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BACK TO BASICS

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education

in

Candidacy for the

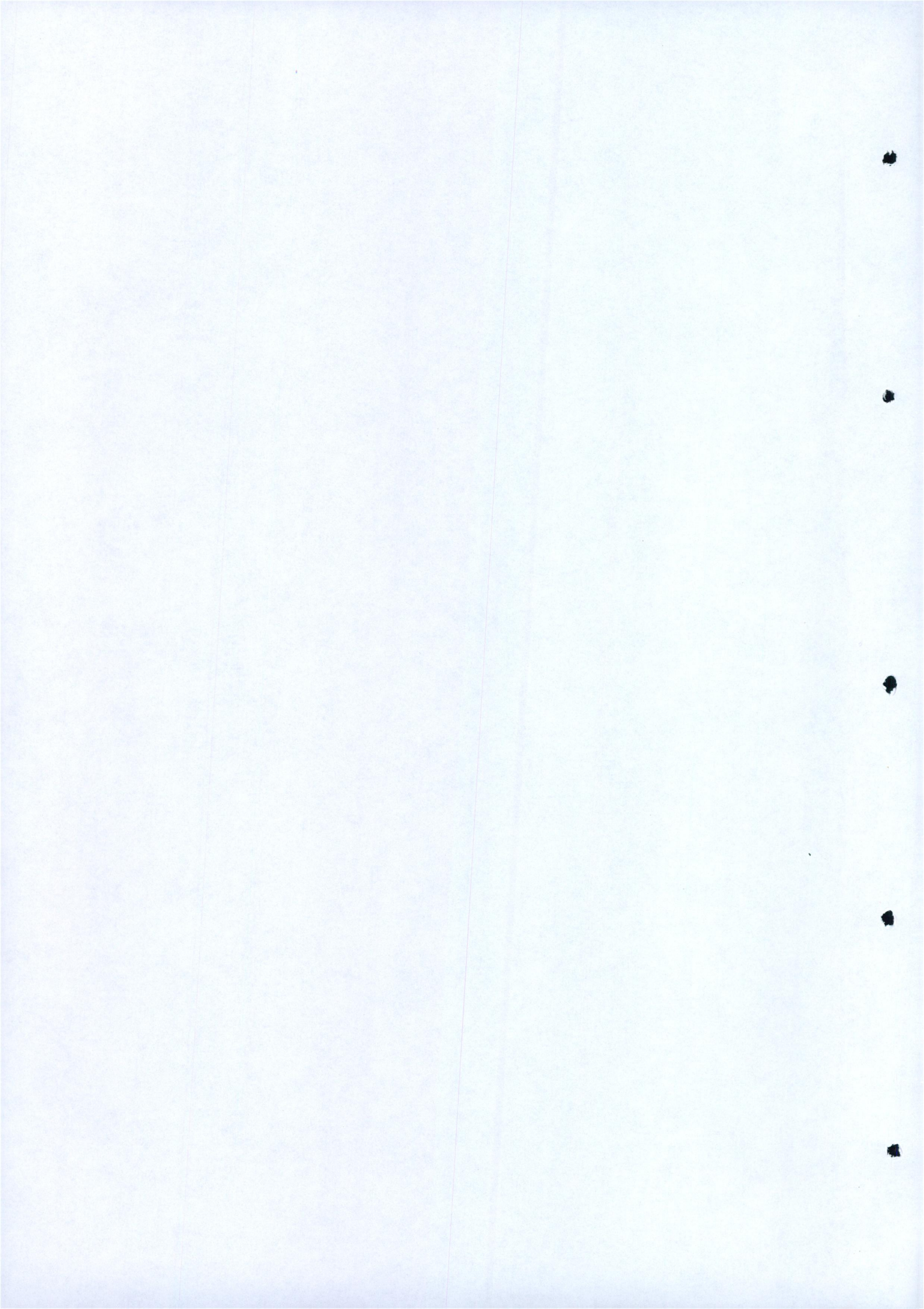
B.A. DEGREE IN ART AND DESIGN EDUCATION

by

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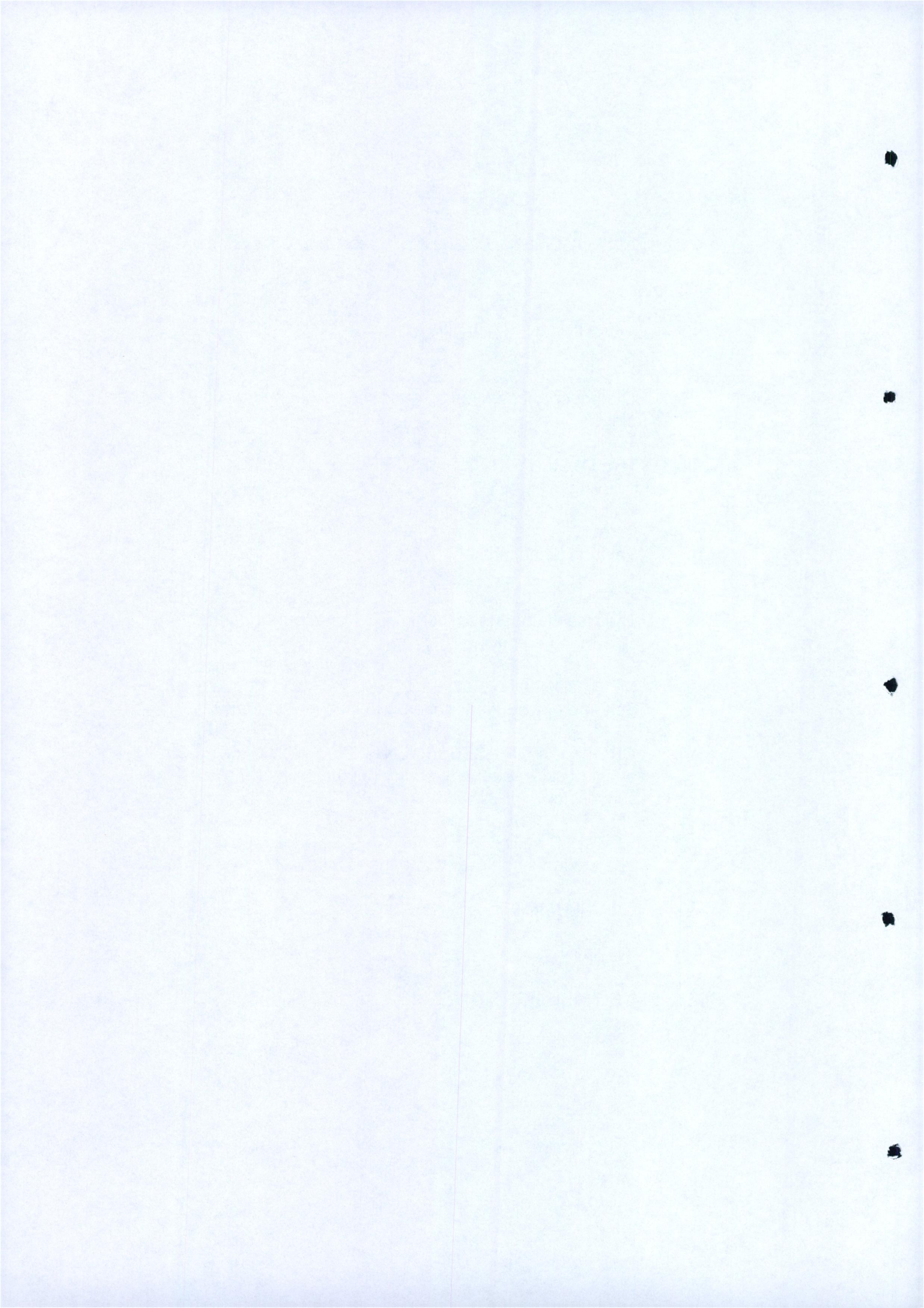
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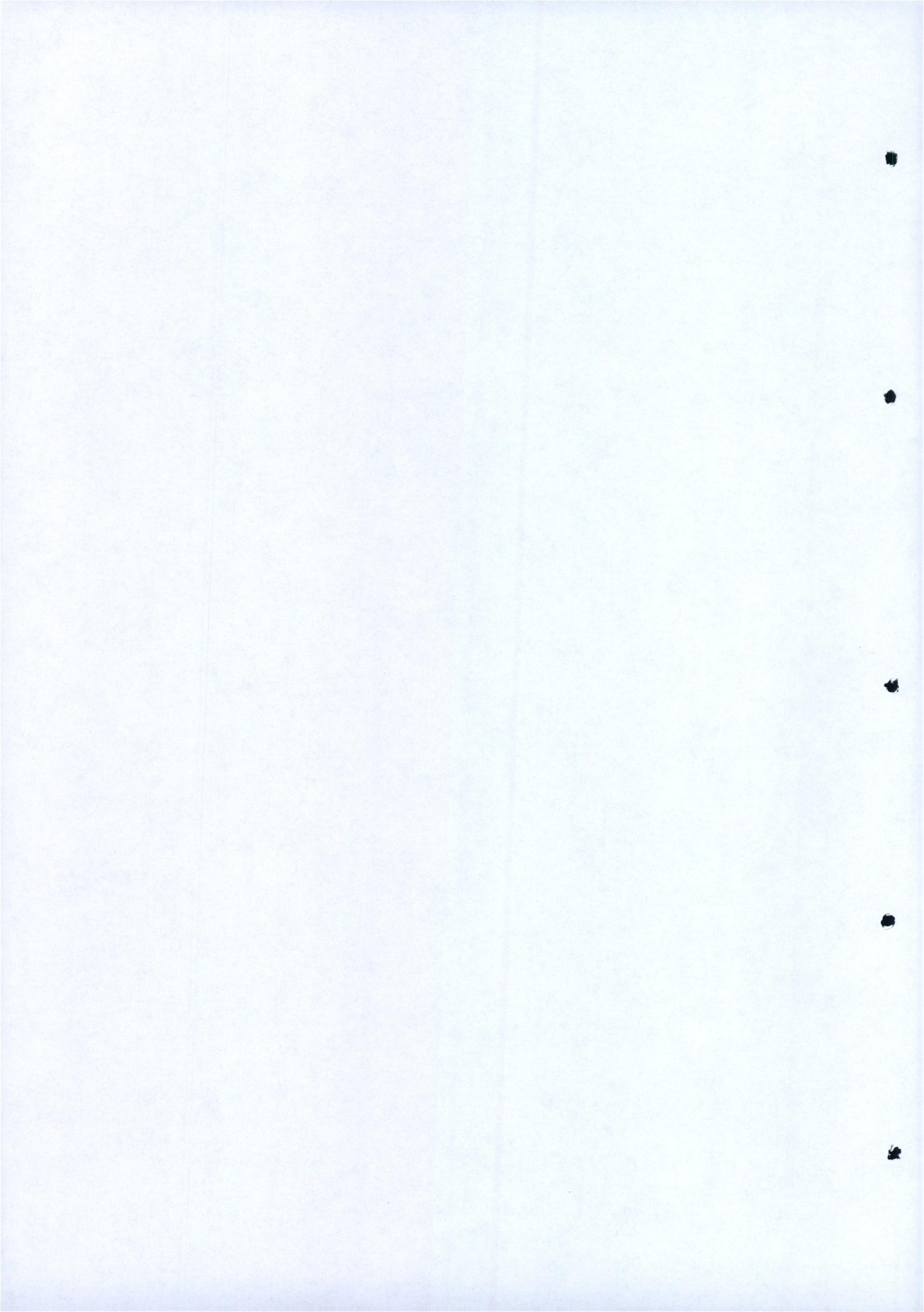
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CHAPTER 1

BACK TO BASICS WITH PAINTING

PAINTING IN ART EDUCATION

The emphasis in contemporary art education is on the expressive aspects of both responsive and creative experience. "Drawing and painting are probably the most pervasive of all art activities engaged in by children" (1) therefore produce some of the most expressive and creative images of all art work. Our earliest experience of art was mainly drawing and painting with our hands, sponges, rags and old toothbrushes.

Primitive men and children make the mark and it a sign.
Representation and ritual gesture are identified. (2)

Our first inclination as children in art is to produce a picture, a nicely painted picture of Mummy and Daddy in the garden. Even in paintings as primitive as these children learn to explore, experiment, enquire, design and develop aesthetic skills and knowledge. This process we have all experienced is vital in the role of art education. However, children especially those in primary schools are often given paint brushes, told to colour in their drawings and left mainly to their own devices. It is through their naive spontaneity that they learn to explore and experiment with colours, lines, shapes, and compositional arrangements. Art craft and design in the primary schools makes a fundamental contribution to children's education. Art education in many contemporary primary schools is based on the child's



personal development, ability to express themselves and overall self-reliance. However, on entering second level education the main focus of their learning should lay on the basic skills required to carry out any piece of art work.

The overall basic aim of art education entails helping children to understand and use the language of aesthetics, to teach the pupils the skills required to understand and respond to art in their environment. The improvement of the child's personal perception and pattern solving skills combined with the social aspect which improves the pupil's perception of the world. Frederick Gore states that art is not life but the interpretation of life. (3) Children must learn to view the world through more experienced and knowledgeable eyes in order to understand it. My intention is to focus on the remaining overall aim of art education, the teaching of the fundamental technical skills in the art room and beyond. I believe the basic underlining principle of any subject is vital to any students education and I have chosen painting to portray my point on this issue. My main interests tend to lean towards painting and I feel it is often overlooked as an activity which requires instructions on technical skills. We experience painting and its effects on our lives far more than we wish to imagine. If we remember, it was painting which sparked off photography which in turn provoked the motion picture development. Everyday we are surrounded by painting and its results without ever having to visit an art gallery. I believe children need a basic knowledge of painting and its history before they can learn to really appreciate the skills involved in this activity.

