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INTERDEPENDENCE OF THE COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE IN IRISH EDUCATION

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INTRODUCTION

The cognitive and affective are both interdependent forms of thought. Yet throughout the history of western education greater attention has been given to cognition. This dissertation aims to examine the implications of an education system that fails to recognise the importance of the affect and the inseparable relationship between the cognitive and the affective.

Chapter 1 looks at the cognitive and affective aims of second level education and suggests why a greater emphasis is placed on the cognitive. It assesses whether or not the individual needs of pupils are being fulfilled and looks at how the cognitive and affective are treated under the broad headings of general education and preparation for life.

Art is perceived as an affective subject, Chapter 2 proposes how it can contribute to the holistic development of pupils. It examined cognitive and affective aspects of the subject by defining the goals and objectives of art education.

Chapter 3, the methodology chapter, is an opportunity to practically apply the research and ideas in the previous two chapters to my own teaching practice. The results of this experience are discussed in Chapter 4. Conclusions and recommendations are made in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 1

COGNITION IN THE CURRICULUM AT SECOND LEVEL

A REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cognitive versus Affective Thinking

> The aims of schooling and the development of the students ability to think and to know have long been associated. Indeed, if there is any general educational goal to which professional educations and the lay public subscribe, it is in what the literature refers to as 'cognitive development'. (1)

Cognitive development deals with thinking and it is generally dealt with in isolation in second level schools much to the detriment of affective thinking which deals with feeling. (2) The emphasis and value Western education places on cognitive development has a long history, originating in ancient Greek civilisation. Greek nobles and free men left manual labour to their slaves, thus allowing themselves the time to concentrate on developing and cultivating their intellect. They were given the freedom to pursue knowledge for its own sake, to develop that which was deemed highest and distinctively human in man: his reason. This knowledge was pursued principally in mathematics and literature. (3) Plato regarded knowledge that relied on the senses as untrustworthy. He believed the affective to be a distraction that kept man from knowing the truth. (4)

Plato separated the cognitive from the affective; thinking from feeling; mind from body. This is a distinction which according to Mulcahy in Curriculum Policy In Irish Post-Primary Education exists in present day Irish post-primary education where "theoretical knowledge assumes paramount importance in the curriculum". (5)

Eisner, however, does not believe that such a distinction can be made between cognitive and affective thought because "the hard and fast distinction between what is cognitive and what is affective is itself faulty". (6) He proposes that there can be no affective activity without cognition. If to cognise is to know, then to have a feeling and not to know it, is not to have it. In order to have a feeling, one must at least be able to distinguish between one state of being and another. Making this distinction is the product of thinking, a product that itself represents a state of knowing. (7)

Similarly Eisner explains that there can be no cognitive activity that is not also affective. It is impossible to think in a way that does not also involve feeling. If one could think without feeling, then such a state could be known only by knowing the feeling that the absence of feeling signifies, i.e. to experience thought as bland, boring, dull, feelingless, is to recognise its feelingful character. (8) Therefore, cognitive and affective processes are not independent nor can they be separated "they are part of the same reality in human experience". (9)

Having therefore established the relationship that exists between the cognitive and the affective we will discover whether or not it is realized in Irish second level schools.

Cognitive and Affective Aims in Second Level Education

The general aim of education stated by the NCCA in their 1993 publication A Programme For Reform: Curriculum and Assessment Policy Towards the New Century is:

> To contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, critical, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure. (10)

I believe this aim recognises the connection between the cognitive and affective by focusing on the development of the whole person both academically and emotionally. In Our Schools: a Framework For Curriculum And Assessment published by the Curriculum and Examination Board elaborated on this by specifying some of the aims of education.

The Board stresses the importance of the basic skills i.e. numeracy, literacy and oral communication and states that their development is a "key objective of the education system". (11) School programmes must also reflect the increasing importance of science and technology in all aspects of life; "the

particular importance of science and technology for economic development must be reflected in the school curriculum". (12) The Board recognises the importance of creating an awareness and appreciation of our own culture and European cultures which includes studying European languages. The reinforcement and development of "mathematical competencies" must be a "feature of education at all levels". (13)

The Board recognises the importance of creating a sense of self-confidence and self-worth in pupils to enable them to develop qualities such as "adaptability and flexibility which will help them maximise the opportunities afforded by a changing labour market". (14) Physical activities should be offered to pupils in order to develop a confident and healthy attitude towards their own mental and physical development. The curriculum should include moral and spiritual development and should continue to respect the religious values and traditions in the community. The importance of the creative and aesthetic experiences of the arts in helping with the pupil's personal development and enriching the quality of life generally is recognised. The report notes the particular contribution areas such as design can make to economic prosperity and suggests that schools should help to develop young people as caring, responsible and participating members of society, with an understanding and a tolerance and respect for the values and beliefs of others. Schools should develop a sense of moral responsibility in young people and an appreciation of the natural environment. Finally an understanding of

"economic processes and of the role of the individual as citizen, as consumer and as producer" (15) should be developed. (16)

Influence of Examination on Curriculum.

Theoretically, on the basis of these aims, Irish second level schools should produce pupils who have attained their academic potential for their relevant age and level: pupils who have developed emotionally and spiritually, who have respect for themselves, their environment, and fellow mankind, who aspire to be model citizens, parents and employers. In reality however, in the practice of these aims a division between the cognitive and affective is created. Many educational aims are neglected or ignored in the pursuit of qualification and success at examinations.

In our present system of education cognitive information is absorbed and retained only to be regurgitated in an examination, almost to the exclusion of non-cognitive or non-academic aims. The introduction to the Green Paper on education Education For A Changing World states that

> .....the curriculum and exam system is strongly biased towards acquiring factual knowledge rather than developing critical thinking and problem solving skills. (17)

This failure to attend to the overall needs of the individual means that the curriculum does not suit all pupils and leads to an emphasis on one aspect of the pupil's development.

In the present education system, pupils are rarely allowed to relate

information to other topics or to their own experiences. Dewey likens this method of teaching to playing a record:

> .....this method of teaching may be compared to inscribing records upon a passive phonographic disc to result in giving back what has been inscribed when the proper button is pressed in recitation or examination. (18)

While the authors of In Our Schools believe that a curriculum which challenges and rewards will develop a sense of confidence in pupils, (19) examinations also serve to measure the pupil's level of education in relation to others; to form a basis for career choices by teachers, pupils and parents; and to serve as entry qualification for many forms of employment and further studies. This places great pressure on pupils to do well at examinations. It also places pressure on teachers who want to achieve as many "honours" and as few "failures" as possible. Mulcahy believes such pressure gives a status to examinations and allows them to dictate the subject matter covered in lessons and how it is taught. (20) In Dewey's opinion the learning process becomes a means to an end, with greater importance placed on results. (21) Eisner believes that

> ....the use of a tight and prescriptive curriculum structure, sequential skill development and frequent testing and reward are classic examples of form becoming content. (22)

In Our Schools recognises this fault and realises that "assessment procedures should be determined by and should support the aims and objectives of the curriculum". (23)

A curriculum with much emphasis on examinations can dupe pupils into believing that for every problem there is a correct solution. To quote Eisner "the child's problem becomes largely one of learning how to follow rules and complete assignments". (24) In Our Schools states that the school

> .....should help pupils overcome the fear of failure.....They must be encouraged to think in terms of identifying problems and considering situations rather than always seeking absolute right or wrong answers to problems. (25)

Mulcahy believes this importance attached to examinations also promotes a sense of competition among pupils at the expense of co-operation and community. (26) According to Eisner those pupils who do not achieve success at examinations can learn to feel fearful and incompetent. (27) These are not the aims of education but they are some of the negative results of our present curriculum.

Individual Needs of Pupils

This preoccupation with right and wrong, correct and incorrect answers leads to pupils being categorised as bright or stupid. The individual needs of the pupils tend to be neglected. Dewey believes that while some pupils may perform poorly in more academic or cognitive areas they can achieve high standards in what could be loosely termed non-academic or affective areas that are ignored in day-to-day lessons or which cannot be examined in the conventional way. (28) In Our Schools recognises this shortcoming and states that "the school must seek out those areas of achievement for each student".

(29) This involves the school taking an interest in the pupils own personal interests and linking them in some way to the curriculum. The curriculum should be relevant to the pupils' needs and interests. (30) Dewey states that the teacher must recognise the forces that are moving the young

> .....to see them as possibilities, as signs and promises; to interpret them in short, in the light of what they may come to be....We must provide a body of subject matter much richer, more varied and flexible, and also in truth more definite, judged in terms of the experience of those being education, than traditional education supplied. (31)

Associating education with the needs and interests of pupils relates to the "growth theory" presented by philosophers such as Rousseau and Froebel. Education was likened to nourishing and developing trees and plants, the teacher being the gardener and the pupils the plants. They believed in allowing pupils to develop at their own rate rather than being force-fed information and facts without reference to their own interests and stages of development. Critics of this theory such as Peters and Deardon accepted the growth theory as having historical importance only. In Deardon's view:

> What the growth theory has done is at least to stress the side of that ideal balance which has typically been under-stressed in the more authoritarian kind of education which until quite recently was traditional. (32)

But Darling is not convinced that the growth theory can be dismissed or forgotten so easily, he states:

> .....behind the rejection of the growth theory lies the view that current educational practice is already sufficiently liberated from

> the old way. Once the nature and function of this assumption is revealed, those of us who find its claim at least questionable may feel we can legitimately re-establish growth theory as a set of ideas worthy of serious study. (33)

General Education and Preparation for Life

It has been established that the education system focuses on what could be broadly termed cognitive aims to the neglect of affective aims (I use these terms broadly as it has also been established that cognitive and affective cannot be easily separated). Therefore educational aims such as the development of numerical, literary and oral communication receive greater attention and priority than aims such as creating a sense of self-confidence and self-worth in pupils, and the moral and spiritual development of pupils.

The aims of education could be defined in terms of offering a general education and preparing pupils for life. A general education is offered to pupils in the form of more academic or cognitive related subjects. Far from denying the input that such subjects can make in our lives, preparation for life includes to a greater extent, areas such as preparing pupils for adult roles and responsibilities, encouraging pupils to develop their own set of values. Preparing pupils for life has more to do with the affective, emotional or non-academic aspects of education than the cognitive.

