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Dissertation Abstract

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Course :	B. A. in Art & Design Education
Title :	MUSEUMS & GALLERIES : The Value of Museums and Galleries as a Source for Practical Junior Certificate Projects.

This dissertation aims to examine the value of the integration of support studies into practical Junior Certificate Projects, specifically with reference to the utilisation of museums and galleries as possible starting points.

Chapter I defines the term "support studies", explores it's rational, and assesses it's integration into practical Art, Craft and Design projects, through a review of the literature. Chapter II focuses on the museum / gallery as a source for support studies, identifies the importance of utilising such venues, and stresses the importance of the liaison between the museum / gallery and the school. Chapter III examines the place of education within the museum / gallery, and reviews existing learning materials. Chapter IV proceeds to provide background information and a structure on which the research project in Chapter V is based. This project utilises the Museum of Ireland as a starting point for a practical theme based project, in a classroom situation. After a description of the project, the value of utilising the museum is assessed, and the contributions made to the educational development of the students are analysed.Chapter VI draws conclusions from the research project, and identifies the numerous positive contributions the use of a primary source, such as the museum / gallery, makes to the "all round" development of the student.

Thus the need to promote the utilisation of museums / galleries as a source for practical Junior Certificate projects is recommended in the conclusions and recommendations.





Colaiste Naisiunta Ealaine is Deartha National College of Art and Design Faculty of Education

MUSEUMS / GALLERIES AS EDUCATORS:

The Value of Museums and Galleries as a Source for Practical Junior Certificate Projects

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of Education

in Candidacy for the

B.A. Degree in Art and Design Education

by

JOY GRIFFIN

JUNE 1995



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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is concerned with the integration of support studies into practical Junior Certificate Projects, specifically with reference to utilizing galleries and museums as possible starting points.

In Chapter I, the term "Support Studies" will be defined, it's rationale will be explored and its integration into practical art, craft and design project will be assessed, through a review of the literature.

Chapter II will focus on the museum / gallery as a source for support studies, identifying the importance of utilizing such venues and also the liaison between the gallery / museum and the school.

Chapter III examines the place of education within the gallery / museum and reviews existing learning materials.

Chapter IV proceeds to provide background information and a structure on which I based my Research Project in this dissertation.

Chapter V entails an account of the Research Project itself, in which I used the Museum of Ireland as a starting point for the practical theme based project, in a classroom situation. After a description of the project, the value of utilising the museum is assessed and the contributions made to the educational development of the students are analysed.

Chapter VI draws conclusions from the project and puts forward recommendations and means by which the use of galleries / museums can be promoted as starting points for Junior Certificate projects.

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CHAPTER 1

SUPPORT STUDIES

In 1987, the Junior Certificate was drawn up by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). This new syllabus offers a whole new approach to Art, Craft and Design at Junior Cycle, which is dynamic and exciting.

A major aspect of the new syllabus is the cultural and aesthetic development of the students through the integration of "Support Studies" into the students practical work.

In this dissertation I will be exploring the value these support studies make to the educational development of the student.

But firstly, it is necessary to define support studies within the Junior Certificate Syllabus, and why they came about.

Background Information

Prior to the introduction of the Junior Certificate in 1989, Art Education at Junior Level took the form of the Intermediate Certificate. Practical work produced in a vacuum was a predominant part of this syllabus, which had only a vague directive in relation to art appreciation (1).

The <u>Critical Studies in Art Education Project</u> noted that there was an increasing acceptance that "practical activity alone does not necessarily lead to critical awareness and understanding" (2). Also "a belief was being expressed that individual creativity is best nurtured and developed in a climate which also emphasises judgement, rigour and knowledge" (3).



These statements are echoed in the Junior Certificate syllabus aims and objectives, that students should "not only produce practical work" but "also develop powers of aesthetic perception", and "the ability to understand art, craft and design as a cultural phenomenon" (4).

Thus, with this in view support studies were included into the Junior Certificate to provide the basis for introducing students to the whole diverse world of visual arts as an integral part of their practical projects.

Defining Support Studies

Support studies, within the context of the Junior Certificate, focus on the integration of the work of artists, craftspersons and designers "from past and present, world-wide and local, Irish or European" (5), into practical examination projects. Using these, students can draw parallels between their own work and that of others, thus combining practical, theoretical and critical work, "to acquaint the student with adult and child art, craft and design from many cultures. Critical approval and evaluation skills should be developed, so as to lead to an understanding and appreciation, as well as an enjoyment of their own work, and that of others" (6).

Support studies can be related to "ideas, movements, working methods, influences, meanings, impact, problems encountered and problems solved etc." (7), and these should be taught "as an integral part of each learning experience" (8).

Every art, craft and design process and concept has a particular vocabulary, and the accurate use of correct and relevant words and terms is crucial to the student developing a grasp of the subject area (9). As a result, the student's analysis of drawing, painting, printmaking, architecture, sculpture etc., should result in the understanding and recognition of the artists' expression, philosophy of life, inner feelings and aspirations as a human being (10).

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Rationale for Support Studies

The work of Elliot Eisner, and his model of artistic learning has obviously influenced the decision to include support studies in the Junior Certificate Art Syllabus.

Eisner opposes the widely accepted view that artistic learning is an automatic consequence of maturation, i.e. that the child is an unfolding organism whose talents in art come to fruition with sympathetic but unobtrusive teaching, thus the belief was that the child developed primarily from the inside out (11). Eisner believes that art education can be facilitated through instruction. He has pointed out that artistic learning is not a single type of learning (12).

According to Eisner, artistic learning deals with the development of abilities to create art forms, the development of powers of aesthetic perception, and the ability to understand art as a cultural phenomenon (13). "Thus", Eisner claims, "an understanding of artistic learning requires us to attend to how people learn to create visual forms, having aesthetic and expressive character, to how people learn to see visual forms in art and nature, and to how understanding of art occurs" (14).

Eisner identifies three aspects of learning:

- (i) The productive
- (ii) The critical
- (iii) The cultural (15).

The productive involves technical elements i.e. the actual making. This requires skills in managing tools and materials, visual and spatial skills, inventive skills in extending and combining the limits of materials and processes, etc. (16). In f act, this aspect is more or less what the Intermediate Certificate required. The critical and cultural aspects are



undoubtedly influential where support studies are concerned. The critical aspect seeks to cultivate a sense of value, an ability to make sound judgements (as opposed to mere preferences) and to exercise self-direction in and through art, craft and design (17). The cultural aspect emphasises the historical dimension from which the work came. This is a dynamic and holistic view rather than a chronological 'time and place' view. It is about understanding the conditions (i.e. social, political, economic) which give rise to a diversity of works as well as the ways in which works affected the times in which they were created (18).

Integration of the Practical and the Aesthetic in Art: <u>A Review of the Literature</u>

The innovative and influential works of art educators, such as Brian Allison and Rod Taylor have provided justifications for the integration of practical and the aesthetic in art. Their literature emphasises a need for balance in the art, craft and design curriculum - a balance that couples practical art with critical, historical, cultural and aesthetic activities.

Brian Allison argues that making art is but one facet of any properly balanced art and design education. He promotes the analytical, the critical, the historical and the cultural domains as well as the presently pervasive expressive practical domain, as he feels they all have their rightful place within the subject (19). Allison believes that to be "educated in art", means considerably more than being able to manipulate some art materials, however skillful and expressive that manipulation might be. It also means to be perceptually developed and visually discriminative, to be able to realise the relationships of materials to the form and function of art expression and communication, to be able to critically analyse and appraise art forms and phenomena, to be able to appreciate the contributions to, and functions within different cultures and societies that art makes (20). The Gulbenkian report, <u>The Arts in Schools</u>, states that "participation and appreciation are complementary"

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is not being used in a loose manner, because, as the report points out, "to come to know a work of art is to grapple personally with the ideas and values which it represents and embodies. By giving form to their own perceptions, artists can help us to make sense of ours" (22). The Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation report emphasises the need for education to take account of the important diversity of cultures, of their patterns of growth and of the restlessness of their traditions.

The <u>Arts Discussion Paper</u> also states that "making" art (artistic education) and "receiving" art (aesthetic education) should be seen as "two complementary processes that are thoroughly integrated" (23). Essentially this is what the Junior Certificate aims to do, i.e. by integrating the "making" and "receiving" of art.

The report "The Arts in Schools": outlined a cultural education as being one which:

- helps pupils to understand cultural diversity by bringing them in contact with the attitudes, values and institutions of other cultures as well as exploring their own.
- alerts them to the evolutionary nature of culture and the potential for change.
- encourages a cultural perspective by relating contemporary values to the historical forces which moulded them. (29).

Rod Taylor has similar views. He states that "pupils are imperceptively developing a knowledge and awareness of art, and are forming opinions and judgements as they make observations and express preferences for related works through an examination of similarities and differences" (25). "Thus", he concludes, "the combination of theory and practice is an education in art, craft and design, can form the basis of an approach to art education in which pupils can experience all the benefits and virtues implicit in making art: development of analytic and observational skills, sustained application, personal expression

etc. But simultaneously, they can have opportunity to look outwards to the whole diverse world of the visual arts, and also see their endeavours as part of this larger whole with each aspect nurturing, affirming and enriching the other" (26).

The <u>Arts Discussion Paper</u> also states that 'making' art (artistic education) and 'receiving art' (aesthetic education) should be seen as two complementary processes that are thoroughly integrated" (26).

A Means of Integrating Support Studies into Junior Certificate Projects

According to the Junior Certificate syllabus, support studies should be integrated with practical work in such a way that the student "perceives new meanings and new discoveries" (27).

The Junior Certificate Teacher's Guidelines state that "these studies may become the starting point, stimulus or main motivational force in a learning experience in order to bring to the act of appreciation and critical appraisal, personal experience with the formal elements that constitute the process, object or statement" (28). However, despite the fact that such guidelines were published and available to all teachers in 1989, <u>The Chief Examiner's Report</u>, published in 1992, after the first examination of the Junior Certificate proved that there is a need for a more refined definition, making it clear exactly what is required. According to the <u>Chief Examiner's Report</u>, the term 'support studies' is being interpreted quite literally (i.e. as a 'support' or back up), in that the studies are frequently being selected after the project has been completed, simply because they are an exam requirement. This "random selection of cut-out images from magazines or photo-copied images, which have only a vague and superficial connection with the selected project title" (29), are easily identified by the examiner as they will not have had any influences on the project work. Used in this way the whole purpose of the support studies is defeated as they have not been integrated.

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Of course it is only natural that art teachers, who, up until now have seen practical art and art history as being two distinctively separate subjects, are apprehensive about taking the initiative to integrate the support studies inventively and imaginatively, rather than a mere reinforcement of the teaching of an art element, for example.

For these teachers, whose main experience of using artworks has been in the "art history and appreciation" format for leaving certificate, i.e. emphasising dates and quotable "proven" facts, this is a huge change (30). Rather than the transmission of a body of knowledge which is "out there", largely indivisible and unrelated to the students personal artistic struggles (31), the purpose of the support studies takes a different approach. Their inclusion encourages students and teachers to focus more on ideas and qualities in the work of the artists, craftspersons and designers, rather than the conventional chronological sequential format; the former is believed to be more productive of insight and understanding, than the latter (32).

Primary and Secondary Sources

The Junior Certificate syllabus recommends that students should develop a "capacity for focussed personal response. The motivation should be visually orientated and derive from students direct experience of the natural, social or constructed environment" (33).

According to Kieran Meagher, this reference to "direct experience" can be taken to mean first-hand experience i.e. the analysis of primary source material. Where support studies are concerned, this refers to using original works of art, craft and design (34).

The study of first hand material is of utmost importance, according to Rod Taylor, but it is aided by the second hand source (35).

