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## **THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS IN THE ART ROOM.**

We make contact with the realities of our surrounding environment through perception and this perception is reliant upon our sensations. Sight is the most highly developed of our senses and a description of how visual information within our environment is picked up by our eyes, is fundamental in addressing the process of visual perception and its development.

The process of visual perception and its development is dependent upon the essential structure of selectivity. The nature of selectivity although essential can be detrimental and ultimately destructive. This detrimental aspect of the selective structure and its effects on the potential learning and growth of visual perception needs to be addressed and a solution sought. A solution which will seek to promote relevant selective actions, a solution known as visual awareness.

There is no literary definition of visual awareness but there are elements from which a process can be defined and developed. Through a comprehensive exploration of the process of visual awareness and the factors which are necessary for its development (environment and culture) this dissertation will identify a feasible way in which visual awareness can be taught and successfully promoted within the classroom. A process which needs to be promoted and developed in order for art education to progress.







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**The Promotion and Development of Visual Awareness in the Art room.**

**A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education**

**in**

**Candidacy for the**

**DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS.**

**by**

**Yvonne Kane**

**June 1996**



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# INTRODUCTION.

Visual Arts education aims to encourage visual awareness and a curiosity in each pupil and to provide the means to express visual and tangible ideas and feelings to communicate with self and with others. These aims should remain constant throughout the continuum of Primary and Post Primary Education." (1)

Visual perception and its limitations must be addressed, in order for Art Education to progress. Visual awareness has been cited as a solution to the limitation of Visual perception and its development as a process discussed in relation to environmental factors and their effects. For the purpose of this dissertation I wish to discuss the promotion and development of Visual awareness in relation to how it can be feasibly taught as an essential factor within the Art room.

Chapter 1, Towards a definition of Visual Awareness. Chapter 1 focuses on the detrimental aspect of the selective structure and its effect on the potential learning and growth of Visual Perception in relation to the creation of Visual awareness as a solution. Through this exploration a definition of the process of Visual Awareness will be obtained.

Chapter 2 addresses the central elements necessary for the development of Visual awareness, these being Environment and Culture and discusses the effects these factors may have on the development of Visual Awareness.

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of the proposed system on the performance of the system. The study is divided into two main parts: a theoretical analysis and an experimental evaluation. The theoretical analysis is presented in Chapter 2, and the experimental evaluation is presented in Chapter 3.

The study is organized as follows: Chapter 1 is the Introduction, Chapter 2 is the Theoretical Analysis, Chapter 3 is the Experimental Evaluation, Chapter 4 is the Conclusion, and Chapter 5 is the Bibliography.

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Chapter 3. discusses the practical promotion of Visual Awareness within the classroom through the use of support studies.

Chapter 4 the methodology chapter gave me an opportunity to promote Visual Awareness in the classroom myself.



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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **VISUAL AWARENESS: TOWARDS A DEFINITION.**

Through briefly defining and investigating the process of Perception, I will endeavour to focus on and discuss the specific topic of Visual Perception and the essential structure of selectivity. The detrimental aspect of the selective structure and its effects on the potential learning and growth of Visual Perception, in relation to the creation of Visual Awareness as a solution will be explored. Through this exploration a definition of the process of Visual Awareness will be obtained. The six key elements which when comprised compose Visual Awareness, will be identified and their overall process discussed in relation to

- 1). the classroom in the Art situation and
- 2) the two main factors, environment and culture which may positively or negatively effect their development.

### **Towards a definition of Perception:      A general discourse.**

Several prevalent theorists in the field of educational psychology have developed and documented their own personal interpretations of the process of perception, two theoretical examples being. R.L. Gregory's and Coon's definition of the term

"A dynamic searching for the best interpretation of the available data." (1).

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While Coon stated that Perception as a process

"assembles information into a usable  
mental representation of the world." (2)

Although neither interpretation is self explanatory or enough to relate a practical understanding of the Process of Perception, Coon's exposition of the term "assembles information into a usable representation of the world" does seem to raise four fundamental, interlinking questions which may help to clarify the meaning of Perception. These questions being :

1. What kind of information is being gathered?
2. Where has this information been collected from?
3. How will this information be assembled?
4. What will become of the assembled information?

The questions although identified separately when answered collectively will serve to outline a unified and personal definition of the term Perception, as perception is a process not a series of single independent acts.

### **A unified definition of Perception.**

In simple terms Perception is the name of those processes which take in, and make sense of all the things we see, hear, smell, touch, taste, or are aware of, that is our sensations.

"The brains interpretation of the  
information processed by the senses."(3)



Perception is an active process of interpreting our experiences so that they make sense. Irving Kaufman defines perception as

"The particular characteristic means whereby man places himself in the environment, knows it and acts upon its incoming information, after, he has coded it for himself and given it meaning" (4).

### **The process of Perception.**

Sensations are received by the sense organs, coded, given a meaning and then decoded by the appropriate brain centres. How we interpret those sensations and ultimately respond actively or passively to them is affected by subject variables such as 1). Cultural conventions, 2). Physiological factors and 3). Environmental habituation (discussed later in relation to visual perception and selectivity).

### **Sensation and Perception: A separate issue!**

We make contact with the realities of our surrounding environment through perception and this perception is reliant upon our sensations. There is no distinction between these two terms, although certain psychologists would dispute this statement.

"It is extremely doubtful that we ever experience pure or meaningless sensation" (5).

Our awareness of the immediate environment is predominantly organised in terms of meaningful objects eg. faces, books, etc. as we normally see these rather than other stimulus elements of which they are composed, that is lines, colours, dots etc.





A significant reason for the belief that there is no distinction between perception and sensation can be found rooted in the process of Visual Perception.

"Sensory receptors do not act as mere transmission channels to the higher connical canoes. In vision for example, a great deal of organizing and patterning of the stimulus information takes place in the eye itself, even before neural impulses leave the retina on their way to the brain" (6).

It is this specific area of Visual Perception which now needs to be discussed and developed in relation to the overall structure of selectivity and the detrimental effect this theory may have upon the development of Visual Perception as a process.

### **Visual Perception. How we see: A Biological Perspective.**

In perception as Sir Ernst Gambrick (1950) realized to such good effect

"Art and Science meet." (6)

"How and what we see the ways of transference of raw sensory data into recognition of objects and various facets of interpretation of the perceived data are the very subject matter that serve as underlying constituent parts of art activity." (7)

Human beings possess a "sensory motor brain" which enables all sensory imput to redirect the body to carry out and complete essential and appropriate motor activities. This idea fosters an understanding of Sensory Processing and also acts as an aid in the



comprehension of specific sensory processes i.e. sight, how we see. Sight is the most highly developed of our senses and a description of how visual information within our environment is picked up by our eyes is fundamental in addressing the central issue of Visual Perception and its development.

"An understanding of perception would be simple if it was a simple matter of biology." (8)

### **The Mechanics of Seeing: A Biological Perspective.**

We look at the immediate environment which surrounds us and those parts which our gaze is directed to (a process of selectivity discussed later) reflects light into our eyes. How the rays of light enter each eye can be compared to the way light enters the lens of a camera. Light varies in wave length and these variations in wavelength are perceived as differences in colour. The rays of light are then focussed by the lens of the eye onto a light sensitive surface at the back of the eyeball known as the Retina. All visual information which is in front of us, appears not as a constructed visual representation on the retina but as a "projected image which is upside down, left to right, diminished in size and interchangeable." The specialized cells of the retina, photoreceptors - which respond to light with electrical signals and retina ganglion cells - whose structure form the optic nerve, react by initiating nerve impulses in the nerve of the eye. These nerve impulses are then conveyed by the optic nerve to an area at the back of the brain called the Occipital area of the cortex, thus completing the basic stages of visual information processing, a process which efficiently codes, decodes and gives meaning to any information visually gathered from the environment.





## **Selectivity, an unavoidable issue: an essential action.**

Our environment can be described as being "A mass of available stimulation" and as young children try to grasp and process all aspects of available data which surrounds them their powers of observation appear to be unlimited. However, this level of processing within the brain is impossible to maintain as it leads to a sensory overload and as a result the child will have to learn how to select information that is considered to be valuable.

## **Defining selectivity in relation to the human visual system.**

### **Selective Attention.**

Selectivity refers to the ability to focus our attention on one source of stimulation.

Studies have been carried out which have tried to uncover and explore the circumstances under which this attention will switch to other sources of information, but most of these findings are inconclusive and open to debate.

The selective aspect of Visual Perception is already evident from the first day we are born and develops as perceptual skills evolve. New born babies prefer looking at patterned cards rather than plain ones. Infants are attracted to more intricate patterns e.g. checkboards and their gaze has been found to be directed towards whole spheres rather than flat circles. Four month old babies will advance towards producing an active response to patterns resembling the human face and dismiss any other features which remain unscrambled. Adults by the time adulthood has been reached most individuals will have had a common experience of instantly perceiving a face, where



will have had the common experience of instantly perceiving a face, where one may not exist at all or an example being when looking at patterned wallpaper from a distance. Therefore it can be said that the human visual system is continually involved in the primary purpose of the selective process, that being the reduction of the large mass of sensory stimulation which is being constantly received into accessible manageable amounts.

## **The Origins of Selectivity.**

### **Kaufman's and McFee's theories of Selectivity.**

Kaufman believes that the origins of the selective process can be traced back to primeval times. He states that when man was surrounded by a hostile environment his survival depended solely upon his selective attentiveness. The identification of changes within his environment, example movement or external conditions helped ensure mans place, control and understanding of his immediate environment.

Jane McFee shares Kaufman's views on the origins of selectivity and in "Art, Culture and Environment" she discusses children who come from rural areas being much more aware of environmental details when placed within a city scape. They are again selectively aware and through their identification of example, extensive movement and obvious changes within the external conditions / environment these children continue to emulate the primeval origins Kaufman discussed. If the observations were documented practically through example, painting the rural dwellers will according to McFee usually convey more information then urban dwellers. Working on the premise that "they have been exposed to less and so do not have to ignore as much." (8)





## **How selectivity works within the human visual system.**

The study of selectivity and how it actually works is a complex issue. Any account offered about the process seems to include a reference to some kind of physiological filter. The apparent function of the filter is to allow only one source of information through into consciousness while disallowing any other sources to enter. A hypothetical theory which has been proposed by several physiological theorists states that :

"some stimuli are decoded sufficiently for their importance to be assessed and then rejected, filtered out whilst others are filtered in"(9).