General Education

The general education available to second level pupils is offered in a range of subjects. We have already observed that the curriculum appeals to a limited range of pupils i.e. those schooled in the "canons of mathematical logic and practised in the field of language". (34) Drudy and Lynch believe that this challenges us:

> .....to think of new ways in which we can recognise all human intelligences and not just those that have gained legitimacy because they accord with the principles of Western Platonic thought. (35)

Eisner and Gardner both believe that mankind possesses many forms of intelligence. The pupil who does not exhibit a great potential in linguistic or mathematics may have potential in another area without realising its value, and that pupil may pass through the education system without realising his/her full potential. (36) This could explain why "more than one in five students currently end the senior cycle without achieving five D grades". (37) Eisner points out:

> What we seek in education is the cultivation of intelligence in several modes in which it can operate. We seek to liberate rather than to control. (38)

Mulcahy also believes that only a limited number of intelligences are exploited in schools, he recognises the tendency "to elevate conceptual and verbal skills into an end unto themselves with a consequent neglect of other important matters". (39) Eisner believes that concepts which are visual, auditory, kinaesthetic, olfactory, gustatory and tactile should also be given public status

in such forms as words, pictures, music, mathematics, dance etc. The vehicle through which these forms are given public status he calls "forms of representation". (40) Man has always needed to "shift the forms of consciousness he experiences". (41) For example, early civilisations living on the edge of survival felt the need to paint their cave walls, perform dances; they felt the need to change the quality of their experiences. Today we go to films, plays, read books etc., we come away refreshed from this change in form of consciousness, this different form of representation.

In the same manner schools need to offer different forms of representation in the curriculum. In illustrating this, Eisner explains how limiting one form of representation for example mathematics, can be. If we were limited in this manner, he asks, how could we express something humorous using addition, subtraction or geometry? This illustrates the point that to reduce learning to a limited number of forms of representation would eventually "not only limit expression, but put the brakes on conception as well". (42) It also suggests "that mathematics like every other form of representation is an appropriate vehicle for expressing some aspects of human consciousness, but not all aspects". (43)

This is similar to Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences: linguistic, logical, mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily kinaesthetic and personal. He states that since these intelligences are separate an individual is likely to show different levels of ability in each one. One student may show evidence of becoming an outstanding lawyer, novelist or journalist because his/her linguistic intelligence

produces a facility for vividly describing, explaining or persuading. Another student who may show an ability to understand his/her own and others feelings, and how those feelings relate to behaviour, is exhibiting high intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. (44)

Therefore logical-mathematical and linguistic intelligence are only two forms of intelligence and until other forms of intelligence are introduced to the curriculum, using different forms of representation, an adequate general eduction is not provided for.

Preparation for Life

In addition to offering a general education, second level education prepares pupils for life. Mulcahy identifies four demands of living: the recreational or cultural; the philosophical; the vocational and the practical. (45) We will now look at how each of these demands are provided for, or fail to be provided for in second level education.

The importance of the recreational and cultural demands of living do not receive enough attention in school. Yet their importance is highlighted when we call to mind the rise in unemployment and the increased amount of leisure time which this lead to. Greater numbers of people have more leisure time than before; it has a bigger part to play in life and therefore it is the responsibility of the school to prepare pupils to use their leisure time fruitfully. (46)

The philosophical demands of living involve the need for each of us to form a philosophy of life or a world view, the need to develop a set of values to guide us in daily living. (47) This view is shared by Dewey who believes the school should cultivate reflective thinking by encouraging qualities such as open-mindedness, whole-heartedness and responsibility. Open-mindedness is an active desire to listen to more sides than one, to give full attention to alternative possibilities and to recognise the possibility of error even in the beliefs that are dearest to us. (48) It is easy for pupils to show interest in a subject with examination pressures motivating them; but teachers should try to go beyond this and instill in their pupils a genuine whole-hearted interest in their subject. (49) Finally, pupils should be encouraged to develop the responsibility to accept beliefs and their logical consequences. Dewey finds there is a tendency for pupils:

> Not to ask for the meaning of what they learn in the sense of what difference it makes to the rest of their beliefs and to their actions. (50)

The neglect of Irish schools in relation to this demand of living is illustrated by the fact that Drudy and Lynch in Schools And Society inform us that we are unique in the EU in having no philosophical or social scientific subjects in the second level curriculum. (51)

The vocational demand of living receives greatest attention in the Leaving Certificate curriculum. It is, says Collins "assumed that education prepares students in the skills necessary for work and skills are the main determinant of occupational success". (52) This connection between education and vocation,

according to Drudy and Lynch, has led to greater pupil participation in most of the sciences, accountancy and business organisation. Consequently this has led to a decline of pupil participation in the arts and humanities. (53)

Drudy and Lynch also believe that schools meet the vocational demands of living by fostering values such as punctuality, obedience, conformity, a sense of duty and deference to authority, values which employers welcome. (54) Despite this effort to prepare pupils for working life, the business world recognises the fact that many young Irish people tend to lack certain requirements. According to Education For A Changing World, these include communication and other interpersonal skills sought by employers, critical thinking, problem-solving ability and individual initiative that an enterprise culture requires, and language skills to work and win markets across the EU and take part in tourism related activities. (55)

Finally, we come to the practical demands of living, an area in which Mulcahy believes "the traditional concept of general education as a liberal education has been most deficient". (56) Practical demands of living include decision making, the acceptance of responsibilities, pursuing goals, rearing a family and caring for others. Drudy and Lynch refer to this as "unpaid labour". They recognise the vast amount of labour that is involved in both domestic work and caring. (57) For example, few people would hire a plumber or mechanic without first checking their credentials, yet

> ... we are quite prepared to send all our young people out of

> school to rear children, make marriages, organise community life and run the sociopolitical system of the country without any rigorous education in these fields. (58)

Education For A Changing World realises that the "emphasis on acquisition of facts rather than on critical thinking" (59) hinders young people in preparing for work as it hinders them in preparing for life. (60) It also realizes the urgent need for the education system to develop in the student the ability to manage oneself and make the most of personal resources; an ability to express one's own viewpoint rationally and to relate effectively to other people. (61)

Conclusion

Based on the work of Eisner it has been observed that cognitive and affective thinking are both related, that one does not exist without the other. The general aim of education (as stated by NCCA) demonstrates a recognition of this. It is concerned with the development of all aspects of the individual - both academically and non-academically. However Mulcahy and the Government in Education For A Changing World, state that this aim is not fully realised in day-to-day schooling. Aims with a greater emphasis on cognition receive greater attention due to pressure and format of examinations. The negative effects of examinations include the encouragement of rote learning and results become more important than the learning process. By neglecting the more non-academic or affective aims, the individual needs of pupils are ignored, especially those who do not have a flair for or interest in academic areas. It is important to recall the growth theory at this point. Its theorists believe in catering to the individual needs of pupils. Although their

ideas eventually become impractical, their basic beliefs that education should parallel the needs, interests and development of pupils, have a lot to contribute to the education system today.

The aims of education as stated in In Our Schools were examined under the headings of general education and preparation for life. Academic aims provide a general education, while non-academic areas involve preparation for life. Eisner's theory of different forms of representation and Gardener's theory of multiple intelligences suggest that a general education is hardly being provided. While the fact that Mulcahy's four demands of living (recreational, philosophical, vocational and practical) are not provided for, statements from Education For A Changing World suggest that the Leaving Certificate does not adequately prepare pupils for life as teenagers or adults.

Therefore the general aim of education is not being fulfilled due to the division which has developed between the academic and the non-academic, the cognitive and affective. As a result pupils are leaving the education system without realising or reaching their full potential.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 2

AFFECT IN THE CURRICULUM

The Contribution of Art Education to the Holistic Development of the Pupil

The previous chapter discussed how cognitive and affective thought and feeling cannot be distinctly separated. Yet it has been proved that the cognitive is given greater priority in education. Subjects and interests have been pigeonholed by the system, creating divisions which eventually influence the way we live. Dewey states:

> Between sciences sake, art for art's sake, business as usual or business for money making, the relegation of religion to Sundays and holidays, the turning over of politics to professional politicians, the professionalising of sports and so on, little room is left for the sake of living a full, rich and free life. (1)

In the previous chapter some of the negative aspects of a curriculum that focuses on cognition were observed. Emphasis on examination or limited use of intelligence lead to a limited cognitive development and neglect of affective development. A subject such as art, however, is an area in the curriculum that concentrates on the cognitive and affective development of pupils.

The Arts in Education: A Curriculum and Examinations Board Discussion

Paper informs us that "the creative and practical approach of the visual arts education which incorporates the artistic and aesthetic is an essential aspect of education." (2)

Art education depends more on the active involvement of the student rather than on the passive reception of an existing body of subject matter. The world is interpreted using different skills and different modes of representation. The Board states that:

> ...visual thinking and curiosity are developed through sight (the education of visual perception), touch (sensitivity and dexterity), light (tone, colour and form), space (shape, form and location) and an interaction with and mastery of the diverse materials of the visual arts. (3)

Other areas of the curriculum appear concerned with providing ready-made answers to pupils; in art education, however, there is no right or wrong answer. Instead it seeks to equip students with "ways of working to identify problems and to arrive at their own answers at their own pace" (4)
Art education, therefore, aims to fulfil the individual needs of all pupils, it is not concerned with a certain type of pupil; "academic" or "non-academic". The Board tells us that "all pupils irrespective of their levels of academic achievement, would benefit from a good visual arts education." (5)

Art education is concerned with the holistic development of the individual. In the introduction to the syllabus for Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design,

An Roinn Oideachas states:

> Art, Craft and Design provide a unique part of the education of the whole person, through heart, head and hand, enabling the person to shape his or her world with discernment, and to understand and appreciate the work of others. The benefits of an education in Art, Craft and Design for the student at this developmental stage extend far beyond a competence in the subject itself (and the ability to apply it through life). Art, Craft and Design education develops a number of important personal qualities, particularly those of initiative, perseverance, sensibility and self-reliance. (6)

The holistic development of pupils is a concern of humanistic psychologists such as Maslow and Rogers. They believe that education must consider all aspects of the individual (mental, physical and emotional) as "each of these components of 'self' depends, in part, on changes that are taking place in other areas of development." (7) They believe that affective matters should be explored just as much as the cognitive side of subject matter, and teachers should use techniques to encourage pupils to explore their feelings and emotions. (8)

While it is impractical to follow one theory of education it is beneficial to realize the contribution different theories make.