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The use of secondary source material, notably photographic reproductions, is also a valuable resource, and when used discriminately (36), Meagher believes they can be of greater benefit in adding a contemporary or historical dimension to study (37). He is also cautious with regard to the use secondary source material only for the reason that there is the temptation to superficially copy reproduced imagery - an idea which the syllabus does not promote as being worthwhile (38).

Thus, sources for support studies for practical Junior Certificate Projects should be from first-hand experience of the source i.e. primary sources; the preparation and back-up being from secondary sources such as books, slides, films, videos etc.

Rod and Dot Taylor have summarised primary and secondary sources under their relevant headings.

- 1. Primary Sources
 - a) Original art work seen in museum, gallery, exhibition, studio, workshop etc.
 - b) Original art work on loan to a school or in a school's own collection.
 - c) Visits and residences by practicing professional artists, craftspersons and designers
 - d) Statements made by artists about their work (including comments made during workshop sessions), published or broadcast interviews, letters etc.
 - e) The art work of other pupils.
 - f) The art work of the teacher.

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2. Secondary Sources

- Reproductions of art work in the form of photographs in books, postcards, prints, slides etc.
- b) Monographs, critical or appreciative studies in books or on film or on video.
- c) General background documentary information which places an artist's work in a social or historical context including reconstruction of fictionalised accounts of artists; lives, methods of working etc., in books, film or video (39).

John Berger believes that we now live in an age in which the multiplicity of reproduced images has taken away from the uniqueness of the original: "because of the camera, the painting now travels to the spectator, rather than the spectator to the painting. In its travels, its meaning is diversified" (40).

Surely, it is understandable that matters to do with scale, medium and detail, as well as notions of presence and occasion, are all extremely important features of a heightened experience of art. The reproduction only hints at these inherent qualities, and it is only in the study of originals that full significance of process is revealed and understood (41).

This is certainly supported by the following statement by one of Andrew Mortimer's thirteen year-old students. She tells of her reaction to Théodore Géricault's <u>'The Raft of the Medusa'</u>, which she had studied in reproduction, and then in a television programme before persuading her parents to take her to Paris to see the original (42).

"From the TV programme I learned an enormous amount of history and background information about the artist and the painting..... this helped me to understand the painting. But the film didn't do the picture justice. The painting was unexplainable. It covered a

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space bigger than the end wall of the assembly hall..... it caught my attention immediately, the moment I walked into the room I was mesmerized..... what I knew in theory could now be put into practice, just sitting imagining the pain and hunger the survivors were suffering. My imagination was running loose about how they got into that situation in the first place and what would become of them. As my eyes scanned every inch of the picture, I spotted something that wasn't be visible at first sight. It was a ship in the background of the painting. Suddenly the painting just fell into place. I now knew what the people on the raft were vigorously waving at. This tiny dot on the horizon of the picture would be unknown to thousands of people who spend only seconds glancing at the figures in the painting" (43).

This account highlights precisely the problem of the use of secondary sources ('the film didn't do the picture justice'), and outlines a process of growing empathetic understanding from initial intellectual comprehension, to emotional involvement, by way of careful scrutiny of the actual object (44). This has considerable motivating consequences on the student, which may spark off a drive to pursue further interest in that work and subsequently in a wider range of material: thus coming to make discriminatory judgements. This in turn also leads to the reinforcement of practical work by insights gained through study.

Although Mortimer applies this process to artworks in galleries and museums, a similar process could be applied in approaching other primary sources for support studies. There are numerous possibilities for first-hand primary sources. Examples include The Zoo, The Botanic Gardens, The ESB Museum, Christ Church Cathedral, Smithfield Markets, to name but a few in Dublin alone, not to mention the numerous art galleries, museums, heritage centres, workshops, etc., that can be used throughout the country. All of these primary sources can be researched and backed up by secondary source material, to result in a rich and valuable learning experience.

Of the primary sources I mentioned in the above list, I have chosen the art gallery and the museum. In the next chapter, I will focus on using these as sources for support studies for practical Junior Certificate examination projects.
FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 1

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CHAPTER 2

THE GALLERY AS A SOURCE FOR SUPPORT STUDIES

Importance of Gallery Visits

The art gallery is one of the most readily available primary sources available to art students. For the vast majority of students at Junior cycle, a trip to an art gallery will represent their only experience of learning in a gallery (1). With yet another option scheme after the Junior Certificate, many students drop art - one of the rare subjects that form a major footstone of our civilisation - invariably in favour of yet more 'academic' subjects (2). Unless their home circumstances are particularly favourable the majority of these pupils' attitudes, values and insights in relation to the visual arts will be largely based on their art "diet" up to the end of their third year (3).

Therefore it is vital that if a class is taken to an art gallery, it has got to be an experience that is valuable and memorable to them. Rod Taylor describes it as being "something that is valuable to them, something which they can recall with some pleasure and feel that they really have made some breakthrough in their perception of art works - it's taking children to an art gallery for the first time that really is of great importance - and it can often be quite disastrous" (4). These "disasters" are usually initiated by students' opposing attitudes to institutions such as galleries / museums etc. These attitudes relate to students' preconceptions of the galleries / museums and the place of art in their homes.

Students Attitudes to Galleries / Museums

The attitude that students have to art galleries varies according to social class, i.e. manual workers, indeed, up to 66% of them, according to research by Bourdieu, associate museums closely with churches in their minds (5).



Many galleries / museums date from the nineteenth century and were specifically designed to emphasise this link, buildings deliberately incorporating architectural features reminiscent of churches and classical temples. It was part of the aim to evoke in the visitor a sense of awe - and hence respect for the artworks on display. The fact that exhibits must not be touched, (often underlined by uniformed attendants, who can carry out their duties in an authoritarian manner, affirms the sanctity of the gallery and the feeling that the conversation of its priceless treasures - what Berger terms "holy relics" - must over-ride such immediate ones as participation and enjoyment. (6).

With this ethos still prevailing in the majority of galleries / museums in the nineties, it is surely unfair to expect students to develop an affiliation with the artworks in such an atmosphere. Therefore, the art teacher has a huge responsibility to promote enthusiasm and excitement about visiting such a venue.

The student is hardly likely to take an interest in a trip "in which leaders herd children through the museum, lecturing all the way" (7). According to Newsome and Silver, the traditional visit to the museum/gallery "often seems to impose a passive learning situation on children, by giving them irrelevant information" (8). They firmly believe that children learn best "through participation, discovery and the stimulation of their natural curiosity (9).

In essence, this calls for the need for communication between the school and the gallery/ museum, via the art teacher, and gallery/museum educational officer.

Importance of Liaison Between Schools and Galleries

If there is a liaison between school and gallery, then the chances are greatly increased of obtaining maximum benefit from the visit. If the art teacher conveys the exact requirements of the visit to the gallery, then the gallery staff can arrange suitable materials for that particular classes' needs.



Therefore with specific tasks to complete, relating to practical projects in the classroom, the students have a real focussed purpose that will support their own work by investigating the work of others. This eliminates confusion, boredom and fear of the gallery, as it brings the artworks down to the students' level. It makes them feel a bond between their work and that of the artists, through answering questions which compare similar aspects in their own work with that of others.

Furthermore, a visit outside the school, will become something alive, real and relevant, if students know the visit is directly related to what they are doing in the artroom.

According to John Holt, by linking school art and gallery art, "demands are made on the wide spectrum of students' intelligence, capabilities and talents (10). By doing this, "participation", "discovery" and "stimulation", which Newsome and Silver referred to as the best vehicles through which to learn, are brought to the forefront. (11).

Sadly, however, the conventional possible gallery tour as described by Newsome and Silver still predominates (12), and can only be substituted by more active visits by demands of a liaison between school and gallery/museum.

Most importantly, this interaction helps to decipher what the gallery / museum visit aims to achieve i.e. how the visit will contribute to the students' practical projects. This is absolutely essential in order to have a productive, worth-while and stimulating learning experience, which will be an integral part of the Junior Certificate project. There is a huge difference in the approach which schools take to visiting galleries / museums, and the significance and part the visit plays in relation to work back in the classroom.



Katy MacLeod feels that:

"Taking into account the outstanding variety in the way school visits are organised, some being part of carefully constructed programmes of related study, some being purely off the cuff and casual, educational visits are generally of the slot-in-kind! Schools come with their courses sewn up, visit the gallery, take what the gallery has to offer, and go. The gallery may be unaware of the overall purpose of the visit and may not be fully informed about follow-up sessions". (13).

When galleries / museums are used in this way opportunities are lost both ways: the school makes too narrow a claim on the galleries resources, and the gallery pitches its tour largely in the dark.

In a recent interview, Helen O'Donoghue, the Educational Officer at the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA), said that very few schools actually seek the museum's advice educationally, before a visit. They normally arrange independently for a regular curator to document the exhibits. (14).

Traditionally, the majority of art gallery / museum staff were appointed from university backgrounds because of their art history qualifications. The art teacher is in a similar situation in that the traditional training was a practical, skills based approach. Often, teachers and curators have been persuing the same goals without working together, or even worse, different goals, without realising it.

However, through a liaison, the art history content of one is complemented by the practical skills of the other. Between them, they have a combination of skills which when used properly will lead towards a more rounded and relevant gallery visit.

The teacher can inform the gallery staff exactly what is required from the visit, i.e. what the students are undertaking practically, how it will link, the age, ability and background of the students etc. This is vital as the gallery / museum staff have only one opportunity with a



particular group / class. If they are unsuccessful, it is improbable that those pupils, or even that school, will return. Surely this is too huge a risk to take when the visit will most likely shape the students' views and attitudes to art galleries / museums.

Rod Taylor echoes this view and stresses "the importance to the art teacher of knowing that the gallery staff have an inside knowledge and expertise which is complementary to their own and which is therefore going to further their own and their students' awareness of particular works in a memorable way, through contact with a committed and informed specialist". Good gallery practice arises out of a partnership and through understanding between teacher and gallery / museum lecturer (15).

If this interaction between school and gallery / museum does take place, what does the gallery / museum see as the role in contributing to the educational development of the student, (specifically, its contribution to follow-up practical projects in the classroom.) The next chapter will explore the possible contribution of the gallery / museum to follow-up practical projects in the classroom.



FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 2

- Katy MacLeod, "Gallery and School: Art Study Programmes", in <u>Critical Studies in</u> <u>Art and Design Education</u>, ed. David Thistlewood, (London: Longman Group :Ltd., 1989), p. 88.
- Rod Taylor, <u>Educating for Art: Critical Response and Development</u> (London: School Curriculum Development Committee, 1986), p.
- 3. Ibid., p. 181.
- 4. Ibid., p. 135.
- 5. John Berger, "Ways of Seeing", quoted in Educating for Art, Rod Taylor, p. 135.
- 6. Rod Taylor, Educating for Art, p. 136/137.
- 7. Katy MacLeod, "Gallery and Schools", p. 88.
- B. Y. Newsome and A. Z. Silver, <u>The Art Museum as Educator: a Collection of</u> <u>Studies as Guides to Practice and Policy</u>, p. 266.

9. Ibid., p. 267.

- John Holt, "How Children Fail", quoted in <u>Critical Studies in Art and Design</u> <u>Education</u>, ed. David Thistlewood, p. 89.
- 11. Newsome and Silver, Art Museum as Educator, p. 267.



12. Ibid.

- 13. Katy MacLeod, Education Supplement (Bristol: Arnolfini Gallery, 1983).
- Interview with Helen O'Donoghue, Educational Officer at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, November, 1994.
- 15. Rod Taylor, Educating for Art, p. 267.

