

T 1427

NC 0020658 X



COLAISTE NAISIUNTA EALAINÉ IS DEARTHÁ
NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

THE PURPOSE AND VALUE OF ART EDUCATION.

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education

in

Candidacy for the

DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS

by

PAUL STUART

JUNE 1995

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page No.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.	iv
INTRODUCTION.	1
Chapter	
I. THE PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.	4
Personal Fulfilment	
Artistic Heritage	
The Role of Art in society	
II. METHODOLOGY.	13
Introduction to lesson sequences	
Methodology	
III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.	19
Lesson Sequence in action	
Analysis of pupils reaction	
CONCLUSION.	35
APPENDICES.	38
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.	40

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	Page No.
1. Harry Clarke " <u>Detail from a window, Saint Peter's Church, Phibsborough, Dublin</u> "	27
2. Evie Hone " <u>Madonna and Child, with Saints Brigid and Patrick</u> "	28
3. Pupil's design for stained glass showing both design and glass piece.....	29
4. Pupils working in the classroom.....	30
5. Example of pupils finished piece: " <u>Sailing</u> ".....	31
6. Pupils in St. John the Baptist Church in Blackrock drawing from Evie Hone's work.....	32
7. Pupils filling out worksheet in church.....	33

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my tutor Deirdre Rafferty for her assistance in writing this dissertation.

INTRODUCTION

If we look at formal education, we realise that the transmission of knowledge rests upon twenty six letters and ten numerals. These are merely tools to use in the pursuit of knowledge and are not in themselves learning. These thirty six abstract figures are manipulated and reshuffled from kindergarten through college. The development of mental growth, then, tends to become an abstract function as these figures take on different and more complicated meanings. ¹

This is the opinion of Lowenfeld and Brittain. (1987) When approaching an idea to write this dissertation on, two questions presented themselves to me. The first one was, what is the function of an art education? Secondly, what is the value of an art education? Traditionally art has not been seen as important as other academic subjects such as mathematics, languages and the sciences. However art education is important and valuable for a variety of different reasons. It can make a unique contribution to a pupils' education that no other subject in the curriculum can make. When a pupil chooses art as a subject in second level school, they are most likely unaware of the far reaching contributions art education can make to the individual in many different areas. They are also most unlikely to be unaware of the hard work of Art Educators to get art to be taken seriously in the curriculum and viewed as an essential component in a good all round education.

In Chapter 1 the various elements common to several rationales for Art Education which writers and educators believe will be discussed. From reading the opinions of various writers on art education, I have focused on the three purposes of art education which the American writer Laura Chapman (1978) puts forward:

- (1) To encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience.

- (2) To transmit an appreciation of the artistic heritage of the students.
- (3) To develop an awareness of the role of art in society.²

Using these three purposes of art education I have designed two projects in conjunction with my teaching practice in Newpark Comprehensive School, Blackrock, Co. Dublin. These two projects will either succeed or fail in attaining Chapman's three purposes.

Art is underrated in society at large and this is reflected in the lack of prominence it gets within the curriculum. In this dissertation I will try to establish what is the purpose and value of art education. By focusing on what exactly it is about an art education that no other subject in the curriculum can offer, I will endeavour to prove whether or not the perceived cultural and aesthetic wealth that an art education provides can successfully be taught at second level school and whether it is a worthwhile pursuit.

FOOTNOTES INTRODUCTION

¹¹ Viktor lowenfeld and W. Lambert, Creative and Mental Growth, 8th Edition (New York: Collier Macmillian , 1987) p. 25

² Laura Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education (New York: Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978) p. 19.

CHAPTER 1

THE PURPOSE OF ART EDUCATION: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Art education can be divided into two main areas, the intrinsic which is that of making art and the extrinsic which is the process of receiving other peoples art. According to the American writer Laura Chapman(1978) there are three main purposes of Art Education:

- (1) To encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience.
- (2) To transmit an appreciation of the artistic heritage of the students.
- (3) To develop an awareness of the role of art in society.¹

Transmitting an appreciation of artistic heritage

It is proposed to take these three areas and examine what other writers have to say on these three aims. The first area to be addressed is that of transmitting an appreciation of their artistic heritage. According to Eisner(1972), there are two major justifications for the teaching of art. They are the contextualist justification and the essentialist justification.² The contextualists argue that the type of art program offered in schools should depend on who the client is, what type of needs the community has, and what problems the larger society is facing. The essentialists emphasise the kinds of contributions to human experience and understanding that only art can provide. They argue that these contributions are unique to art.

The Report of the Arts Councils Working Party (1987) states because of a neglect of the arts in Irish education, whole generations have lost the opportunity both of learning about their own artistic history and of acquiring the skills necessary to build upon it.³ According to Lowenfeld and Brittain:

There is no genuine history of art, rather there are historians who have selected art objects from those that have remained from a society and collected those together in such a way that others look upon those examples as typical of a period in history.⁴

One aim of a good art education should be to give pupils a good grounding with the traditions of art. Art objects exist in a cultural context. They make sense only in the context in which they were created. It is important that pupils understand this so they can see the contribution that a particular art object makes to the development of the tradition.