The Problem Solving Nature of Art

What Dewey refers to as the "pigeonholing of interests", has also led to art

being perceived as a purely affective subject, Eisner tells us that "for many the arts are seen as outlets for the release of affect". (9) Therefore, if education is perceived as a process through which thinking is fostered, and if art is a mere expression of emotion, it is clear that art will be perceived as peripheral to the major mission of education. To quote Eisner:

> The tendency to separate art from intellect and thought from feeling has been a source of difficulty for the field of art education. (10)

The aim of art education for the Junior Certificate, however, proposes that art deals with more than the affective. It's aims are:

- To promote in the student an informed, inquiring and discriminating attitude to his or her environment and to help the student relate to the world in visual tactile and optical terms
- To develop a sense of personal identity and self-esteem through practical achievement in the expressive, communicative and functional modes of art, craft and design
- To develop in the student an understanding of art,craft and design in a variety of contents - historical, cultural, economic, social and personal
- To develop in the student the ability to supply evaluative criteria to his/her own work and to the work of others and in his/her daily encounters with the natural, social and man-made environments and with the mass media
- To promote in the student a practical understanding of, and competence in the principles and skills underlying visual and constructional design and problem solving
- To develop through structured practical work the student's aesthetic sensibilities and powers of critical appraisal, appreciation and evaluation and to enhance the student's qualities of imagination, creativity, originality and ingenuity. (11)

These aims suggest that art has something to offer everyone, that it is not only relevant to the "talented". An Roinn Oideachas recognises the cognitive and affective contributions the subject can make to the development of the whole person. It recognises what Eisner calls "artistic action as a mode of intelligence" (12) or what Dewey refers to as the "qualitative problem solving" (13) nature of art.

Dewey and Eisner do not see intelligence as a quantity of something that someone possesses, a noun, they interpret it in the manner in which someone copes with a problematic situation, a verb, a type of action. (14)

An artist is posed with a variety of problems in creating a work of art. For example, he/she is given a sheet of paper or a lump of clay onto which he/she must convey the intended vision; the artist must be responsive to the actions and consequences in using a chosen material; and must manage that material so that it functions as a medium; there is also the problem of developing a sense of unity or cohesiveness in the work. Eisner explains that because the act of creating a work of art deals with the visualisation of qualities (visual images) which are directed at the creation and control of qualities (line, shape, colour etc.), it is a mode of intelligence that operates within the domain of the qualitative

> ... hence we can conceive this type of activity as qualitative intelligence (15)

Dewey believes that anyone who ignores the necessary role of intelligence in the production of works of art identifies thinking with verbal signs and words. He suggests that

> ...to think effectively in terms of relations of qualities is as severe a demand upon thought as to think in terms of symbols, verbal and mathematical. (16)

He continues by stating that art probably demands more intelligence than most of the thinking that goes on among those who call themselves "intellectuals" because "words are easily manipulated in mechanical ways." (17) Ecker echoes this by stating that

> ...the history of art could be viewed as a record of the highest achievements of man's qualitative problem-solving behaviour. (18)

Therefore, art fulfils the need outlined in Education for a Changing World:

> ...to equip students within the ability to think and to solve problems - rather than just with an accumulation of knowledge. (19)

Because there are no right of wrong answers in art, students make their own personal decisions and create personal and individual solutions. Having observed that art is a subject that combines thought with feeling, it is important to look in greater detail at how it achieves this combination by examining the goals of art education.

Goals of Art Education

Eisner and Chapman define three goals of art education. While both definitions are similar, they each use a different terminology to define them. Chapman's first goal is the "personal goal" of art (20) what Eisner refers to as the "productive aspect of art" (21); it involves the pupil's quest for personal fulfilment being facilitated through art experiences based on their immediate life, learning how to create visual forms which contain aesthetic and expressive character. Chapman next refers to the "social goal" (22), what Eisner labels the "cultural aspect of art" (23). In order for pupils to make informed aesthetic decisions about their environment they must become aware of the role of art in society as a cultural phenomenon. Chapman defines the third goal of art education as the "historical goal" (24) or what Eisner calls the "critical aspect of art" which is attained by studying the history of art as a form of human development and achievement, discovering how people learn to see visual forms in art and in nature.

We will now examine these goals in greater detail and observe how they fulfil some of the needs in our present system of education.

Personal/Productive Goals

In order to find personal fulfilment through art Chapman believes students need

> ...to learn how their lives can be enriched by their own efforts to create art and respond to visual forms. (26)

This does not imply that teachers surround pupils with a variety of materials and tools and allow them to respond according to their impulses. Nor does it imply that by suggesting procedures or plans to students, teachers will be invading their individuality. This method is "really stupid" according to Dewey (27). Genuine self-expression is a very high level achievement. It requires sensitive adult guidance in mastering the creation of ideas for personal expression and the use of media to convey an expressive intent. (28)

In the present education system there are few opportunities for pupils to express how their particular life feels, to discover what its special meanings are or to comprehend why it is like no other person's life. Education for a Changing World realises the need to develop in the student an "ability to express one's own viewpoint rationally". (29) Art education can provide for this need: pupils are encouraged to focus on themselves, establish their own opinions and viewpoints through the creation of visual forms.

This is what Eisner describes as an essentialist justification for the teaching of art, which states that the personal element of art makes a unique contribution to human experience. (30) Dewey believes that

> Art is the living and concrete proof that man is capable of restoring consciously, and thus on the place of meaning, the union of sense, need and impulse and action characteristic of the live creature. (31)

Social/Cultural Goals

Chapman points out that society is identified by the visual forms it creates and if one accepts this to be true it is fair to say then that art reflects society. Therefore, the goal of art education includes learning how art forms originate in society, how visual qualities express social qualities and values, and how the various media are used to express social values. (32) Today's society, he continues, is presented with many forms of art, for example, advertising, packaging, films, television. We should examine the processes involved with modern forms of art from the artists and spectators point of view: i.e. from expression (generating ideas, refining them, using materials) to response (perceiving, interpreting and judging art forms). (33) Otherwise, as Benson points out, we face the danger of becoming a society characterised by a uniform mediocrity of taste, controlled by commercial interests:

> ...the best because less popular and more difficult to appreciate will become less available and a major cultural opportunity will have been lost (34)

This goal of art education is also the contextual justification for the inclusion of art, in addition to the essentialist justification. The contextualist justification uses the particular needs of society or students as a major basis

for forming its objectives. (35)

The Arts in Education : A Curriculum and Examinations Board Discussion Paper shares this view, the Board believes that an interest in art cannot be imposed on pupils. The pupil should be

> ...enabled to develop an interest in and a value for the arts in a way that is appropriate to his or her needs and abilities. (36)

Historical/Critical Goal

Education for a Changing World also states the need

> ...to educate young people for their role as citizens of Europe while retaining and strengthening their distinctive Irish identity and culture. (37)

By studying the history of art and design, pupils will come in contact with the social and cultural histories of Europe and Ireland.

There is more to teaching art history than presenting names, dates and facts to pupils, it must also relate personally to them. Connections can be established between pupil and artist by pointing out problems that confront, for example: exploiting media, creating visual expression. Pupils will observe a variety of solutions to similar problems.

Through studying the history of art, the pupils use of vocabulary and terminology should develop and broaden. They should become comfortable describing and discussing all forms of art, craft and design whether they be historical or work from the classroom. (38) By exploring the individual lives of artists (their opinions, influences and society) pupils are introduced to a vast range of circumstances beyond their own experience. (39)

Objectives of Art Education

The next step is to examine how these goals of art education can be achieved by examining the objectives of art education in relation to the objectives of the Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design curriculum.

Eisner puts forward two objectives of art education which complement one another: instructional and expressive objectives. Instructional objectives describe "the behaviour or product a pupil is to display or construct" (40) while an expressive objective describes "an encounter the student will have" (41)

Instructional Objectives

Eisner believes that the concept of instructional objectives has some important and useful contributions to make in the field of art education. One of the most important being that of encouraging curriculum planners to think with precision about what they are after. (42) Fuzzy language and thinking are avoided by including instructional objectives which describe the way in which students are to behave or the competencies they are to display after working through a curriculum.

Instructional objectives in the Junior Certificate include developing the students ability to

- use and understand the art and design elements
- use a variety of materials, media, tools and equipment
- use an appropriate working vocabulary
- understand relevant scientific, mathematical and technological aspects of aft, craft and design
- sustain projects from conception to realisation
- appraise and evaluate his/her own work in progress and on completion
- develop an awareness of the historical, social and economic role and value of art, craft and design, and aspects of contemporary culture and mass-media. (43)

Relatively seldom, however, in the teaching of art do teachers want a predictable or specific performance from pupils. Eisner believes that "what is often hoped for is that the student will confer his private and imaginative interpretation upon some material." (44)

This view is echoed by the Curriculum and Examinations Board publication, The Arts in Education

> Artistic problems cannot have solutions imposed upon them. The solution to an artistic problem cannot be arrived at by following a given set of rules. (45)

For this Eisner invents the concept "expressive objective" to complement the concept of instructional objective. (46)

Expressive Objectives

Expressive objectives, Eisner informs us, recognise the expressive qualities of art, i.e. not merely giving vent to feelings, but endowing the material with a sense of one's feeling. The Curriculum and Examinations Board explains

> ...it is the very act of making that creates the experience and the artist in turn is made by that which he/she makes (47)

Teachers use expressive objectives in the belief that "the students will construct some form or idea that is uniquely his own". (48)

Expressive objectives include developing the students ability to

- give personal response to an idea, experience or other stimulus
- work from imagination, memory and direct observation
- use drawing for observation, recording and analysis as a means of thinking and for communication and expression
- use the core two-dimensional processes in making, manipulating and developing images, using lettering and combining lettering with image, in expressive and communicative modes
- use the three-dimensional processes of additive, subtractive and constructional form-making in expressive and functional modes. (49)

Before pupils can use materials for expressive purposes they must become familiar with skills, techniques and processes to express ideas, images and feelings. Eisner tells us that "once skills are developed they can be used in expressive contexts." (50) A close relationship exists between both instructional and expressive objectives and the two must work together in the curriculum. Too much emphasis on instructional objectives creates a wooden and emotionless curriculum. Similarly a pupil cannot create a truly expressive piece of work when he/she lacks the skills to manipulate the media. (51)

Continuity and Sequence

An art project should combine instructional objectives and activities with expressive objectives and activities. In order to so this successfully projects must contain continuity. This involves allowing pupils to develop, refine and internalise skills acquired in previous lessons and hence become part of an expressive repertoire. It is important not to conceive of learning activities as merely a series of independent events. Eisner states that

> ...lack of continuity hampers the development and refinement of the skills necessary for using the material as a means of expression (52)

The Junior Certificate: Art Craft and Design: Guidelines for Teachers also recognises the importance of continuity

> Learning situations should be carefully selected keeping in mind their continuity - that is, the extent to which they will allow the student to practice the understanding and skills previously acquired. (53)

It is also important to include the development of skills in projects, to gradually increase the level of complexity. This is what Eisner calls sequence; it "refers to the organisation of curriculum activities which become increasingly complex as students proceed." (54)

Guidelines for Teachers also refers to sequence. The practice of skills should be

> ... selected and organised with regard to sequence i.e. subsequent situations should present more complex tables so that the skills acquired would be refined and expanded. (55)

Conclusion

In this chapter the cognitive and affective value of art was discussed. Shortcomings related to more academic subjects in the curriculum such as limited forms of representation, failing to recognise different levels of student ability are addressed in the curriculum for art. Art education is sympathetic to the individual needs of the pupil, it takes into account the mental, physical and emotional development of pupils, it is concerned with their holistic development.

