the classroom wall.
Clay	Make a clay tile.	Look at items of clothing and note their shapes. Make some sketches of these. Choose one on which to base your tile.	Roll out a tile from clay. Roll out a slab of clay and cut an item of clothing into a simple shape from it. Attach it to your tile using 'slip' and add patterns to it using a toothpick. Use small coils or clay shapes to add interesting features to your work.
Construction	Make a 3D piece of clothing, using your imagination to decorate it.	Look at pictures of clothing from books, magazines, and in the classroom.	Fold a piece of sugar-paper in half and draw a simple outline of an item of clothing onto it. Then cut it out so that you have two pieces. Staple them together leaving a hole large enough to stuff with newspaper, and then staple closed. Decorate your item of clothing using paint and a variety of materials by gluing them on.
Fabric and fibre	Explore and experiment with fabrics and fibres in tones of one colour.	Look for pieces of fabric and other materials we wear, for example old clothes cut up, buttons, ribbon, beads, wool in tones of one colour.	Draw the outline your chosen item of clothing onto a piece of hessian and decorate it using lots of different types of fabrics and fibres in tones of one colour. Sew and glue them on.

Theme: Clothes			
Classes: Third and fourth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Create texture.	Look at items of clothing and talk about their texture. Take rubbings of fabrics and materials we wear or accessories that are made from them, for example knitted items, fibres, hessian, lace, threads, buttons, embroidered pieces, canvas.	Use your rubbings to create an outfit for an imaginary character. Add details using markers, crayons, colouring pencils, or pastels.
Paint and Colour	Create paintings based on the imagination.	Talk about the clothes we wear in cold weather. Look at pictures of people from cold countries and the kinds of clothes they wear.	Design an outfit you would like to wear in cold weather taking ideas from what you have seen in pictures and talked about.
Print	Make a print block.	Look at and talk about items of clothing and the shapes of their outlines, the patterns on them, etc.	Make simple sketches of clothing. Use string glued to card to make a print block based on an item of clothing you have drawn. Print onto paper and then try printing on different kinds of fabrics.
Clay	Make a clay form.	Talk about characters from history/books/movies (for example, <i>Lord of the Rings</i>) that wore flowing robes.	Take a piece of clay and manipulate it to make a sturdy figure in a flowing robe. Use clay tools or plastic cutlery to add details such as patterns and texture.
Construction	Invent a hat for a princess, witch or wizard.	Talk about princesses, witches, wizards. Look at pictures. What kind of hats did they wear?	Using stiff card make a cone shaped hat, or use an old lampshade. Decorate it with lots of different materials, for example paint, buttons, fabrics, sequins, ribbons.
Fabric and fibre	Make an inventive piece from fabric and fibre.	Collect gloves and mittens and talk about their patterns, texture, colours, shapes, etc.	Use your hands to draw the outline of two gloves on a piece of suitable fabric and cut them out. Use a variety of fabrics, fibres, stitches, and small decorative objects to design your own gloves or mittens.

Theme: Clothes			
Classes: Fifth and sixth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Discover pattern, texture and tone in clothing.	Look at items of clothing and discuss the patterns, flow, tones, folds, etc. as they are draped over chairs, worn in different poses, when standing in different lights.	Make sketches of your classmates in different kinds of clothes, such as uniforms, skirts, trousers, cloaks. Look closely at the folds, how the light shines on them, the textures, the patterns, and try to depict these in your drawings.
Paint and Colour	Look at and respond to the work of another artist. Paint in the style of another artist.	Look at paintings of people by Renoir, for example <i>'The Swing'</i> , <i>'A Girl with a Watering Can'</i> , <i>'Le Moulin de La Galette'</i> . Look at the way he used paint to create the flow of fabric, the folds, frills, patterns, shadows in clothes. How do clothes in the distance appear?	Try painting a picture of a person or crowd from the same historical period as the artist and paint in the artist's style using paint or pastels. More examples of paintings and other artists can be found at www.ibiblio.org/wm/paint/auth .
Print	Do silk screen printing.	Look at a variety of T-shirts with simple logos on them.	Design a simple logo for a T-shirt and make a stencil based on it. Use a silk screen to print the logo onto a T-shirt.
Clay	Explore other forms.	Talk about characters from stories, poems or movies and what they wear.	Use wire to make a figure of a character of your choice. Wrap strips of papier-mache around it to build it up. When dry, paint it and add decorative items to make interesting patterns, textures, etc. on the figure's outfit.
Construction	Make imaginative structures, for example a mobile.	Look, talk about, and make a list of items of clothing, their shapes, patterns, colours, etc.	Cut out a simple clothing shape from cardboard. Paint and decorate the back and front of the shape using various paper techniques, for example folding, pleating, scrunching, curling. Add decorative items such as sequins, glitter, buttons, or beads. Suspend from an old wire hanger using thread or cat gut.
Fabric and fibre	Make a wall hanging based on the imagination.	Discuss your favourite popstar/actor/sports star. What kind of clothes do they wear?	Design a costume for your favourite star and create a wall hanging. You can use old clothes, sheets, table clothes, sample books from fabric shops, lace, netting, beads, buttons, etc.