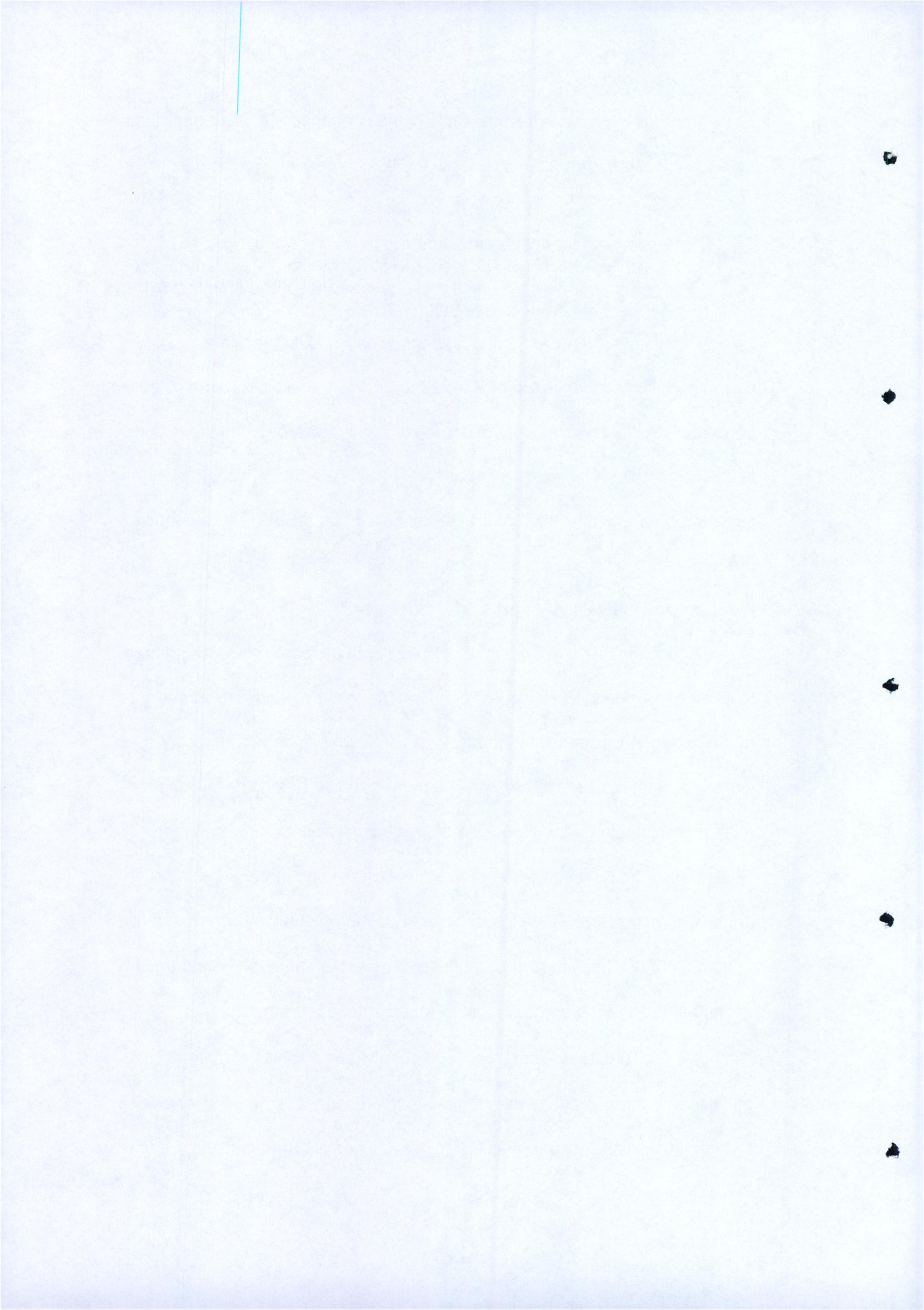
In order to provide the children with the confidence to make decisions on a technical basis they need to know the basic underlining principles.

Necessary for full understanding is to learn something of the principles which are necessary to all forms of painting, and some of the ways in which these are extended and modified by different materials and techniques. (4)

Painting in the art room should be treated for example like an experiment in the science lab or a workshop in the metal work room. Clear, concise instructions with plenty of demonstrations given on even the simplest task for example, learning how to hold and use a paintbrush, how to clear and store away carefully this piece of art equipment. Each simple task lays down the foundation for a greater understanding and appreciation for the painting utensils and materials.

According to Karla Cikonova hearing is not the same as knowing how to listen to music.(5) Likewise seeing is not the same as knowing how to look at a painting. Equipped with the basic principles of painting a pupil can clearly understand what to look for in a composition. This helps to enhance their appreciation of art work overall, through their own experience in the classroom. The fun and experimentation experienced in the art class at primary level however is not lost or forgotten when a pupil enters second level education. In fact it is quite the opposite. The explorations and spontaneity continues but in a more informal, skilled and structural manner.

The students are now equipped with the basic knowledge of painting and upon this they begin to develop a unique and comprehensive style of their own. Children must learn that painting is an art in itself and not