Aims of the Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design course illustrate that art education is concerned with the cognitive and affective development of students. Cognitive concerns such as acquiring skills, are used for affective purposes i.e. creating an expressive piece of work. The goals of art education proposed by Chapman and Eisner were discussed in relation to some of the needs of our present education system outlined in Education for a Changing World.

Eisner believes that a combination of instructional and expressive objectives are required to carry out the aims of art education. The Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design course includes both types of objectives. Guidelines for

Teachers stresses that continuity and sequence of lessons and projects are important for the implementation of objectives.

FOOTNOTES - CHAPTER 2

1. Dewey, On Education, p.142.

2. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education : a Curriculum and Examinations Board Discussion Paper (Dublin : The Curriculum and Examinations Board 1985), p.16.

3. Ibid., pp.16-17.

4. Ibid., p.17.

5. Ibid.

6. An Roinn Oideachas, The Junior Certificate: Art, Craft and Design (Dublin: Stationery Office), p.1.

7. David R. Shaffer, Developmental Psychology: Theory, Research and Applications (California: Brooks/Cole, 1985), p.8.

8. Biehler and Snowman, Psychology Applied to Teaching, p.493.

9. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, (New York: Macmillan, 1972) p.115.

10. Ibid.

11. An Roinn Oideachas, The Junior Certificate, p.2.

12. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.113.

13. Dewey, On Education p.249.

14. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.113.

15. Ibid., p.114.

16. Dewey, "Art as Experience", cited in Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.114.

17. Ibid.

18. David W. Ecker, "The Artistic Process as Qualitative Problem Solving", cited in Eisner and Ecker, Readings in Art Education, (London: Blaisdell, 1966), p.62.

19. Department of Education, Education for a Changing World, p.4.

20. Laura N. Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education, (New York:

Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1978), p.118.

21. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.65.

22. Chapman, Approaches to Art, p.118.

23. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.65.

24. Chapman, Approaches to Art, p.118.

25. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.65.

26. Chapman, Approaches to Art, p.118.

27. Dewey, On Education, p.153.

28. Chapman, Approaches to Art, p.119.

29. Department of Education, Education for a Changing World, p.4.

30. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.2.

31. Dewey, On Education, p.43.

32. Chapman, Approaches to Art, p.127.

33. Ibid.

34. Ciaran Benson, Place of the Arts in Irish Education, (Dublin: Arts Council, 1979), p.22.

35. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.2.

36. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education, p.8.

37. Department of Education, Education for a Changing World, p.4.

38. Rod Taylor, Educating for Art: Critical Response and Development, (Essex: Longman, 1986), p.270.

39. Benson, Place of the Arts, p.24.

40. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.156.

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid., p.154.

43. An Roinn Oideachas, The Junior Certificate, p.3.

44. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.155.

45. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education, p.8.

46. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.156.

47. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education, p.7.

48. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.156.

49. An Roinn Oideachas, The Junior Certificate, p.3.

50. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.157.

51. Ibid., p.159.

52. Ibid.

53. National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, The Junior Certificate, Art Craft Design: Guidelines for Teachers, (Dublin: The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, 1992), p.7.

54. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, p.160.

55. An Roinn Oideachas, Guidelines for Teachers, p.7.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction to Research Project

Based mainly on the writings of Eisner and Dewey and publications from the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment and the Department of Education, it has been discussed in the previous two chapters that there is a serious neglect of attention to the affective development of pupils in the present system of education. An unnatural separation has been established between the academic and non-academic aspects of the curriculum and the individual pupil. It was also established that art has valid and valuable contributions to make to all aspects of the individual.

These being concerns which are important to me, I felt it only natural that I look at my own teaching practice and apply some of these discoveries to it.

Aims of Research Project

The scheme of work followed was entitled "Gargoyles", I worked on it with a first year group of girls in Sancta Maria College, Ballyroan. Each pupil made a gargoyle, the project involved working mainly three dimensionally with papier mache and a lot of research was carried out using other three

dimensional materials and two dimensional work. There were three main stages in the project; drawing and making the head; designing and making the background; and painting.

There were a variety of aims implemented in this scheme of work. It provided me with an opportunity to apply my research practically to my teaching practice. I included instructional and expressive learning objectives which were intended to allow pupils to follow rules and come to terms with skills and materials before using them for their own expressive means. I also aimed to link the subject to the pupils' own interests and environment, so that it would become more than a classroom subject. In this sequence of lessons the main art element was form but I presented it to the pupils in a variety of ways; it was interpreted two and three dimensionally using a wide range of media and techniques. The project also involved exploring texture, tone, shape and line. In planning the scheme of work I wanted each learning experience to lead into the next. I aimed to include a sense of continuity and sequence. I hoped that as a result of this the pupils would develop a sense of confidence in their own work and working with materials. By evaluating and discussing the work regularly I would offer pupils the opportunity to not only build their confidence but to develop their vocabulary, their use of terminology and knowledge of the subject. Therefore, while the pupils worked individually on their gargoyles they would not be working in isolation. I will now explain in detail how this scheme of work evolved.

Description of Scheme of Work

The gargoyles are based mainly on the form of the face. The pupils spent several initial lessons recording the form and proportions of the features two dimensionally. I told the pupils we would be doing some three dimensional work based on these drawings. I did not say what exactly that would be, for the moment I wanted to concentrate on familiarising the pupils with the natural face. In a series of four lessons we drew the face progressively recording new information and using different techniques. I discussed with them the positioning of the features in proportion to one another. They discovered, for example, that the eyes are positioned half way down the head. Through a series of questions they also discovered which areas of the face are lighter than others, that these areas are lighter because they protrude; they are in relief. We then set about recording this information. The pupils sat in pairs opposite one another, one posed while the other drew, and then reversed roles. On a black sheet of paper with pencil the pupils drew the outline of the head and with marks established the position of eyes, nose, mouth etc. Then with white oil pastel they blocked in the light areas of the face.

On commencing this scheme of work I was aware that I could encounter difficulties with pupils' reluctance to draw the face. I realised that some could become very self-conscious in having someone else study their face or they could become disheartened if their work did not look like the person they were drawing. I believe these difficulties were overcome because due to the nature of the exercise, the end result, no matter how successful or unsuccessful will never look like a real face. I believe these drawings show a confidence;

most pupils were successful in establishing the proportions of the features and the light areas were blocked in solidly and definitely. In addition to describing the light areas of the face, the pupils also discovered that they had recorded the dark areas, areas of recession, represented by the black areas of the page. (Figures 3.1 - 3.3)