Theme: Seasons			
Classes: Infants			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on vividly recalled feelings, real and imaginative experiences, and stories.	Poem: <i>Jack Frost</i>	Draw Jack Frost using chalk on different coloured backgrounds.
Paint and Colour	Use colour to express vividly recalled feelings, experiences and imaginings.	Take the children for a walk, pointing out the changing colours, autumn colours.	Paint freely using red and yellow.
Print	Experiment with the effects that can be achieved with simple print-making.	Look at images of the sun, including Van Gogh's <i>Sunflowers</i> .	Print sunny images using found objects, for example corks, stones, leaves, scrunched up paper.
Clay	Make a clay form and manipulate it with fingers to suggest a subject.	Poem: <i>Jack Frost</i> .	Pull out spikes from clay to suggest icicles. Add spikes of clay to the shape.
Construction	Make imaginative structures.	Story: <i>Jack Frost</i> .	Use classroom furniture, boxes, etc. to create a home for Jack Frost .
Fabric and fibre	Invent a costume.	Winter Characters: <i>The Snow Queen</i> .	Invent a costume from the 'dressing up' box .

In self-evaluating his/her activities the student can

- look at illustrations of Jack Frost (after the activity)
- talk about colours (warm colours, autumn colours, etc.)
- discuss smooth, spiky shapes when working with clay
- hold a fashion show of costumes invented

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other students, and the work of artists
- look at and talk about examples of simple print in everyday use
- look at, handle and talk about familiar objects for experience of shape, texture and pattern
- look at, handle and talk about simple pieces of clay pottery.

Theme: Seasons			
Classes: First and Second			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on his/her personal or imaginative life.	Look at our own coats, for colour, design, fabrics.	Draw a design for a summer/winter coat.
Paint and Colour	Discover colour in the visual environment and become sensitive to tonal variations between light and dark, and to variations in pure colour (hue).	Look at the sky in different seasons.	Paint without using a brush, using sponges, rags, cotton wool to paint the sky in the different seasons.
Print	Experiment with the effects that can be achieved with simple print-making techniques.	Gather leaves. Look at the different shapes and colours.	Using various leaves as stencils, sponge print. Look at the positive, and negative shapes that can be achieved.
Clay	Change the form of a small ball of clay, using the medium expressively.	Hear/read a poem about characters from a winter story.	Make a sturdy clay figure based on a winter character.
Construction	Make imaginative structures.	Hear/read a poem/story about winter characters.	Diorama: Make a structure for the winter character.
Fabric and fibre	Make small inventive pieces with fabric and fibre.	Talk about the seaside.	Make a collage: on the beach.

In self-evaluating his/her activities the student can

- talk about various types of fabric used to make seasonal wear
- look at colour and tone (particularly in a stormy sky)
- look at print in everyday use
- describe the form he/she created with the clay
- describe the structure of the diorama and describe the fabrics and fibres used to make the collage

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other students, and the work of artists
- look at art prints that have relatively simple shapes, textures and patterns
- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of three-dimensional form
- look at figures by famous sculptors with contrasting style, or at slides/prints of these.