CHAPTER 3

THE MUSEUM / GALLERY AS EDUCATOR

The Place of Education within the Gallery / Museum

Museum / gallery directors tend to view education as all embracing. The Director of the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) Declan McGonagle, says that: "The key to forging the link between gallery and community is education, it is education in the sense of mediating, opening up, understanding and engaging with the people" (1).

If museums feel so strongly about their educational role, how do they go about implementing it on administrative and practical levels, what are the philosophies inherent in this function and what form does the educational priority take?

McGonagle, (IMMA) is critical of galleries which regard education as an afterthought, an uncomfortable requirement that is conveniently dealt with by minimal service to large school parties. He places education in the foreground by creating a position for the educational officer, which is on a par with that of the curatorial posts. (2).

Most museums do not want to reproduce a school atmosphere, but rather to allow a different kind of experience enabling students to interact with the collections and museum functions.

What then, do museums and galleries mean by the word "education"? Helen O'Donoghue, the educational officer at IMMA, considers aesthetic education (looking and seeing) as important for the education of various groups. She feels it is necessary to avoid normal methods of teaching, helping the students explore and participate in the museum environment. For her, aesthetic "education" is an awareness of works which enhances the perceptual abilities of students, through the exploration of new teaching methods, techniques, and experimenting with new materials which schools do not have the time to do. (3).

O'Donoghue's definition of aesthetic education as "looking and seeing" (4), is echoed by Renée Marcousé, who promotes drawing as the most valuable means to help looking. He feels that:

The requirement that they look carefully, is not only the most important, but is also the most difficult to achieve. In our experience this is best done by sketching.

It is not a question as how well they draw; the drawings may be quite slight, even some detail which has interested them. The aim is to give them an opportunity to stand and stare, to become aware of forms and colours, of which otherwise they are but dimly conscious; for these aesthetic impressions are difficult to define and as personal to the child as to the adult. Such impressions can at some stage be strengthened and intensified but discussion or explanation, but initially, they can be acquired only through visual contact with the object (5).

Australian research into school excursions has shown that where "active experiences" are incorporated into visits, greater learning takes place. This contrasts to the conventional passive visit (6).

In Sweden, research has also shown that there is a strong corralation between the benefits gained from exhibitions and the level of the visitor's own creative activity (7).

Therefore, teaching in the museum should acknowledge both participation and appreciation as being complementary aspects. One of the main means of educating students in the gallery / museum, through art, craft and design, is through the worksheet. These worksheets vary enormously in their emphasis, from gallery to gallery, as do the types of materials in general which are available to teachers.



A Review of Existing Learning Materials

Worksheets are the primary type of learning material available to teachers and students. They are the main vehicle through which the "aesthetic learning" takes place (8).

In order to demonstrate how very different worksheets can be in their effectiveness. I have taken two galleries, and analysed why, in my opinion, I think their worksheets are successful or unsuccessful.

According to Hooper - Greenhill, unsuccessful worksheets are those which:

"are not specifically geared towards the needs and abilities of the group using them; direct attention given to the label rather that the artifact. They do not encourage thoughtful looking and use of observation, and are limited to a 'see-it', 'tick it' approach, all in all, preventing, rather than promoting learning". (9).

Successful work sheets, on the other hand according to Hooper-Greenhill, are:

"carefully planned, tried and tested in relation to specific objectives, are agerelated, encourage deductive thinking, are theme or person based, are limited to a few key objects, often use drawings and illustrations in imaginative ways, enable follow up discussion afterwards at school or at the museum, and may enable modifications by the teacher". (10).

The quality of worksheets available in Irish galleries / museums varies dramatically, from the successful to the unsuccessful. This can be easily demonstrated through the comparison on worksheets from two very different types of galleries:

- i) The National Gallery of Ireland.
- ii) The Irish Museum of Modern Art.

These two institutions vary enormously in their learning emphasis i.e. what type of learning they are promoting, their sensitivity towards ability, age, interest, and generally, the suitability of the worksheets to the specific group student.

i) The National Gallery of Ireland

This gallery is over 190 years old, and although it houses the work of some of the most important contributors of ideas in the history of Art (i.e. Montegra, Caravaggio, Rubens, David, Degas etc.), its educational programme is in fact quite conservative, and fails to promote excitement and involvement with the work of these artists.

Questions on the worksheets (Figures 1 and 2) focus on the formal attributes of the artworks in question. They are lower order questions, and do not encourage deductive thinking, or an exploration of the aesthetic qualities inherent within the work.

Participation is vital if students are to fully engage with artworks, and the National Gallery's Worksheets do not adequately deal with this area. Illustrations are poor on the worksheets, and activities such as drawing in missing sections of the artwork are poor and ineffective methods of participation.

I also think that the National Gallery worksheets overlook the needs and capabilities of individual students. The sheets are age grouped (i.e. 6-12 years), (10-18 years). I feel that these age groups are pointless as there is something dramatically wrong if an eighteen year old, second level student can only perform at the same level as a ten year old, primary level student, and indeed, an eighteen year old third level student.







.

ons to the French Rooms and find the picture shown below

THE HOLY FAMILY

11

Ask for dire



Complete the missing details and colour in this picture.

How many liquies are there in this picture:	
Do you know what an anget looks like:	
Can you describe an anger	
The child Jesus is seated on Our Lady's lap, who is t	the man in the background, what is he doing:
Who is the child Jesus locking at:	
	G blue, D yellow, D red G green, D pink, D mauve, D brown

Fig. 1: The National Gallery of Ireland Worksheet (Front)







Another method that Poussin has used to tocus attention on the central ligures is to have everyone in the picture looking at them. He is also very careful about how he uses colour, notice how he uses the strongest colours on the most important figures.

There are a lot of shapes like triangles in this picture, can you draw three shapes in the boxes below.



The artist was very interested in antiquity. Can you find anything in the picture that you consider old or antique:_____



HICOLAS POUSSIN (1594-1665)

Athough French by birth, Poussin spert the greater part of his working life in halv. In 1624 he settled in Rome, which was then the artistic centre of Europe, where he began to mix with educated people who later became his patrons.

The anist's classical style emerged gradually, he learns how to balance colour and form, the real and the ideal, emotions and beauty. He studied anique statues and ancent Roman ruins to help him convey his vision and 'The Holy Family', painted in 1649, shows the results of these studies.

The picture is a deeply spiritual one reflecting the peace and contentment of its subject—The Holy Family. The structure is clearly ladiout, the ligures are statuesque discreaying ittle emotion and the background buildings are undoubtedly inspired by Poussin's surroundings in Rome. Poussol is considered the greatest French painter of the 17th century and 'The Holy Family' is a superb example of his style.



The Holy Family' is a very special subject to paint, and over the years anists have tended to set the scene in their own century. We would ask you to consider The Holy Family' as it might appear today, think about where the scene would take place and look at newspapers and magazines to help you with details.

Gallery Coening mouns. Non-Sait: 10 a.m. 46 p.m., Thurs: 10 a.m. 46 p.m. Sun: 24 p.m. Drawing toards may be borrowed from Reposition C. Kane Boune & The hatronal Gallery of Ineand. This sheet may not be reproduced

Fig. 2: The National Gallery of Ireland Worksheet (back)



In contrast to the National Gallery, IMMA's worksheets are accompanied by separate guidelines for the teacher. These worksheets (Figures 3 and 4) are designed to give direction to discussion and additional projects for the teacher to follow up on, on return to the classroom.

Each worksheet has a two year age bracket and they encourage students to look at, and respond to the formal and aesthetic quality of each work. The questions also encourage the child to explore each area of the object or painting, the materials and the methods used and their relationship to other artworks within the museum.

The teachers' guidelines contain information regarding aesthetic decisions made by the artist, and advise on how to encourage students to explore these aspects through physically imitating the postures within the work; comparing differences in other works by the artist; looking closely at the tool marks of the artist; creating stories and drawings of the exhibition. They also provide the opportunity for the teacher to discuss other areas of the school curriculum which may relate to the works i.e. history etc.

The preparation of worksheets by IMMA show a sensitive approach to the needs of both teacher and student.

These worksheets allow room for modification by the teacher to meet the requirements and levels of his / her students abilities.

All in all, IMMA's worksheets promote an active visit to the museum, but they are also unfortunately, one of the few sources which have broken away from the conservative "see it", "tick it" format, which Hooper-Greenhill described. (11).

LEADER WORKSHEET 3 AGES 8-12

WEST WING

The worksheet is for the use of the group leader to help the group look at and discuss the work on exhibition. There is a separate worksheet for each person in the group where the group member will be asked to write a little about some of the work. These worksheets are designed to give direction to discussion and also dives as to haw visiting the gallery might lead to follow-up work back in the classroom. Take time also to look at and respond to work which is not featured here if the group is interested.

Landing

Richard Long Kilkenny Circle Limestone 1991

 Paul Henry Turf Stacks in the Bog Oil on Canvas 1, 1920

These two works is in the discussed in relation to each other. Note are about landscape. In the painting, the furt is stacked in a particular way. Sith Richard Long's piece, the artist had to lonk and fee, the snape of each stone before he decided to place it, so that each stone would build up the circular shape. This is like dry store wall building. This way thuilding could be related to stole circles. Newgrange, beening buts and Gallarus frat ry.

Move into the corridor int enter first room in left.

1. Antony Goraley

Still Fallers Set True Take with the stream esting to a set which we

Fig. 3: The Irish Museum of Modern Art: Teacher's Information Sheet

for Exhibition.



Stephan Balkenhol Worksheet 3 Age (11-13)

1. 57 Penguins

In groups of 5, walk in among the penguins. The man who made these penguins came to the Museum and placed each penguin in a particular position so try not to touch or move them.

Look at the way the penguins are standing. Look at the way some penguins are on their own and some are in groups. Try and find a penguin that is standing like the man on the wall.

Pick a penguin and copy the way it is standing. Remember that penguins have no elbows or knees like you have.

What is each penguin placed on?

The penguins are made from_

Why do you think some penguins are lying down? ____

When you have looked at the penguins join the rest of the group and make drawings of 5 different penguins.

4. Small Man On Snail Describe this plinth

7.Turtle Describe what is different about this plinth compared to the others you have seen

Fig.3: The Irish Museum of Modern Art: Students' Worksheet


Since the National Gallery requires only the acquisition of basic factual knowledge, answers are predetermined. The problem is that this induces a kind of tunnel vision where only the predetermined goals are seen as being important, and the evolution of other goals, along the way, is eliminated. In gathering the information and fulfilling the goals of the worksheet, the learner might miss many other opportunities for deeper insights into the objects.

IMMA have avoided this by including open-ended questions which encourage the learner to engage in more imaginative but less predictable learning from the exhibits.

There is a huge need for similar types of worksheets to be available in all museums / galleries, especially as the Junior Certificate demands that such institutions meet certain educational aims and objectives.

However, in order to obtain maximum benefit from the use of such worksheets in the gallery / museum, careful planning must go into the research and preparation preceeding the gallery visit, and most importantly, to the follow-up work in the classroom, i.e. how the visit will link into, and be an integral part of, the students practical projects.

Thus, it can be recommended that there are three essential parts to a successful gallery/museum visit:

- i) Preliminary preparation.
- ii) The Visit itself.
- iii) Follow-on work in the classroom.

These will be explored in the next chapter.



FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 3

- E. Loone, "An Interview with Declan McGonagle", in <u>Culture in Dublin</u>, (Dublin: 1991), pp. 120-125.
- 2. Ibid.
- Interview with Helen O'Donoghue, Educational Officer at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, November, 1994.
- 4. Ibid.
- Renée Marcousé, "The Listening Eye", quoted in Rod Taylor, <u>Educating for Art:</u> <u>Critical Response and Development</u> (London: School Curriculum Development Committee, 1986), p. 137.
- A. MacKenzie and R. T. White, "Fieldwork in Geography and Long-term Memory Structures", in <u>Research and the End of Schools as we know Them.</u> ed. R. T. White, (Australian Journal of Education, vol. 28, No. 1, p. 58).
- 7. V. Arnell, Going to Exhibitions, (Stockholm, 1976), p. 31.
- 8. Interview with Helen O'Donoghue, November, 1994.
- Eileen Hooper Greenhill, <u>Museum and Gallery Education</u>, (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1991), p. 126.
- 10. Ibid.
- 11. Ibid.



CHAPTER 4

PLANNING A VISIT TO A GALLERY / MUSEUM

The structure of a visit to a gallery or museum needs very careful thought and detailed advance planning.

According to Woodward, "most of the best visits to museums and galleries form part of a three-part unit:

- i) Preliminary preparation.
- ii) Museum / Gallery visit.
- iii) Follow-up work.

i) Preliminary Work

The preliminary work may be carried out in school, or out of school, and is used to prepare the students so that maximum value can be gained from the visit itself. The museum or gallery visit acts to motivate, stimulate, provide a physical experience, and consolidate learning, and as such, is successful either fairly near the beginning of a programme of study, or fairly near the end. It is essential that the experiences of the visit are recalled, discussed, evaluated, and responded to back in the classroom, otherwise much of the value will be lost. Very often although the museum visit is only one component in a programme of study, it is the hinge that articulates other aspects of the learning process, and as such is essential to the course" (2).



Teacher's Preliminary Visit to the Museum / Gallery

In the planning of a visit, it is essential that the art teacher can survey the venue in advance, particularly if this is the first time for the venue to be used. The preliminary visit can be used to locate the toilets, coach-parking space and other practical details; to pin-point any unexpected potential disasters, such as certain artworks being away for a period, etc. On a preliminary visit worksheets can be compiled, or adapted. Also, this is an opportunity to meet the educational officer, to discover precisely what the visit will comprise of, and to agree joint objectives and procedures.

Importance of Classroom Preparation

As well as making the preliminary visit to the gallery / museum, it is vital that adequate classroom preparation is done, so that the students have enough groundwork done to gain maximum benefit from the visit.

Where classroom preparation is adequate, students are more likely to attain some measure of independence in the gallery. The teacher is then able to operate more informally with small groups at a time, generating mutual discussion. This allows for genuinely meaningful teaching which falls between the extremes of no support at all on one hand, and the predictible mechanical gallery tour on the other. However, inadequate preparation can often lead to disappointment and a dissatisfactory and unproductive learning experience.

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Witkin records on teacher's dilemma following a visit to a gallery:-

"I must confess to a certain amount of dismay when I am faced with people with a very superficial or immature approach to the work, I know this is a personal weakness that I am continually fighting. I took ninety pupils, to an exhibition of Indian Art for half an hour. I felt a sort of regret that children can be so utterly illiterate as to pass by things which really are tremendous masterpieces, without even a second glance. One knows that one is exposing children to these things and one hopes that at some time in the future, this experience will be remembered and have some kind of impact upon them. But the experience for me is tinged with a certain amount to regret that they aren't mature enough to be able to appreciate, to even begin to appreciate, what they're being exposed to. (3).

According to Witkin, this teacher was deeply considerate of his pupils, and hurt that what touched him deeply should leave them cold. One can easily picture his indifferent pupils wandering aimlessly through that gallery.

Witkin states that:

"The great wealth of the art world achieves no integral place in the creative work of the art departments themselves, and yet teachers are continually surprised, and often secretly furious with their recalcitrant barbarians whose own work they may have promised or found worth in the past..... the pupil has little respect for what he cannot use, and he cannot use anything that he has been inadequately prepared to contact in experience." (4)

Obviously, in addition to preparing pupils for what they are going to see in a particular exhibition, by discussing something of its content prior to the visit, Witkin is suggesting that there is a deeper and longer-term form of preparation - that of utilising the wealth of the art world as a natural, integrated part of practical art room activity (5), which is precisely what the Junior Certificate aims to do.

Eisner believes, that what we make of a situation that we encounter, depends in large measure, not only on the objective characteristics of the situation, but on what we bring to the situation, in the form of our immediate needs and our general past life history (6).

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The impact of different frames of reference upon the "same" phenomenon is well illustrated by the comments made by a minister, a real estate broker, and a cowboy, each of whom, stood on a cliff, overlooking the Grand Canyon. After several moments of gazing, the minister pondered, "what a great gift of God!", the real estate broker mused, "what a fantastic place to build motels!", the cowboy exclaimed, "what a hell of a place to lose a cow!" (7).

Each of these men saw the Grand Canyon differently, the experience each of them had, was affected by the frame of reference he brought to the situation. It has been argued by Philip Phenix and other educational philosophers, that the process of schooling ought to consist of helping children to learn to use the various frames of reference that men have developed, in their attempt to understand, experience, and control nature (8).

What a child learns is, in part, due to what he has had an opportunity to experience. These experiences contribute to the development of frames of reference that in turn create expectancies that admit or reject, certain aspects of the environment (9). Part of the problem that the art teacher faces, is to help the child expand his / her frame of reference so that his / her concept of art extends well beyond the often limited conception that has currency in many homes and communities (10).

Using Artworks as a Starting Point for Practical Projects

When using artworks as starting points or supports in any way for the students' own practical work, it is vital to motivate the students through the artwork. All such artworks are produced in a cultural or social context, and this is an ideal way to spark off the initial interest.

There are many useful, but often neglected, ways of placing art objects or artists into context. These include the study of information (for example, written or filmed) that enhances an understanding of the historical or environmental conditions in which the work

was made; reconstructions of the artist's life or social milieu; experimentation with materials or method associated with the artist; and visiting the site(s) of reproduction from specific landscapes, to actual studies.

General background documentary information or reconstruction of this sort can be a key to capturing students initial interest, and provide a platform from which a more sustained and informed study might be undertaken. It can also help link art with other curriculum areas (including history, English and other languages, geography, science etc.)

When such materials are used as stimuli for more extended study in the gallery / museum, and then, following up the gallery visit with thematic based project work, integration of the practical and the aesthetic takes place, in a manner that is educationally beneficial for both teacher and student.

Working with the Gallery before the Visit

As already discussed in Chapter 2, it is vital that there is communication between the art teacher and the Educational Officer at the museum / gallery, prior to the visit. Good gallery practice arises out of a partnership and through understanding between teacher and gallery staff.

With regard to activity in the gallery, Helen O'Donoghue (IMMA) feels that it is vital this partnership is there, as each group will have specific needs which cannot be met by a standard way of working in the gallery.

This is particularly relevant to Junior Certificate projects, where there are specific themes and requirements to be explored through the visit.

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O'Donoghue feels that set programmes (i.e. worksheets, etc.) are not suitable for Junior Certiciate students, as they are too general. If a class are using the artworks in the gallery/ museum as a source for thematic based Junior Certificate projects, then it is essential that the art teacher and the educational staff at the museum, communicate and benefit from each other's ideas. The art teacher needs to be clear about the outcomes/objectives which need to be achieved through the visit i.e. the purpose of the visit.

When the educational staff know the needs of the class, the ability and the temperament of the individual group, the theme of the project and the type of work that the teacher wishes to follow up the visit with, it is then much easier to come up with specific material which meets the needs of that group.

If, on the other hand, a group of students do not plan with the educational staff in advance, then the curators do not know where to pitch their information, what is for relevance to the class, how to approach the group, i.e. whether to convey information or promote discussion through questioning etc.

Also, it is vital that the museum / gallery staff know how much preparation has been done prior to the visit, if any, and how much experience the class have had in looking at and exploring artworks. Otherwise the visit will be in danger of being an adverse experience through inappropriately pitched information. This can occur at a conceptual level where the guides information is pitched above the students' heads, consequently turning off many students. The opposite can also occur where by asking increasingly obvious questions in their attempts to get some response from students, the guide is in reality, patronising towards the group's intelligence and ability. However this is avoidable if prior collaboration is made between school and gallery.

When pitched at the correct level, the guide's knowledge can help the pupils to recognise what is unique in a particular work; in its absence, all works may seem similar to each

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other, without any standing out as being significant. Such experiences can be avoided if sufficient preparation and collaboration between school and gallery / museum, takes place prior to the visit.

Importance of Critical Criteria

In the past, a general absence from the art syllabus of the cultivation of critical thinking, meant that many students were ill-equipped to approach gallery / museum artifacts, with any adequate criteria to enable them to proceed past a cursory glance.

A constant complaint of teachers is that when they take their students to a gallery, they go through the entire place in a matter of seconds.

With the integration of support studies in practical Junior Certificate projects, however, this can be avoided if students are given a criteria under which to explore artworks. Rod Taylor proposed a model in the critical studies for Art Education Project, "Educating for Art".

Taylor believes that there are "four fundamental areas" (11), which "all have teaching potential..... they are all relevant to all art and crafts objects, though the emphasis on particular aspects will inevitably vary from one work to another" (12).

Even without prior knowledge, any artwork can still be approached from these four fundamental stand-points, each with the potential of generating a wide range of discussion, questioning and responses (3). These are content, form, process and mood, and they give rise to the following types of questions:

Content:

- What is the work about?
- What is the subject matter?

Is the subject matter incidental, or is it, for example, a vehicle for the social, religious, moral or political concerns of either artist or client?

Was the subject matter observed directly, remembered or imagined?

Has it been treated representationally or is there deliberate exaggeration, distortion or abstraction? If so, why?

Is the subject matter surface deep or are there hidden, or not immediately apparent meanings alluded to, through the use of, for example, symbols, analogies, metaphors?

Form:

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- How has the work been arranged?
- Is this in keeping with its content?
- Does it confirm or contradict the work's imagery?
- What kind of colour scheme has been used?

Is it, for example, harmonious or is it one of contrasts?



- Does one colour dominate or do two or more have equal significance?
- Is there one principle shape or is it composed of interrelating combinations of shapes?
- Are there recurring shapes, lines, rhythms, forms, etc., which determine the design of the work?
- Does the work have variety or unity of texture?
 - Does the work hold together as an overall entity, or is it pleasing in parts, yet unsatisfactory as a whole?

Process:

- How was the work made and what was it made with?
- What materials, tools, processes and techniques did the artist use?
- How and where might the artist have commenced to work?
- Through what stages might the work have proceeded from commencement to completion?
- Might the artist have made supporting studies sketches, photographs, maquettes, colleges or stencils for example?
 - Was the work executed rapidly or might it have evolved slowly over a long period?



What skills must the artist have required to produce such a work?

Mode:

- Does the work affect you, the viewer, in any way?
- Does it capture a mood, feeling or emotion which you have already experienced?
- Does it convey feelings about life and nature?
- Can you imaging what the artist's feelings might have been while producing this work?
- Is the work quiet or noisy, soothing or disturbing, happy or sad, relaxing or jarving, etc., in the mood it conveys and the feelings it arouses?
- Is your mood simply the one of the moment, or has the work directly affected you?
 - If the latter, what are the qualities that so affect you? (14)

It is vital that students have such criteria and develop an ability to make sound judgements about artworks, as opposed to mere preferences. Elliot Eisner has written: "preference for style in art requires no education or sophistication. As in taste, in matters of preference, there can be no dispute. Anyone can have, and is entitled to is own preference or taste. Judgement is another matter." (15)

The gallery / museum visit can be used as a means of promoting discussion, of a critical nature, thus encouraging development of critical skills, social skills and appreciation of art, craft and design.