FIGURE 3.1

Study of Features in Relief

FIGURE 3.2

Study of Features in Relief

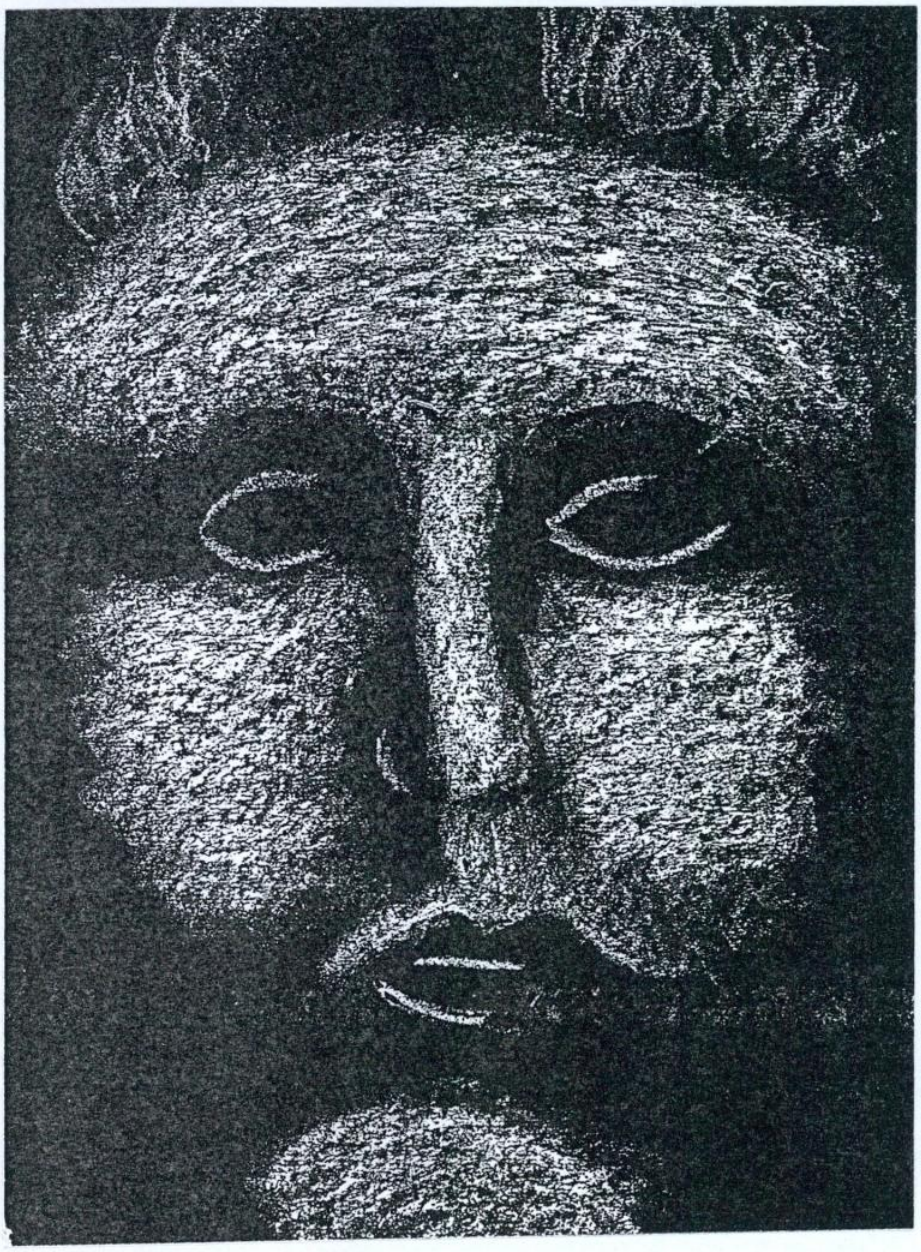
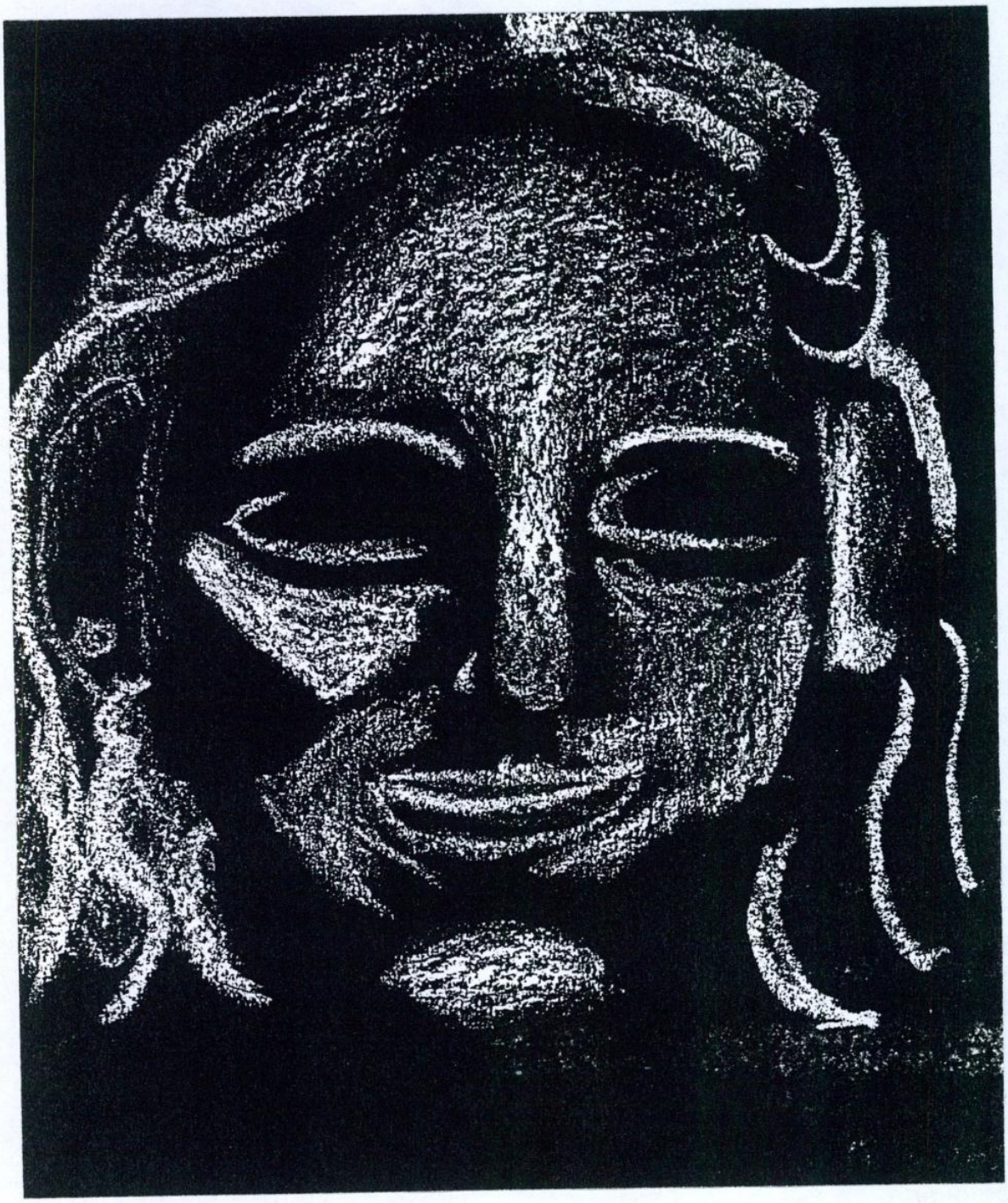


FIGURE 3.3

Study of Features in Relief



The next lesson was a progression on the previous one. The pupils again recorded the proportions of the features with pencil marks. However, a third tone was introduced in recording the form of the face. We discussed that light on the face does not go suddenly from light to dark, there is a gradation. To record and illustrate this gradation the lesson involved recording the extreme light areas with white oil pastel and extreme dark areas with black oil pastel on grey paper. The areas that were neither extremely light or dark, the mid-tones were represented by the grey page. The results of this lesson again show the pupils' ability to record the proportions of the features, they also illustrate a basic understanding of tone and form. (Figures 3.4 - 3.6)

FIGURE 3.4

Tonal Study of the Head

FIGURE 3.5

Tonal Study of the Head

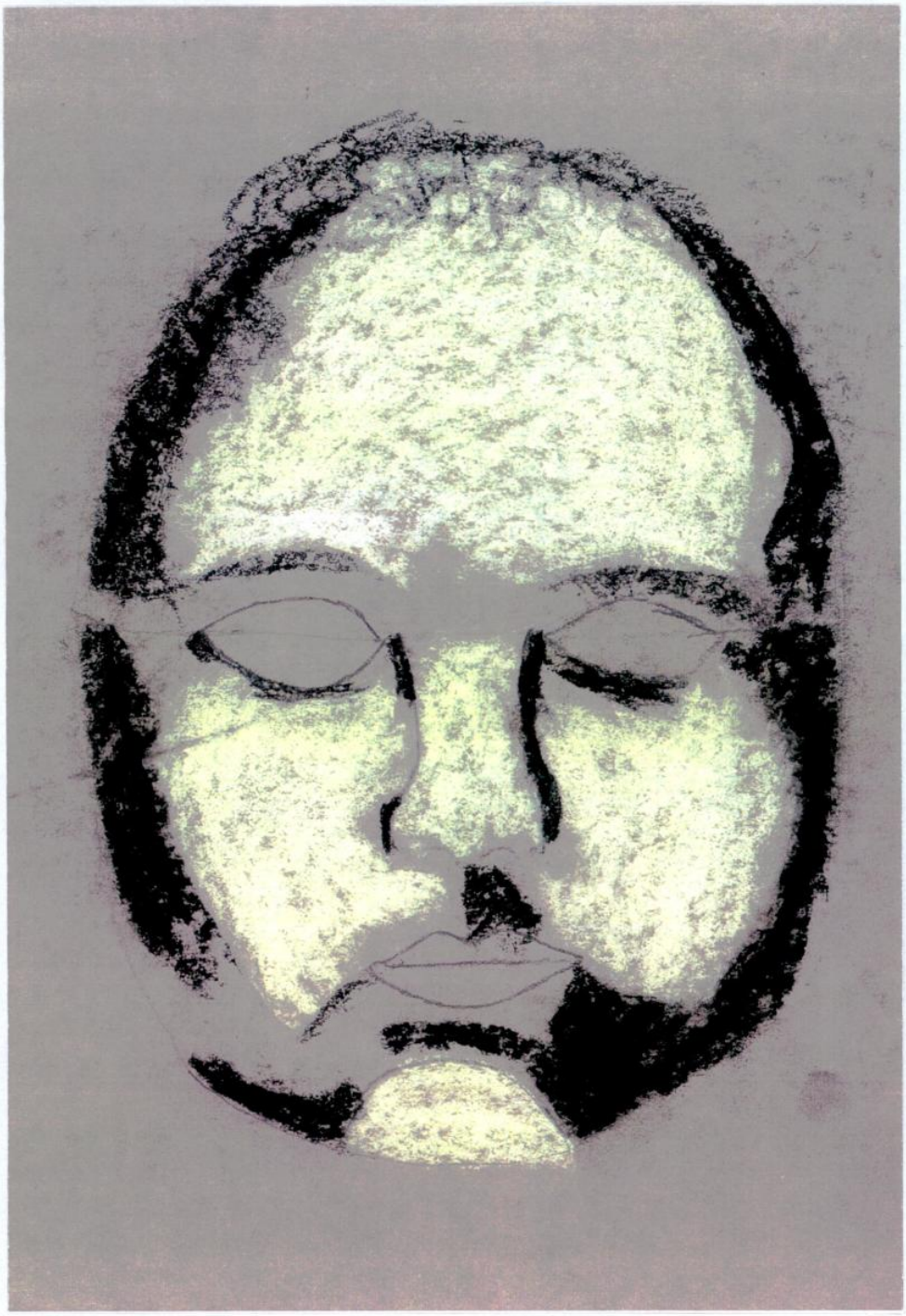
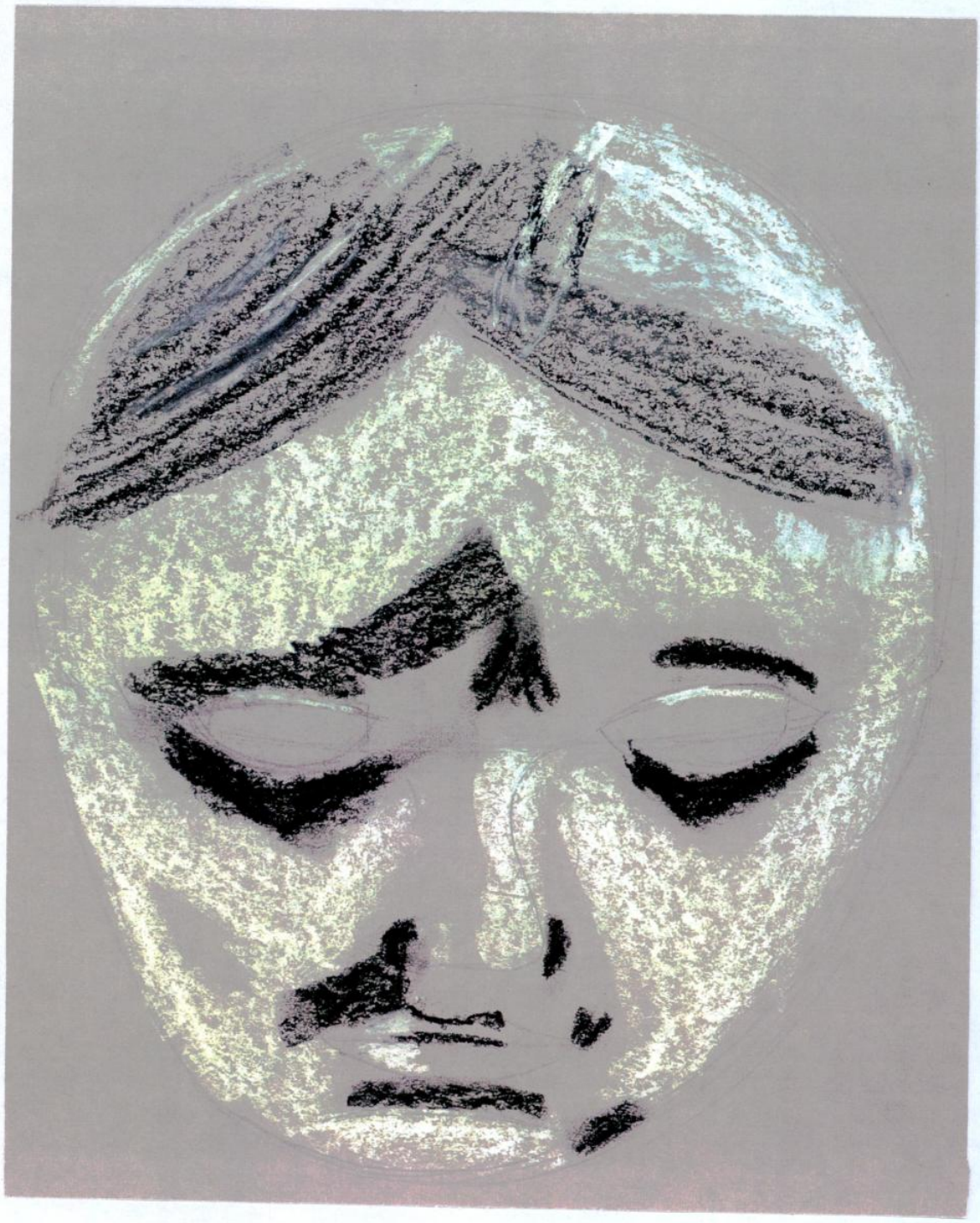


