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Enhancing Pupil's Self-Esteem through Craft

Many pupils lack belief in their ability to draw and paint. These pupils are suffering from low self-esteem and may be identified as lazy or disruptive pupils.

I have found, when involved in craft work these pupils are more enthusiastic and less disruptive. Pupils tend to place greater value on their work and receive a greater sense of accomplishment on making a tangible object through craft.

In my dissertation I explore self-esteem, its characteristics and how teachers of art, craft and design can positively change pupil's self-esteem. I look at the benefits of craft and have attempted to determine whether craft can enhance pupil's self-esteem.

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ENHANCING PUPIL'S SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH CRAFT

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INTRODUCTION

Self-Esteem is a term which most teachers are familiar with, but the extent to which they realise it's importance varies significantly.

In my experience as a student teacher of Art, Craft and Design, I have found crumpled art work on the waste paper bin, seen scribbled over drawings and heard the phrase "I cannot draw", an alarming number of times. It is not that the pupils lack skill or talent in Art, but that they are suffering from low self-esteem. They lack belief in their own ability to draw. The apparently 'lazy' pupil who is slow to participate in class may also lack self-esteem. Non participation may be a defence mechanism against the possible humiliation of trying and failing. "Failure with honour". (1) Pupils, it has been found prefer low effort explanations for their failure as opposed to low ability ones. They prefer to accept correction from the teacher than to try or make an effort.

Many pupils are daunted by the task of drawing and often have a preconceived notion that they are unable to draw. The pupil with low self-esteem will often draw on a very small scale and be embarrassed to show the work to others. The pupil with high self-esteem will draw

big and bold and will have no problem in receiving praise or admiration from others for the work. I have found that pupils involved in craft work as opposed to the fine arts of painting and drawing, have a much more positive attitude towards their work. In the difficult time of adolescence, craft affords pupils the opportunity to tackle a job, carry it through to completion and thus advance their self respect (2).

In an increasingly competitive world teachers and parents tend to place a great emphasis on academic achievement. Education is not just about developing cognitive skills, but, also about helping children to form positive self images, to develop socially and mature into responsible competent adults. "Success is a journey not a destination".(3)

In my dissertation I explore self-esteem and how I as a teacher of art, craft and design can positively influence pupils' self-esteem, through craft work.

FOOTNOTES INTRODUCTION

1. M.V. Lovingham, Making The Grade (London: Cambridge University Press, 1992) P.74.
2. S.R.Laycock "Adolescents Problems in Growing up Emotionally", Home and School P.64.
3. M. White, Self-Esteem Its Meaning and Value in Schools (Cambridge; Daniels Publishing, 1992), P.1.

CHAPTER 1

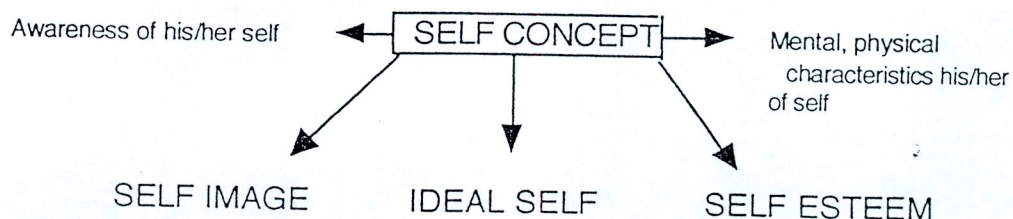
SELF-ESTEEM

Self Concept

Self-esteem is the way individuals feel about themselves. Throughout our lives we build up a knowledge of ourselves which is largely dependent on how other people treat us, and relate to us. "Our picture of ourselves is not derived by sitting in isolation, but is generated by our engagement with others".(1)

To fully understand self-esteem, the terms self image, ideal self and self concept need defining. Self concept is an umbrella term under which self image, ideal self and self-esteem develop. Self concept is concerned with three aspects of a person, the cognitive (thinking) the affective (feeling) and the behavioural (action). The mechanics of how self-esteem operates was clarified by the work of Rogers in the U.S.A. and Argyle in England.

Figure 1:



Source: Denis Lawrence, Enhancing self-esteem in the classroom, (London: Paul Chapman, 1988), p.1.

Self Image

Self Image is the individual's awareness of his / her mental and physical characteristics. Self. image is determined by our relationship with significant people in our lives. For most, parents and family are the first significant people in their lives. They will communicate to us whether or not we are loved. Later in school our peers and teachers become significant people. How these people react to the individual affects their self image. With peers a child will discover whether s/he is popular or not, whether s/he is of average height and weight. The teacher through verbal and non verbal communication will let the child know if s/he is of average, or above or below average intelligence.