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It is essential that development of these areas is ongoing in the classroom, and not only touched on by the occasional external visit (i.e. to museums/galleries). The success of the gallery visit depends largely on how much of such development has preceeded the visit.

ii) The Visit Itself

The visit itself will take one of a number of forms. It should offer a wide variety of stimulating activities, enable students to come in to contact with objects and displays, and allow them sufficient time to visit the museum shop also.

Firstly, however, it is important that the students feel comfortable - after all, this is a new learning environment, which has the potential to distract rather than attract attention and involvement.

A New Learning Environment

The stimulating setting of the museum / gallery is unfamiliar to the students; the disorientation the students experience needs to be overcome by exploration. This need to explore the space before feeling comfortable can interfere with knowledge - based tasks, unless these tasks can be carried out in an exploratory mode. (16)

Most museum and gallery educators are aware of the need to put audiences of all ages at ease in strange places. On arrival at the museum / gallery, some basic orientation is vital before settling into the main purpose of the visit. This preliminary phase is also necessary if a gallery curator is conducting the visit, to make an initial relationship with the group, and even if the art teacher decides to conduct the visit him/herself, it is a good means of focussing the attention of the group.

Exploratory behaviour, such as data gathering, discussion, etc., can follow then.

Visiting a Museum - A Historical Viewpoint

In the 1880's, Greenhill drew up a list of useful "rules" to keep in mind on visiting a museum, to help the visitor. These so called "rules" are still a good guide to plan a visit by:

- 1) Avoid attempting to see too much.
- Remember that one specimen or one article well seen is better than a score of specimens casually inspected.
- 3) Before entering a museum, ask yourself what it is you particularly wish to see, and confine your attention largely to those specimens. Consult the attendant as to what is specially interesting in each room.
- 4) Remember the main object of the specimens is to instruct.
- 5) Have a notebook with you so you can record your impressions, then on a succeeding visit, you may pick up your information where you left off in the previous visit.
- 6) Introduce in conversation your impression of what you see in museums.
- Consult frequently the technical literature on the special subject in which you are interested.
- Visit the nearest museum periodically and let it be to you an advanced school of self instruction.

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- 9) Remember there is something new to see every time you go.
- Make a private collection of something, remember that a collection of postage stamps has many uses.
- 11) Follow up some special subject of museum study.
- 12) See slowly, observe closely, and think much upon what you see. (17)

Today, most museums / galleries share this idea of the museum as education in its own right. Learning in the museum / gallery can take place on a group basis in the form of discussion, or on an individual basis, by exploring the artworks through worksheets. In order for maximum educational development, ideally, both types of learning should be promoted. For both, the teacher must act as the initiator, the motivator, and the stimulator, and interact with the students.

Student / Teacher Interaction in the Gallery

Verbal Interaction

What the students obtain from the visit, will depend largely on the type of interaction between the teacher and the pupil in the art gallery. Although worksheets may ensure that each student has a chance to express personal ideas, feelings, and in general, an industrial response to the works on display, it is vital that there is an initial discussion between the group and the teacher / curator. This initial discussion acts as a catalyst for thoughts, ideas, insights, etc., into artworks. It should stimulate and arouse the students' imaginations, so that they can form their own ideas on the work, through personal response in their worksheets.

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Therefore, great emphasis should be laid on the importance of the type of interaction which takes place, between student and teacher / curator in the gallery, (i.e. the type of questions asked), as this consequently determines the type of learning which takes place.

According to Mike Hildred, more open-ended questions need to be asked by teachers, requiring redeployment of teaching skills in terms of listening to what pupils tell them, and recognising what is said; giving pupils of all ages more practice in expressing and justifying their opinions. (18)

In his BBC programmes, "Ways of Seeing", John Berger questions the interpretations of paintings by experts, in books and the media in general. Berger includes the art teacher in his criticism, when claiming that students, given encouragement to look and think for themselves, could extract a wealth of potential meanings from direct contact with art images, without being subjected to the common "mystifying clap trap", which happens all too often. (19)

With students' lacking specialist art knowledge, at Junior Certificate level, the teachers' perspective tends to inhibit expression of the group's individual points of view. Opinions about art are of course just opinions, some are informed, others are not. (20)

John Bowden views it as a first and important lesson for students to believe that their judgements are as valid as those of the "expert", whilst it is to a certain extent true that complicated analysis of works of art, are often made by critics and reviewers, the teacher needs to emphasise (in order to encourage discussion) hat the uninitiated can express value views without "expert" knowledge. The view that art criticism is solely the province of people of learning, has done much to inhibit the average person's enjoyment of art. (21)

According to Berger then, much relies on whether the teacher elevates him / herself above the level of the students, and transfers known facts, etc., about artworks, or whether the

teacher has an open mind, and is willing to accept that all opinions are valid, if booked up with a sound judgement.

In his researches, Rod Taylor has found that teachers who retain a fascination with, and enthusiasm for, the art form or object, are the ones who, however "experienced", remain in a state of personal growth. They appear to maintain a constructive balance between their private and personal lives and the considerable demands of being committed art educators. (22)

Some teachers continue to "grow" in their love and understanding of the visual arts through some form of personal and active involvement, as opposed to those who continually attempt to draw passively upon what they derived from their art training. They are better able to help their pupils envisage something of the full breadth of the visual arts. Without this kind of continuing personal involvement, it is all too easy for the art teacher to appear as the sole arbriter of artistic taste and judgements. (23)

In this book 'The Teaching of Art', David Hargreaves stipulates four conditions as being necessary if the teacher is to "explain" the arts successfully to pupils.

- That the teacher successfully communicates his or her own fascination with, and enthusiasm for, the art form or art object;
- That the explanation given builds upon the pupils aroused interest in the art object, or upon the pupils' fascination with the teachers' fascination;
- 3) That the teacher is allowing the pupils to make a free decision of their own to move from "outside" to "inside" and is in no way seeking to compel them to do so;
- 4) That the teacher is inviting the pupils to join him / her on the inside, but is making no judging against them if they choose not to do so. (24)

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Although the domineering teacher is criticised (i.e. by Berger) (25), it is absolutely necessary that the teacher does chair the discussion, not regarding him / herself as an "expert", with the right to determine what is "good" or "bad", but as an initiator and an encourager of ideas, thoughts, etc.

It is vital that all students get a chance to express themselves in the museum/gallery. This is often a problem as it is essentially a verbal process. The cognitive element is a significant factor in such procedures, and thus the more able pupils can dominate in discussion.

It would be unfair if the gallery / museum visit were only to be of use to the more able, verbal student. This is a potentially dry and academic approach, and is essentially what the Junior Certificate is aiming to eradicate, as the average weak student encounters difficulties.

However, it is not justifiable to abandon critical judgements and use of relevant vocabulary, simply because a class is weak accademically. If discussion is linked specifically to practical work which the students are involved with in the art class, then this is a far more realistic way of involving students on an accessible level for them.

If a critical model such as Taylor's "Form, Content, Process, Mood" mode (26) were used, the discussion would automatically become more easy to direct.

Without the use of such a model, John Bowden observes that when students are invited to express a general opinion, the debate was often extremely brief, the conversation centering mainly on preferences relating to subject matter, but seldom was extended, or involved any logical debate. (27)

Bowden noticed that some general aspects of behaviour were apparent from an early stage in his observations. Many of the students felt there was a "right" answer, based on

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specialist knowledge or information. Bowden found that the students relied heavily on what the teacher regarded as "good" and "bad", and accepted this as the expert opinion. (28)

When the learning experience in the gallery is integrated with practical projects, one of the most important types of information needed is of a visual nature. Often this creates a problem as students are inclined to spend very little time looking at object in museums or galleries when given no guidance or help. The few short seconds that are spent are rapidly reduced after the first two or three display cases.

Therefore, the most important thing to start with is to slow down the process of looking at objects. (29)

Learning to Look

Morris has recognised that special techniques are required to enable students to look at artworks. (30) Drawing to discover the characteristics of an object is useful, especially when a focus on a specific aspect, i.e. texture or form, is suggested. Objects can be drawn to show how they work, or to demonstrate size or scale, using measurements. Sometimes viewing-aids are useful, such as card frames (viewfinders), or magnifying glasses. Drawing comparitive details is a good way of building up information to be used later. For example, making a collection of mouths or eyes from portraits to use in mask-making, or a collection of tea-pot spouts for use in tea-pot designing. Concentrating on the detail in question does not prevent looking at other aspects.

A means of promoting the visual and the verbal

Visual and verbal can be combined also. Describing an object verbally in response to questions from someone who cannot see it but has to draw it, is fun and requires close
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looking and careful use of language also. Descriptions in writing, perhaps on a prepared sheet with identified aspects (colour(s), decoration, size, number of parts, etc.), can promote careful attention.

One of the easiest ways of seeing specific peculiarities of any one object is to compare it with another which is similar but not the same. Many objects are difficult to decipher, because they have an apparent "naturalness" and inevitability that is difficult to overcome. Comparison with another solution to the same problem is one way to solve this. For example, the comparison of two Byzantine mother and child icons, highlights the difference in size and relative position of the figures, the features in the faces (are the eyes pointed in the same way in both paintings?), the use of colour and so on. This technique is invaluable when deciphering why two paintings / sculptures of the same theme / title are different, which is ideal for approaching junior certificate practical projects.

Some techniques can be identified that enable a detailed response to or an analysis of one or more objects. For example, the comparison of two objects with the same function but which differ in time, environment, value, or material, leads to useful discussion. Any collection of things can be classified into sets, by material, by colour, by use, by association, or by cost.

One of the most useful effects of using objects for teaching is the amount of discussion that can be created. This can be used in the museum / gallery, and also back at school afterwards in the practical projects. The benefits gained from the visit are innumerable - oral skills, such as vocabularly are developed, also clarity of ideas, audibility, the exchange of ideas, listening and responding to others.

Knell and Taylor have proposed a method known as "object based learning" (31), in which there are no right or wrong answers in discussion - this eliminates opinions. Instead, it focusses on the object itself, its materials, its style, its history and provence.

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Object based Learning

This is an ideal means of linking aesthetic and practical work. Knell & Taylor suggest that questions in discussion relate to the artwork itself directly, and concentrate on immediate aspects, such as "What does it look like?", "Where did it come form?", "Who made it?", "Why was it made?", "For whom was it made?", "What has happened to the object since then?", "Has the object been changed?", "What did the object mean when it was made?", "What does it mean now?". (32)

Thus, even a 2-dimensional painting can be treated as a 3-dimensional object, as it can be seen to be built up of a number of layers (canvas, ground paint, varnish, frame), and of different materials. (33)

Since the Junior Certificate projects are theme based, the work in the gallery/museum will need to be quite specific. This, however does not restrict the use of the artworks to mere "supports". i.e. mere back-up material. In fact, this is only one of the many ways of approaching the integration of the artworks in the museum/gallery, with practical projects in the art class.

During my research, I have come up with several other ways of using the support studies as a starting point for junior certificate practical projects.

The following are suggestions of some of these:-

1) To use the Subject Matter of the Artwork as a Starting Point

Essentially, this is a thematic link, using a similar approach to that which the artist used. This can be backed up by secondary sources (i.e. information referring to the primary source work, documenting the artists' ideas, influences, background,



etc). The secondary sources can be of both visual and verbal nature, anything which compliments the primary source.

2) To use the Art Elements of the Artwork as a Starting Point

This link focusses on materials, techniques, media, style, etc., which the artist, craftsperson or designer used. Essentially, this link is identifying the way in which the artist approached the problem (e.g. applying texture, mixing colours, measuring perspective, creating a certain type of atmosphere, etc), then analysing how this problem was solved, and using this analysis to help the student realize how to solve these problems in their own work. It can focus on different movements (i.e. how the pointillists achieved optical mixing of colours).