As a justification for a comprehensive visual art education, the C.E.B. Discussion Paper(1985) advise that access to the knowledge, ideas and values of pupils heritage and contemporary visual culture is an integral part of the visual arts education process.⁵ It also proposes that in Ireland our cultural resources have an important role to play in building a sense of worth and confidence as a nation.⁶

Also in the aims of visual art education set down in the C.E.B. Report of the Board Of Studies(1987), reference to cultural heritage is made in the aim to introduce pupils to the history and traditions of art, including the art of other cultures, and to develop particular understanding of the work of contemporary artists.⁷ To extend pupils knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of art so as to foster their capacity to make developed critical judgements and authentic personal choices. Our environment, it appears, reflects

the values of our society.⁸ Teaching children about their cultural heritage equips them with a certain visual literacy which enables them to read between the lines and decipher meanings that are presented in visual forms. Chapman is concerned that children understand the context from where different styles evolved. "The uncontrolled growth of large, urban centres has created an environment that is difficult for us to see and comprehend as a stylistic whole."⁹

To encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience

According to Malcolm Skilbeck(1983) in a lecture given in Trinity College:

The arts are, in the words of my old tutor, Louis Arnaud Reid, an embodiment of meaning: they also embody values and constitute a means whereby students can explore, assess and develop their own values: they invite and encourage personal enjoyment and are non-exclusive.¹⁰

Students in secondary school are adolescents and this period of their life is often characterised by emotional intensity, social awareness, apathy and personal loneliness. While art doesn't offer the solution to the many and varied problems of growing up, it is one of the few subjects in which pupils can be actively encouraged to clarify and express their own feelings, thoughts and perceptions.¹¹

The view of the C.E.B. paper(1985) considers human interaction through symbol systems and the importance of art and the arts as distinct symbol systems and ways of communicating which helps us to become more fully productive and understanding members of our culture/society.¹² In the art class pupils can experience some tangible contact between them and their environment. Art is about utilising senses, the ability to see, feel, hear, smell and touch. Learning is done through the senses. In the art class pupils actual environment is taken into

consideration. They are drawing from and constructing with objects from their immediate environment, -sweet wrappers, coke cans, magazines and many other examples. Therefore art is more meaningful for the pupil because it now extends beyond a print of a Renaissance painting or water-colour landscape they may have in their own house. When pupils succeed in making something they have a finished product at the end of it with which they can enjoy a sense of achievement. It is unique to them. This powerful feature of the art class gives the pupil a sense of the potential and capability.¹³

The skills and dispositions promoted by a good arts education are transferable into a wide range of non-arts contexts.¹⁴

Art develops other qualities in pupils which extend beyond the art room. As pupils experiment and become familiar with the properties of the various media they are using, they will have to overcome certain technical difficulties. According to the Junior Certificate(1989), at junior level the product or final statement should be seen for its possible further development and value in new learning experiences. From such problem solving, pupils will develop worthwhile qualities as patience, planning and perseverance. Pupils learn that mistakes will be made at the preliminary stages on paper and these difficulties may be overcome before making the finished piece. Though pupils create individually for the Junior and Leaving Certificate exams, there is scope in the syllabus for pupils working in groups together on projects such as a mural or large construction. During such projects pupils can learn the value of co-operation so they can perform the task easier and more competently. Other transferable skills which are developed in the art class are taken from the C.E.B. discussion paper on arts education:

- patience.
- an ability to tolerate ambiguity.
- responsiveness to the power of the materials themselves.
- a willingness to relinquish unsuccessful strategies.
- a commitment not to be satisfied with premature solutions.
- confidence in the role of the developed intuition to contribute to the solution.¹⁵

The art class may be used as a vehicle to encourage and raise the self-esteem of the pupils by the teacher. Pupils are producing something tangible and bringing their skills, themselves and their creativity to bear upon it. This gives the teacher the opportunity to encourage and praise each pupil for their achievements.

Developing an awareness of the role of art in society

As it applies to the Junior Cert, developing an awareness of art, craft and design in society will be examined. In our increasingly multi-media world, we are constantly being bombarded with images. It is essential therefore that we teach pupils to become visually literate, as Chapman puts it:

People who are totally unaware of the manner in which they are affected by visual forms are vulnerable to control by perceptual forces they cannot understand, judge or change.¹⁶

Almost everything in the pupils' environment existed before they were born—cities, buildings, roads, cars, shopping centres, television. Our television culture can leave the individual feeling like a passive participant. ¹⁷Having an

understanding of where and how the artefacts of our society came about helps in making sense of our environment and feeling more integral to it.

As human beings, children deserve an educational program that prepares them to feel some personal and direct control over the shape of their world and what it says about being human.¹⁸

It is important to realise our visual environment reflects the values of our society. Television commercials alone will paint a very clear picture of the dominant concerns of our society. Desired attributes are material health, status, good looks, security, freedom and youthfulness.¹⁹ Consequently, the antithesis of these characteristics is often used as a tactic to scare the consumer into purchasing endless products. Students in an average art class will be familiar with the prevailing advertising without any real understanding of the power of visual imagery to manipulate and deceive. Through the learning of how design works and pupils experiencing of designing their own logos, trademarks and posters for example, they will learn how images can be manipulated to communicate a variety of messages by altering such elements such as colour, scale, cropping the image or placing the image out of context. Clearly, a certain standard of visual literacy is desirable. "If we are unresponsive to the conditioning of our senses" says Chapman "we can hardly judge the positive or negative influence of conditioning on our lives."²⁰

The Guidelines for Teachers for the Junior Certificate(1989) states "The natural and man-made environment should be used wherever possible as a valuable resource for learning and developing a critical awareness".²¹ If art is about expressing what it is to be human and about enhancing ones' environment, then we can open pupils minds and develop their ability to perceive and become

critical of their visual environment. We cannot teach pupils what is tasteful, nor can we impose our own personal taste as teachers upon the pupil. We can only strive to stimulate thought, for as Lowenfeld and Brittain put it:

...the appreciation of art thrives on discussion and is not subject to the usual test of factual knowledge regarding style, period of history or artist.²²

Eisner(1972) outlines the functions of art as sources of justification of its teaching. One function of the artist is that of social critic. Pablo Picasso, George Grosz and Kate Kollwitz are just three examples. Artists can take the personal and make it public so that we the public can identify with it as a whole. The ideas of the culture take on a larger significance that it wouldn't have had before. Through art we are presented with new ways of seeing things. Kandinsky showed us how to look at a painting two dimensionally. Art can transcend the routine day in day out and take meaning out of the banal. Abstract artists are able to express human feelings and concerns in their skilled use of the art elements such as line, shape and colour. They have found shapes or application of paint that show us how our sensibilities can be moved. As Eisner puts it, "In short, art teaches us to be alive".²³

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

-
- ¹Laura Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978) p. 19.
- ²Elliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York: Collier Macmillian, 1972) p. 2
- ³Ciaran Benson, The Place of the Arts in Irish Education Report of the Arts Council's Working Party on the Arts in Education (Dublin, The Arts Council, 1979) p. 18.
- ⁴Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert, Creative and Mental Growth, 8th Edition, (New York: Collier Macmillian 1987) p. 106
- ⁵Curriculum and Examinations Board Discussion Paper, The Arts in Education, (Dublin: C.E.B., 1987) p. 6.
- ⁶*Ibid.*, p. 6.
- ⁷Curriculum and Examinations Board, Report of the Board of Studies, (Dublin: 1987) p. 24.
- ⁸Chapman, Approaches to Art, p. 121
- ⁹*Ibid.*, p. 218.
- ¹⁰Malcolm Skilbeck, "What is the Role of the Arts in the Core Curriculum?", (Public Lecture: Trinity College Dublin, 1983) p. 13.
- ¹¹Chapman, Approaches to Art, p. 203.
- ¹²C.E.B., Arts in Education, p. 6.
- ¹³Chapman, Approaches to Art, p. 201.
- ¹⁴C.E.B., Arts in Education, p. 5.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 9.
- ¹⁶Chapman, Approaches to Art, p. 126.
- ¹⁷Lowenfeld and Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p. 105.
- ¹⁸Chapman, Approaches to Art, p. 99.
- ¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 103.
- ²⁰*Ibid.*, p. 107.
- ²¹The Junior Certificate Art, Craft and Design Syllabus, (Dublin: Department of Education, 1992) p. 7
- ²²Lowenfeld and Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p. 105.
- ²³Eisner, Artistic Vision, p. 281.

CHAPTER 2

In the last chapter I reviewed the literature which I have read on art education. I found that the three purposes of art education put forward by Laura Chapman (1978) but which most art educators agree an are:

- (1) To encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience.
- (2) To transmit an appreciation of the artistic heritage of the students.
- (3) To develop an awareness of the role of art in society.¹

In this chapter the practicalities of teaching art in the classroom will be looked at. I will also outline my proposals for two lesson sequences for two separate second year classes that I am teaching presently in Newpark Comprehensive School in Blackrock, Co.Dublin. I aim to achieve Chapman's three purposes in my own teaching during these lesson sequences. Initially, my idea was to design two separate projects-one for each group of second years. However because of limitations on time I have only been able to put one sequence into effect before the writing of this dissertation. I have included my proposal for both sequences, however, in this chapter.

The first sequence is a carving project based on the Early Christian High Crosses of Ireland. The second is a stained glass project based on Irish stained glass artist Evie Hone. The focus is on the High Crosses because they are such a rich and unique part of Irelands' artistic heritage. Particularly focus will be on the Cross of Muiredach at Monasterboice. The sculptor who worked on this cross carved his figures in relief and had a remarkable sense of composition, placing several

figures in a panel without overcrowding. The panels on the cross are Biblical narratives and it is said that one side of the cross refers to the New Testament whilst the other refers to the Old Testament. The class will be shown slides of the Cross and then given some information about the history and function of such an artefact. The students themselves will be questioned for their reaction and then engaged in some discussion. According to Robert Clement:

By far the most important system any teacher can use is that of generating enquiry through talk, whether through exposition, questioning, discussion or interaction. There is no doubt that there is a strong correlation between the quality of children's work in art and the amount and quality of discourse that both precedes and supports the work.²

To make the sequence more relevant for the students discussion will take place on when and why these panels in Muiredachs Cross were carved. Then I will direct the discussion towards the issues and interests which face these second year students as fourteen year olds living in South Dublin, Ireland, in nineteen ninety five. I will address the following questions to them:

- What are your interests?
- Who are the most important people in their life?
- Do you see yourself as Irish first or European first?
- What influence does Britain and America have on your life in terms of music, fashion or sport?
- What do you see yourself doing in ten years time?

After spending some time discussing these issues the class will design a panel from the High Cross based on their own experiences and identity. We will discuss how the figures in the High Cross are stylised and individual responses from the students will be encouraged. When the pupils have designed their panels

on paper they will then proceed to carve their designs out of oasis foam bricks in relief.

For my other sequence Irish stained glass artists will be looked at. The project involves the students designing and making a piece of stained glass using real glass. At the beginning I will introduce the sequence with a slide show illustrating briefly the history of stained glass and the function and effect stained glass has on an environment. A visit to a St. John The Baptist Church in Blackrock will then ensue where we will take in the work of two of Irelands most famous stained glass artists, Evie Hone and Harry Clarke.