Our self image does not depend solely on feedback from others but also on the individual's cognitive ability to reflect on experiences and interpret them (2). People with low self-esteem will constantly underestimate both their abilities and the regard in which they are held by others.

Ideal Self

There are certain characteristics, behaviour and skills one would wish to attain. Teenagers are particularly sensitive to body image, with differing rates of growth, and the messages the media gives about the ideal man/woman's body. They want to be taller, thinner, have better hair. Teenagers too may wish to be better academically to please their parents and teacher's, they may wish to be more popular with peers. This is perfectly normal, none of us is perfect and given a chance we would all change something about ourselves.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is the individual's evaluation of the discrepancy that exists between the self image and the ideal self. A discrepancy between the two is inevitable and completely normal. How significant people in the child's life react to them will determine acceptance or anxiety about the discrepancy.(3). If parents' expectations are too high and the child is unable to meet them, the result may be guilt, anxiety and subsequently, low self-esteem. The teacher has a responsibility to set realistic goals for pupils. No goals may result in no achievement. Failure to reach unreasonably high goals can negatively affect pupil's self-esteem.(4).

"The golden rule of the class teacher is to provide opportunities for success at however low a level".(5).

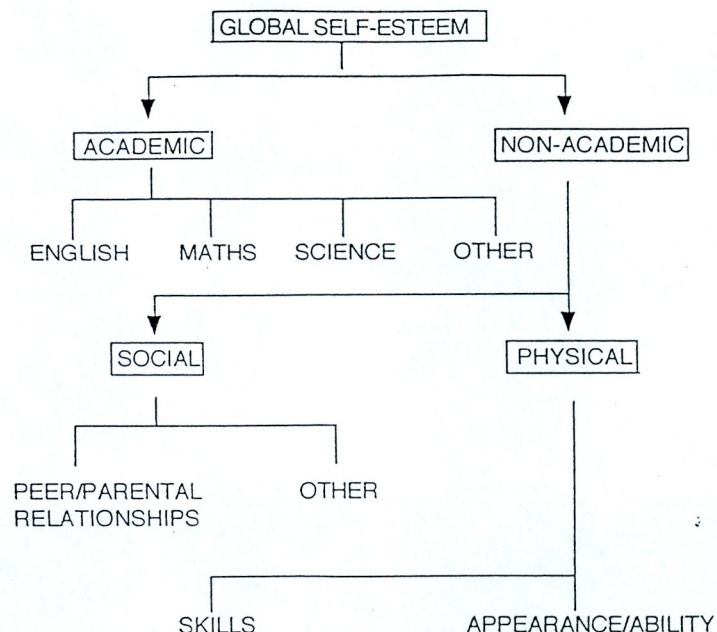
There is a correlation between self-esteem and achievement. Stanley Coopersmith began investigating this in 1968 with a sample of ten year old boys from similar socio-economic backgrounds (6). He found that children with high self-esteem performed better than children with low self-esteem of similar ability. The former children set higher goals for themselves, showed less need for adult approval and were less deterred by failure. They also had a more realistic view of their abilities. Children with low self-esteem were under-achievers, self conscious and over sensitive to criticism. Those who were recorded as mid self-esteem, had many of the same qualities as those with high self-esteem, but tended to conform and to need social acceptance. The one significant difference in the backgrounds of the boys was their relationship with their parents.

The parents of the boys with high self-esteem considered their children to be significant, interesting people. These parents knew a lot about the child's interests (hobbies, names of friends). Methods of discipline were consistent, based mainly on positive re-enforcement (privileges or rewards for good behaviour, withdrawal of privileges for misbehaviour).

The parents of the boys with low self-esteem knew considerably less about their children's interests. They were considered to be unfair by their children. Methods of discipline were either too strict or too permissive and inconsistent. These parents were communicating to their children that they were not important to the home.

Coopersmith's studies covered only boys, but it has been argued that girls tend to have lower self-esteem than boys.(7) Denis Lawrence argues that this is only the case in areas like mathematics and science. When it comes to an overall feeling of worth, or global self-esteem (Marsh Et Al 1984) there is no difference between the sexes.(8) It is therefore, possible to have high self-esteem in one area and a low self-esteem in another.

Figure 2:



Source: Denis Lawrence, Enhancing the self-esteem in the

Children from working class backgrounds tend to have lower self-esteem than those higher up on the socio-economic scale (9). The reason is that their living conditions are less pleasant and schools are often older and less well maintained.