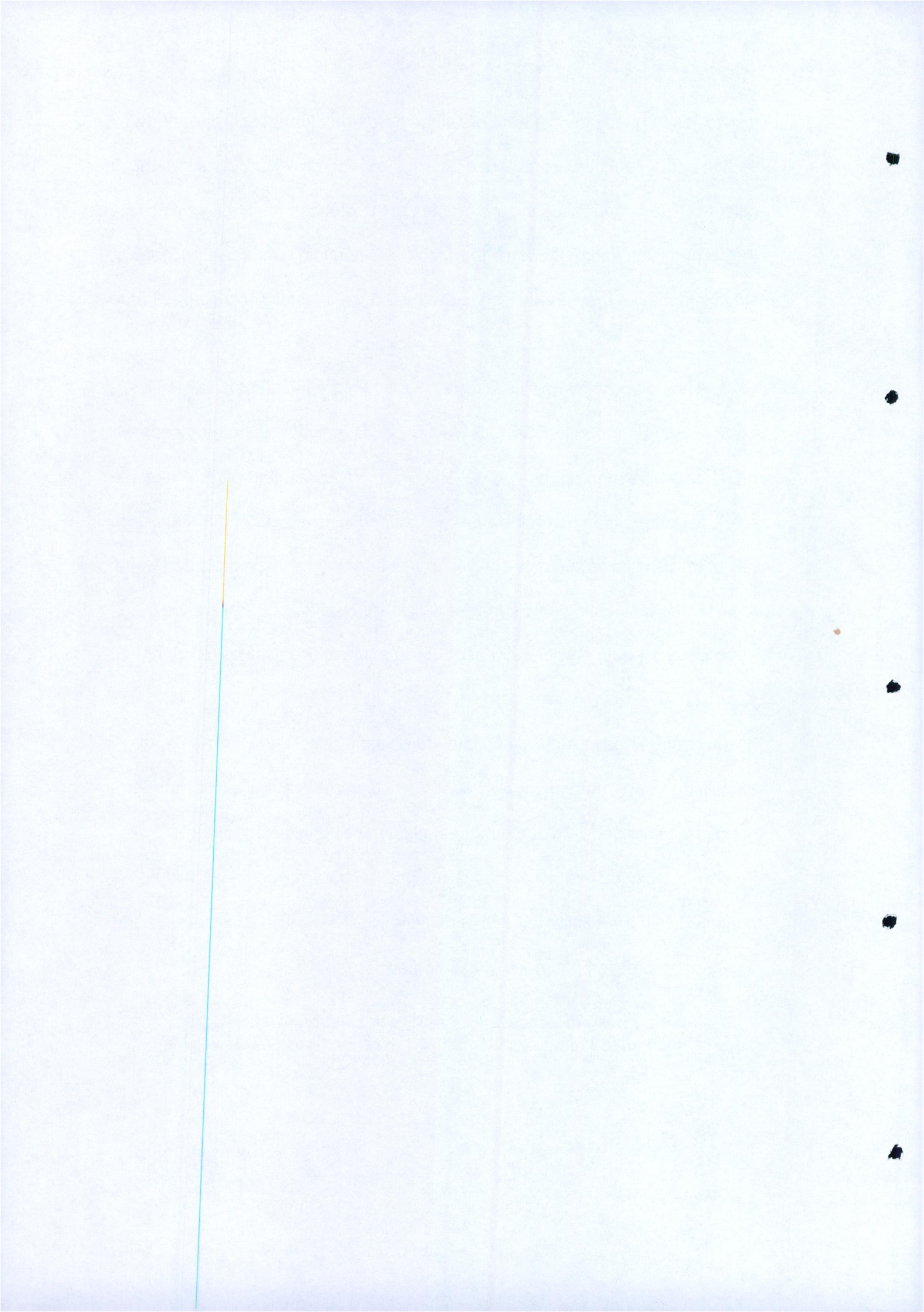


just a means of colouring in and drawing. Students often become frustrated because they feel they have ruined a perfectly good drawing by filling in the colours. They cannot see the importance in the process of actually painting the composition itself. Students therefore tend to avoid painting in secondary schools because they are lacking in the basic principles of applying paint onto a page.

Their work becomes less expressive and more inhibited as a result. They become more self-conscious of their painting skills and comparisons will be made between the pupil's work. Students find it difficult to place a high value of appreciation on their art pieces. Abandon crayons, markers and safe colouring pencils, let the rich textures of paint spread itself over the page and soak up the fascinating new surfaces which are created. Children should learn all over again how to paint and how to express themselves through their work.

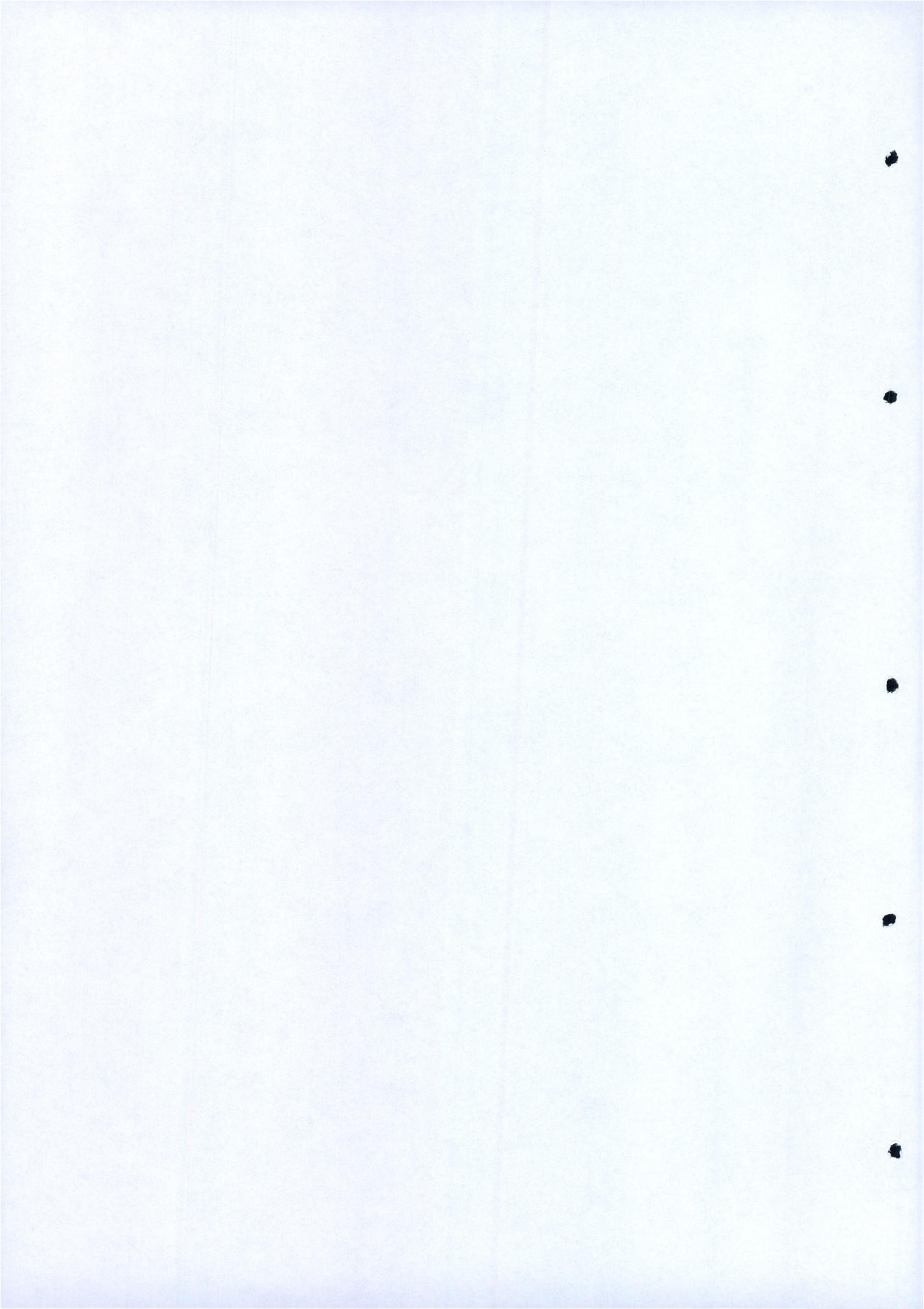
In this dissertation I will go into the painting principles in more depth explaining how a student should begin a painting, the materials that can be used, the techniques, colours and overall compositional arrangements. When a pupil goes into second year in a post primary school he should be equipped with the basic methods of painting which will allow him the time and experience to develop his skill of painting even further.

If the purpose of education is to prepare children for the future, should education be looking to the future for more basic skills. (6)



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 1

1. A.L. Hurwitz and Michael Day, Children and their Art. pg 157
2. Gore, Principles of Painting, pg.12
3. Ibid.,pg.12
4. Ibid.,pg.20
5. Cikonova, Teaching Children how to Paint, pg.7
6. National Art Education Association, Arts Education and back to Basics, ed. Stephen M. Dobbs, pg.199



CHAPTER 2

BACK TO BASICS

The term basic skill encompasses skills as diverse as recognising and naming shapes, letters and numerals, solving problems involving concepts such as more than, less, bigger and smaller, counting and performing a variety of arithmetic operations. (1)

In my dissertation the term basic skill of painting encompasses the skill of drawing, colouring, compositional arrangement and the application of various painting techniques. It is the combination of these tasks which provides the students with a clear understanding of painting and the very basic but beneficial process involved.