According to the final report from the National Curriculum Art Working Group in Brittain, it is essential for pupils to gain a developing awareness of the work of others. They believe that:

As pupils get older, this process should be complimented by the study of art history and social, economic, religious and cultural contexts. Such study requires knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils need the ability to 'engage' with an artefact i.e. be willing to devote time and energy to responding and relating to it.³

Making art is enriched for students through studying the work of other artists and designers in much the same way as their use of language is improved through reading the work of writers and poets in their English class. By referring to the work of other artists, the students do not only learn about their artistic heritage, they can also obtain valuable technical information about how to deal with a wide variety of subject matter.⁴

As in the Gothic stained glass which was designed for a given Church or Cathedral on an allegorical Biblical scene, the students will have to think about

where they would want their pieces to be displayed. In this project I have given the class the brief of designing the pieces for the windows of the art room.

When they go to visit the Church in Blackrock they will have to fill out a worksheet. This worksheet will focus on three stained glass windows by Evie Hone. The students will have to make a drawing and colour study of the central window. In addition they will have to answer a series of questions designed to raise their awareness of what they're looking at and increase their knowledge of the significant contribution that artists like Evie Hone and Harry Clarke made to Ireland's artistic heritage at the early part of this century. For an example of the worksheet see Appendices.

In this stained glass project with second years I hope to attempt to fulfil Chapman's (1978) three purposes of art education. The first purpose which endeavours to "Encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience" will be measured throughout the sequence in the classroom as the pupils work on their own piece. This aim is perhaps the most difficult to prove. I intend to conduct a survey of the class by means of a questionnaire. There will be nine questions in total. Three of these questions will focus on reasons why the pupil chose art as a subject in the first place.

Chapman's second purpose to "Transmit an appreciation of the artistic heritage of the students" will be met by introducing the students to stained glass through slides but more tangibly through direct contact with windows by Evie Hone and Harry Clarke. It will make the art history part of the lesson more relevant and interesting when the pupils are going to be working with real stained glass themselves. They will appreciate the design decisions both artists had to

undertake and the technical difficulties they had to overcome in relation to working with glass as a medium. The fact that the pupils are coming directly into contact with stained glass in the full glory of the Church will bring the lesson alive for them.

Thirdly and finally is Chapman's third purpose to "Develop an awareness of the role of art in society". Art serves many functions as we have seen in Chapter 1, but stained glass artists were usually commissioned to make pieces for Churches or environments of a specific kind. The stained glass windows the pupils are coming in contact with are depicting Biblical scenes and it is important that they are seeing them in their context rather than as some abstract slide or reproduction in a schoolbook. They will not just be learning about the role of art-they will be experiencing it.

I will now look at some of the aims set out by the Junior Certificate because I am dealing with a Junior class. The Junior Certificate has the aim of maintaining a continuum between the primary and post primary educational experiences:

The general aim of education is to contribute towards the development of all aspects of the individual, including aesthetic, creative, cultural, emotional, intellectual, moral, physical, political, social and spiritual development, for personal and family life, for working life, for living in the community and for leisure.⁵

Many of these aspects of development are combined in the art programme at junior cycle level. The three purposes of art education which I am hoping to achieve through my own teaching are also related to the aims set out in the Art, Craft and Design syllabus for the Junior Certificate. Chapman's first purpose of personal fulfilment relates to the aim of developing a sense of personal identity

and self-esteem through practical achievement in the expressive, communicative and functional modes of art craft and design.⁶ The second purpose of transmitting an appreciation of artistic heritage relates to the aims of developing in the student an understanding of art, craft and design in a variety of contexts, historical, cultural, economic, social and personal.⁷

Finally, the third purpose set out by Chapman to develop an awareness of the role of art in society relates to developing in the student the ability to apply evaluative criteria to his/her own work and to the work of others in his/her daily encounters with the natural, social and man-made environments and with the mass media.⁸

In the Junior Certificate art programme these aims will be met through a combination of drawing research, three-dimensional construction in various media, and support studies. As regards my own projects, it remains to be seen as to whether these three aims will be achieved or not.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

¹Laura Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978) p. 19.

²Robert Clement, The Art Teachers Handbook, 2nd Edition (London Hutchinson Education, 1990) p. 55.

³Ibid., p. 70.

⁴Ibid., p. 64.

⁵The Junior Certificate, Art, Craft and Design Syllabus (Dublin: Department of Education n.d.) p. 5.

⁶Ibid., p. 7.

⁷Ibid., p. 7.

⁸Ibid., p. 7.

CHAPTER 3

Description of Lesson Sequence

During my second term of teaching practice I carried out this sequence of classes with a group of second years of mixed ability. It was a stained glass lesson sequence consisting of eight lessons. The sequence began with a slide show of Byzantine mosaics, Gothic stained glass, paintings and stained glass by Matisse and work by Harry Clarke and Evie Hone (F.1 and F.2). The class had made observational drawings of fish which they had already used to make lino prints. They then used these studies of fish to make a suitable design for their stained glass. This required that the design would compose of simple shapes using flat colour. The next step was to start making the stained glass piece. It was actually a mosaic using different coloured pieces of left over stained glass which I had collected from various stained glass studios.(F.3) Each pupil transferred their design onto a ten by eight inch sheet of clear glass. They then selected a suitable piece of glass from a box containing different coloured glass in different compartments.(F.4) They stuck each piece of glass using clear glue. They then put grout in between the glass to fill in the cracks and coloured it with black polish.(F.5) During the sequence I brought the class down to the church in Blackrock to see the stained glass.(F.6 and F.7)

Towards the end of the sequence I gave each pupil a questionnaire to fill out. From their responses I would be able to see how successful I had been in achieving Laura Chapmans'(1978) three purposes of art education. These purposes are:

1. To encourage personal fulfilment through the art experience.

2. To transmit an appreciation of the artistic heritage of the students.
3. To develop an understanding of the role of art in society.¹

I ran the sequence with a class of twenty five pupils. The limitations of this dissertation do not allow me to fully detail every individual pupils' response, therefore I have selected a cross section of responses and comments. The first three questions of the questionnaire were designed to examine the success or failure of Chapman's first purpose. Question number four to six were designed to examine Champion's second purpose. Finally, question's number seven to nine were designed to examine Champion's third purpose concerned with broadening the pupils understanding of the role of art in society.