Characteristics of Self-Esteem

In school a child with high self-esteem will be confident in his/her school work and with peers. S/he will not shy away from tackling new academic problems or challenges. S/he will readily seek advice or assistance when needed and will accept criticism and praise gracefully. The pupil with low self-esteem will usually try to avoid a challenging situation as it suggests the possibility of failure. The child with low self-esteem may even refuse to work. In the words of psychologist and philosopher William James (1890), "With no attempt there can be no failure, with no failure no humiliation".(10)

How a child with low self-esteem reacts to a challenging situation will depend of the temperament of the child, whether they are extroverted or introverted.(11) The introverted child with low self-esteem may appear shy, listless, a daydreamer. S/he will be reluctant to take on new activities and may be overly sensitive to correction. The extrovert is less typical of our preconceived notions of what a child with low self-esteem is like. They may be boastful, disruptive, attention seeking and arrogant.

S/he will avoid work and may blame others for his/her mistakes.(12). In a report on self-esteem by the INTO Equality Committee, the findings of a survey were published in February 1995. Teachers believed that bullies and victims of bullying have a low self-esteem. There is a link between socio-economic class and a child's level of self-esteem. children with low self-esteem often manifest discipline problems and occasionally even juvenile delinquency, whereas high levels of self-esteem are conducive to healthy relationships.(13)

Self concept is a motivator and we all work in a way fitting to our self perception.(14) Pupils with high self-esteem set higher goals for themselves and achieve more. Pupils with low self-esteem underestimate their capabilities, and so, under achieve. There is a link between self concept and creativity.(15) Children derive great pleasure from expressing their feelings and emotions through art. The sense of achievement and satisfaction derived from this expression of self-importance can develop a child's self confidence. In a study of sixth graders in Australia, (Williams, Poole and Lett, 1977) children who were in the top five per cent on a creativity test were higher in self-esteem than less creative children.(16) Another feature of self concept is that it is resistant to change.

In order to enhance the self-esteem of a person with low self-esteem, they will have to break with a pattern of thought and behaviour in order to change their self image. This is difficult because of their low self-esteem and any attempt to change it will mean a certain degree of risk taking. risk taking may possibly end in humiliation and failure, which is the very thing that is most feared. Any attempt to enhance self-esteem needs to be a slow gradual process.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1.

1. David Fontana, Psychology For Teachers (London; the British Psychological Society and Macmillan Press, 1989) P. 266.
2. Cooley's Looking Glass Theory of Self.
Denis Lawrence, Enhancing Self-Esteem in the Classroom (London: Toutledge and Keegan Paul, 1967) P.3.
3. Ibid, P.4
4. Ibid, P.5
5. Fontana, Psychology for Teachers, P.155.
6. Ibid, P.267
7. Ibid, P.269
8. Ibid, P.279
9. Lawrence, Enhancing Self-Esteem, P.P.8,9
10. Martin V. Lovingham, Making The Grade (London; Cambridge University Press, 1992). P. 74
11. Fontana, Psychology for Teachers P.155
12. Tony Humphreys, A Different Kind of Teacher (Cork; Dr. T. Humphreys, 1993) P.
13. Anette Dolan, "Self-Esteem, INTO Equality Committee Report, Education Today, Summer 1995, P.16
14. Lawrence, Enhancing Self-Esteem, PP 8,9
15. Phillips 1973, Workman and Stillion 1974, Studies on Relationship between creativity and ego development in college populations. V. Lowenfeld and W.L. Britain, Creative and Mental Growth, (New York, Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. 1982) P.19.
16. Ibid, P.18.

CHAPTER 2.

Changing Self-Esteem

It is possible to positively change a person's self-esteem. It is important that all teachers be aware of this. The work of Argyle (1970) draws attention to the factors involved in this kind of attitude change. This change is more easily brought about when the person helping to bring about the change has status and is capable of establishing a warm relationship with the subject. The teacher is already in a position of status, but, may not have a warm relationship with the pupil. Carl Rogers outlined the three personal characteristics a teacher should possess in order to establish a warm relationship with a pupil. These characteristics are acceptance, genuineness and empathy.(1)

An accepting teacher is non-judgemental of a child and his/her personality. When a child misbehaves, it is essential that the teacher corrects the undesirable behaviour, without criticizing the child personally. It is also important to accept pupils' decisions even if you disagree with them. (2) This is often difficult for an art teacher to do as it is a temptation to steer a pupil and their work in a direction which is in line with the teacher's own taste, rather than letting them choose their own direction.