Theme: Seasons			
Classes: Third and fourth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Experiment with the marks, lines, shapes, textures patterns, and tones that can be made with different drawing instruments on a range of surfaces. Draw from observation.	Talk about different types of rain: mist, light, shower, downpour.	Draw different types of rain.
Paint and Colour	Discover colour in the visual environment and become sensitive to colour differences and tonal variations through colour mixing.	Look at Renoir's ' <i>Les Parapluies</i> '. Look at the tones of colour used by the artist.	Paint umbrellas using only primary colours.
Print	Use a widening range of print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints.	Look at art prints or print design that emphasise shape, texture or line.	Using relief print blocks create a print design with a repeated pattern.
Clay	Develop line, shape, texture, and pattern in clay.	Look at a selection of calendars.	Make low-relief designs on slabs/tiles of clay to represent the four seasons.
Construction	Explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures.	Collect and look at different types of seeds: sunflower, apple, beech, oak, etc.	Make a collage using only natural materials.
Fabric and fibre	Explore and discover the possibilities of fabric and fibre as media for imaginative expression.	Look at a selection of T-shirts. Talk about the design, colours, etc.	Tie-dye plain T-shirts.

In self-evaluating his/her activities the student can

- look at and talk about his/her drawings
- look at colour and discuss how colour can create moods
- look at examples of print in everyday use
- talk about his/her patterns in the clay
- talk about his/her choice of materials used for the collage
- have a fashion show with tie-dyed T-shirts

- look at and talk about his/her work , the work of other students, and the work of artists
- look at, handle and talk about art prints or print designs that emphasise the play of shape, texture or line
- look at figurative and non-representational pieces of sculpture, or at slides or prints of these
- look at different items of clothing from different times and cultures.

Theme: Seasons			
Classes: Fifth and sixth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Discover how line could convey movement and rhythm.	Look at wind vanes, wind speed, the story of the sun and the wind.	Draw clothes, flags flying in the wind.
Paint and Colour	Become sensitive to increasingly subtle colour differences and tonal variations in natural and manufactured objects.	View seasonal paintings by different artists. Look at the colours used, the paint used, etc.	Choose a season, choose colours, and create a painting.
Print	Use more complex print-making techniques to make theme-based or non-representational prints.	Look at a selection of posters, the layout, colours used, the lettering, etc.	Use the monoprint technique in designing and making a seasonal poster to advertise an event in class/school.
Clay	Explore some of the essential characteristics of three-dimensional work.	A desert island castaway can make a wish list of a restricted number of items.	Design and make a wish list of items/structures using clay.
Construction	Make imaginative structures.	Use weather forecast symbols.	Using wire, invent and construct a seasonal mobile.
Fabric and fibre	Make small inventive pieces in fabric and fibre.	Look at a selection of calendars.	Working in groups, design images to depict a month. These panels can be put together to form a wall hanging.

In self-evaluating his/her activities the student can

- discuss how some things change shape in the wind
- discuss his/her choice of colours for the seasonal painting
- find uses for the posters
- talk about his/her work in clay
- talk about his/her choice of items and the difficulties/ease in making them
- talk about his/her choices of symbols for the mobiles and the difficulties/ease in making them
- talk about choices of fabrics/fibres in making the panels for the wall hanging

- look at and talk about his/her work, the work of other children, and the work of artists
- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of texture, shape and pattern
- look at art prints or print design that demonstrate a variety of print-making techniques
- look at, handle and talk about natural and manufactured objects for experience of three-dimensional form
- look at, investigate and talk about spatial arrangements, balance and outline in collections or photographs of natural and manufactured structures
- look at, handle and talk about a variety of fabrics and fibres for experience of tactile, visual and spatial qualities.

Theme: Food			
Classes: Infants			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on imagination.	Listen to, recite, sing, and talk about nursery rhymes that feature the theme of food: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Miss Muffet • The Queen of Hearts, etc. 	Draw a picture of your favourite character eating his/her particular favourite food.
Paint and Colour	Begin to learn about colour mixing.	Discuss all the colours we can see in fruit and vegetables.	Paint pictures about your favourite fruit and vegetables.
Print	Make prints with found (natural) objects.	Bring in a collection of fruit and vegetables. Taste them and discuss favourites.	Cut the fruit and vegetables into sections, segments, pieces. Press these into printing ink rolled out on a flat surface and print onto paper.
Clay	Explore and experiment with clay, marla, Playdough, etc. Explore pottery techniques.	Talk about favourite foods and what shapes they have.	Experiment with a piece of clay. Turn it into one favourite food item, then another, then another.
Construction	Play with construction games and toys.	Collect toys such as Lego, duplo, building bricks, toy farms, etc.	Make models of shops, farms, kitchens, etc.
Fabric and fibre	Invent a costume.	Talk about everyday situations that involve food.	Turn your play corner into a kitchen, a restaurant, a shop, etc. Dress up as the characters in these situations using a dressing up box.