3) To Imaginatively use an Artwork as a Starting Point

This might involve depicting an incident which you would imagine had happened before the incident depicted in the painting, or what may be going to happen following the incident in the painting. This is particularly suitable for focusing on what is happening in the painting, as one must know this before the preceeding / proceeding events can be determined. Perhaps some object / gesture will give a hint to the narrative of the artwork.

Also, if there is a building or a wall depicted, to imagine what is going on behind/ inside, perhaps to give a descriptive passage describing the scene. Using this method, research outside the museum / gallery can be done to find out more about the era, historic events, costume, customs, etc. the set of the barry of the set of the set of the set of the set of the set

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Connections can be easily made with other subjects, i.e. with drama by using a painting as a source from making stage sets. Scenes from paintings can be reconstructed, i.e. battle scenes. Taking this theme as an example, this offers numerous avenues of exploration, e.g. events of battle, historical context, costume of the time, battle strategy, etc). This theme can also link with English, by writing a descriptive passage about the battlescene, also describing how people dressed, appeared, spoke, etc. Costume automatically links with Home Economics, Stage Set links with constructions studies.

Thus, the painting can be used as a starting point for any scenario, and the scenario can then be used for many practical projects, backed up by primary & secondary sources (i.e. using objects which feature in the painting from a primary source).

5) To Use the Artists themselves as a Direct and Primary Source

One of the most significant aspects of the gallery / museum is that many of the artists / craftspersons and designers are actually still alive. If so, then it is vital to stress the contemporary aspect. One way of doing this is to bring the artist into the classroom, or at least make it known to students that the artist is alive, and currently practicing work. Many contemporary artists are only too happy to talk to students about their work and some will even spend a period of time out in the school, following up a gallery visit with practical projects.

Having the real artist as teacher evokes a sense of enquiry in the students, as the artist motivates and stimulates them. Thus the students no longer have to tap at dead historical artists and artifacts, but rather the art comes alive and provides a new range of perspectives on the artists techniques and skills. Most importantly



this aspect gives the notion that art history is going on at the present moment and is therefore a continuum.

iii) Follow-up Work Back in the in the Classroom

Practical projects stimulated by the gallery / museum visit should follow on naturally from the learning process in the gallery / museum. The work which takes place back in the classroom relates to the objectives of the teacher, and the possibilities are endless.

Obviously, because the Junior Certificate projects are theme-based, the work in the gallery will have been very specific, relating to individual themes.

In order for the visit to the gallery / museum to be of benefit to the students, it is vital that follow up work is a continual part of the project back in the classroom. This plays a huge part in taking the artworks which are on display in the museum, down from their pedestal, thus making them more accessible to the students.

By recognising that the artists / craftspersons or designers, whose work they have been exploring, is similar to the work they are doing in some way, then the students feel more comfortable with the works, and are therefore more open in their discussion about the artworks. This is because the students develop a bond with the artifacts and overcome the distance / fear that they might have had, if the visit had no relevance to their own work.

If the museum / gallery can provide such an ideal link between these art students and artists from the past and present, surely it is vital that there is sufficient encouragement and help available to art teachers to approach using the museum / gallery as a source.

However, after researching various galleries & museums, both in Dublin and in London, I was astounded to find that the material available to teachers are virtually non-existent. If

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they do exist, they are extremely limited and do not meet the requirements of the Junior Certificate syllabus, as they deal mainly with proved factual information, rather than the exploration of materials, techniques, etc, with view to follow on practical work.

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After carrying out this research, I have identified a need in Irish Museums / Galleries for materials which will make these primary sources more accessible for teachers to use as a source for the practical theme-based Junior Certificate Projects.

In the next chapter, I will outline a proposal for an educational package for teachers which I will design as part of my Major Graphic Design Study Specialist Area.

The package will take a number of sources and suggest how they might be used creatively and imaginatively as starting points for Junior Certificate practical projects. It is hoped that such a package would promote the use of Primary Sources as a more motivating and exciting starting point, thus encouraging teachers to make more use of them.

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FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 4

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CHAPTER 5

EDUCATIONAL PACKAGE PROPOSAL

A Need to Make Galleries / Museums More Accessible

As discussed in the previous chapters, the integration of primary sources with practical projects makes numerous contributions to the students artistic, aesthetic, creative and overall development.

Contrary to this, few teachers in Ireland use galleries / museums as a source for Junior Certificate (or any other) practical projects, i.e. as an integrated part of their learning. Rather, they use the visits merely as an end in themselves, which rarely relate to work in the classroom. Thus, the students see the experience in the museum / gallery as being totally separate from their learning in the classroom, instead of linking the two learning environments together, which would offer so many extra opportunities.

So why do so few teachers use the museum / gallery, or indeed any primary source, as an integral part of practical project work? After discussing this with several art teachers, it was generally felt that these sources were not "user-friendly". Few museums / galleries provide an educational service with teacher materials available, or an educational officer.

It can be deduced from this that there is a need for an educational package which will make the galleries / museums more accessible for teachers.

Rather than relying on the museums / galleries themselves to provide an educational service, a package that would enable teachers to see how these primary sources can be used as a starting point for practical projects would be ideal. The ideas and suggestions in the package could then be applied to any primary source.



I have decided to design such an educational package, for teachers' use, specifically geared towards Junior Certificate practical projects, promoting galleries and museums especially, as primary sources. I feel that if there is a package available, that this will encourage teachers to try out using external sources as a starting point, and that they will hopefully find it to be a motivating stimulus for any practical project.

Aims of the Educational Package

The overall aim of the educational package is to promote the integration of Support Studies into practical Junior Certificate projects, specifically the use of those from a primary source. I hope to achieve this by producing a package which will make primary sources, such as museums and galleries more accessible to teachers. By providing an educational package of teachers' materials, i.e. overheads, worksheets, exemplar visual aids etc. I hope to show how the artwork in the museums and galleries can be used as a starting point for practical Junior Certificate projects thus illustrating this through exemplar projects.

Through the teachers use of the package the following aims should be achieved:

- That the requirements of the Junior Certificate be met in terms of the "all round" education of the student, by providing them with opportunities to develop relevant vocabulary skills, critical skills, and thus develop an ability to make a sound critical judgement which is both discriminative, curious and questioning.
- To develop students confidence and self-esteem, by seeing their own work in relation to fellow classmates; and also on a broader scale, in relation to artists, crafts persons and designers, from Ireland, Europe and worldwide.

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3. To help students draw parallels between their own work and that of others from a technical point of view, thus helping them to clue into how others solved particular problems (i.e. calculating perspective).

Structure of the Educational Package

The package will be divided into five main parts. A different theme and a different source will be used for each part. Five typical Junior Certificate themes will be taken, so therefore the approach taken to projects in the package will be similar to how one would approach a Junior Certificate project. Although only one area will be explored for each theme (i.e. graphic design for one theme, textiles for another), suggestions will be made as to how the project could be developed down other possible avenues.

In order to analyse the value that the support studies from a primary source have on practical project work, I have decided to select one project from the package and carry it out in my teaching practice.

Methodology Introduction

A first year mixed ability group from Notre Dame des Missions in Churchtown have been selected to undertake the project. The National Museum of Ireland will be used as the primary source because the overall theme for this classes' work for the year is "The Celts". Thus, the museum is an ideal source, and integrates naturally into their work.

The preceding undertaking to the museum project was essentially one of graphic design, in which secondary source reproductions of the Celtic artifacts from the museum were used as a starting point for designing letter forms.

Each student took one letter of the alphabet, so when united as a group project, the entire alphabet was designed (Plate 1). The project involved recognising similarities between the overall shapes of the artifacts and the letter forms, e.g. the full linear form of the croziers have obvious similarities to the letters "F", "L", "H", "B" etc. The main problem solving element involved looking carefully at the Celtic artifact, then after selecting a suitable letter, deciding through a series of drawings, how the artifact could be altered to make it into that letter form (Plate 2).

Therefore, as a result of this project, the class have become familiar with the artifacts from the museum.

However, up until now the support studies were all from a secondary source, (i.e. post cards, books, slides, Celtic artifacts, the history and development of writing over the ages, i.e. cuneiform writing, clay tablets, manuscripts and different type styles etc.) (Plate 3).

The project from the package is a continuum from the Celtic alphabet project. This time, the object is to design a musical instrument, again, based on the artifacts from the museum and using them as a starting point.

Because this section of the project will be three dimensional rather than two dimensional, it is necessary to work directly from the primary source. This involves visiting the National Museum of Ireland in order to gather the necessary information to make the three dimensional form and observe decorative details etc.

In order to approach the museum visit, Woodwards three-part structure (see Chapter 3) will be used. Woodward believes that in order for students to gain maximum benefit from the gallery/museum visit, the project should be broken down into three parts:









PLATE III

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PLATE III:

Examples of Secondary Sources used as starting points for the Celtic Alphabet Project.



- i) Preliminary Research.
- ii) The Visit Itself.
- iii) Follow up work in the classroom (1).

I approached the museum visit in this way and have consequently broken down my description and analysis of the project into these three sections.

i) Preliminary Research

What we make of a situation depends in large measure not only on the objective characteristics of the situation, but also on what we bring to the situation, in the form of our immediate needs and our general past life history (1). This refers to the experience the students have had up until now, not only with subject matter which is similar to that in the museum / gallery, but also interacting with objects and people, historical information they may have collected preceding the visit. As a preparation for the visit, the class was introduced to the Celtic artifacts by means of secondary sources. I felt that his was necessary, as then, when the students' came in contact with the primary source, they would appreciate the differences between the two.

Skills and Information Acquired Before the Museum Project

As I have already mentioned, introduction to the artifacts by means of secondary source material (i.e. reproducing in books, slides, postcards etc.) was carried out using a graphic design project as a vehicle. Thus, through the designing of an alphabet, based on the Celtic artifacts, the students becomes familiar with the artifacts. This occurred through their analysis of the shapes of the artifacts, then the altering of these artifacts to design letter forms. Essentially this involved taking one object and changing it into something else. This was an appropriate project to lead into the musical instrument project as the essential idea of changing one object into another, remains. Therefore this is another skill that the



students will bring with them to the musical instrument project.

As support studies for the Celtic alphabet project, the students developed an appreciation of the context within which the Celtic artifacts were made, also the history and development of writing, illuminated manuscripts etc.

These were suitable cross curricular links with English and history, especially history, as I worked with the history teacher on the project. Therefore the students brought quite a substantial amount of supporting information with them to the project, not just acquired in the art class but also from other subjects.

The next step taken was my own preliminary visit to the museum.

Preliminary Visit to Museum

I met with the educational officer of the National Museum of Ireland who was exceptionally helpful but who did not seem to see the visit to the museum as extending beyond an external visit by the school. Therefore, I had to compile worksheets myself as there is no educational material available from the museum.

The museum is laid out particularly well from a graphic designer's point of view. Information about the artifacts is extremely well designed and executed.

The preliminary visit to the museum was used mainly to locate artifacts and to compile a map of the museum. I was astounded to discover the extreme difference between the size of the artifacts in "real life", compared to the reproductions which the class have seen up until now. It will be interesting to observe their reactions and to see if they notice the differences between primary and secondary sources.


Compilation of Worksheets

When compiling the worksheets, I used Rod Taylor's "Critical Studies in Art Education" model for analysing a piece of art. This consists of content, form, process and mood, and I used these four areas as a structure around which I developed the questionnaire.