A teacher needs to be genuine, to be oneself and not hide behind a facade, or behind the role of the professional. S/he must reveal his/her personality to the class in an appropriate way. To do this a teacher must have high self-esteem, as anyone fearing rejection would never reveal themselves. Teachers with low self-esteem tend to be overdemanding, subsequently pupils cannot live up to the teacher's expectations and this leads to pupil's with low self-esteem (4). The converse is also true. (Onwake 1954 Burns 1975). Teachers with high self-esteem are likely to produce students with high self-esteem. People with positive attitudes about themselves will have positive attitudes towards others.

Empathy, another quality the teacher must possess, is the ability to appreciate what pupils are feeling. Pupil's with empathic teachers feel more at ease and can relate more easily to the teacher. Carl Rogers demonstrates that when the teacher has the ability to empathise with the student the likelihood of significant learning is increased.

In addition to these characteristics outlined by Rogers, there are other factors within the teachers control which can affect the pupils self-esteem. Teachers should be aware of the non verbal messages they communicate, through posture, eye contact, pauses in speech, tone and speed of speech. It is easy to tell when someone

dislikes you without a word being spoken. Verbal statements are a lot easier to manipulate than non verbal statements.

In the classroom it is very important that the teacher is aware of every pupil and makes a conscious effort to acknowledge each of them. This does not mean the teacher must have an individual conversation with each person in every class, but at the very least the teacher should communicate with each person through eye-contact and gestures. In the art class it should be possible to see each pupils work and give them individual time. It is absolutely essential to remember not to be distracted when speaking to and listening to a pupil. If a teacher walks away while a pupil is in mid-sentence the effect on that pupil's self-esteem may be very damaging. The teacher must constantly be reassuring the pupils that they are worthwhile, interesting individuals and this begins with remembering their names.

Teachers who give positive feedback usually have pupils with high self-esteem. There should be as much emphasis on praising effort and behaviour as attainment. With regard to work in the art class, find something positive in each work e.g. "the colours you used compliment each other" or "You have used line in a very strong way, well done". displaying pupil's work in the art room and around the school, not just the particularly gifted pupils work lets pupils know you value their work.

The INTO (1994) survey found both bullies and victims of bullying have low self-esteem. They believe pupil's with low self-esteem often manifest discipline problems. The teachers also believe there is a link between delinquency and low self-esteem.(5). In a study by Burgart (1968) a group of delinquent boys rated lowest on a creativity test, compared with other groups of school children.(6). Having the opportunity to express oneself in a creative fashion provides some means of reacting to the social environment in ways that are acceptable to that society. Art and particularly craft affords children with this opportunity for creative self-expression.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

1. David Fontana, Psychology For Teachers, (London: The British Psychological Society and Macmillan Press, 1989) P.155.
2. Carol Rogers, Freedom To Learn For the '80's (Colombus: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co. A Bell and Howell Co. 1983) PP 123-225.
3. J. Hill, Person Centred Approach Schools (Manchester: P.C.C.Books, 1994) P. 24.
4. Jean Farrell, "To Pass On Self-Esteem.. You Must First Have It Yourself" Personal Development in Education Today 1995, P.10
6. V. Lowenfeld and W.L. Britain, Creative and Mental Growth (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc. 1982) P.324.

Why Craft?

The experience of art at primary school level is often in the area of painting and drawing. On entry to second level, a pupil will have determined whether or not s/he is good at art, based predominantly on personal evaluation of his/her ability to draw and paint. If a pupil does not have confidence in his /her own ability in art s/he will not have enthusiasm for the subject, perhaps even to the point of making little or no effort. (No attempt-no failure, no failure -no humiliation).

Pupils with low self-esteem underestimate their capabilities and can often be identified in the classroom as being the disruptive pupils. Threat of punishment is often the response to disruption in the classroom. Punishment inhibits the child's natural curiosity and further reduces their self-esteem. In art there is the opportunity to nurture this natural curiosity by allowing pupils to experiment with different media. Through craft, a pupil is given the opportunity to work with a wide range of new and exciting materials, including, clay, wire, fabric, wood, plaster and found objects.

"The more opportunity there is for the student to manipulate, change and build in diverse ways from a material, the better the material is".(1).

By the process of discovery the pupil will build self-confidence.

The term 'craft' is familiar to us all. I have never had cause to question its meaning. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have attempted to find a conclusive definition of craft as,

"A process of creative activities for children in which a product is the result or record of the experience" or "any piece of hand workmanship that might claim to have a claim to beauty.(2).