Question one asked: **"Why did you choose art as a subject?"** This question hoped to find out exactly what were a pupil's reasons for choosing art as against other subjects. In answer to this question almost all of the pupils said they choose art because they were good at it, they enjoyed it, because it was creative or it gave them an opportunity to be expressive. One pupil specifically wrote: "I picked art as a subject because it's something you enjoy and you feel happy when you've done something and it has turned out good." Two pupils wrote that they chose it because they liked what they saw other people doing in the art room. One pupil wrote that they chose it only because they didn't get their first choice which was music.

Question number two asked: **"Do you find art is different from other subjects? If so, how?"** This question endeavoured to find out if there was anything unique to art in the curriculum from the pupil's viewpoint. The answers to this question

in the majority were variations on the following: "Yes I do, I find that when you've finished a project you know it was you who did it and not a teacher." "Yes, there is a wide range of things to do in art and you are moving around more than most classes-just sitting in a chair." Two pupils answered 'No' to this question.

The third question asked: **"Did you enjoy the stained glass project? Why \ Why not?"** Three quarters of the students answered that they did enjoy the project. An example from this group is: "Yes I did because I liked piecing parts together and I like the results you get when you hold it up to the light." Nine pupils wrote that they enjoyed the project but they also had criticisms such as they found it quite frustrating trying to piece all of the various pieces of glass together. "I enjoyed the stained glass in the beginning but it gets a bit annoying when the pieces don't fit together properly." Two pupils out rightly wrote that they didn't enjoy the project.

Question number four asked: **"Name an artist who works in stained glass:"** This would measure how successful the project had been in acquainted the pupils with some knowledge of an artist who worked in the medium. Eighteen out of twenty- five pupils were able to successfully answer this question.

Question number five was: **"Stained glass is found mostly in churches. Why is this?"** This question was looking for was some kind of understanding of the reason why stained glass has historically been associated with churches and what function it serves in a church window. In the introduction for this project we looked at slides and I drew out of the pupils the answers to these questions by focusing on individual slides and discussing them. For the most part answers

tended to focus on one aspect of their function such as their creating a spiritual effect, being decorative, and adding to the holy atmosphere in the church. No one answer was entirely comprehensive in itself though answers varied from one short sentence to a longer explanation. Two pupils didn't answer this question at all. Here are some examples of from those who answered: "I think stained glass is used in churches because it's used to glorify the pictures of God and Jesus and stuff. " "To calm the church and decorate it and also to make the church seem holier. " "The colourful light gives a peaceful atmosphere and it gives privacy as no one can see in or out and for decoration. "

The next question was: **"What did you learn if anything, about the history of stained glass?"** "I had given the pupils a talk when I brought them down to the church in Blackrock about how with the advent of the architectural feature of the Gothic church with its ceiling built in arches, the structure of the church was now stronger and the walls of the church didn't have to be as thick as they previously had to. Therefore with the thinner more graceful walls more windows could be inserted and inserting stained glass was now possible. As a result stained glass flourished. I showed them examples of stained glass from the fifteenth century through to the Irish stained glass movement 'An Tur Gloine' involving Evie Hone up to more contemporary approaches moving away from religious imagery.

In their responses five pupils wrote that they didn't learn anything about the history of stained glass. Four pupils misunderstood the question and answered what they learned about the practicalities of making stained glass in the classroom rather than the history of it. Of the remaining sixteen pupils the answers varied in length and content. Here are some responses: "That it was mainly in churches until a while ago when artists started putting it in museums, homes etc. " "It came about after more became known about how to build better

architecture. It was used in churches instead of frescoes. " "Some people painted very holy pictures on the glass and now people are doing more modern things."

The last three questions were designed to measure the pupils understanding of the role of art in society. It asked: "**Aside from churches, have you ever seen stained glass anywhere else?**" There was an excellent response to this question with only two pupils unable to answer it. Twenty pupils were able to cite at least two places where they had seen stained glass before. Here is a sample of some of the responses to this question: "Bewleys, in door panels and in pubs." "Yes, in some expensive restaurants etc. e.g. Tota in Blackrock and in pubs." "On Georgian doors and on some conservatories."

Question number eight asked: "**Why did you choose the image you did for your stained glass?**" All except one student answered this question. The answers obviously differed from pupil to pupil but generally pupils wrote that they chose their particular image because they either liked it, it was colourful, they felt it would work well in the medium of glass: "Because I thought it would work well in stained glass with light shining through it." "Because I thought it would be nice to try tone in glass and this picture had plenty of tone."

Finally the last question number nine asked: "**Considering the image, where would be a suitable place to display your stained glass and why?**" This question was asked in an effort to get the pupils to think about the transition from the artist making their work in their studio and then bringing the work out into the wider environment. Asking them to suggest an appropriate place to display their work would make them think more about the reasons for making art and appropriate places to exhibit them. The responses varied according to each

pupil and what their image was. One pupil who made a design with fish gave the following answer: "It was a dolphin, so I would display it in a seaside hotel, restaurant, cafe or an aquarium." Similar answers from pupils who used birds or fruit in their designs suggested putting their stained glass in a pet shop or fruit shop. Some pupils merely suggested that their piece should be put on a window so the light could shine through it. "I think my stained glass should be put on a conservatory window as the colours are light and the pattern is simple." Other answers included: "In a child's bedroom because children love bright colours." "In an art museum or a home. It's not something religious."