Although I have outlined the fundamental stages of producing a painting, so much more that is not mentioned is learned along the way, for example the students will inevitably experience and learn about line, shape, tone, texture and pattern etc. Each basic skill required to carry out a painting is a very important one in its own right. Not only do students read and learn about these skills required, they take an active part in experimenting, discovering, enquiring and developing these stages through practise in the art room. We all tend to remember those classes where an activity took place and a lesson was taught and thoroughly enjoyed through this method.

Whatever skill we are learning, we need practise. Most students rightly value practice very highly as a method of learning. (2)

It is important not to forget that pupils must be provided with the time to make mistakes, correct them and move onto the next problem to be solved at

any stage of their working process. As Frederick Gore simply states:....the word must be made 'flesh'(3)

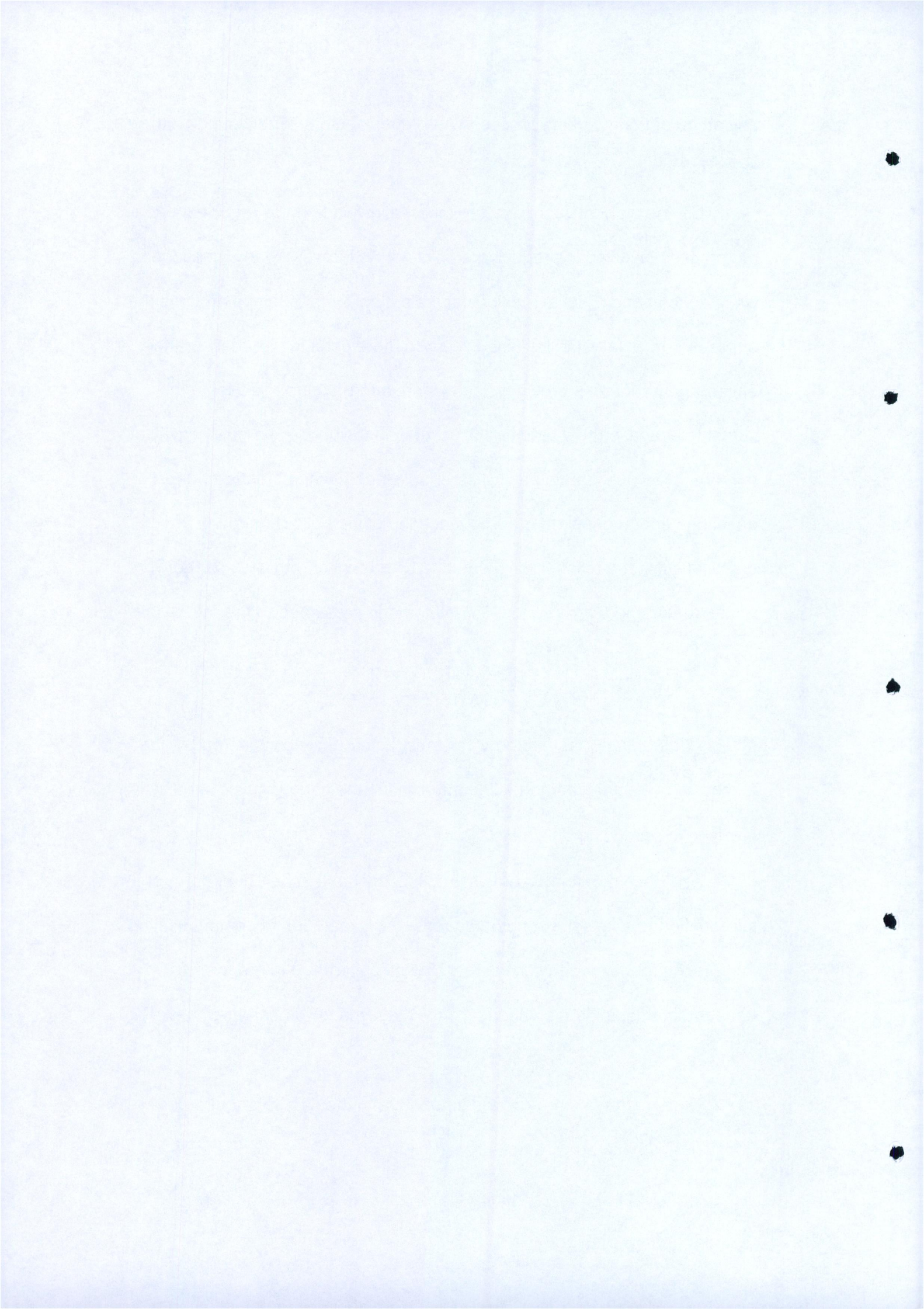
Let the students carry out the tasks allowing them to really experience the process involved in producing a painting. As I have already mentioned, with very clear concise instructions and plenty of simple demonstrations the pupils will undertake the task involved with more confidence, reassurance, encouragement and more importantly more information. It is vital to the students education that teachers allocate time to introduce a new activity or to reinforce previous learning activities. Pupils appreciate time allowed for questions and queries. In order to teach the basic skills required in any practical class the teacher must set up a time bracket within which the work will be researched, redesigned, completed and presented to the rest of the class.

COMMUNICATION

Another important factor which must be carefully considered by the teacher is the actual method of communicating the various basic skills involved in producing a painting.

As I have mentioned, oral instructions by the teacher in the form of an introduction to a lesson is one of the most basic methods of communicating information to the students. A series of written literature in the form of handouts underlining the various simple stages involved can also be very effective.