In literature, design and craft are often coupled, as are craft and the decorative arts. Boundaries of where art stops and craft begins are very ambiguous.

Is sculpture art or craft? Pottery is definitely craft, so is modelling in clay a craft? I have chosen to use the definition given by Seonaid Robertson in his book on 'Creative Crafts in Education'.

"There seems to be one antithesis implied in its (craft) use in general conversation in which art as creative is contrasted with craft as skilled use of tools, and another implied in school use, where art is drawing and painting and craft is work with other material".(3)

I will use the latter definition, implied in school use, when I refer to craft. The pupil not only is the creator of the craft work, but also the designer.

Although children with low self-esteem underestimate their ability, sometimes their talent is more likely to lie in an area of craft as opposed to painting or drawing. The overall aim of second level education according to the white paper on education, is that:

"Individual students are encouraged to reach their full potential as they advance through the educational system. The education of each student is valued equally despite a wide range of individual differences in backgrounds, abilities or early experiences and achievements" (4).

In order to help pupils reach their full potential, we as teachers of art, art and design are obliged to offer them the opportunity to experiment with as wide a range of arts and crafts as possible, so that they many find their forte, whether it be in pottery, weaving, sculpture, or indeed, drawing.

"A course of art should not be for the talented students, but for all students, so that they discover that art is a valuable means of focusing energies into creative problem solving, not only in school, but also after graduation" (5).

In this technological age, craft could be a very worthwhile way to use the increased leisure time. The commercial viability of craft should also be pointed out to pupils and the value of the handmade as opposed to the mass produced product highlighted.

The importance of craft is recognised by Lowenfeld and Brittain who advocate an art programme.

"In which the methods and materials are as far removed from the environmental and psychological restraints of the high school as possible, and which involves the student directly in the fundamental process of creating a product with real utilitarian value" (6).

From my experience, the tools found in a typical art room are paintbrushes, palettes, waterjars, scissors and staplers. These basic tools restrict the range of craft work that can take place. In every art room there should be the need for some extra tools such as a screw-driver, hammer, pliers, hacksaw, and a powerdrill. Another reason for encouraging craft is the increased responsibility it gives to pupils. Trusting pupils to handle these materials and tools, which are potentially dangerous if mishandled, gives pupils a sense they are respected and worthwhile.

In any craft the pupil will learn about the material and its properties through its use. They will need to acquire certain skills and make decisions (e.g. decide on the best way to join wire, or, secure slabs of clay together).

The pupils will even develop their own technique. This problem solving required for craft will give students a great sense of satisfaction and accomplishment as well as a sense of appropriate control of environment.

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"An art programme to develop self-esteem would take as its starting point, not art, but children and take from the arts what was appropriate for them".(7)

In my experience, pupils tend to place a greater value on the creation of a tangible 'thing' like a piece of ceramic or a puppet as opposed to a drawing or painting. Pupils should be afforded the opportunity of experimenting with a variety of crafts. It is only through realising their own capabilities and potential that pupils will have a more positive self-image and subsequent enhanced self-esteem.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

1. V.Lowenfeld and W.L.Briaain, Creative and Mental Growth (New York; Macmillan Publishing Co.Inc., 1982) P. 416.
2. George Pappas, concept in Art Education (New York: Macmillan Publishing co. Inc., 1970). P. 307.
3. Seonaid M. Robertson, Creative Crafts in Education (London, Toutledgte and Keegan Paul Ltd, 1974) P.56.
4. Department of Education, charting Our Education Future. White Paper on Education (Dublin; Stationery Office, 1995) P. 43.
5. Lowenfeld and Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, P.320.
6. Ibid, P.400.
7. Eliot W. Eisner, Educating Artistic Vision (New York, The Macmillan Co., 1972). P.2.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

The Clock Project

With a fourth year class of twenty eight pupils of mixed / good ability, I made wall clocks based on the self portrait. The first few weeks the pupils drew their self portraits, using mirrors. The pupils were anxious after two weeks of drawing to move on to the craft work of making the clocks. The next stage was the design stage. Before designing the clocks I showed the class visual aids of distorted portraits, rather than clocks. I felt the conventional clock as a visual aid might inhibit the creativity and originality of their work.

Week One: Line drawings of face, line and shape self portraits.

Week Two: Line and shape drawings, concentrating on proportions of the face.

Week Three: Pulling faces, line shape and tone.

Week Four: Face from different angles, line, shape.

Week Five: Design for clock distorting / re-arranging features of self portrait.