Analysis of Pupils Responses:

From the pupils' responses to the first three questions I believe that art provides a sense of personal fulfilment in the pupil because it is allowing them to create and input their own ideas. I believe the pupils in my art class chose art precisely because they enjoyed it and many of them mentioned they chose art because they were good at it. This suggests that they have at some time in their life been encouraged or praised for their artistic achievements by someone. A majority felt that art was different to other subjects and that this was certainly a positive thing. The major difference was that in the art room there is space for the pupils own ideas rather than being told exactly what to do. A sizeable proportion mentioned that the art room was relaxing and that you could move around and talk. It could be said that perhaps art was seen as an easy subject where one didn't have to take it seriously or tax oneself. Three quarters of the class wrote that they enjoyed the stained glass project though some had criticisms about the frustration of finding pieces to fit exactly. It was a challenging project for the pupils and they certainly learnt many new technical skills.

From the answers I received to the next three questions I believe that the pupils generally learnt and are now familiar with the Irelands stained glass heritage at the early part of this century. Most were able to name an artist that worked in stained glass. Having brought them down to visit a church containing stained glass by both Evie Hone and Harry Clarke they were clear on the heritage and tradition of stained glass in churches. Though not every pupil was able to relate something of the history of stained glass, a lot was learnt by a majority of the class. There was definite success in this project in transmitting an appreciation of the artistic heritage of these pupils. They were learning a craft in the classroom and simultaneously were able to see examples of some of the most famous Irish stained glass artists in a church in their local area in Blackrock. This direct link between the practical learning and making in the classroom and visiting examples of our artistic heritage will cement in their minds what stained glass is all about much more than simply reading about it in a textbook.

The last three questions were designed to measure the success in developing the pupils' awareness of the role of art in society. From the answers I received I firmly believe that the pupils started to notice stained glass in their environment more. Often during the project pupils came up to me and told me of somewhere they had seen some stained glass or a mosaic. I am sure that this was a result of them learning about such art forms in the art class and they began to notice such things in their environment. We spent some time in class discussing where would be a suitable place to display their stained glass and what kind of places' one would find stained glass. There was a good response to these questions and I think this got the pupils to think about the role of art be it decorative, symbolic, functional, commercial or another reason.

feel I have with varying success achieved the three purposes of art education that I set out to achieve in this sequence.



Figure 1: Harry Clarke "Detail from a window, Saint Peter's Church,
Phibsborough, Dublin"



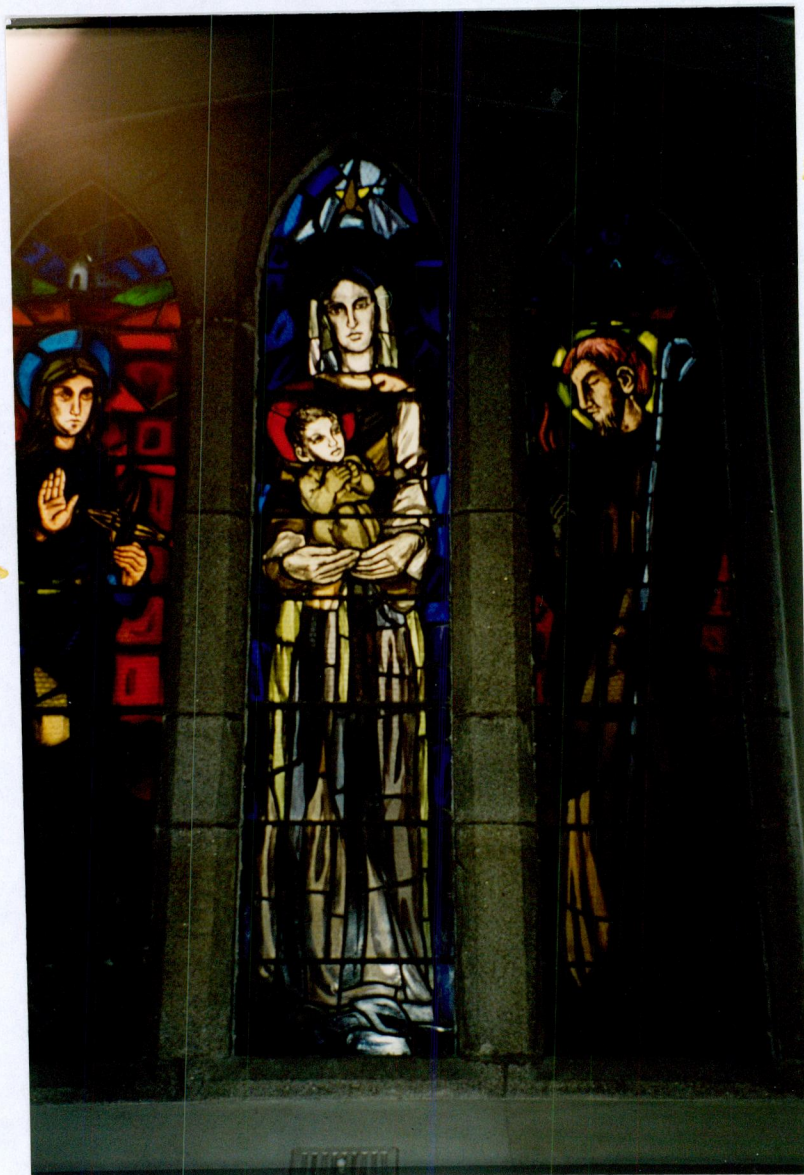


Figure 2: Evie Hone. "Madonna and Child, with Saints Brigid and Patrick"





Figure 3: Pupil's design for stained glass showing both design on paper and on glass.