## **Aims of Physiological filter theories**

In brief, theories vary on the creation, position and function of the filter. These theories debate for example whether: 1). the filter mechanism begins to operate earlier on in the perceptual process. The early filter theory documented by Ann Treisman's attenuator model (1963) stated that all information collected by the sensory system will be decoded for relevance before being rejected or accepted. 2). The filter mechanism begins to operate later on in the perceptual process. The late filter theory is supported by Deutsch and Deutsch pertinence model 1963. Within this model it has been proposed that its main aim is to take the sensory stimulus and decode it for (a) its physical properties and (b) its ultimate meaning before any decision is made. It is important to note that all of the above are just theories, and that the exact nature



of the filter mechanism which the selective process depends upon is unknown.

As stated before, perception and now selectivity in relation to the process of visual perception is reflected by subject variables such as :

1. Cultural conventions = learning experience, belief, expectations, values etc.
2. Physiological factors = temperament, health, age, mood etc.
3. Habituation = environmental and ecological habits.

The result of these subject variables on selectivity can be either positive or negative

**Habituation:** A practical example of the effects subject variables have on selectivity.

Some negative aspects of selective perception result from Habituation.

The human mind turns out stimuli that are consistent, predictable and repititious. For this reason you often become aware of familiar surroundings (a large poster on the back of the Art room door next to the drawing boards) only when they are then removed, that is when change takes place (the poster is taken down and the drawing boards stacked away).

If a student is forced to pay attention to certain stimuli such as an ill constructed still life, using forms irrelevant to student surroundings, then their minds will try to turn off. Human perceptual systems requires variation in order to function, as when exposed to repititious artificial steady state conditions the students sense receptors will cease to function.

Rudolf Amhiem's theory of Selectivity found in one of his many essays on the psychology of art, states firmly that a perceptual challenge should be placed before the





children at all times rather than "Shapeless, mysterious, unrelating sensations." He also believes that the blunting of the children's perceptions and cognitive responses may simply be a defensive action carried out by the child in order to defend him/herself against "incomprehensible, frightening, overwhelming sensations."

"How many of our children lack sensory stimulation? One might suspect that most of them receive too much. What is wrong with them may be something quite different, normally that they are incapable of responding to perceptual challenge." (10 ).

The result which habitation has on selectivity is one of overall negativity unless challenged and if selectivity is altered negatively then the overall efficiency of the process of visual perception can be called into question.

### **A comprehensive evaluation of the efficiency of Visual Perception.**

**The process of Visual Perception, efficient, effective, evolved or defective.**

As stated previously the process of Perception would be:

"Simple, if it was a simple matter of biology" (11).

Complex yet intriguing, the nature of this process manages to raise several prevalent questions about its own efficiency, effectiveness and evolvement. In simple terms the process of Visual Perception is often lacking in the ability needed to achieve its main objectives. Its lack of efficiency and effectiveness can be observed at several key points during the process.

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## **The inefficiency and ineffectiveness of Visual Perception: A structural observation of key points.**

1). During the initial phase of observation a lack of accuracy and the dulling of objectivity can cause the quality of information being processed to become questionable. A good observation is an accurate and relevant observation.

"That what is perceived should always be organised and that which is presented can be organized in several different ways. Some of which are better than others for effective observation". (12).

This statement underlines the importance of the role of the teacher when developing good observational skills and outlines a positive action which can be carried out by the motivator (teacher) in order to maintain a standard of good work among the students.

2) The selective phase of Visual Perception can be comprised by the action of making irrelevant selections. Selections irrelevant to the end in view. Selectivity will again be directly affected by poor observational skills and unless the issue of "looking" rather than "seeing" is addressed within both phases, then the evolvement of Visual Perception will remain static.

Selectivity, although essential to the overall process, can have detrimental effects which need to be examined under a specific heading.

3) The main function of coding is to classify and clarify. However, as indicated, before there can be a tendency for some to focus on intrinsic details which can ultimately cause the process of Visual Perception to slow down.

# THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

FROM THE FIRST SETTLEMENTS TO THE PRESENT TIME

BY JAMES OSGOOD

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1857

THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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The arrangement of the categories of information in relation to their importance can be internally influenced by past experiences or be that the lack of past experiences in relation to the external world.

4. Meaning is also dependent upon a student's individual past experiences of the world, experiences which need to be developed if the process of Visual Perception is to improve.

These are just some areas of inefficiency and ineffectiveness located within the process and their effects on the ultimate evolution of Visual Perception are deconstructive and essentially destructive.

The main inefficient area within the process of Visual Perception remains that of selectivity its defectiveness alone can cause the process of Visual Perception to be limited; selectivity needs to be addressed.

**Visual Perception. The defective aspect of visual perception.**

The specific effect of selectivity on the potential learning and growth of visual perception in relation to the creation of visual awareness.

**Selectivity: A detrimental action.**

The essential need for selectivity has already been acknowledged as necessary, but the positive aspects of this action can be subsequently overshadowed by the end product, that being the closing off of visual perception.



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### **Visual Perception : A limited experience.**

The overall aim of selectivity is to reduce the mass of available stimulation which surrounds each individual to accessible, manageable amounts.

However, the nature of selectivity can be such that it will often select irrelevant information which is non representative of the stimulation available.

Once the process has selected one source of visual stimulation, it has actively denied other stimulus entry, which will eventually lead to the detrimental closing off of our visual field of perception.

To prevent this action from happening a solution must be created, defined and constructed in relation to the prevention of "limited perception". A solution which seeks to motivate good observational skills and promote relevant selective actions. A solution known as Visual Awareness.

### **Visual Awareness: A solution to the Problem.**

Visual awareness which will be defined shortly can alter the skills and sensitivity (to immediate environment) necessary for the prevention of limited perception.

Its construction and development can support the reconstruction of visual perception which will eventually lead the individual to a greater understanding of the world which surrounds them.

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## **Defining Visual Awareness.**

There is no literary definition of Visual Awareness but there are key elements from which a process can be defined and discussed.

## **The process of Visual Awareness**

The process of Visual Awareness involves six key elements :

1.     **Observation.**
2.     **Choice.**
3.     **Coding.**
4.     **Meaning.**
5.     **Response.**
6.     **Sensitivity.**

which need to be developed and discussed in relation to concrete examples that can be abstracted from the actual school environment.

## **Observation.**

Observation is motivated perception : It is goal directed and the efficiency of the process of observation is essentially a matter of the degree in which several features of the act of perception contribute to the expenditure of the attainment of the goal.





The practical function of observation is to enable the observer (student) to know what is going on around him. This is achieved by the gathering of visual information, from the immediate surroundings through an act of perception which will then allow the student to adjust his actions according to the information collected.

The whole stability of the process of visual awareness is dependent upon the students ability to secure visual information from his/her environment in an effective, accurate and objective manner.

**The practical teaching of good observational skills.** The practical teaching of good observational skills can be approached most effectively through a simple drawing based task, in which students will learn to acquire the efficiency accuracy and eventual objectivity necessary for the next step of the process to take place.

**Drawing based task.** Any Visual forms is defined by the use of contour lines, lines which can provide maximum visual information if observed at certain points. These points are the area where change takes place within the objects, that is direction of line.

An example of this would be where the neck of a glass bottle becomes slender in relation to its bottom width. When these points / areas of change have been identified by the students, with initial help from the teachers, then the pupils can begin to attend to the areas of change in order to secure an understanding of the form.

Through a simple task like this students become aware of :

1. Differences in objects.



2. Learn how to observe correctly, meaning instead of just "looking" at objects, looking is a mindless act of our eyes in distinguishing importance of size, limit, values etc., they will begin to "see" the objects. Seeing is the human context within which visual phenomena acquires personal import, the tenor of individual understanding..

The development of the latter, "Seeing" is essential for the creation of visual awareness and the basis for the act of "seeing rather than just looking" must begin with the observational phase in order for the actual process of visual awareness to continue. Failure in observation is in general due to weakness in discipline and restriction and is in contrast to good observation, which is a relevant observation.

"To ensure efficiency in observation is in part a problem of motivation and that is in part a problem of control." (13)

Being able to distinguish between a good and a bad observation is often a difficult task when we are being constantly submerged by the visual information found in our surroundings and as we try to cope with the mass of available stimulation we can often experience a term known as sensory exhaustion. Sensory exhaustion can cause lethargy in visual perception and must be avoided at all costs. This avoidance is achieved by a process known as selective attention. Selective meaning choice.

The first part of the report is devoted to a description of the experimental apparatus and the method of observation. The second part contains the results of the observations and the third part contains the conclusions.

The experimental apparatus consists of a glass vessel containing a liquid and a small amount of gas. The gas is introduced into the liquid by a tube which is connected to a gas supply. The pressure of the gas is measured by a manometer. The temperature of the liquid is measured by a thermometer.

The results of the observations show that the rate of absorption of gas by the liquid is proportional to the square root of the pressure of the gas. This result is in agreement with the law of Henry.

The conclusions of the report are that the rate of absorption of gas by a liquid is proportional to the square root of the pressure of the gas. This result is in agreement with the law of Henry. The experimental apparatus is simple and the method of observation is easy.



## **Selectivity. The Reason we choose.**

Humans probably have the most highly sophisticated mental processing systems of any animal but, even with that we cannot pay attention to everything which surrounds us within our environment all of the time, as the brain is unable to process such a large amount of available stimuli. It seeks and emphasizes the need to pay attention to something before it can deal with it . Even though accuracy in relation to observation which is motivated perception, was highlighted during the observational phase, it is important to state that no matter how accurate our perception is we cannot pay attention to too many things at the same time. The way humans pay attention has been described as being a single channel low capacity system.

Single channel. Meaning only being able to concentrate on one thing

Low capacity memory. Meaning the system cannot handle too much

## **Why do we choose what we choose.?**

It is inevitable that some stimuli are more likely to be attended to then others, the reason being, things which are different from what we know and understand to be the accepted level of stimulation, are more likely to attract us. Example, a poster hung incorrectly (upside down) in the Art room.

## **Taking the school as an example.**

Students from the first day of entry into second level education will discern a set perception of their immediate surroundings, believing their expectations to be true.