Week Six: Design for clock

- Week Seven: Finish design, including colour scheme to actual size.
- Week Eight: Trace outline shape of clock onto cardboard and cut out.
- Week Nine: Commence paper mache.
- Week Ten: Continue paper mache. Hold areas of relief.
- Week Eleven: Apply pollyfilla, P.V.A. and White undercoat.
- Week Twelve: Paint on design of cloth.
- Week Thirteen: Varnish and insert hands and movements.

Figure 3



Week eight: Tracing outline of clock onto cardboard



Figure 4



Week twelve: Painting on design of clock



Figure 5



Week thirteen: Inserting movement and hands



Figure 6



Two Completed Clocks



Criteria For Assessing Self-Esteem

To assess my pupils' self-esteem in the artroom, I have chosen five criteria based on the work of Dr. Tony Humphreys on the subject of self-esteem. Humphreys identifies characteristics of students with low self-esteem in both introverts and extroverts.(1). For extroverted pupils, the term Humphreys uses is under-control indicators and over-control indicators for introverted pupils.

Over-Control Indicators

The student may be:-

- * Shy and withdrawn.
- * Reluctant to take on new activities / challenges.
- * Unable to easily mix with other students.
- * Over conscientious or apathetic in learning situation.
- * Fearful and timid in new situations.
- * Easily upset if corrected.
- * Daydreamer.
- * Fearful of failures and mistakes.
- * In the habit of putting self down.

Under-Control Indicators

The pupil may be:

- * Boastful.
- * Regular Traunt.
- * Frequent requester of help of reassurance.
- * Attention seeking.
- * Continually asking if he/she is liked or popular.
- * Avoider of work even though risking teachers disapproval.
- * Blaming others for his/her mistakes or failures.
- * Prone to regular aggressive outbursts.

Derived from these characteristics I will use the following criteria to assess the pupil's self-esteem in relation to their behaviour in the artroom.

1. Does she get down to work readily?

i.e. Does she get out her folder, or piece of work from previous week and commence work immediately?

2. Does she treat her own/others work with respect?

i.e. Does she have regard for her work, return it neatly to her folder after class. Does she deface her own peers work?. Does she tear up or crumple her own work?

3. Can she* find value in her work?

i.e. Can she identify positive points in her work.
Does she reach a level of engagement with the subject
or does she remain apathetic?

4. Does she has a good relationship with Peers?

i.e. Does she sit alone? Is she critical of others
or their work? does she appear to be a bully? does
she get ridiculed?

5. Does she require a lot of attention?

Does she work without constant supervision? Is she
disruptive? Does she frequently seek assistance?

* I use 'she' as my studies refer to girls only.

Humphrey's indicators of low self-esteem refer
to both male and female.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 4

1. Tony Humphreys, A Different Kind Of Teacher (Cork; Dr. Tony Humphrey, 1993) PP. 51-55.

CASE STUDIES

Carla and Emma

For this disseration I have chosen two girls from my fourth year class who display characteristics of low self-esteem. One girl, Carla, is introverted and displays the typical 'over-control indicators' as outlined by Humphreys, and the other girl Emma is extroverted and displays the 'under-control indicators' (1). I then assessed their self-esteem through the criteria I had chosen.

1. Does she get down to work readily?

Carla: usually gets out her folder but almost always, will sit at her desk doing nothing, until I question why she is not working. At this stage, she will make a half-hearted attempt to work, but on my return she will again be idle.

Emma: Emma will not even consider getting to work unless asked repeatedly. She usually commences the class by sitting on the radiator for as long as possible until I stand over her to make her work.

2. Does she treat her own / others work with respect?

Carla: Carla's folder is almost empty. When she does any work she must discard it. She would never deface her peer's work.

Emma: Emma never returns her work to her folder. If she does not crumple it and put it into the waste paper bin, she leaves it lying around. I have found her work on the floor with footprints on it numerous times. She has, on occasion, defaced her own work by writing on it, scribbling over it, or making caricatures out of her portraits. Emma also treats her friend's work with little respect. I have witnessed her write her name and splash paint on her friends work.

3. Can she find value in her work?

Both Carla and Emma cannot find value in their work. They both draw very small, will remain idle whenever possible, and I have heard both girls exclaim "I cannot draw" and "my drawing's crap".

4. Does she have a good relationship with peers?

Carla: Carla appears to be a loner, she does not sit beside any particular person. There is usually a free space beside her in the class. She does not talk to any of her peers during the class.