The questions on the worksheet are structured around the following areas:

i) Content:

These questions are factual, their main function being to focus the student and to establish that this artifact is 3-dimensional - i.e. can be seen from all angles and is no longer flat on a page, as in a reproduction in a book.

ii) Form:

Questions relating to form (or how the artifact is made up) focussed on the different parts which the artifact is made up of. What sort of forms are they? Can shapes be identified within the artifact?

iii) Process:

These questions relate to materials used to make the artifacts and also techniques used to manipulate materials. Since the students were embarking on a project to make instruments based on the artifacts themselves, I really focussed on how they would have made the artifacts from commencement to completion.

iv) Mood:

Question on mood dwell on the aesthetic qualities of the artifacts. This relates to its execution and the relation its display in the museum, has to its original function, i.e. was the artifact originally intended for such display? why the students think it is displayed, what they think the artifact was once used for. Then, in order to



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promote creative thinking, students were asked how they would display the artifact so that its original purpose would be illustrated.

Further questions, which linked the historical artifacts with contemporary life were also included i.e. what object nowadays would have the same or a similar function to the artifact?, what could they think of from their homes etc., that could be used to make the more decorative parts of the artifacts etc. This was important as at this stage the students should have become relatively familiar with the artifacts, and should be able to identify links between materials and techniques used in the real artifacts, and similar materials and techniques which they could use to reproduce the same effects. This was a crucial link to make as it reinforces the bond the students have with their particular artifact. This is the part which I believe to be the most important educationally as it promotes the idea of Art, Craft and Design, as being a continuum, i.e. even though the artifacts were made 3000 years ago, that there are modern materials which may be quite similar in appearance to the Celtic materials. For example, some beads, buttons, stones etc., may resemble the speckled enamel decorations.

Other Classroom Preparation

Before the visit to the gallery, the students were introduced to the project during a class. They were presented with the design problem: to design a musical instrument based on the Celtic artifacts, which must also be functional (i.e. make some sort of sound). Here, the students come up with preliminary ideas of how they would alter their artifact to change it into a musical instrument. This also encompassed an introduction to how basic instruments make sounds. This class was extremely important as some students focussed on only one specific part of their artifact.

Therefore when they go to the museum, it will only be necessary to focus on the part of the artifact they need for their instrument. This, consequently focusses the students' aims in

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the museum and gives them each an individual purpose i.e. specific things they need to find out in order to help them make the instrument.

Developing Critical Skills

This project is an ideal vehicle for students to learn to think in a sound and critical way. A major aim was to encourage and help students to proceed past the cursory glance at the objects, and through questions which require personal opinion and thought, (as opposed to facts and "known" details), to promote an enquiring and imaginative process of thought.

Part of the preliminary class before the museum visit was spent discussing and evaluating the students design for their musical instruments. This got the students used to talking about the artifacts and their ideas, consequently promoting critical skills and vocabulary, as well as confidence in expressing personal ideas and views and being able to back them up logically.

(ii) The Visit Itself

On arrival at the gallery the students were firstly gathered together in the audio room, as this was a quiet environment where their attention could be focussed.

This initial period was essential, not only to focus the students attention, but also to introduce the class to what they had to do, and to find out where the artifacts were located in the museum.

The following is a brief account of what the visit to the museum entailed:

Following the initial briefing on location of artifacts, the worksheets were distributed. Rather than send the students off to their relevant artifacts straight away, it was vital to



introduce them to the worksheet, read it through, and begin to initiate and stimulate ideas. This motivated the students and got them interested, involved and eager to go. Also, I felt it was essential to constantly refer to what their drawings were to describe, what was to be the purpose of them etc., so as to really focus students' attention acutely. After the initial breifing, the students completed the worksheets independently so as to promote individuality (Plate 4).

The questions on the worksheets achieved their aim in that they really got students thinking about the artifacts. Answers displayed creative and imaginative ideas, especially questions such as, "what do you think would be the equivalent of your artifact today?" Questions such as this stimulated individual answers, and creative lines of thought.

The worksheet included a variety of written and visual answers, so this variety ensured constant change.

The worksheets were the main means of bringing information back into the classroom. This information was then backed up by discussion and the use of secondary source materials.

iii) Follow Up Work in the Classroom

This was the most vital stage of the project as this is when the work done and the information gathered in the gallery was put into use.

I feel that by ensuring that the gallery visit plays an integral part in practical work, it means that the Celtic artifacts (which are normally viewed as being "untouchable", especially emphasised by the whole scenario of alarms sounding if the glass cases are touched etc.), now become more approachable to the students.



Using the Primary Source: Students working with the Artifacts in the Museum.



Now they feel that they have something in common with the artifact - they develop a bond with it. Thus, this helps the artifact to be taken from its pedestal and helps bring it down to the level of the students.

Back in the Classroom

Back in the classroom reference to the worksheets enabled the students to discuss the artifact. This involved comparing and contrasting answers from worksheets, and then, from this, developing into a discussion about materials and techniques which might have been used. It was important to emphasise the technical and practical aspects of the artifacts, as this is what the practical project would require an understanding of.

Evaluation of the Museum Visit

Drawings from the museum were successful and described exactly what the students needed to know to help them make the musical instruments, i.e. decorative details etc. Through the worksheets, students had identified differences between the primary and secondary sources, size being the most obvious in most cases.

Back in the classroom the students were also more involved in the project and were more in tune to the fact that the artifacts were used in the Celtic Era (3000 years ago). Before seeing the artifacts in the museum they were not so aware that 3000 years is a considerable time span, and that tools which were available then were quite crude compared to what is available today. Therefore, through discussion, it was concluded that craftsmen in the Celtic era must have been exceptionally skilled. Consequently, the students are now more aware of the circumstances under which the artifacts were produced, i.e. "the cultural and historic dimension from which the work came" (2).



Secondary Source Back Ups

Following the visit to the museum, the basic designs for the musical instruments which were done before going to see the artifacts, were redrawn in more detail. Since the students were now more motivated about the work and they knew they had a lot more information about the artifacts, they were more confident in their responses. I found that during the last project while the artifacts were from a secondary source, the students were quite distant from the objects in their discussion, making remarks which were based on judgements and preferences rather than being able to back up opinions. Now that students are more comfortable and familiar with the artifacts, they are more confident in offering ideas, thoughts etc., than before. Thus, I feel that this is a result of coming in contact with the actual object, rather than a reproduction of it, i.e. postcard. This supports Newsome and Silvers' view, (see Chapter 2), that "children learn best through participation with the object, discovering and the stimulation of their natural curiosity. However, subsequent secondary source support studies were used and proved extremely effective, in that they supported the development of the project.

When it came to developing the design working drawings into 3D wire/paper maché etc., I used the wire armature structures of David Begbie (Plate 5) to illustrate construction of wire to show how wire can be manipulated and to show the possibilities of using plain chicken wire I selected this support study not to illustrate the standard I expected, but rather to show the extent to which wire can be used, to encourage students when using this material (Plates 6 and 7)The next secondary support reference I used was the artist / sculptor Karel Appel (Plate 8). Appel's sculptures are bright and explore the planes of forms. Thus, this aspect of his work was emphasised in the students work (Plate 9).

Both of these secondary sources proved to be successful motivators, in that the artists work excited the students and made them eager to move onto the next stage of the project. The work of Karel Appel was particularly appealing as the colours were bright, vivid and eye



catching. As a result of using Appel's work as a colour reference, the musical instruments took on an almost Tribal appearance. Of course this was perfectly acceptable as there are many links between Celtic and African cultures. Through the work of Appel the students learned about planes as Appel changes colour every time the direction of the plane changes. Therefore it was easy to distinguish the planes in his work.

When the musical instruments were complete (Plates 10, 11, 12), a class evaluation was held, as opposed to the individual or small group evaluation which were held up until them. The evaluation was a means of bringing together all the learning which had taken place throughout the project. Many significant results were observed throughout the project, which illustrated the value the support studies had on the students.





PLATE V:

Secondary Source Support Study for Wire Construction - David Begbie, "Swingback", 1993.



PLATE VI

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PLATE VI:

Students working with chicken wire back in the classroom, constructing musical instruments.





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PLATE VII:

Students applying papier mache over wire structure base, in order to make musical instruments.



PLATE VIII

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PLATE VIII:

Secondary Source Support Study for Colour - Karel Appel, "Bird", 1969.



PLATE IX

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PLATE IX:

Students applying colour to musical instruments, using Karel Appel as a secondary source.



PLATE X



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PLATE X:

"This drum is based on the crosier of Clonmacnoise. I kept the drum like the cylinder form of the crozier, but instead of trying to make the full crozier, I just chose one part of it - the man's head. I made three of these around the drum. In order to make a noise, I stretched leather tightly on the top of the drum, so it makes a hollow sound when tapped. Leather tongs tie on the sheet of leather and also I decorated the stick with them. I used ordinary twigs as Africans used these to play drums in ancient times", (Description by Student).



PLATE XI



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PLATE XI:

"My saxophone was made by firstly looking at the Lismore Crozier. I used the jewel decorations as the buttons on the instrument. My saxophone is long and like a cylinder form. It curves and is round like the Lismore Crozier. As well as putting on 3-dimensional cylinders for the buttons, I also painted on circles for decoration on the side to match the buttons", (Description by Student)



PLATE XII



PLATE XII:

"I wanted my instrument to be like a bodhrán because a bodhrán is a circle, like the Broighter Collar. I also used the circle for decorations and motifs on the bodhrán. I wanted the instrument to make several sounds so I put rice into cylinders on the base. These can be shaken to make noise. I also put strings onto the top with cat gut. The strings can also make noise when you pluck them. My colours are bright like Karel Appel and they also change on different planes", (Description by Student).



PLATE XIII



PLATE XIII:

"My instrument is a shaker. I began by doing drawings of the Lismore Crozier. I especially liked the enamel on the side. I could not see how speckled the enamel was in the books, but in the museum it looked like little dots. I used beads to get this effect. I put the beads down both sides of the shaker in little cylinders. Inside the shaker I put Marrowfat peas. When I shake the instrument, the noise is loud and hollow", (Description by Student).



Results and Conclusions

In order to document my results, I will evaluate to what extent the project met the aims of the educational package. These can be discussed under the three general aims of the educational package:

1. To meet the requirements of the Junior Certificate in terms of the "all round" education of the student, by providing them with opportunities to develop relevant vocabulary skills, critical skills and thus develop an ability to take a sound critical judgement which is both discriminative and questioning.

Since the museum project made significant links with other areas of the curriculum, i.e history and music, students became more aware of the importance of using what is explored in one subject, to complement another subject. In this case, the cross curricular links focussed on the Celtic artifacts, from a historical and cultural point of view. The students were working simultaneously on the Celtic Era in history, and most students had both interest and skill in musical instruments. Thus, they recognised, through these links within subjects can overlap and be closely related to each other. This view of education is one which the Junior Certificate promotes, in which education is seen as a holistic process, with learning in one area being relevant to the other.

At the beginning of the project, some of the class did not even link that the Celtic artifacts in the postcards were actually made during the Celtic period, which they were simultaneously exploring in history class. This proved the importance of cross curricular links, i.e. of reinforcing connections between subjects, so the students themselves can identify that all areas of education can complement each
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other. In the case of this project, the link was purposely obvious so that students could identify this contribution to their "all round" education.

Specific areas which were developed were vocabulary and critical skills. This involved developing a vocabulary of words and terms which were relevant to the project. These terms were introduced as they became necessary, therefore they were reinforced practically; for example, when talking about the artifacts, terms such as form", "3-dimensional", "relief", "high relief, "low relief", "tactile texture", "decoration", "function", etc., arose. Rather than being introduced insolation, with no reference to anything practical, these terms were introduced, with reference to practical work, then reinforced through repetition and discussion. The terms consequently enabled students to described their own work and the work of others.