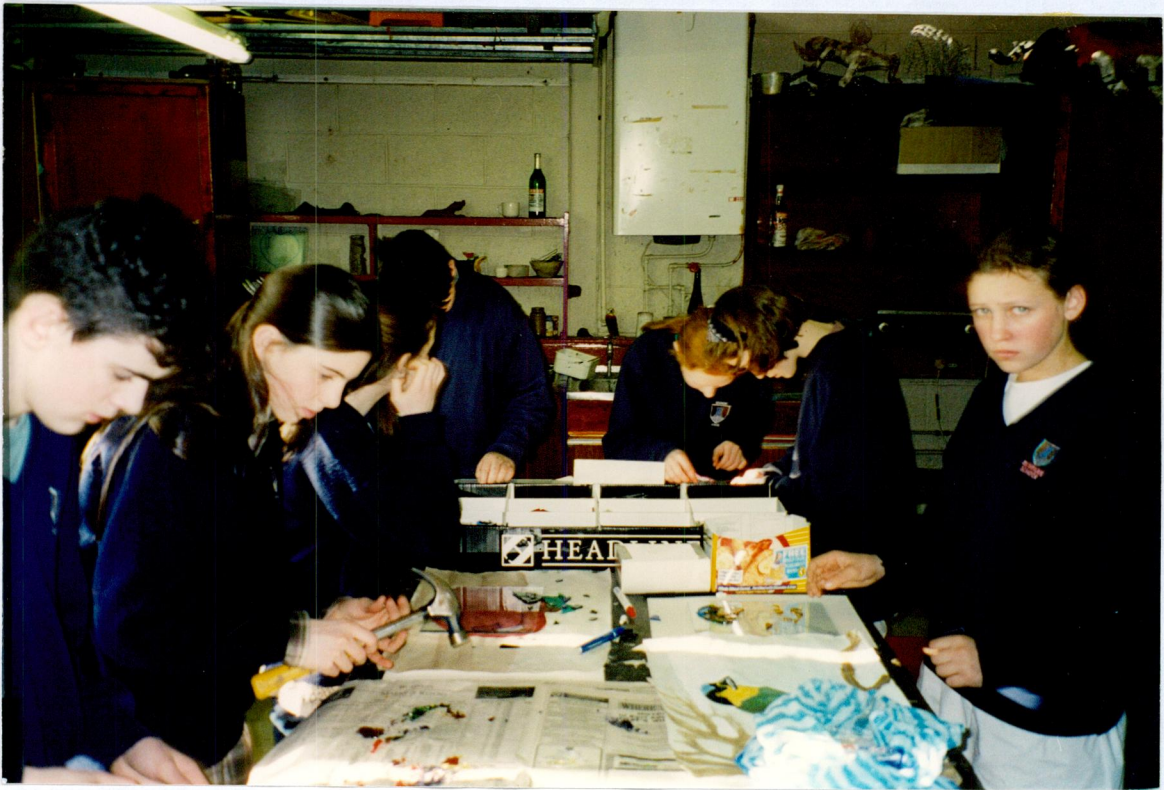


Figure 4: Pupils working in classroom.





Figure 5: Example of pupils finished piece: "Sailing"



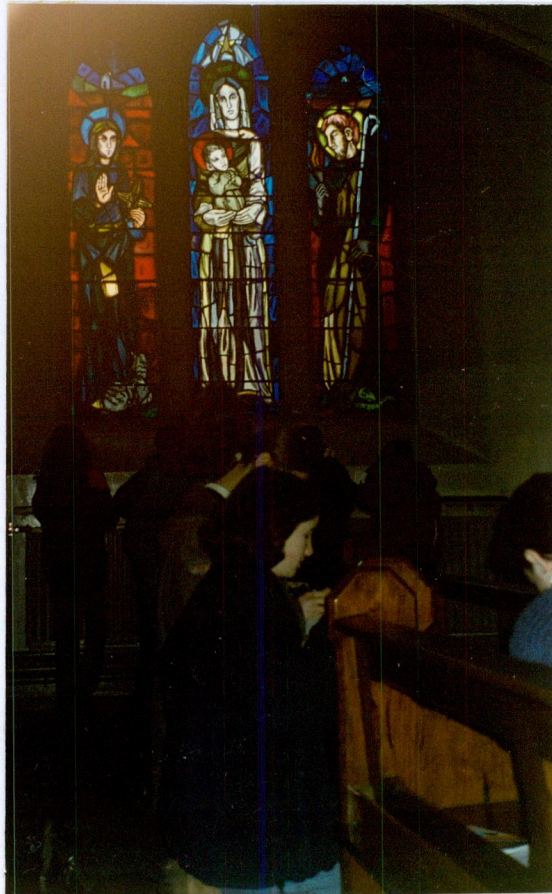


Figure 6: Pupils in St. John the Baptist Church in Blackrock drawing from Evie Hones work.