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Visual forms which would have initially been met with interest because of their unfamiliarity are now subconsciously absorbed along other irrelevant stimulation only to be ultimately rejected by the process of selectivity.

Objects which the students are expecting to see like a large tapestry hanging in the main foyer, or framed works by past pupils which are dispersed along the corridors are perceived quickly in comparison to the time it takes to perceive something which is unexpected. When objects are perceived quickly a perceptual set is formulated.

The term perceptual set refers to a state of readiness to respond in a particular way.

This is a non. advisable state to maintain, as it dulls perceptual skills, which will create a visual lethargy. A lethargy which could be detrimental to the continuing process of visual awareness.

Often the artificial conditioning of a school environment can be completely stifling for the student and unless, an attempt is made to re-order their surroundings ( example, hanging more prints, paintings, posters, students work etc).then the students response will remain passive.

Selectivity is a fundamental element of the process of visual awareness for without it the human visual system would be unable to deal with the mass of available stimulation which surrounds it and as mentioned before "it is vital we pay attention to something before we can deal with it fully. "(14)

1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country.

2. The second part of the report deals with the economic situation of the country.

3. The third part of the report deals with the social situation of the country.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the political situation of the country.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the cultural situation of the country.

6. The sixth part of the report deals with the environmental situation of the country.

7. The seventh part of the report deals with the international situation of the country.

8. The eighth part of the report deals with the future prospects of the country.

9. The ninth part of the report deals with the conclusion of the report.

10. The tenth part of the report deals with the annexes of the report.

11. The eleventh part of the report deals with the bibliography of the report.

12. The twelfth part of the report deals with the index of the report.

13. The thirteenth part of the report deals with the list of figures of the report.

14. The fourteenth part of the report deals with the list of tables of the report.

15. The fifteenth part of the report deals with the list of abbreviations of the report.

16. The sixteenth part of the report deals with the list of acronyms of the report.

17. The seventeenth part of the report deals with the list of symbols of the report.

18. The eighteenth part of the report deals with the list of units of the report.

19. The nineteenth part of the report deals with the list of references of the report.

20. The twentieth part of the report deals with the list of footnotes of the report.

## Coding

After selectivity has taken place and our source of stimulating information has been identified, then the need to code that information becomes relevant to the process of visual awareness.

The term coding refers to the stage within the process where the information that has been selected is now being classified and placed into categories of importance. The way in which we classify this information is solely dependent upon our own personal experiences of the world. Some students may place more emphasis on intrinsic details rather than concentrating on the form as a whole, identifying small areas of change which will bear little or no significance to the overall understanding of what has been perceived. A practical example of this kind of classification process can be seen when teaching a diverse group of students how to draw the proportions of the face correctly. After relating the fact that the head is egg shaped / oval to the students, the next step is to indicate the importance of drawing. 1). A central horizontal line from which the eyes will hang. 2). A central line which when drawn will cut the oval in two (split the face in half). From this point onwards there will be other rules which will have to be put into practice (e.g. one eye is equal to one fifth of the width of the head, the total width of the head = five eyes) in order for the task to be completed and although this process may seem logical there are some students that tend to pay attention to the intrinsic details, these students will remain solely concerned with the actual ruling of the two central areas





rather than the solving of the problem at hand. Such a classification of information can be blamed on a student's limited experience of the world and can only be overcome by a combination of good observational skills with an exploration of new visual experiences within the classroom. This combination will eventually lead to the completion of the process of visual awareness.

### **Meaning.**

Since the process of classification has taken place and the categories of information have been arranged in order of importance, then the next necessary step to be taken is for the classified information to be given a meaning.

The coded visual information will be taken and re-ordered in such a way that it will now take on a singular meaning. This singular meaning is representative of an individual's finalized understanding of the information collected and may have in part been achieved by the use of memory storage.

Memory storage is a term which refers to the action of searching for whether we have previous experience of the coded collected information or not and it is again dependent upon the individual's previous collective experiences of the world. Experiences which have been processed by the individual because of a lack of overall sensitivity towards the general surroundings. A sensitivity which could be promoted in the process of visual awareness.



A singular meaning is essential if the process of visual awareness is to continue and it is for the student a clarified definition of what the stimuli means to them. Example, a photograph of a friend transferred onto a T-Shirt. The function of a singular meaning cannot be realized fully until a student responds to it and it is this type of response which the process is now concerned with.

## **Response.**

There are two types of response which can be carried out by the student in a reaction to the singular meaning previously formed, either :

- 1).     **Active.**
- 2).     **Passive.**

### **Active.**

An active response is a productive response because it signifies the fact that a form has been fully perceived from an act of choice that was made by the student.

### **Passive.**

Passive is the opposite to active and it is of little service to the process of visual awareness. In simple terms it refers to the fact that a form has not been perceived.

An active response is deemed necessary for the completion of the process and its importance cannot be diminished when the effect it has on the final component of the visual awareness process is taken into account.





## **Sensitivity.**

Once a student has fully realized the power of perception through an active response, they will begin to reinforce their ability to "see" rather than pursue their habit of "looking". Through the act of "seeing" (which has previously been defined under observation) a student can begin to focus on the importance of the creation of a general sensitivity towards their own environment and culture. They must become aware of the colour, shape, form, texture etc. present within their own surroundings and identify other qualities or changes as man did in primeval times which they would not normally see. For example, a half drop pattern with mismatched bricks which forms the front of a derelict building. The significance of sensitivity cannot be stressed enough as it is essential for the completion of the process of visual awareness and as a vital objective it needs to be supported and developed by the art teacher in order for it to be sustained.

The role of the art teacher in the success of the student creating and maintaining a sense of sensitivity is paramount. The art teacher must want to create an eagerness within her students to see images for example by Andy Warhol and guide them to an appreciation of its sensitivity towards colour, or to feel the rough wool that is woven through the weaving frame. The art teachers role must become one of motivator, a motivator who stresses the need for good observational skills (observation being motivated perception). The specific role of the teacher in the development of visual awareness within the classroom will be discussed at a later stage. Sensitivity completes





the process of visual awareness and within its own exploration highlights the importance of two factors which will be necessary, yet sometimes detrimental to the development of the actual process of visual awareness these factors being the environment and culture.

With the completion of the examination of visual awareness as a process, it is now essential to identify the structural outline of the necessary factors for the development of visual awareness and discuss the effects these factors may have on the promotion of visual awareness.



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## **CHAPTER 2.**

### **ENVIRONMENT & CULTURE**

#### **FACTORS NECESSARY FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS**

The main objective of this chapter is to address the central aspects of environment and culture and discuss the effects that these may have on the development of visual awareness.

Through first identifying both factors as being necessary for the development of visual awareness and defining their structural outlines (sub componets), I will then endeavour to examine the internal structure of each and develop my findings in relation to the effects they may have on the development of visual awareness.

**The Factors Necessary for the development of visual awareness are: :**

- 1. Environment.**
- 2. Culture.**

**A structural outline of the sub components necessary for the composition of the environmental factor which is essential for the development of visual awareness**



## ENVIRONMENT : A STURCTURAL OUTLINE

"Environment is primarily responsible for the making of a child. As we change and build that environment in different patterns, that child will change and reflect the experience that he has had." (1)

The way a student perceives the world and his level of visual awareness is inextricably influenced by the **home in which he lives**.

"Certainly the cognitive behaviour of individuals, their effective behaviour aand interaction between themselves and environment all play a part. The **background** of a student at the time, his exposure to **mass media** and his ability to be flexible in his thinking and his standing **in the classroom** all influence the development of an aesthetic awareness."

Within the above statement made by V. Lowenfield and W. Lambert in their publication : "Creative and Mental Growth : 3 sub components of the environmental factors which may affect the development of visual awareness were inadvertently referred to. These sub components as indicated are more commonly referred to as :

1. **Family.**
2. **School.**
3. **Media.**

and when united form the structural outline of the environmental factor.





## **THE ENVIRONMENT : A FACTOR EFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS**

### **AN INTERNAL VIEW OF HOW EACH SUB COMPONENT MAY EFFECT THE DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS.**

#### **THE FAMILY.**

Even after children start school parents act as a central influential force which will in part dictate their child's attitudes and general behaviour. According to Jean Piaget and his theory of "Cognitive Development", for the first seven to ten years of a child's life a state of maturation does not permit us to use abstract rules and principles to structure its behaviour. He described this type of thinking as "Pre-Operational". The child's thinking is controlled by what things look like and by externally imposed instructions from adults. "Children at this age cannot really think for themselves" and it is only at a later stage that the child's thinking becomes more logical and it begins to deduce that it can influence objects and events in its environment in a deliberate and meaningful way.

Even though a child may reach the highest level of cognitive development by the age of ten (and upwards) their education is still consistently being influenced by their family / background. A discussion on the topic "Family background and its social cultural factors can be divided into two main areas :

1.     **Cultural.**
2.     **Attitudinal.**





## **CULTURAL.**

This term refers to parental attitudes towards reading / parents reading habits and whether a child has become aware of the importance of books as an educational tool which can be fun, yet relevant to their own lives and immediate environment. In relation to art education the cultural aspect of a family background can be vital to the development of visual awareness and visibility of the appreciation of the arts (through books, paintings, wallhangings, woven rugs, etc.) within the home which can then become for the child a link between their own environment and all art activities carried out.

## **ATTITUDINAL.**

This term refers to parental attitudes towards educational attainment and achievements. Educational attainment and achievement while a necessity for some remains irrelevant to others. Socio economic status is a complex issue which undoubtedly effects the attitudes of parents towards education. Poor housing, deprived geographical areas, lack of community spirit etc., all effect the family and in turn may breed ignorance in relation to education and therefore art education.

With reference to poor housing, deprived geographical areas etc., it is important to note that although students who are raised within deprived environments are often considered to be "visually deprived" or deemed slow learners. Such terms as highlighted above are not specific to any particular socio economic group.



Students who have been brought up in any socio economic group and whose environment has been found to be a visually deprived environment can often appear to be slow learners but, Jane McFee believes that with the right environment these show learners will soon equal their peers in artistic ability. If children are visually deprived within their own immediate environment, example, the home, then their perception of art and actual art works will also be limited and they will often remain unresponsive to any visual images initially displayed. The students will carry with them what they have learned from their own background which will lead them to either accept or reject art as a subject.