Emma: Emma sits with the same three girls each day. She is well liked, and a source of amusement for her friends. She sometimes wanders around the classroom and makes fun of other people's work. She appears to a bully. Others seem to be intimidated by her.

5. Does She Require a Lot of Attention?

Carla: Carla never actively seeks attention, but through her lack of work I find myself spending time with her in every class.

Emma: Emma requires a lot of attention. She does little work unless I am watching her. She is very disruptive, constantly messing, speaking badly and interfering with others who are trying to work. She is constantly calling me over to her as she will need to go to the toilet, have something in her eye or be accusing someone of ruining her picture.

The analysis overleaf was based on the behaviour of Carla and Emma from weeks one to seven of the clock scheme. It was all the work of drawing and designing prior to the actual making of the clock. The craft of making the clock I believe enhanced the self-esteem of both Carla and Emma.

In the following weeks Carla seemed to develop a new enthusiasm for her task. She got down to work on her clock without being asked and even seemed more talkative with her peers.

Emma was noticeably less disruptive. The activity of the craft interested her and so contained her. She found value in her work and asked me to photograph it. Her painting of the clock was watery to begin with, but she persisted to get it right and applied several layers of paint. She had never before displayed such dedication to her work. Clearly, there was a level of engagement with the task.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 5

1. Tony Humphreys, A Different Kind of Teacher (Cork:
Dr. Tony Humphreys, 1993) PP 45-50.

CHAPTER 6

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Self-Esteem Of The Class

To determine the self-esteem of the class, I applied the five criteria for assessing self-esteem to each pupil based on my own observations (See Chapter 4). I also gave the class a questionnaire in which the pupils evaluated their own work.

1. Does She Get Down To Work Readily?

Table 1:

| | Yes | No |
|---------------|-----|----|
| No. of Pupils | 24 | 4 |

During the portrait drawing and designing of the clocks, the same four pupils each week needed encouragement to work. Once the actual making of the clocks commenced each pupil began work immediately.

2. Does she treat her own/others work with respect?

Table 2:

| | Yes | Disrespectful
to own work | Disrespectful
to own and
others work. |
|---------------|-----|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| No. of Pupils | 24 | 3 | 1 |

The pupils placed less value on the work they did in a drawing class. Drawings were frequently not returned to folders or discarded. Once the clocks started taking shape almost every pupil was careful with her work. The class requested the clocks to be locked in the storeroom for safekeeping.

3. Can she find value in her work?

Table 3:

| | Yes | No |
|--------------|-----|----|
| No of Pupils | 25 | 3 |

There is only one girl in the class who did not complete her clock and remained apathetic throughout the project. Both case study girls Emma and Carla reached a level of engagement with the task. They were both pleased with their finished clocks, and could comment positively on their work in an evaluation at the end of class, which is a progression. On completion of the clock project these figures could be amended to twenty seven out of twenty eight pupils finding value in their work.

4. Does she have a good relationship with peers?

As with any class, there are cliques. Carla was the only one, who initially appeared to have no friends. The next project I embarked on with the class was a large scale sculpture which required group work. The girls worked well together, cliques were temporarily dissolved. Some pupils appeared intimidated when working with Emma and her two friends. Carla appears much happier, more talkative and relaxed.

5. Does she require a lot of attention?

Table 4:

| | Yes | No |
|---------------|-----|----|
| No. of Pupils | 3 | 25 |

Emma is not as disruptive. Carla does not need to be overseen constantly any longer. The rest of the class worked well independently.

Based on these results, the class does not have a problem with low self-esteem. Besides Carla and Emma there is only one other pupil I can identify as having low self-esteem.

I gave a questionnaire to the class to determine whether they had a preference for painting drawing or craft.

(See appendix 1). I asked each pupil to rate her ability in painting, drawing and craft. I aim to determine if their evaluation of their ability corresponds with my evaluation of it.

Table 5:

Preferred area of Art, Craft and Design.

| | Painting | Drawing | Craft | No Preference |
|---------------|----------|---------|-------|---------------|
| No. of Pupils | 5 | 3 | 18 | 2 |

Pupils rated their own ability in the areas of painting and drawing, and craft separately.

Table 6.

Self Evaluation of Ability in Drawing and Painting

| | Weak | Average | Good | Very Good | Excellent |
|----------------|------|---------|------|-----------|-----------|
| No. of Pupils. | 5 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 2 |

Table 7.

Self-Evaluation of Ability in Craft

| | Weak | Average | Good | Very Good | Excellent |
|---------------|------|---------|------|-----------|-----------|
| No. of Pupils | 1 | 6 | 8 | 11 | 2 |

Only two pupils believed themselves to be better at painting and drawing than craft. Twelve pupils believed they were best at craft.