FIGURE 3.6

Tonal Study of the Head



I now felt the pupils had a good basic understanding of the features and form of the face. I also believed they were more confident about drawing one another and being drawn. It was time to observe and record the features more accurately and I decided pencil would be a more appropriate medium as oil pastel is too thick for recording detail. We looked at portraits by David Hockney drawn with pencil (Figure 3.7) and through a series of questions focused the pupils' attention to the fact that darker and sometimes thicker lines were used in the areas of recession and lighter, thinner lines in relief areas. We also observed that the artist used as few lines as possible to give as much information as possible. In addition to drawing the front view of the face, the profile was drawn. We discussed the benefits of recording the head from both angles and discovered the different types of information that both gave. We also concentrated on drawing expressions and noted how different expressions altered the features. This lesson developed both the pupils' ability to record the features of the face and their understanding of form. They discovered that the outline of the head changes when observed from different angles because it is a form, it is three dimensional. (Figures 3.8 - 3.9)

FIGURE 3.7

Portrait by David Hockney)

FIGURE 3.8

Linear Portrait (Frontal)

FIGURE 3.9

Linear Portrait (Profile)

In the following lesson I developed this idea, the learning objective was for pupils to discover how to record information for a three dimensional piece in two dimensions. This was the final lesson before working three dimensionally. I explained to the pupils that we would be making gargoyles out of papier mache. With visual references I explained the role and function of gargoyles. I asked the pupils questions such as how would they feel walking down a street with gargoyles looking at them?; why would they feel this way?; what could they do to their gargoyle to make others feel this way? The pupils observed that the exaggerated and distorted features and expressions of the gargoyles gave them an intimidating quality. In the next lesson the pupils decided the kind of expression their gargoyle would have and recorded that expression in a frontal and profile drawing of their partner's face. I wanted to synthesise everything we had discovered about the form and proportion of the face in this lesson. On grey paper the pupils recorded the proportion and expression of the face with pencil, againt using as few lines as possible to give as much information as possible. Then using black and white chalk pastel the light and dark tones of the face were recorded. Chalk pastel was easier to smudge and gave a subtler gradation between light and dark tones. I tried to prepare pupils as much as possible for working in three dimensions by asking questions such as why did we need to record information from both sides of the face?; why did we want to make our drawings look three dimensional?

The following six lessons were spent working on the gargoyles' faces three

dimensionally. I was satisfied with the pupils' understanding of the form and proportion of the face, they had worked hard and diligently at recording what they saw, now they could use this information to create another face, one they could exaggerate and contort without allowing it to become ridiculous. It was important that we work in a step by step fashion, the pupils had to develop an understanding of and confidence in working three dimensionally with papier mache. I used two visual aides for this part of the scheme. The first was the completed head of a gargoyle which was a stage the pupils would work towards, the second head I used for demonstration purposes at each lesson to outline procedures the pupils would follow, it developed at the same rate as the pupils' work. We began describing the form of the mouth first because the expression and form of the mouth effects the expression and form of other features. The pupils used their own faces and drawings as reference for working three dimensionally. We continued in this manner, each week working on a different feature. The gargoyles evolved. (Figure 3.10) Each week we discussed the new feature verbally, describing its form and how it could be distorted, before describing it visually. I brought in visual references, for example caricatures by Leonardo da Vinci and photographs of gargoyles to be found in Dublin city. I also aimed to develop the pupils' understanding of form by getting them to look at their work from more than one angle and examining how the two dimensional research related to the three dimensional work. Gradually the pupils' confidence and competence in working three dimensionally with papier mache expanded and developed. The pupils also developed a confidence in discussing their own and others work. We

evaluated the work constantly, either at the beginning, during, or end of lessons, whichever was appropriate.

FIGURE 3.10

Pupils Working on Gargoyle Head

Once the gargoyle's features were completed the next step involved designing and making the backgrounds and ornamentation, this took four lessons. Based on other gargoyles I decided that the source for the backgrounds and ornamentation would be hair and leaves. With pencil, pupils recorded the outline of leaves and tone of hair to become familiar with a variety of leaf shapes and hair types. To introduce the tonal exercise I referred to previous tonal studies the pupils made. This lesson was a further development of that understanding; the pupils would achieve a tonal gradation using a single medium and colour; pencil. To experience and demonstrate the tonal gradation that can be achieved by leaning lightly or heavily on a pencil, the pupils drew four boxes side by side at the top of their page and filled each with a different tone extending from light to dark. They then proceeded to record from observation the tone of straight, curly or plaited hair using light to dark lines. The pupils had no trouble in describing tone with pencil and the work shows a sensitivity and awareness of how tone can describe form, a sensitivity which I believe developed and progressed on their previous tonal studies as a result of working three-dimensionally. (Figures 3.11 - 3.13)

FIGURE 3.11

Tonal Study of Hair

FIGURE 3.12

Tonal Study of Hair

FIGURE 3.13

Tonal Study of Hair

The next step involved using this information in a way that had greater relation to the final piece. The pupils manipulated paper to recreate the texture and form of leaves and hair. A page was divided into three equal sections. The first section was for experimentation in paper manipulation to recreate the texture of hair drawn in the previous lesson. We compared this exercise to the tonal study of hair and discovered that while both described texture they were concerned with different aspects of it, the drawings describe visual texture while the paper manipulation describes tactile texture. In the second section pupils experimented with different ways of manipulating paper to reproduce the form of leaves and examined different ways of arranging them to create a pattern. In the third section pupils combined elements from one or both squares to create a simple design for the background. To generate further ideas I showed visual references of gargoyles and we discussed them in relation to their decoration and ornamentation. (Figures 3.14 - 3.15)