In certain circumstances the attitudinal aspect becomes parents attitudes towards the value of art as a subject in relation to other curriculum subjects. The value which has been placed upon art by the family is clearly evident through the students attitudes towards the subject within the classroom. This can be gauged by observing either their eagerness to partake in experiencing a new symbol system where art is central and expressed through a constructed visual language or by their general lack of disrespect for the subject. Example : home activity unfinished, materials for class forgotten etc..







## **SCHOOL: THE IRISH EDUCATION SYSTEM**

Since the advance of industrialisation formal educational institutions have taken over from the family in the task of teaching basic skills. In fact "the school has become the focal socialising agent yet it cannot completely take over the parents influence."

Education is an institution which plays a fundamental role in the creation of social attitudes and characteristics. The school occupies a dominant position within our lives and for at least one quarter of our life expectancy we have to adhere to its policy making. In Irish secondary schools our education system is inextricably caught up in the self defeating process of public examinations. Any idealistic aims of education for life have been destroyed by the systems emphasis on education for work. Through the verbal and numerical symbol systems which dominate Irish education, students are being taught to ignore the arts with their intrinsic worth in human development and as David Sless points out in his publication **Teaching and Visual Communication** :

" We do not as a matter of course produce people with education in how to use pictures in order to teach." (2)

The long term success of motivating and developing visual awareness in Irish society is dependent upon a radical re-evaluation of educational policy and practice which has just begun with the introduction of the Junior Certificate, art, craft, and design syllabus.



"In the art, craft, and design syllabus there is a sensitivity to ability developmental stages and previous experience. Their starting points are the students direct experience, real or imagined of the natural, social and man made environments. This starts a real sensitivity to the child's development level."(3)

Building up an awareness of the environment and the world around us through art can help us to develop in other subjects areas and until this is fully realised there will remain large gaps in the Irish educational system through which large proportions of our population can fall through.

"The neglect of the arts is the promotion of ignorance."(4)

### **The Schools attitude to Art in relation to the promotion of visual awareness**

This can be addressed under two headings :

1. **Sufficing.**
2. **Stimulating.**

The attitude to art and its promotion and development of visual awareness is clearly evident on entering the actual school building. From general observation one can gain an insight into the subvalue systems which are at work within every school. A system which indicates its preference for certain subjects through :

- A. Monetary support, that is budget funding and
- B. Consistent recognition of subject performance eg. Science, Home Economics.





## **Sufficating or Stimulating.**

### **Sufficating.**

A sufficating school environment which does not support the development of visual awareness through the arts will : 1). Display little or no art work by students or artists on its school corridors, or within its classrooms. 2). It will not promote the subject through the development of open art competitions, acknowledging any artistic attainments achieved by students etc. and 3). The resources found within the art room itself may well be limited and unsatisfactory for the creation of a visually stimulating environment. Without some semblance of support from the school ( principal, teachers from other areas, or students, peers etc.) any level of visual awareness and visual interest would be impossible to maintain over a long period of time.

### **Stimulating.**

The school is a microcosm of the specific society it is structured within and should therefore itself reflect directly the extensive interests and values of that society i.e. students interests and values. This can be successfully done by promoting students work throughout the school and by creating and encouraging an effective support system through internal cross curriculum projects . For example, a history based project when interlinked with art can produce schemes of work that are innovative and developmental and combine both the verbal and visual symbol systems as discussed previously.





## **MEDIA.**

There is no shortage of potentially stimulating visual experiences because we are in an environment which is largely constructed from intense visual imagery of the mass media. As the pace of technology quickens and new advancements are being made new channels of communication are being opened, causing us to be constantly bombarded by new forms of information and apparent entertainment.

The student of today is surrounded by the power of mass media eg television, magazines, radio etc. are all designed to elicit a predetermined understanding and to translate simplified bland and stereotypical images which will satisfy the collective facets of society.

Mass media will always remain passive and it encourages its audience to follow suit because it does not wish to stimulate its viewers. It strives to create a conformity and persuade us to consume its contrived offerings.

Mass media in relation to the development of visual awareness is often detrimental yet still essential for its promotion and as art teachers we must realise that the stimulating climate we wish to create within our classrooms is in part dependent upon the power of mass media.



• We must treat it as it has been treated before, with an air of productive respect. Artists such as Delaunay and Leger in the 1920's to Warhol and Rauschenberg in the 1960's have all explored the images created by advertising designers and re-used them in either a subverted or liberating way. It is the re-use of these images which may well define the solution to the problem of passivity and conformity.

• If students can learn to re-direct the media images which they have perceived then they can begin to really comprehend the complexities of their immediate surroundings.

• Mass media in relation to the environment should be seen as a positive resource which will help maintain a level of interest in visual imagery and in turn support the development of visual awareness rather than hinder it.

• For example, if a student through motivated observations detects an image that they find visually stimulating they can re-appropriate part of that image by learning how to use visual language in order to comment on that representation.

Detecting elements they find exciting can alone promote visual awareness.

• The issue of mass media will also be approached under the main heading of culture, since it also helps to define the structure of popular culture.







## **Culture: A Structural Outline.**

**A structural outline of the sub components necessary for the composition of the cultural factor which is essential to the development of visual awareness. The symbol systems which dominate Irish education are verbal and numerical. However, these are far from the only symbols necessary to become a fully productive and understanding member of our culture. Many other systems exist, central among which are the arts and the neglect of such forms of meaning in the school experience of most young Irish people is educationally indefensible.**

**The way a student perceives the world and his level of visual awareness is also inextricably influenced by the Cultural Society in which he lives. As emphasised in the other statement, for a student to become a fully productive member of culture they must become involved in a symbol system which all foster their comprehension of culture and therefore influence their levels of visual awareness.**

**Culture impinges on the individual and shares his/her personality.**

**"The mass media reproduce dominate ideology and as a conservative revolutionary force they encourage passivity and apathy. The culture associated with the mass media tends to be low quality, bland, escapist, standardised stereotyped, conformist and trivial."(5)**



Art education is a component of that culture and a tool which the students can use to either create a good understanding of visual awareness, or abuse it by allowing culture to completely redefine their powers of preception in a negative way.

When students themselves are asked to define the term culture, their discussion will inevitably tend to focus on one central aspect of the concept, that being mass media and popular culture. However, the complete structural outline of culture encompasses more then one sub component and when disassembled reads as follows :

1.     **National Culture.**
2.     **Popular culture.**
3.     **Youth culture.**

### **CULTURE :                   A FACTOR EFFECTING THE PROMOTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF VISUAL AWARENESS.**

An internal view of how each sub component may effect the development of visual awareness.

#### **NATIONAL CULTURE.**

Art or an aesthetic orientation to the world does several things, firstly, it transcends historical time meaning it closes the gap between past, present and future and secondly it does not treat the observer and observed as separate, nor does it separate





the internal events of the observer from the events in the external world, the time between cause and effect cannot actually be perceived.

Creating an awareness of national culture is of ultimate importance for all second level students. Through emphasising its significance within the classroom we are forcing the students to re-examine the roots of their own individuality and whether or not the phenomenon of Irish Culture itself has had any effect on their own concepts of self as a whole. Self is the very centre of the individual.

An effective way of creating a visual discourse on certain aspects of National Culture could be carried out through an examination of public sculpture. An accessible yet substantial resource, public sculpture on occasion manages to fuse elements from the past and present in order to comment on the evolving culture which surrounds it.

Within the City of Dublin alone there are numerous historical and contemporary sculptures which stand side by side, e.g. Annalivia, Daniel O'Connell, O'Connell Street and they themselves are representatives of a visual language which can transmit knowledge effectively.

**Through the observations of public sculpture alone a student can gain insight into :**

- A. The historical aspect of their national culture which is constantly evolving.
- B. Critically evaluate social issues which are being raised by the Sculptors work.





- C. Identify Irish local artists work which they find relevant to their own work and re-examine the relationship between themselves and the artists representations of the local environment. Through the exploration and focus on, example Public Sculpture within the classroom, a perceptual challenge is being placed before the students which to be met needs a certain level of visual awareness.

Although I have primarily focused on the issue of public sculpture (an aspect of national culture and its positive function in relation to the development of visual awareness) I would like to note that any facet of national culture can be examined through a broad spectrum of art, craft design and as the Junior Certificate syllabus states :

" History of the art, craft and design should be introduced in relation to the learning experiences, with examples from past and present worldwide as well as local Irish or European art so as to acquaint the students with adult and child art craft design from many cultures." (6)

In order to maintain students interest in their own National Culture an art teacher must become aware of external resources including artists in residence, gallery museums, current exhibitions etc. which are available to them. (Art as a part of our National Heritage cannot be ignored.)

### **Popular Culture.**

Discussed previously under the sub heading of mass media, popular culture is classified by its characteristics as being a form of low culture.



Through the use of :

1. **Passivity.**
2. **Simplicity.**
3. **Ambiguity.**
4. **Conformity.**

Popular culture creates aims and objectives which stand in stark contrast to those of high art, or in relation to the classroom art historical references used in the classroom.

The presentation and use of both popular culture and art historical references as stimulating resources within the classroom needs to be approached carefully as each term seeks a specific response from the students.

It is those specific responses which now need to be examined in relation to the positive development of visual awareness.

### **The responses pursued by Popular Culture v Art Historical References a comparison.**

#### **POPULAR CULTURE.**

Created primarily to serve needs adjunctive or hostile to art. Popular culture intends for all of its aspects to be placed on the surface so that they can be quickly seen and easily accepted. These facets seek a response which will be non challenging as

Popular culture serves to titillate, entertain, persuade and intends to maintain a bland simplicity at all levels.





It strives not to stimulate but to numb and seeks a static response from its audience.

Because popular culture seeks only static responses and feeds its audience with pre-determined understandings the potential for creating and developing visual awareness is limited and unless the students are able to re-structure or subvert the images presented to them they will become passive consumers rather than active creators.

### **ART HISTORICAL REFERENCES.**

Art History strives to create genuine art experiences, meaning the symbols art creates are open, alluring and seek exploration. Their meanings are not immediate and the response that is sought from its audience is an active one. A student is persistently challenged and encouraged to react through their own work to the actual art works presented.

High Art/Art Historical References, activates and addresses social issues with a vigour and sincerity. and within such art historical references students can find stimulation and observe issues which may be relevant to their own lives and work.