The pupils assessment of their ability was quite accurate. Eight pupils underestimated their ability in painting drawing and craft, but not dramatically enough to be considered as putting themselves down (which would be indicative of low self-esteem).

Both case studies, Carla and Emma, considered themselves weak at painting and drawing. Carla rated herself as average at craft. When asked if pleased with her finished clock she wrote "Yes I was, it looked well"

Emma rated her ability in craft as good. On her finished clock she commented /It's deadly! My mother thinks it's brilliant".

I think this is very positive progression from the apathetic attitudes of both Carla and Emma at the start of the project.

The class as a whole enjoyed the craft of clock making. I introduced the idea of making clocks to the class at week two, while the class was drawing self portraits. At that time only nine pupils wanted to buy the movements and hands to make their clocks function. By week nine twenty five out of the twenty eight wanted to buy the mechanics for the clock, once they began to see what

the clocks were going to look like. They were also staying in the classroom to work on their clocks voluntarily during their mid-morning break.

I felt these were good indications of the enthusiasm the craft work generated.

Out of the class of twenty eight:

- * Eighteen pupils expressed a preference for craft.
- * Only 15 pupils rated themselves from good to excellent at painting and drawing.

There is a clear preference for craft. The majority of pupils have greater confidence in their ability at craft.

It appears, according to my research that more pupils feel successful while involved in craft work. "The Golden rule of the class teacher is to provide opportunities for success"(1). There is a correlation between self-esteem and achievements(2). So if more pupils feel successful at craft it seems that craft work may enhance pupils self-esteem.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 6

1. David Fontana, Psychology For Teachers (London: The British Psychological Society and Macmillan Press, 1989) P.155.
2. Ibid., P. 267.

CONCLUSION

I attempted to discover in this dissertation whether or not craft work could positively change a pupil's self-esteem. I carried out a number of schemes of craft work with my classes and observed any changes in behaviour and attitude of the class. Based on these observations and feedback from the class it does appear that craft has enhanced some pupils' self-esteem.

Apparently 'lazy' and disruptive pupils were much more productive and less disruptive when involved in art work as opposed to painting or drawing. I noticed these pupils put very little effort into drawings and paintings, had little respect for their work and lacked confidence in their ability in these areas. These pupils were suffering from low self-esteem. For a person with low self esteem lack of effort is a defence mechanism against trying and failing. While involved in craft work however, these pupils had a much more positive attitude towards their work. They had a greater respect for their craft work and reached a level of engagement with the task.

Self concept is a motivator and we all work in a way fitting to our self perception (1). A pupil with low self-esteem, underestimates his/her capabilities and so under achieves. As teachers we are in a position to help positively change our pupil's self-esteem.

A teacher should be accepting, genuine and empathic in order to establish a warm relationship with his/her pupils (2). In the classroom the teacher must be aware of each pupil and communicate to them that they are important, valued individuals, through verbal and non verbal messages. Identifying positive points in pupil's work and displaying work will help build pupil's confidence in their ability.

I have found that more pupils have greater confidence in their ability in craft, especially those with low self-esteem. "A course of art should not be for the talented students, but for all students" (3). The majority of pupils feel more successful when involved in craft work.

It appears therefore, that the sense of achievement derived from craft work may enhance pupil's self-esteem. As teachers of Art, Craft and Design we should give pupils the opportunity to experiment with as wide a range of arts and crafts as possible so each pupil may find their forte.

FOOTNOTES TO CONCLUSION

1. Denis Lawrence, Enhancing Self-Esteem in the Classroom (London: Routledge and keegan Paul, 1967) PP 8-9.
2. David Fontana, Psychology For Teachers (London: The British Psychological Society and Macmillan Press, 1989) P 155.
3. V. Lowenfeld and W.L. Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. Inc. 1982) P 416.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Questionnaire given to fourth years on
 completion of clock project.

1. Which of these do you like best? Circle your answer:?

- (a) Painting
- (b) Drawing
- (c) Craft
- (d) All equally

2. Rate your ability in Painting and drawing from 1
to 5. Circle your answer:

- (1) Weak
- (2) Average
- (3) Good
- (4) Very Good
- (5) Excellent

3. Rate your ability in craft from 1 to 5. Circle your
answer.

- (1) Weak
- (2) Average
- (3) Good
- (4) Very Good
- (5) Excellent

4. Are you pleased with your completed clock? Yes/No
Give reasons for your answer:

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