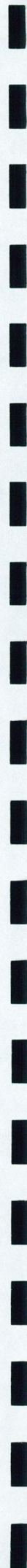
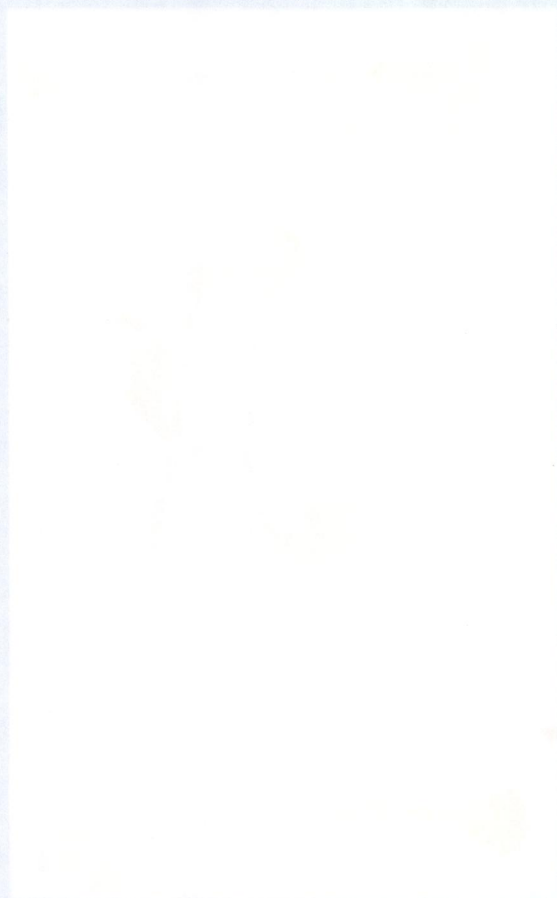




Figure 7: Pupils filling out worksheet in church.



FOONOTES CHAPTER 3

¹¹Laura Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978) p. 19.

CONCLUSION

When I first thought about what I would choose as a topic for my dissertation, I initially couldn't think of anything in particular about art education that I wanted to write about. Unlike the majority of my peers on this course, I had never taught before, having come straight from a degree course. What I really wanted to know was the greater picture or question, what are the reasons for teaching art, what are the justifications, what is worthwhile about an art education and what are the purposes of an good art education? If I was going to spend my life as an art teacher, I wanted to be clear on exactly these questions. I therefore decided that this would form the basis of my dissertation.

From reading the available literature I focused on Chapmans' three purposes of art education because they were in common with most writers on the subject.¹ Before I had read this literature I would have justified art with vague ideas such as promoting an aesthetic awareness in the individual and providing a vehicle for expression. While I haven't changed my opinion, I have become much clearer and knowledgeable on exactly what an art education can provide.

I believe every child should be introduced to art as a birthright, the skills and knowledge they learn in the art class will enrich their lives continually long after they have left the educational system, which is undoubtedly a major asset to any individual.

It is imperative that we also teach children to become visually literate not only

because it exposes them to a whole world of the visual arts that they will enjoy for their entire lives but also because in our market driven society it is essential that the individual is armed against the aggressive sophisticated techniques of contemporary advertising. They must be able to understand the power of the visual image to manipulate the viewer. Also, if we do not educate our young people to become visually literate then we cannot expect them to create a more aesthetically pleasing environment.

I feel that everyone regardless of their class, religion, or race should be given access to knowledge of their cultural heritage from an early age. The art class is an ideal class in which to introduce cultural awareness and link it with practical work in progress. Cultural awareness of individuals in a society can lead to a feeling of a cultural identity for a nation which is important in raising the general self esteem of the nation.

I have shown that it possible to achieve Chapmans' three purposes of art education, they found the stained glass project enjoyable and challenging, they learnt about their cultural heritage linked in with their practical work and they better understood the role of art in society as a result of this sequence. Of course there were different levels of success from pupil to pupil but by planning a lesson sequence well and exposing pupils to art in the real environment, it is possible to achieve the three aims and thus equip the pupils with skills and visual literacy that will be enriching for them for their entire lives.

FOOTNOTES CONCLUSION

¹Laura Chapman, Approaches to Art in Education, (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc., 1978) p. 19.

APPENDICES

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Why did you choose art as a subject?
2. Do you find art is different from other subjects? If so, how?
3. Did you enjoy the stained glass project? Why/Why not?
4. Name an artist who works in stained glass:
5. Stained glass is found mostly in churches. Why is this?
6. What did you learn if anything, about the history of stained glass?
7. Asise from churches, have you ever seen stained glass anywhere else?
8. Why did you choose the image you did foy your stained glass?
9. Considering the image, where would be a suitable place to display your stained glass and why?

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Benson, Ciaran. The Place of the Arts in Irish Education. Dublin: The Arts Council, 1979.
2. Lowenfeld, Viktor and Brittain W. Lambert, Creative and Mental Growth, 8th Edition. New York: Collier Macmillan, 1987.
3. Chapman, Laura. Approaches to Art in Education. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Inc. 1978.
4. Eisner W. Elliot. Educating Artistic Vision. New York: Collier Macmillan 1972.
5. Curriculum and Examinations Board. Discussion Paper: The Arts in Education. Dublin: C.E.B, 1985
6. Curriculum and Examinations Board. Report of the Board of Studies, The Arts. Dublin: C.E.B. 1987
7. Clement, Robert. The Art Teachers Handbook, 2nd Edition. London: Hutchinson Education, 1990
8. Department of Education, Art, Craft and Design Junior Certificate Syllabus. Dublin: Department of Education, 1992.
9. Lancaster, John, Art, Craft and Design in the Primary School: National Society for Education in Art and Design, 1986.
10. Egan, Kieran, Imagination and Education, London: Open University Press, Milton Keynes, 1982.