High art is an individual, informed perspective on the surrounding environment and does not adhere to collective tastes. The potential for the development of visual awareness through the appreciation and use of art historical references is unlimited and should be exploited at all times.



## **Youth Culture.**

Youth culture is clearly evident in the glossy teenage magazines that are as much a part of our fast moving society as television and video are. Magazines such as "Just Seventeen" predominately read by thirteen to seventeen year olds and "19" read by fifteen to seventeen year olds, incorporate all activities and issues which are of interest to today's Youth Culture. From music television (M.T.V.) to the latest fashions, they bombard the viewer with often trivial information that does not serve to inform.

Again passivity and ambiguity is rampant among these magazine issues because, they have the ability to change what should be an active statement about ever evolving elements and culture into a conformists view of a stifled culture.

Through looking at environment culture and the effects they may have on visual awareness, the question of how can these two forces be used as positive visual resources within the classroom must be raised.

This is a valid question which needs to be answered in relation to the practical promotion of visual awareness in an art situation. An issue addressed in chapter 3.





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DATE: 12/17/72

## **Chapter 3.**

### **Visual Awareness:**

#### **A Practical Promotion of an Essential Process.**

#### **Visual Awareness: A practical promotion of an essential process.**

"Visual arts education aims to encourage visual awareness and a curiosity in each pupil and to provide the means to express visual and tangible ideas and feelings to communicate with self and with others. These aims should remain constant throughout the continuum of Primary and Post Primary Education. " (1)

My main objective within this chapter is to investigate how visual awareness can be taught through the practical application of support studies within the classroom. Through identifying and discussing the origins of support studies, I will endeavour to secure a developed definition of the term. This definition will indicate three main sub components of support studies :

- 1). Materials.
- 2). Studies.
- 3). Art Historical references.

Each outlined by the Junior Certificate syllabus and discuss their individual relevance to a general understanding of the term.



Using the three sub components as headings, the issue of support studies and its practical contributions to the promotion and development of visual awareness within the classroom will be addressed. The art teachers role in the development of visual awareness will be discussed and a brief evaluation of support studies carried out.

### **Support studies and visual awareness:**

#### **The origins of support studies.**

##### **The Junior Certificate, Art, Craft, Design Curriculum.**

"There is no doubt.... that there is evidence of a change in thinking about the balance of the art curriculum. Many of the schools while producing artefacts of great quality, also lay stress on the need to educate their pupils to know about the work of other artists and designers, both past and present and to be articulate in the judgements they make about them. "(2)

With the abolition of the Intermediate and Group Certificates and the introduction of the Junior Certificate came the opportunity for all art teachers to restructure their teaching methods.

Since September 1989 all students at Junior Cert level have been involved in the new Junior Certificate syllabus and in June 1992 the first cycle of Junior Certificate candidates were awarded the Junior Certificate.

The development of the Junior Certificate was initiated by the Department of Education when they subsequently commissioned the (CEB) Curriculum and Examination Board from (1984 - 1987) and the (NCCA) National Council for Curriculum Assessment

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1987 awards to put forward recommendations on Curriculum and assessment which could then be implemented successfully and smartly by the Department itself.

In September of 1985 the CEB distributed a discursive paper on the Arts in Education, this was titled as such and served to emphasize three general aims of art education

- 1). To develop a love of interest and value for the arts.
- 2). To acquaint the student with the traditions of art.
- 3). To achieve a balance between artistic education and making art an aesthetic education.

The CEB followed this publication with the appointment of the Arts Board of Studies which saw fit to implement the above aims through a structured report. The significance of the Board of Studies report in relation to the main objective of this chapter lay in their emphasis and views on the development and creation of support studies. The board viewed the creation of support studies as an opportunity to :

"Develop through structural practical work, the student's aesthetic sensibilities and powers of critical appraisal, appreciation and evaluation and to enhance the student's qualities of imagination, creativity, arguability and ingenuity." (3)

and set out a criteria for how they perceived this could be practically taught.

Support studies should be taught as a learning experience, using examples from past and present worldwide as well as local, Irish or European work, thus acquainting the



- student with as many varied cultures as possible. This guideline applies specifically to the teaching of Art Historical References in relation to support studies and shall be sufficiently discussed at a later stage.

The Curriculum and Examination Board and the National Council for the Curriculum recommendations were considered to be well structured and relevant by the

- Department of Education and were thus implemented in the form of the "Junior Certificate. A Junior Certificate which would implement the use of support studies as a practical back up to all areas of Art, Craft and Design.

### **The main differences between the Intermediate and Junior Certificate.**

- The main differences between the Intermediate Curriculum and Junior Certificate syllabus are important to acknowledge, only in so far as a comparison serves to highlight even further the educational policy in Irish Secondary schools over the last twelve years.

The **Intermediate Certificate** was exam based and indirectly encouraged a limited performance from students because the exam itself was limited. It did not require any Art historical references and influences to be present in any form and lacked a developmental structure. The **Junior Certificate** on the other hand has realized the full potential of students capabilities and challenges them accordingly. It is project based and demands an exploration of most mediums. As a syllabus it instigated the use of Support Studies and emphasized the importance of Art Historical References in





relation to the students own work. It stated that support studies should run alongside the ongoing projects. The Junior Certificate seeks to develop a students appreciation and evaluation skills and address the issue of culture and its relevance to the aesthetic teaching of art, craft and design education. The Junior Cert embodies the general aims of art education and consistently encourages development throughout it's structure.

### **Support Studies : A Definition.**

Support studies in relation to the Junior Certificate syllabus were defined as follows:

"History of art and craft design should be introduced in relation to the learning experience, with examples from past and present, world wide as well as local, Irish or European work, so as to acquaint the student, adult and child, with art, craft and design from many cultures. Critical appraisal and education skills should be developed so as to lead to an understanding and appreciation as well as enjoyment of their own work and that of others. " (4)

However, a further clarification of the definition of support studies needs to be developed and can be done so through an examination of certain requirements laid out by the Junior Certificate in relation to the completion of practical work. This definition can then be reapplied to a general discussion on the aims and importance of support studies in relation to the promotion and development of visual awareness.

The Junior Certificate examination requires that on the completion of any practical work that there should be :



1. The first part of the report deals with the general situation of the country and the position of the various groups.

2. The second part of the report deals with the economic situation and the position of the various groups.

3. The third part of the report deals with the social situation and the position of the various groups.

4. The fourth part of the report deals with the political situation and the position of the various groups.

5. The fifth part of the report deals with the cultural situation and the position of the various groups.

6. The sixth part of the report deals with the religious situation and the position of the various groups.

7. The seventh part of the report deals with the legal situation and the position of the various groups.

8. The eighth part of the report deals with the administrative situation and the position of the various groups.

9. The ninth part of the report deals with the military situation and the position of the various groups.

10. The tenth part of the report deals with the foreign relations and the position of the various groups.

- A. A collection of materials that will "support" that work.
- B. A collection of studies that will "support" that work.
- C. A collection of Art Historical References which are relevant to the practical work completed.

The three key elements underlined are those terms which were briefly developed and at best define the structural outline of support studies in relation to : A) Junior Certificate origins. B). A practical understanding of the general term.

### **Materials, Studies and Art Historical References.**

**A working definition of support studies.**

**Materials : Defined.**

As defined by Junior Certificate requirements, materials can take the form of a description of tools, techniques etc. A brief documentation of the actual materials used during a practical project can subsequently enable a student to come to a general understanding of the term and allow them to surmise just how important a re-examination of their immediate environment can be. The re-examination could cause a student to a). identify objects that would have normally gone unnoticed (eg. cardboard boxes, sponges etc.) and encourage them to re-evaluate their pre-determined functions and b). begin to recognize differences in these objects (eg. the texture of the corrugated cardboard is rough and its weight heavy in comparison to the softness of the light sponge).

The documentation of actual materials is particularly relevant to Three Dimensional projects and a practical example centred around this issue shall be briefly discussed in



the latter half of this chapter and "practically" explored within the final methodology section.

### **Studies : Defined.**

Studies, a part of the overall structure of support studies requires students to examine and explore several visual concepts through eg. observational drawing before focussing on one central idea during their practical work for the Junior Certificate.

In simple terms, studies are the practical back up work, i.e. observational drawings, paintings, thumb nail designs etc. which will all work towards "supporting" the finished piece, be it two dimensional or three dimensional. Example being drawings of shoes, bags etc. to support a shopping theme.

"Studies are essential for helping the students sustain projects from conception to realization." (5)

Studies are essential to the overall structure of support studies because they encourage a student to develop and explore their own observational skills.

Good observations of relevant objects, can create an endless source of stimulation and support for the students work. Through these studies a student can finally define their own goals and then relate them to their own environment. The term studies and its relationship to observation is central to the issue of visual awareness and its practical promotion, an issue which cannot be ignored and needs to be discussed in a specific manner. I will endeavour to indicate concrete examples of the collective points illustrated above.



1. The first part of the report is a general introduction to the subject of the study.

2. The second part of the report is a detailed description of the methods used in the study.

3. The third part of the report is a presentation of the results of the study.

4. The fourth part of the report is a discussion of the results and their implications.

5. The fifth part of the report is a conclusion and a list of references.

6. The sixth part of the report is a list of appendices.

7. The seventh part of the report is a list of figures and tables.

8. The eighth part of the report is a list of footnotes.

9. The ninth part of the report is a list of acknowledgments.

10. The tenth part of the report is a list of references.

## **Art Historical References : Defined**

" To extend pupils knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of art, so as to further their capacity to make critical judgements and authentic personal choices." (6)

"Pupils critical appraisal and evaluation skills must be developed leading to their true understanding and appreciation as well as an enjoyment of their own work and the work of others." (7)

Both of the above statements refer to the Junior Certificates general definition of support studies and the central issue which they manage to address collectively is the importance of Art Historical references in relation to the overall definition and development of support studies.

Art Historical references is the last term within the working definition of support studies and it's significance cannot be underestimated. The Junior Certificate states that Art Historical references which are going to be used as support studies should be relevant to the students work, whether that work be two dimensional or three dimensional, painting or graphic design.

The artists or artistic movements used should always support the work completed and it is important that the students should feel at ease when discussing their influences, ideas, etc.. Art Historical references can be used not only in the direct manner described but can also be viewed by students as sources of stimulation which could be subverted in order to readdress static concepts. Art Historical references also promote basic observation skills which are essential for the process of visual awareness to take place.