FIGURE 3.14

Gargoyle - Nightmares in the Sky

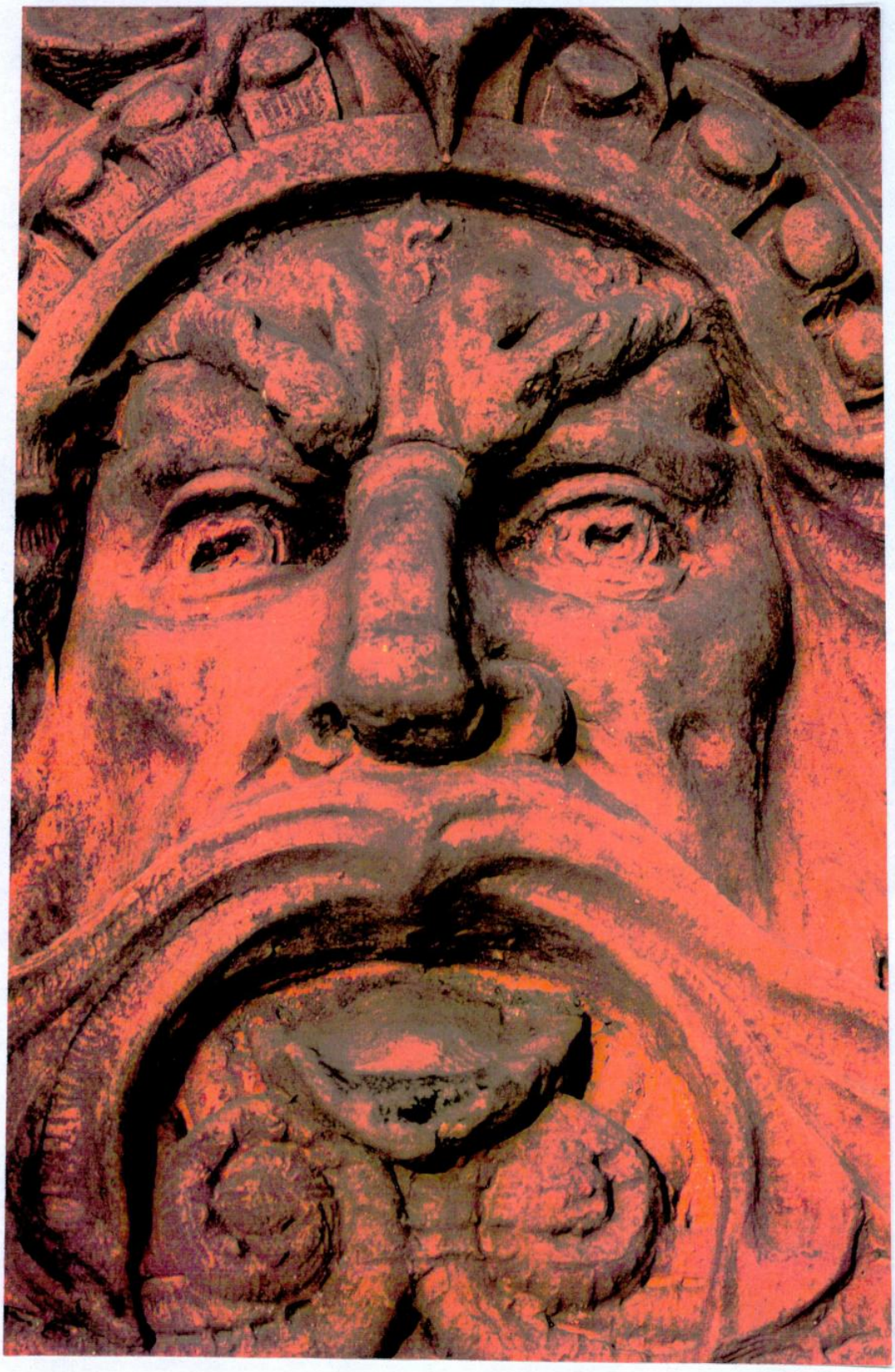


FIGURE 3.15

Gargoyle - Nightmares in the Sky

These two lessons introduced the pupils to the design process, a process which involved a lot of decision making on their part. The pupils worked from several sources, choosing the type of hair and leaves they would use. They described these sources using a variety of materials and techniques and took whatever information they felt was relevant to their work and used it to design their backgrounds.

Over the next two lessons the pupils worked on the decoration of their gargoyles. The papier mache heads were attached to rectangular pieces of card creating support and providing a ground to work on. Rather than simply applying something we had already composed I wanted the pupils to develop the designs and look at the head and its decoration as a total composition. The learning objective was for the pupils to discover that by varying scale and levels of relief of the decoration variety could be introduced to a three-dimensional composition. The designs were simple but this learning objective allowed the pupils to explore the maximum number of possibilities. Through questioning I directed the pupils into thinking why they were applying decoration to the gargoyles. When they observed photographs of gargoyles hanging on buildings, they discovered it was to add to the appearance of the building and to make the gargoyle more eyecatching. (Figure 3.16) We examined further visual references of gargoyles and noted how some contained either leaves or hair or a combination of both in their decoration. We also

examined the use of moustaches, beards and horns as ornamental features.

FIGURE 3.16

Gargoyles, National Irish Bank, Suffolk Street, Dublin

The learning objective for the following lesson was to discover that a composition consists of foreground, middleground and background. This again focused pupils on the whole composition, the head represented the foreground, the decoration the middleground and the backingboard represented the background. We applied this information to the view outside the classroom window and two dimensional work within the classroom. The pupils also discovered that by varying levels of relief in the decoration they linked the foreground to the background.

By the end of this lesson construction on the gargoyles was complete. The pupils were thoroughly satisfied with the work. Each gargoyle was individual and demonstrated a good understanding of the form of the head. The ornamentation was extremely effective and was full of variety which linked the foreground and background.

The next step involved adding colour with paint. This class had no depth of experience in working with colour or paint. I felt they needed to come to terms with the nature of colour, colour mixing and matching, and manipulating paint, before application to the gargoyles. I broke this stage of the sequence into two steps, the first lesson involved experimenting with paint and colour mixing and matching, the second lesson involved the application of this experience to the gargoyles.

For the first lesson I gave the pupils coloured photocopies of brick and stone walls which had prominent blues, greens or reds. The pupils chose a section of the photocopies and mixed paint to match the colours they saw, they also used brushes, sponge and card to apply the paint and reproduce the textures they observed. This lesson involved little instruction from me, I wanted the pupils to explore and discover for themselves. At the end of the lesson we evaluated the work and discovered what colours when mixed together could obtain another colour. The evaluation also allowed pupils to discover the variety of methods used to manipulate paint to reproduce textures. They believed that their work with paint described the visual texture of stone and therefore related to the lesson which involved recording the visual texture of hair. In this lesson the pupils painted on card cut in the shape of stones; the results would be useful in displaying the gargoyles at the end of the scheme. (Figures 3.17 - 3.18)

FIGURE 3.17

Paint Manipulation

FIGURE 3.18

Paint Manipulation

3.18

In the following lesson the pupils decided on the colour of their gargoyle, they also decided how they would apply the paint. (Figure 3.19) I also advanced the pupils knowledge of colour mixing and form by encouraging them to apply dark tones to the areas of recession and light tones to the areas of relief. The pupils discovered that this helped to exaggerate the form of the gargoyles and added to the intimidating appearances and expressions. (Figures 3.20 - 3.33)

The gargoyles were now complete, it was a long scheme of work but one which I felt was thoroughly rewarding, both for the pupils and myself.