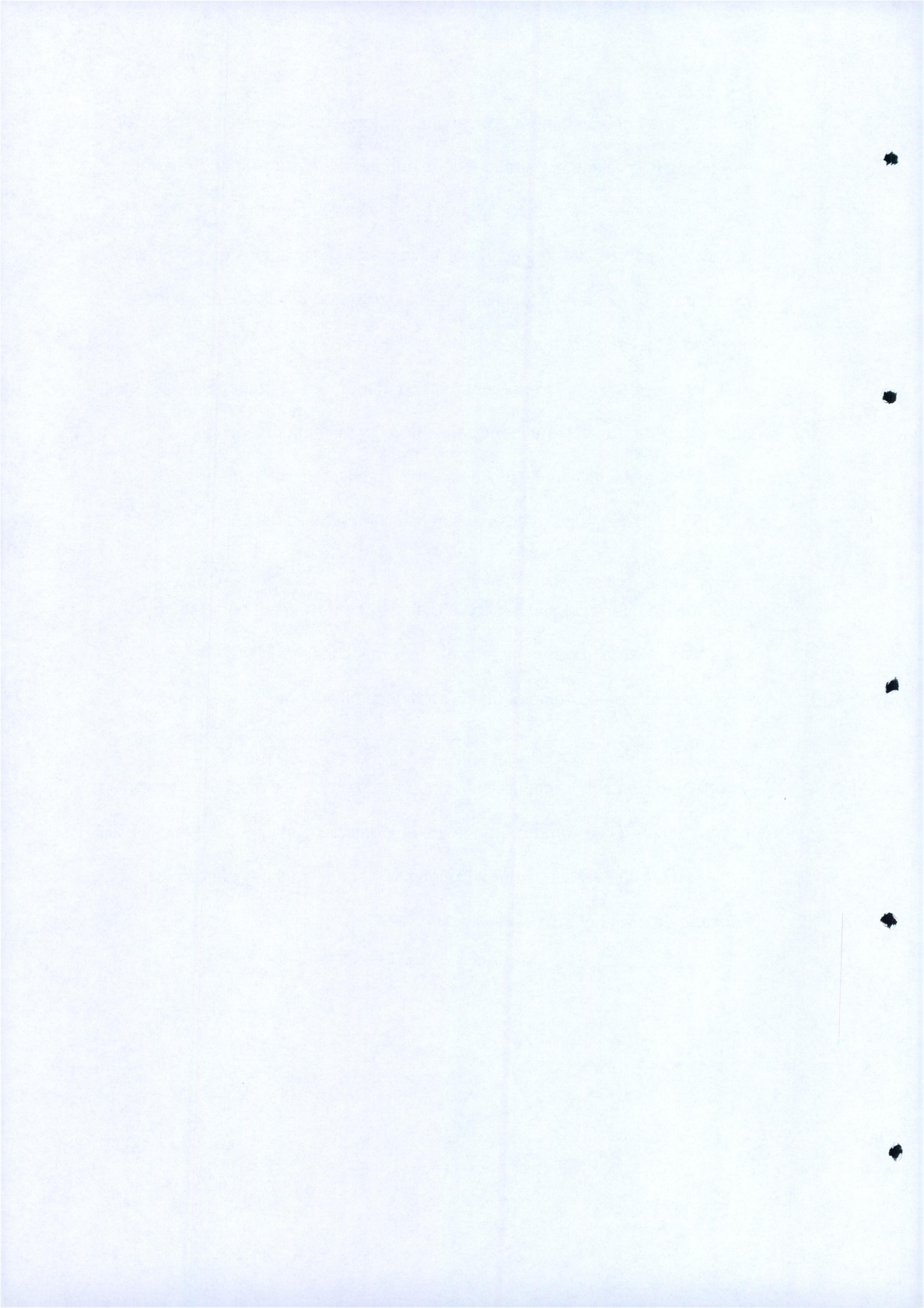
Demonstrations provide the students with the time to enquire and question anything they are not sure about in the process and at the same



time they are becoming more educationally informed. The blackboard can be very useful in quick demonstrations for example at the drawing and research stage. This simple method of communication can often be the most effective for any lesson plan. Examples of artists work and discussions of each ones own approach to a certain topic can lead to exciting projects based on more informed ideas and approaches to the pupils work.

Art galleries are an excellent method of introducing students to the real thing and a very useful and memorable medium of communicating introduction especially to those who are less motivated than others.

Finally, the teacher because she is using her voice throughout the class in the form of instructions, answering questions and so on, must remember to use vocabulary suitable to the students level of understanding and ability. New and necessary vocabulary which inevitably will be introduced at the beginning of a new sequence of work must challenge the students ability yet still be in line with their level of understanding. It is important to remember that no matter how good and basic a scheme of work may be unless it is communicated to the students properly it will inevitably fail in the end. With suitable communication skills and stimuli any scheme of work can be exciting and new.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 2

1. White and Brewer, Teaching Basics Skills, The Principles of Instruction. pg. 7
2. Petty, Teaching Today, pg.18
3. Gore, Principles of Painting, pg.18

CHAPTER 3

DRAWING

It is through drawing, as much as any other subject, that we educate the mind to know, open the mind and the memory, cultivate the imagination and train the judgement and reason. (1)

Each basic skill required to carry out a painting is important in itself and each process has something different to teach us. The first fundamental principle involved is the drawing stage. This part of the process, if not approached and taught differently can be quite boring for the pupils. They must learn to explore the possibilities, enlarge the tiniest section of an area, reduce and intensify areas as large as landscapes. Teach the students that anything can be possible if the approach is suitable. Scale is a factor which inhibits the pupils spontaneity. They often feel that freedom of expression is only found in the application of colour in the pupils drawings. The different lines of expression, the directional lines, the very still rigid and inhibited line all have something to say in forms of expression. The students can learn how to express themselves through their drawings even at the research stage of their project. However, to begin with in many cases the teacher may have to stop and reinforce some basic concepts of drawing, for example by reducing everything we see into simple block forms as in Cezannes work, introducing drawing without lines or drawing the negative shapes instead of the positive. One approach does not suit all pupils so it is important to spend

quality time explaining the various approaches a student could take to particular drawing projects.

Solid training in the skills of handling each technique is necessary before one can turn out work that expresses inspired feeling. (2)

This applies to each of the basic skills involved in painting. A student however must learn the skill of arranging compositional elements. There must be balance within their drawing. When choosing a section of an object to draw the student will learn the skill of compositional arrangement yet it can still exude spontaneity and imagination. When choosing and producing a new composition all of the other painting principles must be taken into consideration. The placement of two shapes beside each other will be disturbed or enhanced according to the colour applied to this particular area. This kind of knowledge will only come through experience and lots of practise thus provoking my belief that the basic principles of painting should be taught in first year allowing the pupils plenty of time to explore and develop their own personal skills in the art room.

It is then the total of interacting lines and shapes and colours, of planes and rhythm, of plain and patterned area, of mass and weight and movement, of space and solid, which make manifest at one. (3)

Even the very basic composition has all of these features underlining its image. The knowledge required to carry out compositional arrangements begins with the simple notion of balance and foreground, middle ground and background. After this introduction in first year the student can then

experiment with composition where the spectators eye is led to a certain area of the painting.