As a combination materials, studies and Art Historical references define a structural outline of support studies. These definitions although independent are interchangeable because ultimately they are one. The main objective of support studies as stated in the Junior Certificate syllabus is to :

"Develop an awareness of the historical, social and economical role and value of art, craft and design as aspects of contemporary culture and mass media." (8)

Awareness being the appropriate word within this statement. During the general definition of support studies I indicated that the collective terms, structural outline, would be of paramount importance to the practical promotion of visual awareness. A promotion which is essential for the creative growth of students. "Visual awareness is the basic ingredient of the artistic and creative processes." (9)

The topic of promotion is now the central issue at hand and shall be addressed through a discussion of the relationship between support studies and the development of visual awareness.

### **Support Studies and Visual Awareness.**

**The promotion and development of Visual Awareness through the practical application of support studies within the classroom.**

Studies, materials and art historical references. How can these elements promote and develop the process of visual awareness in an art situation ?.



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## **Studies and the promotion of Visual Awareness.**

The nature of studies involves the practical process of observation. Used as a starting point for all projects the essence of study demands that a student observe his immediate environment through the act of "seeing" rather than rely on

**The Mindless Habit Of Looking.** This alone requires the student to re-examine and re-evaluate his/her own observational skills before proceeding any further.

The practical function of observation is to enable the observer to know what is going on around him. This is achieved by gathering visual information from the immediate surroundings through an act of perception. A good observation is an accurate observation and an accurate observation of the surrounding environment can only be obtained if the student chooses to "see" rather than "look". Studies encourage the practical process of observation through drawing. Drawing skills can be taught effectively if a student is allowed through studies to choose certain aspects of the environment which they deem to be relevant to themselves and the set project. The practical promotion of motivated observations through studies can be successfully fostered within the classroom if based around a carefully constructed thematic scheme, which is relevant to the students understanding of the world. This responsibility lies on the art teachers shoulders and as a motivator they must seek to develop and direct the students studies in order for the set project to be completed.



**Selective choices made by the student must be relevant.**

Some selective choices made during an act of perception are better than others, through studies students are being encouraged to identify objects which are only relevant to the theme set. This slight limitation can often help the student to develop their observational skills while promoting personal challenges at all times.

**In Developing a sensitivity towards the environment.**

Students through their studies identify objects they may not normally have seen and begin to actively recognise the differences in objects. Through creating an awareness of form, shape, colour, texture etc. studies serve the student best by re-introducing them to their own environment.

The issue of observation is central to the promotion of visual awareness as visual awareness is centered around the whole issue of observation. Studies promote this through understanding and taking a logical approach. When students have completed a series of observational studies they will often judge these studies as being independent of each other. A support study notebook can overcome this and it is a concrete example of how studies promote visual awareness. Through the use of the support study notebook students can : 1). Re-organise their studies into a logical order which will inevitably make the entire process clearer. 2) Through the support study notebook students can begin to look back and evaluate their own work in an objective manner. This evaluation can lead





to further productive work by highlighting any problems that need to be solved and 3)

A support study notebook can be used inside and outside of the classroom and it is an easily accessible form for all students.

### **Materials and the promotion of visual awareness.**

The art room can and should allow a pupils actual environment to be taken into consideration. There is an opportunity for all students to draw, observe and construct with materials from their immediate environment eg. magazines, buttons, sweet wrappers etc.. This would allow students to grasp onto accessible and understandable materials, while instigating a platform for the promotion of visual awareness. "Children cannot get to grips with what they cannot comprehend." The use and documentation of a variety of materials is essential for the development of visual awareness. Through the gathering of materials, students not only continue to develop their perceptual skills by making selective choices but begin to discover that with the use of more than sight or touch they can continue to experience their environment on a different level.

The documentation of actual materials is particularly satisfying and relevant to three dimensional projects, for example, a three dimensional construction of an African mask using found materials would challenge a student to gather their own found materials which could be used for the construction and decoration of the mask. Using found objects students are being forced to question the functions of many materials

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which may have previously been taken for granted, like tin foil, sponge, cans, plastic, wool etc., and are being asked to re-evaluate again their immediate environment and develop their sensitivity to it.

#### **Art Historical references and the promotion of visual awareness.**

"To extend pupils knowledge and understanding of the history and traditions of art so as to further their capacity to make critical judgements and personal choices." (10)

The use of art history references in the promotion of visual awareness is essential. However, it must be noted that when presenting these support studies to the class it is taken into consideration that there are some students who will have been previously exposed to actual works of art and this will have a large effect on how they view these art historical references.

Any expectations or barriers which have been built by the students can be as easily demolished through the careful use of Art Historical references. Contemporary examples of design which are accessible and understandable to the student can be used to aid the rebuilding of this tenuous relationship.

Through the introduction of art historical references students can be made aware of the relevance of artistic work in conjunction with their own work. They can be made aware of artists they might have never had made contact with before (either Irish or International) and begin to develop their understanding of the relevance that Irish culture and other cultures may have had on their own visual concepts. Support studies





are necessary to sustain a students awareness of other cultures as it is essential that students recognise and appreciate work from other countries so that their work seems worthwhile and relevant to them.

Art Historical References promote observation as they encourage students to examine their hidden meanings by "seeing" them as perceptual challenges rather than looking at them as senseless objects. Through the promotion of observation and insight into culture (whether a popular culture, youth culture or national culture) art historical references actively promote visual awareness and can be used to develop this process to its highest expectations.

A concrete example of how art historical references can be used and taught in relation to the promotion of visual awareness can be found in the instigation of a support study notebook.

Through a support study notebook students can throughout school relate the artists they have encountered in their own work or identify for example, where a Henry Moor, sculpture can be found in Dublin city after discussing it within the class structure.

Students must be aware of and be able to appreciate art works because they are visual elements which will influence their work just as much as practical observational studies.

Actual art works also offer us a voyeuristic view of the environment around us. From Sean Scully's abstract paintings of Dublin to Cathy Prendegast's sensual sculptures these artists continue to make private observations public. Yeats depicted a colourful Dublin full of passion and excitement with the people busy rushing down the quays. The



Dublin he depicted is as relevant today as it was then and can be easily understood by all. Students can and will relate to imagery like this and should use it to reach out to their own environments. So when students are looking at works of art they are seeking information, coding it and giving it a meaning. An active response is important and when that has been achieved it has been activated purely by the art work involved and the presentation of it. Students should be able to respond to, criticise and evaluate works of art. This is extremely important to the students practical work and its development.

### **The role of the Art teacher in the promotion and development of Visual Awareness through Support Studies.**

The Art teachers role in the promotion of visual awareness through the use of support studies is essential for the development of the process.

The Art teacher is responsible for :

- 1). The development of observational skills.
- 2). The amount and type of visual stimulus available to the students and
- 3). Creating an environment within which the student can become aware of and use their active reactions in order to relearn and rebuild their own environment.



1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem.

2. The second step is to define the objectives of the study.

3. The third step is to design the study and select the participants.

4. The fourth step is to collect the data and analyze it.

5. The fifth step is to interpret the results and draw conclusions.

6. The sixth step is to report the findings and discuss their implications.

7. The seventh step is to evaluate the study and its results.

8. The eighth step is to disseminate the findings to the relevant community.

9. The ninth step is to reflect on the process and learn from the experience.

10. The tenth step is to plan for future research and practice.

11. The eleventh step is to implement the findings in practice.

12. The twelfth step is to monitor and evaluate the implementation.

13. The thirteenth step is to report on the implementation and its outcomes.

14. The fourteenth step is to reflect on the implementation and its impact.

15. The fifteenth step is to plan for future implementation and research.

16. The sixteenth step is to implement the findings in practice.

17. The seventeenth step is to monitor and evaluate the implementation.

18. The eighteenth step is to report on the implementation and its outcomes.

19. The nineteenth step is to reflect on the implementation and its impact.

20. The twentieth step is to plan for future implementation and research.

### **The development of observational skills.**

As discussed previously support studies predominantly promotes observational skills which in turn help with the promotion of visual awareness. The art teachers role is central in developing the skills needed to observe correctly. Through simple drawing based tasks and the promotion of studies within the classroom and as home activity the art teacher can gauge how much the student has learnt and whether there are any practical problems to be addressed. It is of utmost importance that support studies are made an integral part of the learning process, this can only be achieved through the art teachers involvement. Support studies allow the art teacher to teach constructively.

### **Influencing the amount and type of visual stimulus available to the students**

Art teachers have complete control over the type and amount of stimulus they make available to students in the art room. Through the images and art historical references which are chosen to be shown, art teachers consistently influence what the students see and when they see it. As an integral part of the promotion of visual awareness, support studies are a structured way of creating a new and stimulating environment within the classroom. The way in which images are presented is an important issue which needs to be addressed. The visual stimulus placed before the students must be relevant to their set projects and should run alongside the project at all times. **The type of images also presented are of vital importance.** Not only must the art teacher decide which support



studies are collectively relevant to the students work, they must learn how to channel the mass of available stimulation found amidst the structure of popular culture. MTV (music television ) is the latest example of technology found within the realms of popular culture. This can be positively or negatively used by the art teacher. If the teacher learns how to channel the positive aspects of such a phenomenon then this can become a source of visual imagery for the students. Music Television as a visual experience offers the viewers a good resource for example, graphic art, that is logo's album covers, poster design etc.. It makes these kinds of visual statements accessible for both the students and teachers use.

The environment and culture are the two main factors which affect the development of visual awareness and it is the teachers job to equip the students with enough confidence necessary to cope with both aspects. Technology when controlled and used by students correctly can aid the promotion and development of visual awareness rather than hinder it. The final point which should be made is so in relation to the amount of visual stimulus available to the student. Although it is tempting to say there should be an endless source of visual imagery shown to the students on a consistent basis, it is however important to note that the amount shown should be relevant to the set project because there is a chance that sensory exhaustion could take place which would then ultimately dull the perceptual senses and thus stunt the growth of visual awareness.





**Creating an environment within which the student can become aware of and use their active reactions in order to relearn and rebuild their own environment.**

The art room as a specific environment is essential for the development of visual awareness. It should be stimulating not suffocating. The students must realise that they can recreate this environment as they see fit by questioning what is directly present. The students have acquired the confidence to question through their prior development, through observational skills, art appreciation etc. and this development is due to the positive role which the art teacher has played.