As the project developed, the students acquired more vocabulary and terms, and a dramatic improvement was noted in the level and "soundness" of discussion and criticism at the end of the project. Thus they developed confidence and willingness to speak and contribute more openly in class, as well as developing the ability to be conscious whether or not these judgements were well thought out or not. Also, students were encouraged to question opinions made by themselves and others, through evaluation of classmates ideas, etc., and looking at these opinions from different angles, not just their own.

The project and support studies were used as a vehicle to promote acquisition of vocabulary and critical skills, which are advantageous throughout the curriculum, not just in the art area.

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2. To develop students confidence and self esteem, by seeing their own work in relation to fellow classmates and also on a broader scale, in relation to artist, craftspersons and designers, from Ireland, Europe and Worldwide.

This aim produced results which contributed significantly to the overall aims of support studies in the Junior Certificate syllabus. By taking the Celtic artifacts from a primary source in the museum, students were able to work with the actual objects themselves. The main purpose of using the artifacts from a primary source was to make the learning experience more real for the students.

Since the making of the musical instrument forms was directly related to the actual forms of the Celtic artifacts, the students were making a direct link between their own work and that of the Celtic craftspersons. This reinforced the idea of all art being viewed as a continuum, i.e. the ability to produce something today (i.e. the musical instruments), which is based on something which was made 3000 years ago. First year students do not have a concept of time which enables them to visualize the vast length that 3000 years encompasses.

Through discussions, an exploration into the concept of time was carried out e.g. students were asked how old they were (i.e. 11 or 12 years), then how old the oldest person they knew was (i.e. 80 or 90 years), then how old was the oldest thing they knew (i.e. usually buildings, books, bibles, etc.). The oldest thing students are likely to know of are about 1000 years old approximately, in the case of churches, etc. The Celtic artifacts are three times older than this. Thus by breaking the concept of time down, the students realized that these artifacts are milleniums old. This excited them as they hadn't realized really how long 3000 years was.

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After the time barrier was addressed, the worksheets were used as a means of focussing the students on looking at their own work in relation to that of others. As discussed earlier, the worksheets are a means of student looking at their own work in relation to that of other. As discussed earlier, the worksheets involved the content, form, tone, process structure. This enable questions to be asked which firstly addressed the students own analysis of the artifact, then linking what they had just learnt about the artifact with the project they were about to embark upon. The worksheets addressed both the factual and the hypothetical, the observant and the creative. It resulted in the students developing thinking skills, i.e. how the artifact they chose would be represented today, i.e. what would be its modern day equivalent. For home activity following the museum visit, students were asked to collect found object to bring into the classroom which resembled decoration they had observed on the Celtic artifacts. Objects such as beads, buttons, leatherette, leather, tongs, etc., arrived into the school. This illustrated an interest in the art outside the classroom, i.e. that art is being brought into the home. This may have been a reflection on the attitudes to art in the home, as most of the students were from middle - upper class families and support from families would have been quite good.

Thus the students were exposed to the work of others, both other classmates, and on a broader scale, other artists, etc. This took the artifacts down off their pedestal to the level of the students and developed their confidence and self-esteem, as they saw themselves as doing work quite similar to the Celtic craftsmen.

3. To help students draw parallels between their own work and that of others from a technical point of view, thus helping them to clue into how others solved particular problems.

The work of other artists were also explored as secondary sources, i.e. David Begbie's wire mesh sculptures and Karel Appel's colourful forms. These artists were used as support studies to emphasise some aspect of the project, i.e. Begbie for structure, and Appel for colour. This illustrated that certain aspects of a particular artists work can be taken as an influence on practical work. Again, this emphasized the link with art in the classroom and the whole diverse world of the visual arts.

It was vital to use these artists work as a means of gaining an insight into the way other artists solved particular technical problems, i.e. how the wire mesh wire was manipulated to form the instruments, how colour was applied to form, etc. In the museum itself students observed how the artifacts might have been made, what decoration might have been used, what could be used today to achieve the same effect, etc. Such references link ancient materials with modern ones which will look similar. Thus students are observing, describing and analysing in the museum, and linking their findings with materials from outside the museum.

This linking of past and present and links between artists work and students work helps students to understand that artists, craftsperson and designers, even though times may change, usually approach the same problems visually. They may apply very different solutions to these problems, but nonetheless, they are the same problems to begin with, i.e. how to achieve from, how to decorate, etc. For students such problems need the assistance of support studies to help them gain an insight as to how they might be solved, how an effect might achieved, etc. the set of the partial set of the set of the

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Specific aspects of the artifacts, such as forms and size in particular were noticed by the students, with the aid of the worksheets and this brought their attention to the fact that reproductions often give a totally wrong impression of the size of an object.

The museum project achieved a huge amount of results, and proved that the support studies are an invaluable part of the Junior Certificate art syllabus. They play a major role in contributing to the "all round" development of the student, and from the museum project a number of conclusions can be drawn up, with regard to the value of museums and galleries as sources for support studies for practical Junior Certificate projects. These will be explored in the next chapter.



FOOTNOTES : CHAPTER 5

Elliot Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision, (New York: Collier MacMillan, 1972), p.
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 Kieran Meagher, "The Art, Craft and Design Syllabus", in the Changing Curriculum: Perspectives on the Junior Certificate, ed. Tony Crooks, (Dublin: O'Brien Educational Ltd., 1990), p. 24.



CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions From Research

In this dissertation, Chapters I, II and III explore the value of using the museum / gallery as a source for support studies for practical Junior Certificate projects. These chapters review the literature and are essentially theoretical. In Chapters IV and V the ideas researched in the first three chapters are put into practice by implementing a project in a classroom situation, using the museum as an integral part of the project.

Results from the museum project reveal extremely positive implications for the use of the museum / gallery as a source for practical projects. It can be concluded from these results, that by integrating the use of a primary source into the students' own practical work, many significant contributions are made to the "all round" development of the student.

- Working outside the classroom in venues such as museums / galleries, the students are provided with an exciting new learning environment. This emphasises that education and learning can occur anywhere, and that it is by no means confined to the classroom. Thus students become more visually aware of environments outside the classroom, in their day to day lives.
 - By using the primary source as a starting point, the learning experience is made more real for the students. Rather than working from intangible sources (i.e. books, postcards, etc.) the students can see the real objects, walk around them, look down on them, upward at them etc. Thus, by having direct contact with objects, students become more familiar with them, and are subsequently more involved in their own work.



By using a combination of both primary and secondary sources, students are forced to differentiate between these, i.e. primary source and reproductions of primary source. Thus they develop skills to identify the value of each of these sources, i.e. what is lost through the reproduction of an artwork, i.e. scale of work, colour and texture of work, and the unique aesthetic qualities which can only be experienced through direct contact with the primary source.

Through visiting a museum / gallery, students are exposed to not only the specific artworks they are researching, but they also become aware of the whole diverse world of the visual arts. By linking the students own work with work in the museum / gallery, students see the artifacts as being approachable, i.e. they come down from their pedestals and glass cases to the level of the students. Consequently, they lose their "preciousness" and become more user friendly and accessible.

It is through this accessibility to the artifacts that students gain confidence to express their critical and verbal skills which they acquire gradually as the project progresses.

It is obvious from these conclusions that the use of a primary source, such as a museum or gallery, makes numerous positive contributions to the "all round" development of the student. These contributions emphasise the importance of the use of primary and secondary sources for support studies for practical Junior Certificate projects.

Despite the positive contributions which these primary sources make to the educational development of the students, museums and art galleries do not provide an adequate service to schools in order to encourage the use of such sources.

Museums / galleries need to come from the idea that students are an active audience - that they work to specific agendas and they come to the museum / gallery with specific needs.

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In order to meet these needs, it is vital that museums / galleries abandon the notion of the mass audience. Essentially this involves providing differentiated products for specific groups of students.

Formerly, when exhibitions were understood as acts of one way communication, a concentration on the aesthetic and the narrative was sufficient. However, the introduction of Support Studies into the Junior Certificate automatically places a demand on museums and galleries to provide specific programmes and materials which will make these sources more accessible for teachers to use as a source for support studies.

In order to meet these demands there needs to be a huge liaison between art teachers and museum / gallery staff. The museum staff need to know much more about learning, i.e how people respond and learn at different ages, what makes people interested, and what social, cultural or political factors might aid or inhibit learning. In other words, the museum / gallery staff need a much greater awareness of the psychology and sociology of learning in order to communicate efficiently with students. Thus they will be able to pitch their information appropriately, according to students' personal backgrounds, life experience, personalities and values, as well as race, class and gender.

In our ever changing society, it is vital that museum / galleries do not propose a set programme, but rather that regular critical reflection is carried out in order to evaluate progress.

I conclude with the words of Declan McGonagle who reinforces the importance of being adaptable and flexible in keeping abreast with educational times:

"My sense is that we are at a curious moment in history, when institutions, some knowingly and others unconsciously, are deconstructing themselves. Here we are trying to construct a museum of modern art, but our meaning will be to do both at the same time. We need an entirely different new model that corresponds to something that is happening in society around us. Even the world model suggests something to be copied, but if we are addressing specific place and time, it has to be capable of reinventing itself every few years. I don't know if that's possible." (1).

FOOTNOTES CONCLUSION

1. D. Brett, "Centre of Gravity", in <u>Circa</u>, No. 60, 1991, pp. 26-31.

APPENDIX A

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Name :

This visit to the Museum is to help you find out more about the Celtic artefact you have chosen as a starting point for your musical instrument.

Firstly, buy a postcard of your particular Celtic artifact in the Museum Shop, then find your object in the display area, (see map).

Name of your artefact :

- Make 3 sketches of your artefact, looking at it from three different angles, in this space →
- Compare the photo in the postcard with the real thing in front of you. What can you see in the real thing that you cannot see in the postcard? (Use your drawings to help you think of things)
- 3. Where and when was your artefact found?

- 4. How old is it?
- 5. What was it used for?
- 6. Who do you think it originally belonged to?
- 7. Why do you think this?
- Do you think the person who made it ever imagined it would be displayed in a museum one day?
- 9. Why do you think it is displayed?
- 10. How is it displayed?



APPENDIX B

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11.	How do you think the museum could display the artefact to illustrate what it was originally used for?
12.	What object nowadays would be the equivalent to your artefact? (ie What has a similar func- tion/use?)
13.	What is your artefact made from?
14.	If you were making this object, how would you have gone about it, in four or five stages?
15.	Describe in detail the decoration which has been applied to the artefact :
16.	Can you identify any of the following shapes in your artefact : Circle, Diamond, Triangle, Square, Oval,?
17.	Draw where they are and label where you have identified the shape (in the space opposite \rightarrow)
18.	How do you think the decoration was applied to the artefact?
19	What was used for decoration?
20	What could you use for decoration when mak- ing your musical instrument that would look like this decoration? (ie. beads, shiny paper, buttons, etc.)



APPENDIX C

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21. Here, make four detailed drawings of types of decoration used on your artefact. Remember that this is the information which you will need to make your instrument so spend time on details.

- 2. How will your work in the Museum help you when you make your instrument?
- 23. Are you excited about making your musical instrument?
- 24. For your home activity, use your drawings you have made in the Museum to help you collect things you can use for decoration on your musical instrument. (ie Beads, Shiny sweet papers, tin foil, etc.)



APPENDIX D

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WHERE TO FIND ARTEFACTS :-

- LEAD BULLA, BOG OF ALLEN.
- BROIGHTER COLLAR.
- GLENINSHEEN GORGET.
- . BRONZE CRUCIFIXION PLAQUE, CLONMACNOISE.
- LISMORE CROZIER.
- . CLONMACNOISE CROZIER.
- . ARDAGH CHALLICE.
- . TARA BROACH.
- . CROSS OF CONG.
- 0. DE BURGO O' MALLEY CHALLICE (UPSTAIRS)





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