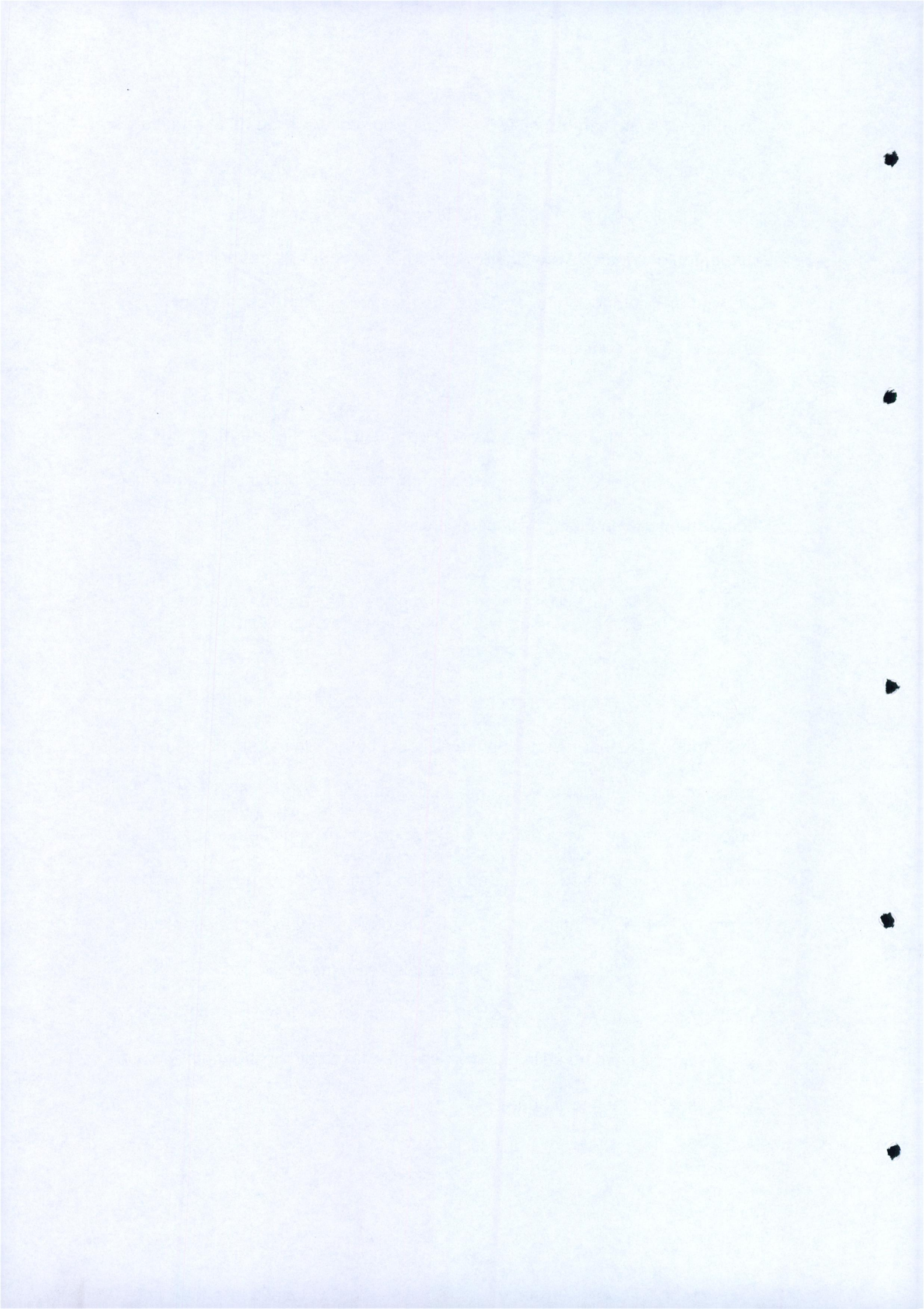
It is also important that students recognise that all of these fundamental principles of painting must work together as a team. The drawing and compositional design stage go hand in hand yet carefully considered in the initial pictorial design.

COLOUR

Unlike art education at primary level, the student begins to learn not only about the seasonal palette but also about warm and cool colours, contrasting, complimentary and harmonious colours.

Colour vision really is a magnificent gift, as without it we would only be able to see in black and white or grey. (4)

Students work should portray the array of colours around us. The importance of colour, not only in the art room but beyond should be stressed to the pupils, therefore developing a strong sense of appreciation of the colours in their own work and the works of others. The placement of colours on the page and the addition or subtraction of one pigment can change the overall effect of a painting may seem quite obvious but even the simplest task must be carefully instructed by the teacher in the beginning. The task of mixing colours may prove more difficult to first year students but with plenty of practise it will become a simple exercise undertaken by the students without even thinking when required.



PAINTING TECHNIQUES

You are free to apply paints with traditional brushes, to use rags or sponges; to stain, pour, drip or pat the paint on with a knife. In short, the knife should scrape, pat, scratch and extend paint and the brush should smooth and stroke. (5)

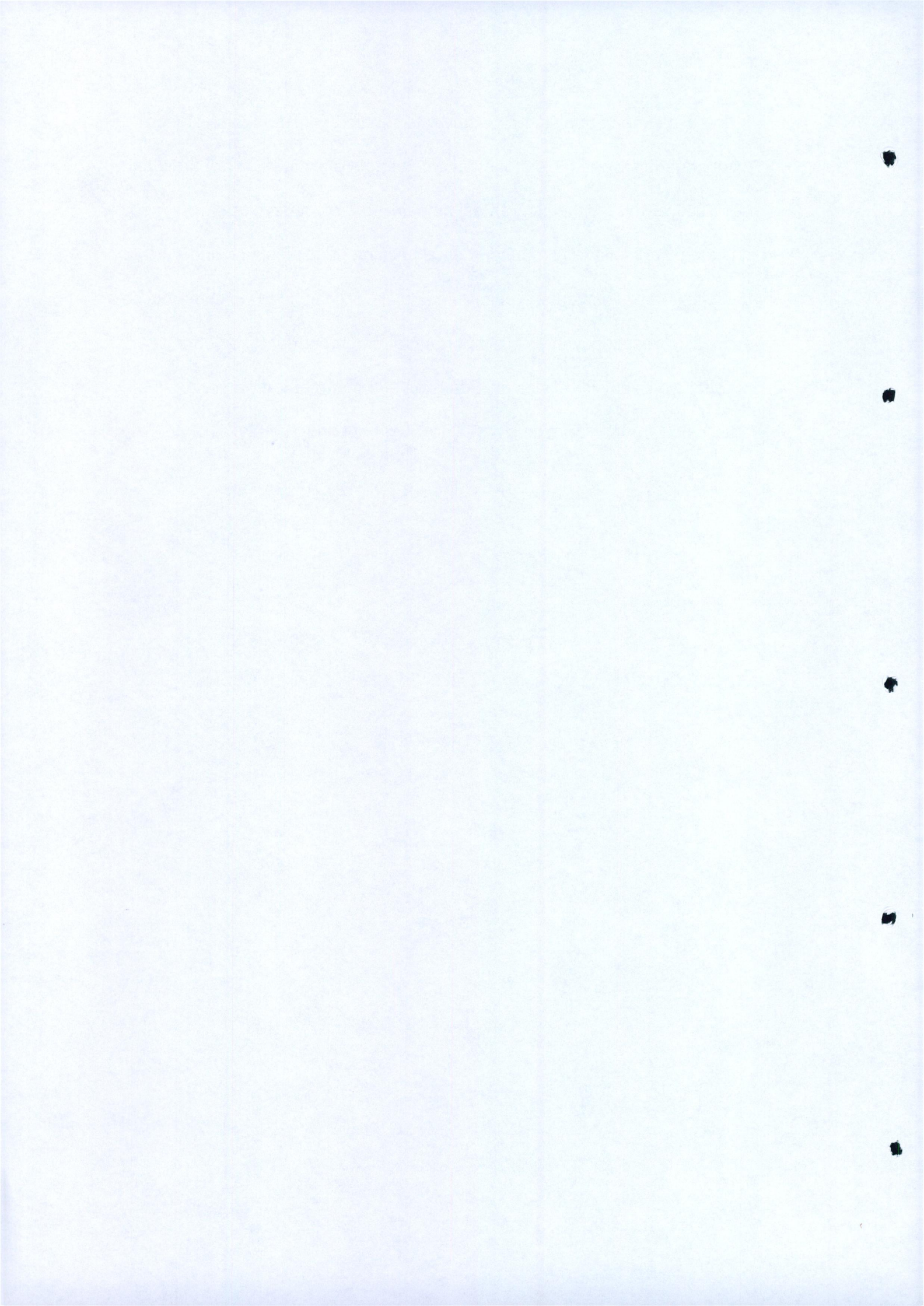
Like any other practical subject on the curriculum very clear instructions should be given to the pupils before they begin any work on their painting. The skill involved in holding and using a paintbrush properly is a very basic but vital role in art education. All of these tasks provide the students with a better sense of confidence in their work and responsibility for their art equipment.