Through observational skills and the ultimate active reactions to what has been perceived, the students can learn to positively rebuild their own environment inside and outside the classroom. The art teacher is the main motivator and should promote the development of visual awareness for without an active input from him/her the development of visual awareness will be short lived.

### **Support studies in relation to the promotion of visual awareness: Evaluation.**

If and when support studies are intergrated into a project then the teaching process that takes place is of far greater value to the student then if the support studies were introduced at a later or earlier stage. Support studies aid the development of any project in a coherent fashion and should be run alongside the project in order to reinforce the



learning process. This can be successfully done by the instigation and use of support study notebooks (as discussed previously). Support study notebooks can and should be introduced at all levels in the Junior and Senior cycles.

At the moment support studies as an outline structure have only been implemented at a Junior Cert. level and while some might say that this is sufficient enough to allow a student to build up a good basis of visual knowledge and develop a visual awareness. It may still remain unsatisfactory. The gap that lies between the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate syllabus is too wide. Each level emphasises different aims, aims which now remain unassociated. This will hopefully be addressed in time as it is essential to find a solution to this problem in order for visual awareness to be constructively promoted at a senior level. The way forward for support studies is through their constructive practical application within the classroom. This will afford both students and teachers an opportunity to amend or expand the boundaries of support studies as they see fit.



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## CHAPTER 4.

### Visual Awareness in the classroom.

#### Methodology.

#### Background to Methodology.

I am currently completing my teaching practice in Loreto High School, Beaufort, Rathfarnham. It is an all girls school with a student population of 600. Art as a subject maintains a prominent position within the school due to the strong profile of the Art Department. The Art Department has sustained this status because of the numerous amount of successful applicants who have gained entry to various art colleges. The scheme I have chosen to use for my practical application, to promote and develop visual awareness in the classroom was a scheme focusing on form and tactile texture and which ran for eight weeks.

The aim of the scheme was to develop an awareness of form and tactile texture through a high relief construction of a mask based on an African theme. The part construction and whole decoration of the mask was to be achieved through the collection and use of found materials, objects to be collected by the students from their own immediate environments. There were no restrictions placed upon the students use of materials during the project as they were encouraged to develop a level of individual sensitivity towards their surroundings.

# Psychology in the Classroom

## Psychology

### Background to Methodology

The study of psychology in the classroom is a complex and multifaceted endeavor. It involves understanding the various factors that influence student learning and behavior, and how these factors can be effectively managed in the classroom setting. This paper will explore the background to the methodology used in this study, focusing on the theoretical and practical aspects of psychology in the classroom.

The theoretical background of psychology in the classroom is rooted in a variety of disciplines, including biology, psychology, and education. The biological perspective focuses on the role of the brain and the nervous system in learning and behavior. The psychological perspective focuses on the role of the mind and the environment in learning and behavior. The educational perspective focuses on the role of the teacher and the classroom in learning and behavior.

The practical background of psychology in the classroom is rooted in the application of psychological principles to the classroom setting. This involves the use of various techniques and strategies to manage student learning and behavior. These techniques and strategies are based on a variety of psychological theories and principles, and are designed to be effective in the classroom setting.

The methodology used in this study is based on a variety of research methods, including surveys, interviews, and experiments. The surveys and interviews are used to gather information about the current state of psychology in the classroom. The experiments are used to test the effectiveness of various techniques and strategies in the classroom setting.

The results of this study will be used to inform the development of new techniques and strategies for managing student learning and behavior in the classroom. This will help to improve the quality of education and to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed.

The concept of a support study notebook was introduced during the initial phase of the project and completed on the completion of the mask. The notebook was to include examples of a) observational studies completed, b) a selection of images and art historical references relevant to the theme Africa and c) a documentation of all materials collected and used during the project. On completion of the task the students masks and support study notebooks were placed on display in the main foyer of the school.

This was the first scheme to be completed by the first year class and was significant in the fact that for many students it was the first ongoing theme based project that they would have encountered.

The overall structure of the scheme itself afforded the students an opportunity to experience several different aspects of the promotion of visual awareness. From observational drawing to developing an ongoing sensitivity towards their environment, students gained basic skills needed in order to enable them to complete the diverse task at hand.

An important issue which had to be tackled during the initial phase of this scheme was the introduction of the new concept of creating and compiling a support study notebook which would be used to (do just as it stated) support any work completed by the student. I found two effective ways of translating the idea of a support study notebook to the class, the first being by showing the students practical examples of what a support study





notebook should entail and the second by referring to well known artists who have used / use the notebook as a form of support for their work. The Art historical reference shown was a reproduction of Leonardo De Vinci's drawings of the human figure, specifically the face.

Through practising these two methods I managed to lessen any anxiety created from the initial challenge of the unknown and this encouraged the students to begin to relate their own work to that of specific artists.

### **Objectives.**

The first class in this scheme was predominantly used as an introductory discussion on the overall objectives of the forthcoming project. This entailed the setting up of a slide show which was aimed at pin pointing for the students specific art historical references and resources which they could use in relation to the creation of their own masks. The material shown during this slide show was extensive as it addressed artists who would be specific to : A) The initial phase of self portraiture, examples of artists show Degas, Da Vinci, Cocateau etc. ( Fig. 4.1.) B) Examples of African tribal masks, sculptures by Picasso etc. which would relate to the design, construction and decoration of the actual mask.

Examples of public sculpture and architecture (Fig 4.2 & 4.3 ) found in Dublin city centre (which were relevant to the sub theme of self portraiture) were also used.

These cleverly highlighted the students own immediate environment and drew their attention to the differences between Irish Culture and African representation of a

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similiar theme. The slide show raised many issues and avenues of discussion and the collective materials which were used by these artists were briefly discussed and compared. In relation to Art historical references which indicated Degas, the basic art element of line was evaluated and the proportions of the face discussed. By using Degas and DeVinci's drawings the topic of observational drawing was approached in a relevant but fun way and the motivation for actual practical attainment of drawing skills was maintained.

The second half of this class was centred around the actual teaching of the proportions of the face. The students remained motivated which in turn motivated their observations. Using their faces as the primary source students began to realise their individual capabilities in relation to observational skills and began to identify the difficulty they were encountering . This alone supported the learning process taking place and signified the beginning of a successful promotion of visual awareness.

The first activity to be completed for the scheme in relation to the support study note book was the collection of both facial and African images. This task alone promoted the use of magazines as a resource material and began to encourage the students visual awariness of other cultures.

The second lesson centred again around the activity of observational drawing which encompassed tone as the art element (Fig 4.4). Through these tonal drawings students





began to further explore the concept of form and their habit of just looking was beginning to be challenged. The main objective behind this class was to promote relevant accurate observations. Through the use of Art historical references such as tonal drawings by Degas an active response was being sought from the students and their evaluation skills tested.

Degas's representation of the face was compared with the examples of facial features gathered from magazines by the students. The students were asked to comment on both images and indicate which they preferred. These two images sought separate responses and forced the student to re-examine their attitudes towards art works in relation to their apparent acceptance of popular culture.

An image of an African mask was also shown in relation to Degas's drawing and the students were asked to comment on what changes had been made to the ordinary facial features in order for the mask to take on the appearance that it did.

This activity was extremely useful in promoting observation in relation to the promotion of visual awareness because it challenged the students to a). recognise differences in objects and b). use relevant visual language in order to communicate their findings.

The 3rd and 4th lessons revolved around the actual making of the plaster bandage masks and constructing a paper mache layer. Students were again exploring the proportions of the face but through a different sense i.e. touch. By applying the plaster





bandage and modelling this over the face the students began to explore their sense of touch at a higher level and what may have seemed confusing during the drawing stage now became clear.

These two classes were active and extremely productive because while the students were predominantly involved in constructing the mask they were also being asked to consider the design of the finished piece. The students were made aware at an early stage in the project that they could only use found materials from their immediate environment when decorating the mask. This was discussed during the initial slide show and had been stressed through the introduction of the support study notebooks (Fig. 4.5).

The fifth & sixth lessons in brief, explored the crucial area of design. These lessons were of vital importance to the promotion of visual awareness because they not only highlighted the importance of the previous images and material collected for the support study notebooks in relation to the overall design, but they directly addressed the students need to create a certain level of sensitivity towards their own environment. This sensitivity was actively explored through the gathering of found materials from their own environment. Through bringing the students out on a sensory walk during the fifth lesson, I was able to address the central issue of tactile texture in an understandable and accessible way. By choosing examples as I walked around I asked the students to relate to me in simple words the differences between these found materials chosen. I encouraged them to develop further their sense of touch and



stressed that any materials gathered must also be documented within their own support study notebooks. There were no restrictions placed on them in relation to where they gathered their resources from but, once a material or object was chosen its origin and original function had to be accounted for.

The whole concept behind, using found material in order to decorate their African masks was to eliminate their dependency on pre-determined images and promote their own level of visual awareness

By identifying objects they may not normally see and by visually documenting the differences between them students will have achieved the motivated state of observation necessary for the promotion of visual awareness.

The gathering of materials also benefited the thumb nail designs created for the sole use of deciding which design would be most successful. Because of their immediate contact with the environment and its resources the students imagination and levels of creativity soared. Their design no longer remained centrally based on just the African theme because as they explored their own environment they became more aware of specific visual elements which inevitably shaped their initial ideas.

Throughout this exploratory phase students were being constantly shown images of African masks and being asked to evaluate what they found stimulating about the particular masks shown. As images were being shown, students were inevitably involved in the selective process of visual perception and acts of choice were being made.





Throughout the project students were consistently referring to art historical references and selected images gathered from magazines and materials found within their own environment (Fig. 4.6).

Not only did this help to promote visual awareness but it sustained the students interest in the environment. They began to view it as a resource of visual imagery. When asked whether they would have normally noticed the material they had gathered before this project one student in specific answered, "No, I would just think of them as normal household objects, but now I see them in a new way".

The seventh & eight lessons were used to complete the construction of the African masks. Students experienced the pleasure of tactile texture again by manipulating the materials and objects gathered in order to create specific effects. The completed masks were effective and all well thought out.