Theme: Food			
Classes: First and second class			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on real life experiences.	Use the opening poem as a stimulus for discussions about shopping trips to the supermarket and to other places.	Make a detailed drawing about one of your shopping trips. Try to include as many interesting details as you can.
Paint and Colour	Add substances to paint in order to create texture.	Experiment with adding a variety of food substances to paint. Talk about how these change the way the paint feels and behaves, for example sugar, salt, flour.	Make paintings using your new paints, for example sugar painting gives the paint a translucent look.
Print	Print with found manufactured items.	Make a collection of objects that food is packaged in, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small containers • bottle tops • jar lids 	Experiment with overprinting or with masking-out, using these objects.
Construction	Explore making simple mobiles.	Discuss what food items might make interesting mobiles, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shapes of card cut into food shapes • sweets • container lids. 	Make a simple mobile using your chosen elements and a wire coat hanger.
Fabric and fibre	Make simple fabric collages.	Invent a food alphabet.	Cut out the shapes of the food you have chosen and glue them to fabric backgrounds to create alphabet banners.

Theme: Food			
Classes: Third and fourth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make drawings based on imagination. Look at and respond to design in everyday situations.	Examine various types of packaging. Set up a display of these. Talk about differences /similarities.	Invent a new product. Draw a design for the packaging you will use. Think about colour, lettering, a slogan, etc.
Paint and Colour	Look at and respond to how colour is used in everyday situations.	Discuss how colour is used in food packaging. Can you see any trends?	Repeat the drawing activity, but this time make your packaging design out of coloured papers as a collage.
Print	Explore printing with stencils.	Look at the shapes of different food items. Cut stencils in these shapes	Use your stencils to print different designs using <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sponge print • spatter paint • stencil brush.
Clay	Create the following Salt dough recipe: 2 level cups of plain flour, 1 heaped cup of table salt, ½ of a cup of lukewarm water, 1 tablespoon of wallpaper paste, 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil.	What food items might we impress into clay to decorate it? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cereal grasses • Pasta 	Make a coil pot or a slab pot. Decorate it by impressing corn, wheat, or barley into the clay.
Construction	Look and respond to the work of artists.	Look at and talk about the work of Andy Warhol.	Try out your natural dyes in tie and dye activities.
Fabric and fibre	Experiment with fabric dyeing techniques.	Talk about how fabrics might have been coloured before the advent of commercial dyes. Research what types of natural food items might have been used. Make up some dyes like these.	Turn your playcorner into a kitchen, a restaurant, a shop, etc. Dress up as the characters in these situations using a dressing up box.

Theme: Food			
Classes: Fifth and sixth			
Strand	Objective	Stimulus	Activity
Drawing	Make close observational drawings.	Conduct a science experiment about growth in plants we use for food.	Record your observations and results in a visual way through the use of drawing.
Paint and Colour	Make paintings based on observation. Look at and respond to the work of artists.	Many artists have used the theme of food in their still life work. Collect some samples to look at, for example Cezanne.	Set up a still-life arrangement of fruit /vegetables and make a painting of what you see.
Print	Explore other types of print-making.	Look at the type of food photography that is used to illustrate cookery books.	Set up food still-life situations and take photographs of these. Use a digital camera. Print them out and maybe use them to illustrate a book.
Clay	Working with clay, students make objects of their choice.	Look at pictures of sculptures, examples of pottery, the story of the stages of pottery.	Make a still life out of clay, for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a basket of fruit • a bag of vegetables. <p>Make a clay plaque with the theme of fruit.</p>
Construction	Look at and respond to constructions we see in everyday situations, for example books.	Discuss how books are constructed. Collect favourite recipes.	Use simple book-binding techniques to make a book of recipes. Illustrate your book with drawings or photos and add interesting construction techniques such as flaps or pop ups.
Fabric and fibre	Explore a variety of ways of decorating fabrics.	Bring in samples of various types of flour, or make your own by crushing grains.	Make a flour batik. Mix flour with water. Use the paste to paint designs on fabric and allow to dry. Paint over with fabric inks/paints. When dry remove the flour paste to reveal the design.