FIGURE 3.19

Pupil Painting Gargoyle

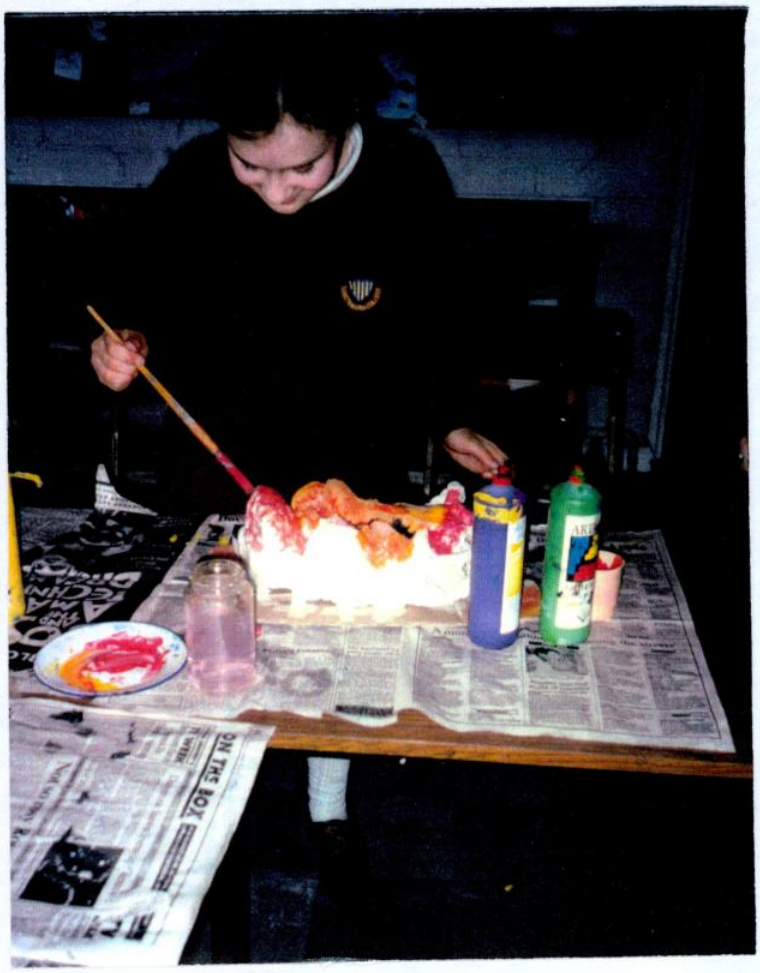


FIGURE 3.20

Gargoyle by Saidbh

FIGURE 3.21

Gargoyle by Aoife

FIGURE 3.22

Gargoyle by Annie

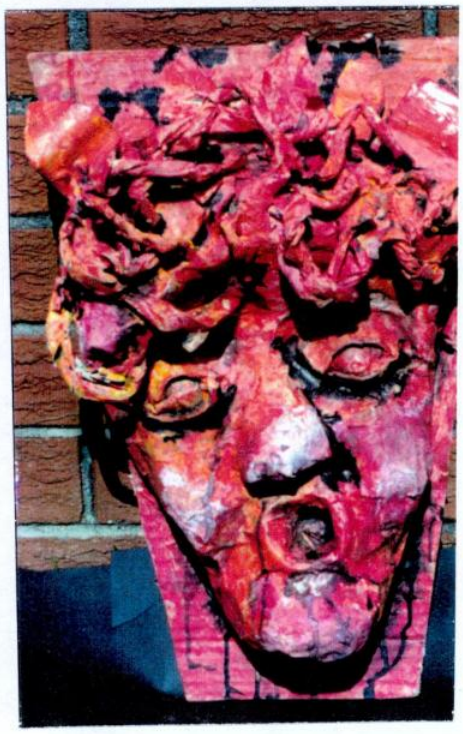


FIGURE 3.23

Gargoyle by Mary-Ellen

FIGURE 3.24

Gargoyle by Caroline

FIGURE 3.25

Gargoyle by Susan

FIGURE 3.26

Gargoyle by Collette

FIGURE 3.27

Gargoyle by Sharon

FIGURE 3.28

Gargoyle by Sinead

FIGURE 3.29

Gargoyle by Anna

FIGURE 3.30

Gargoyle by April

FIGURE 3.31

Pupils' Work on Display

FIGURE 3.32

Pupils' Work on Display

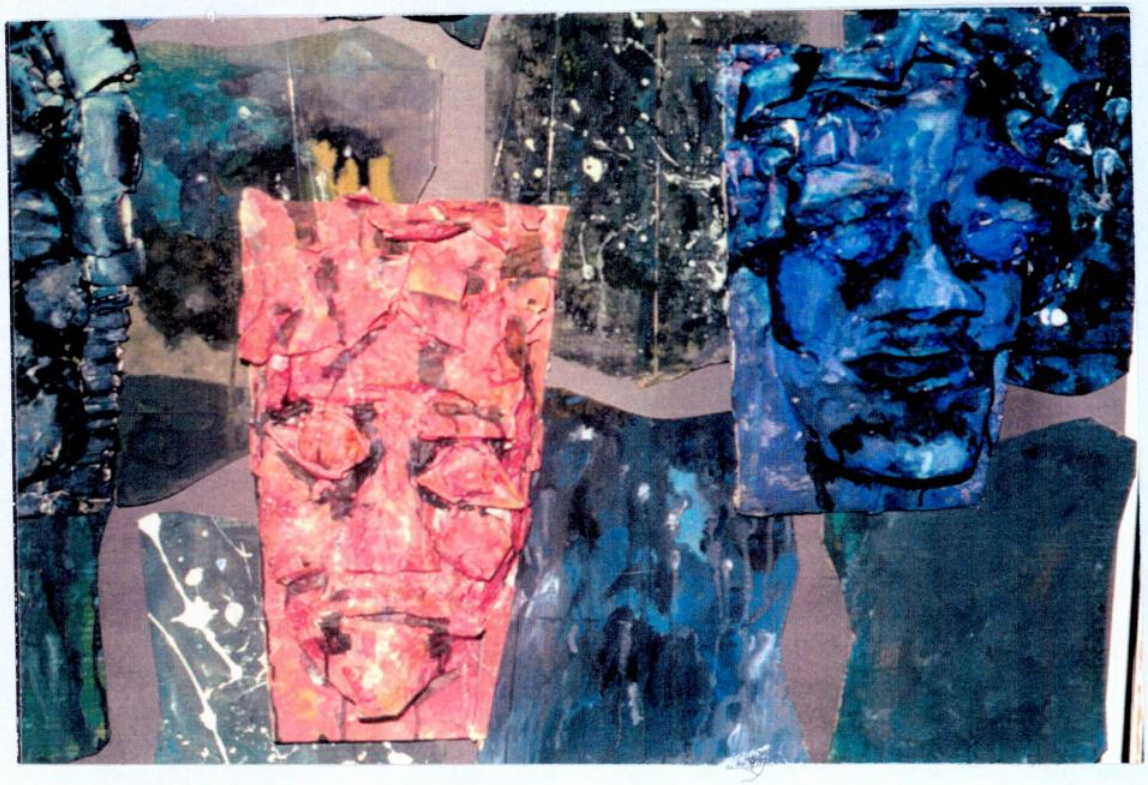


FIGURE 3.33

Pupils' Work on Display

Conclusion

In this chapter I have described in detail the scheme of work I devised which provided me with the opportunity to practically apply the research in the previous chapters to my own experience as a teacher. In the following chapter I will discuss the results of this scheme of work.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Treatment of the Art Elements

In the scheme of work described in the previous chapter three art elements were dealt with in detail: form, tone and texture. They were presented to the pupils in such a way that their understanding and knowledge of them would develop. On each occasion the pupils were presented with a different material, tool or a different method of perception was used. Eisner would say that different "forms of representation" (1) were used to interpret the elements. He informs us that

> ... it is possible to identify the several ways in which the selection of a form of representation influences not only the content of representation but the content of perception as well. (2)

For example in the scheme of work, pupils were provided with the opportunity to explore form two-dimensionally and three-dimensionally. They tried to recreate form on a two-dimensional surface, this form was then exaggerated and distorted in three-dimensional work. Both processes involved working from a three-dimensional source but this source was in both cases, perceived and used in a different way. For example in describing form two-dimensionally the pupils recorded light and dark areas; to record form three-dimensionally they used the two dimensional information and felt the form of

their own faces.

The tone of surfaces was described with oil and chalk pastel, pencil and paint, each particular medium presented its own problems, which had to be overcome. They sought the same information in each exercise, but each time a different result was achieved due to the nature of the material.

This scheme of work allowed pupils to perceive texture visually and tactilely. Through the use of pencil and the manipulation of paint pupils described how surfaces look; through the manipulation of paper they described how surfaces feel. By appealing to different forms of representation or, what Gardner would recognise as different intelligences, Eisner believes appeals to a broader conception of mind, he states that

> The place one might begin to develop a wider conception of mind is by examining the function of the senses and identifying the role they play in the achievement of mind. (3)

However, the development of skill and dexterity is equally important if pupils are to have a successful experience of the subject.

Eisner explains that

> The degree to which skills are absent or technique is weak is the degree to which the forms of representation are themselves weakened. (4)

For this reason the scheme of work allowed time for pupils to understand the

nature of materials and skills before using them for expressive purposes, instructional objectives were used. For example the pupils observed and drew the form of the features before any distortion or exaggeration was performed. For six weeks the pupils worked with papier mache, and during this period their understanding of the nature of the material evolved as did their confidence in their ability to manipulate it. Pupils became familiar with the shape and form of leaves and texture of hair and the variety of ways these could be interpreted before applying it to the gargoyles. The pupils were given time to experience the quality and nature of paint before using it for their own purposes and use.

Inclusion of Appreciation of Art, Craft and Design

The scheme of work did not merely appeal to the pupils' practical understanding of art, craft and design, their aesthetic awareness of the subject was considered simultaneously. The Curriculum and Examinations Board states:

> Nor indeed can artistic and aesthetic experience be separated since the making of art must be fully integrated with appreciation and enjoyment of visual art in all its forms. (5)

By looking at examples of work by Hockney, da Vinci, Edward Smyth etc., the pupils developed a familiarity with the artwork of others. The examples were discussed in relation to the pupils' work, they observed that artists encounter and solve problems similar to those the pupils were presented with. Pupils

also used these historical images as references and inspiration for their own work. For example images of gargoyles allowed pupils to observe the various ornamental possibilities which influenced pupils who added beards, moustaches etc.

However. to facilitate the pupils' appreciation of the subject reference was also made to their environment. They observed images of gargoyles in Dublin city and discussed the role and function of gargoyles in architecture. On bus trips into town pupils were encouraged to look out for gargoyles, to observe features on buildings that would not be immediately distinguishable on foot or that had become too familiar to be noticed.

In this manner the subject left the art room and entered the lives of the pupils. Dewey states that when art is taken from its niche it is the basis

> ... of an educational experience which counteract the disrupting tendencies of the hard-and-fast specializations, compartmental divisions and rigid segregations which so confuse and nullify our present life. (6)

Pupil Participation

The Curriculum and Examinations Board in In our Schools states that

> Overcoming the fear of failure is one of the most significant contributions schools can make in preparing young people for adult life. They must be encouraged to think in terms of identifying

> problems and considering solutions rather than always seeking absolute right or wrong answers to problems. (7)

Presenting problems to the pupils was a prominent feature of the scheme of work. In each lesson pupils encountered a new problem, for example, handling media, using different modes of perception; choosing the source and interpretation of it for ornamentation; deciding on the colour of the gargoyle and how to apply the paint. The pupils were presented with these problems and developed their own, individual solutions. There were no right or wrong answers.

The Board also states in The Arts in Education that

> The visual arts differ from many other school subjects in that they do not seek to provide ready-made answers, but to equip students with ways of working, to identify problems and to arrive at their own answers at their own pace. (8)

I believe this was the main factor in maintaining the pupils' interest in a scheme over such a long duration of time. The scheme of work lasted sixteen lessons, a period which was extended by holidays and days off. When I asked pupils the reason for their genuine, whole-hearted interest in the subject they responded that it was due to so many decisions being taken and implemented and problems being solved by them and that they worked with a variety of materials using a variety of skills.

FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 4

1. Eisner, Cognition and Curriculum, p.47.

2. Ibid., p.49.

3. Ibid., p.30.

4. Ibid., p.49.

5. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education, p.16.

6. Dewey, On Education, p.148.

7. Curriculum and Examinations Board, In our Schools, p.9.

8. Curriculum and Examinations Board, The Arts in Education, p.17.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Synthesis

In this dissertation the treatment and role of cognitive and affective education has been discussed in relation to the present system of Irish education. The cognitive and affective cannot be separated, they are interdependent. Yet throughout the history of education a limited representation of cognition has been given priority, "academic" subjects (i.e. linguistics and mathematics) have been given higher status than "non-academic" subjects. Eisner informs us that

> .... practices and policies that are based on a limited interpretation of cognition tend to lead to a limited conception of educational practice. (1)

The aims of second level education recognise the fine line between the cognitive and affective needs of pupils and provide for both. In practice some of these aims are neglected due to the emphasis placed on examinations and achieving results. As a consequence achievement rather than inquiry tends to be rewarded. This preoccupation with academic aspects of education means pupils are offered a narrow educational experience.

In schools today too much emphasis is placed on retaining information to regurgitate it in an examination. Pupils are not given adequate opportunity to

relate a subject to their own lives or environment, or to make decisions and solve problems. In Education for a Changing World it is stated that a need exists

> ... to equip students with the ability to think and to solve problems - rather than just with an accumulation of knowledge. (2)

Art education is an area in the curriculum which allows pupils to experience and practice a wide range of cognitive and affective abilities interdependently. In Towards the New Century

the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment states

> As well as its intrinsic value, arts education, where appropriately designed and taught, can contribute to the development of thinking skills and to a range of entrepreneurial skills and attitudes. (3)

In allowing art, craft and design to relate to pupils and vice versa they will perceive it as something more than a subject exclusively relating to school hours.

Recommendations to Art Teachers

To attain this perception pupils must experience the personal and expressive nature of art. This will only occur when pupils become familiar with various qualities of media and practice use of tools and skills. Instructional and expressive objectives must be realised in order for pupils to realise the personal goal of art. Continuity and sequence must be evident in projects and schemes of work, allowing pupils to develop and refine skills and use of

material for expressive purposes; gradually increasing the level of complexity in response to their development.

To fulfil the social goal of art education connections must be made, whenever appropriate and relevant, to the pupil's own interest and environment, and to the customs of other cultures. This places art within a context and demonstrates the various roles art plays in society. Pupils should be encouraged to observe and perceive everyday things differently or make new discoveries in their environment.

Historical art references can be included with practical classes in several ways and fulfil a variety of functions. By making relevant comparisons between pupils' and artists' work, pupils will realise the significance of their own work; discussions can be focused around artists' work, allowing pupils the opportunity to express their own opinions and apply terminology acquired through practical experience; works of art can be used as a source of inspiration; they can also provide a motivational factor by becoming something the pupils can work towards.

Pupils will, therefore, develop a sense of responsibility in carrying out and justifying their own actions. They will develop an openminded attitude towards the opinions and beliefs of others and will develop a genuine enthusiasm for the subject as demonstrated by their ability to follow projects through to completion. As Dewey states

To carry out something through to completion is the real meaning of thoroughness, and power to carry a thing through to its end or conclusion is dependent upon the existence of the attitude of intellectual responsibility. (4)

FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 5

1. Eisner, Cognition and Curriculum, p.71.

2. Department of Education, Education for a Changing World, p.4.

3. National Council for Curriculum and Assessment, Towards the New Century, p.3.

4. Dewey, On Education, p.227.

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