In relation to the support study note book all materials and means of application to the masks were documented on a regular basis and evaluated. Each student passed their notebook around in order to re-stimulate ideas, and generate discussion on problems encountered (Fig. 4.7). One student used corrugated cardboard extensively in her design but found it difficult to manipulate. On a suggestion from another student she decided to re-approach her design and vary the materials in order to create a better contrast. This problem encouraged the student to re-evaluate her own work and



and return back to the environment and to her support study notebook in order to solve this practical problem (Fig. 4.8).

### **Evaluation of scheme in relation to the promotion of Visual Awareness.**

Gradually students through the development of the project began to become more aware of objects in their environment which could be successfully brought into their work.

They began to see possibilities in objects within their immediate environment which may have normally escaped their attention. Objects within their own homes were now seen in a new light.

They began to become aware of differences in objects and ultimately became sensitive to their environment, colour, form etc.. Each individual had an active response to a perceptual challenge. Selective choices were made and information was processed and given a meaning (Fig. 4.9).

### **ART HISTORICAL REFERENCES.**

At the beginning of this scheme students had certain preconceptions of what art work should be. These preconceptions were based on previous experiences, family background and environment. They questioned the relevance of studying African imagery and discussed openly their dislike for certain images shown.

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In the initial slide show I used several of Picasso's sculptures to illustrate how he exaggerated facial features and how they could be used in the making of their own masks. The students disliked Picasso's work as they stated openly : " It is not realistic, it is not proper art." When challenged on this point that "it is not proper art", they answered by saying "there is no skill here I could draw large lips and big eyes, these are just not right."

The images of the African mask were received with more enthusiasm, but the students still seemed unsure about the validity of such works.

Over the next couple of weeks as the project progressed I introduced the same images of Picasso's work to see whether students reacted in a similar manner. Their response had slightly altered after being exposed to other art historical references and they began to appreciate Picasso's work for what it is. The significance of his works over exaggerated facial features now became clear as they could see the relevance of his work to their own masks (Fig 4.10).

The students enjoyed the slides of public sculpture and architecture shown and were surprised by how many there were in Dublin city centre. Some students were unaware of the obvious sculptures in O'Connell Street.

The students enjoyed the slides of public sculpture and architecture shown and were surprised by how few they actually recognised. When asked to identify where some of these examples could be found the students found it hard to answer. The task which I





set the class was to locate at least three of the sculptures or buildings shown and document them in their notebooks under the section allocated to the studies of the face.

This scheme set out to promote visual awareness and the art historical references were of vital importance during the project . Hopefully through this scheme and its art historical and contemporary references, students will have become more open and flexible in their opinions towards art then they were before. I also hope that I have achieved my own aim of developing and promoting an awareness in students of their environment and surroundings on the completion of this scheme (Fig 4.11).

the first of these is the fact that the children in the study were

the only ones of their age who had been in the study for as long as

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## **Conclusion.**

"Visual Arts education aims to encourage visual awareness and a curiosity in each pupil and to provide the means to express visual and tangible ideas and feelings to communicate with self and with others. These aims should remain constant throughout the continuum of Primary and Post Primary Education."

The Curriculum and Examination Board, Discussion Paper, The Arts Education 1985 p.17.

To be visually aware of our surrounding environment is an amazing concept and its importance cannot be underestimated. Visual awareness as a factor should be addressed by all teachers of art craft, design. This dissertation has attempted to discuss several aspects of visual awareness. Through defining and discussing its evolvments (a solution to the limitation of visual perception) as a process a ultimate understanding of its significance to art education was reached.

Factors necessary for its development where comprehensively addressed as their bearing on the practical promotion of visual awareness within the classroom was essential for a successful outcome. The issues highlighted above were used to discuss the methodology in the classroom and it was noted that visual awareness can be taught as a general aim of art education. There is something extremely positive about being visually aware, about being sensitive towards the environment and viewing it with pleasure rather than disdain. To enable individuals to view their environment in a different light is an exciting endeavour and one which should remain a challenge for all art teachers at all times.

# Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between the use of social media and the level of social capital in a community. Social capital is defined as the trust, norms, and networks that facilitate co-operation and collective action within a community. Social media, on the other hand, refers to digital technologies and platforms that enable communication and interaction between individuals and groups. The study aims to explore how the use of social media can either enhance or erode social capital in a community. The research is based on a survey of 500 individuals in a small town, where social media usage has increased significantly in the past few years. The survey includes questions about the frequency of social media use, the types of platforms used, and the perceived level of trust and cooperation within the community. The data is analyzed using statistical methods to identify any significant correlations between social media use and social capital. The findings of the study are discussed in the context of existing literature on social capital and social media, and the implications for community development are explored. The study concludes that while social media has the potential to foster social capital, it also poses challenges, such as the spread of misinformation and the erosion of trust. Therefore, a balanced approach to social media use is recommended to maximize its benefits for building social capital.





Fig 4.1





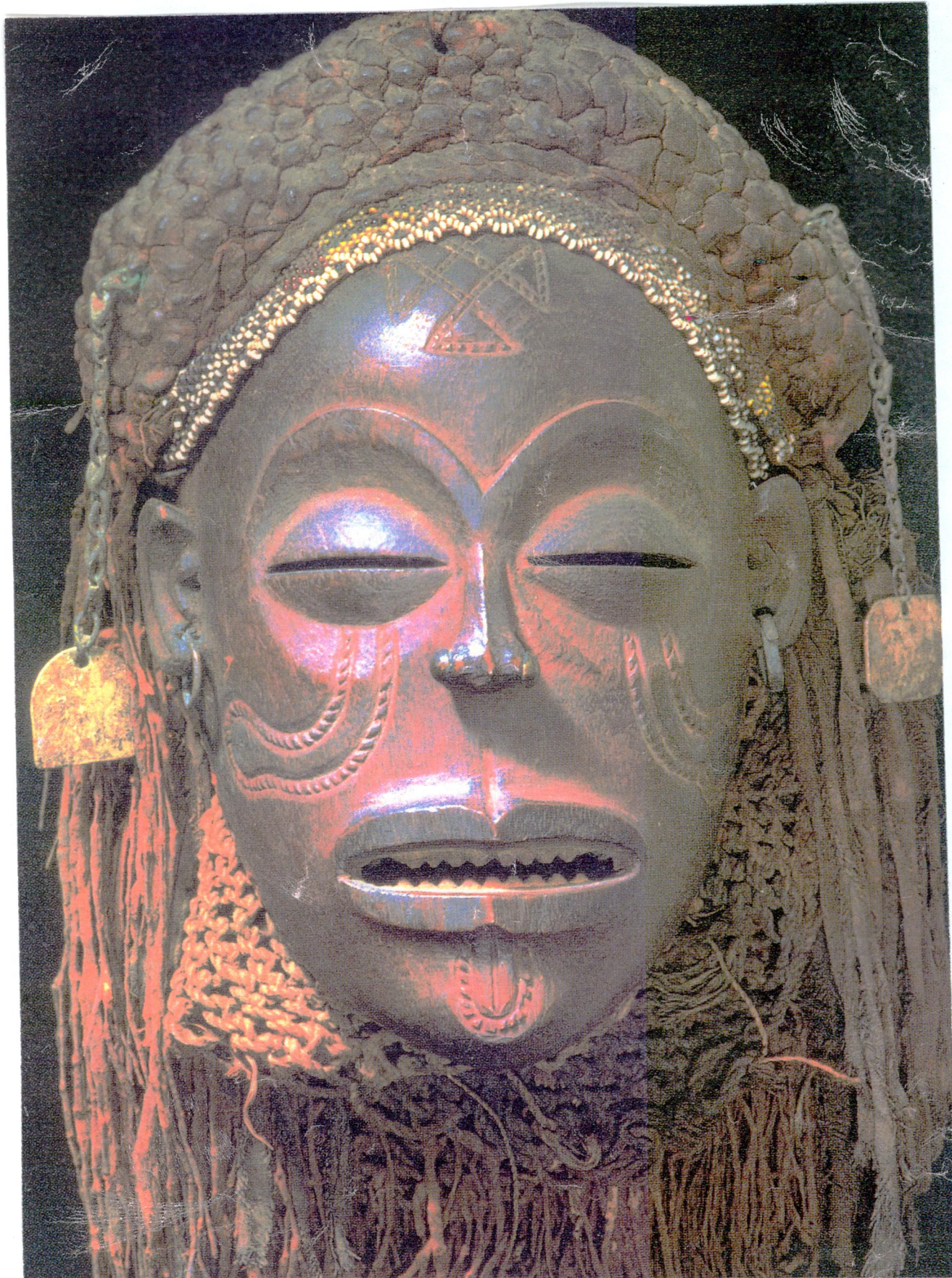


Fig 4.2







Fig 4.3









Fig 4.4









Fig 4.5







Fig 4.6







Fig 4.7







Paper



This paper is used for the  
face lines. I got it from  
the newspaper.

The tinfoil is used for lower  
face lines. It is normally used  
for keeping food fresh.

This plastic is for the hair.  
I got the plastic from  
local shops.

Card

PLAST

got this card from  
a cereal box. This is used  
for the nose and teeth

Fig 4.8







## MATERIAL FOR MY MASK



I will use this rim of a plastic cup for the edge of the eyes. It is usually used ~~(for)~~ to drink out of.



I will use this piece of a plastic cup for a design on the cheeks. It is usually used ~~(for)~~ to drink from.



I will use this straw for the edge of my nose. It is usually used for animals to eat.



I will use this cotton wool for my eyebrows and for the end of my chin. It is usually used to apply make-up or cream.

Fig 4.9







Fig 4.10







Fig 4.11





# APPENDICE

## APPENDICE

STUDENT NAME: Yvonne Kone
THEME: AFRICA

AIM OF SEQUENCE: To develop a understanding off form and texture through a high Relief construction using found objects

POTENTIAL LESSON DEVELOPMENT:

6	Introduce designs	Introduce designs & materials	↓	↓	Designs	↓ Design	↓	Fresh designs	
7	Decorative construction at most	Introduce materials construction	↓	Tenure.	Construction Decorations	construction Designs	Find materials purchase	African masks classmate	Strong as strong as support + SS material end product
8	↓		↓						





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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR RESEARCH

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20250

January 1, 1974

Dr. J. H. B. Smith

Department of Biology

University of Maryland

College Park, Maryland

Dear Dr. Smith:

I am pleased to

learn of your interest in

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