They should learn how to use other artists methods and systems constructively and imaginatively in support of their own work. (6)

In teaching children the technical side of painting for example, the actual handling of paint etc....it is an excellent and very effective method to introduce the study of artist's work into their projects. This is not only a great stimulus for the pupils but it also is a fantastic aid when teaching the various basic painting techniques. There are thousands of different painting techniques by past and present artists but by selecting a few with basic painting principles for example Seurat, the children learn of his work and also experiment, discover and explore for themselves in their own compositions his methods and techniques.

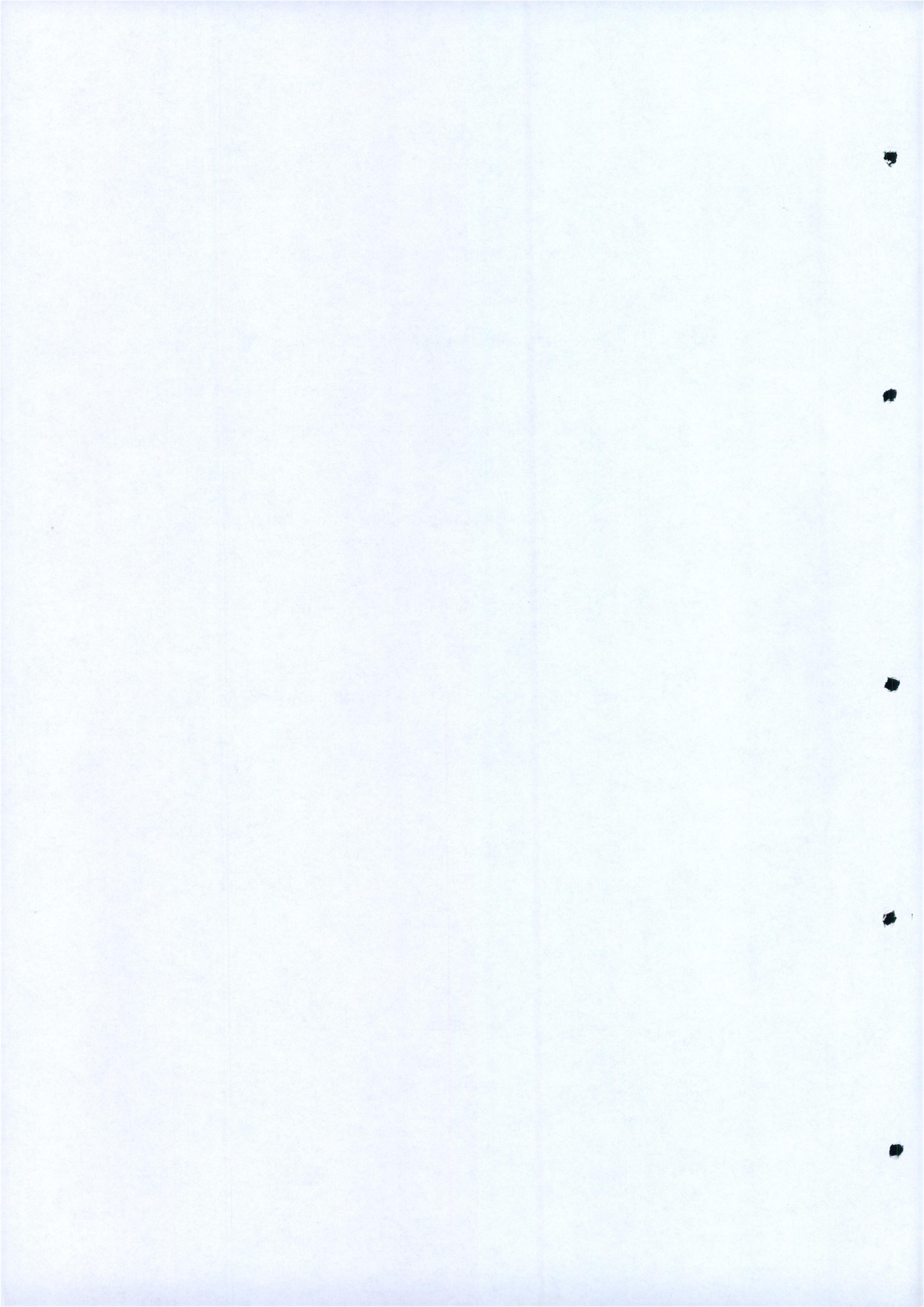
In the experimentation stage the students should be instructed clearly on what materials when mixed together give certain effects. Many of the pupils will discover this for themselves as the painting project develops.

It is the combination of the fundamental painting principles, drawing, compositional arrangement, colour and painting techniques which produces a successful result, however it is important to remember each stage for its autonomy. Each skill is also an extension of the one before, therefore the artistic flow from one process to the next will happen naturally.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 3

1. N.A.E.A., Arts Education and Back to Basics, pg.99
2. Lucia A Salemme, Painting Techniques, pg.2
3. Frederick Gore, Painting the Basic Principles, pg.14
4. Karla Cikonova, Teaching Children how to paint,pg.7
5. Lucia A Salemme, Painting Techniques,pg. 1
6. Robert Clement, Art Teachers Handout, pg.139.



CHAPTER 4

CREATIVITY

The development of skill and competencies in art will bear little relationship to the development of creativity unless all these factors are involved in the planning process.(1)

In the following chapter I describe a sequence of work suitable for fifth year students which I have devised and carried out, which combines the learning process involved in the technical skills of painting and also the creative skills required to complete a successful piece of work

A student cannot however be expected to work creatively unless he is encouraged to do, provided with good stimuli and given reassurance especially expressing himself through his own work.

Art is filled with the richness of textures, the excitement of shapes and forms, the wealth of colour, and youngster and adult alike should be able to receive pleasure and joy from these experiences. (2)

It is through experiencing the actual feel, touch, smell and sight of interesting objects, places and people that encourage students to think, solve problems and come with brilliantly creative ideas and solutions to particular enquiries. After exposure to creative stimuli, the work of pupils becomes more spontaneous, expressive and interesting. According to Lowenfeld and Brittan, no superior outcome is possible in this field without the creative teacher(3). A child can detect a teacher's lack of enthusiasm, the same way in which he can sense the instructor's lack of creativity. As a result the teacher cannot provoke creative ideas and approaches within the classroom. In order to

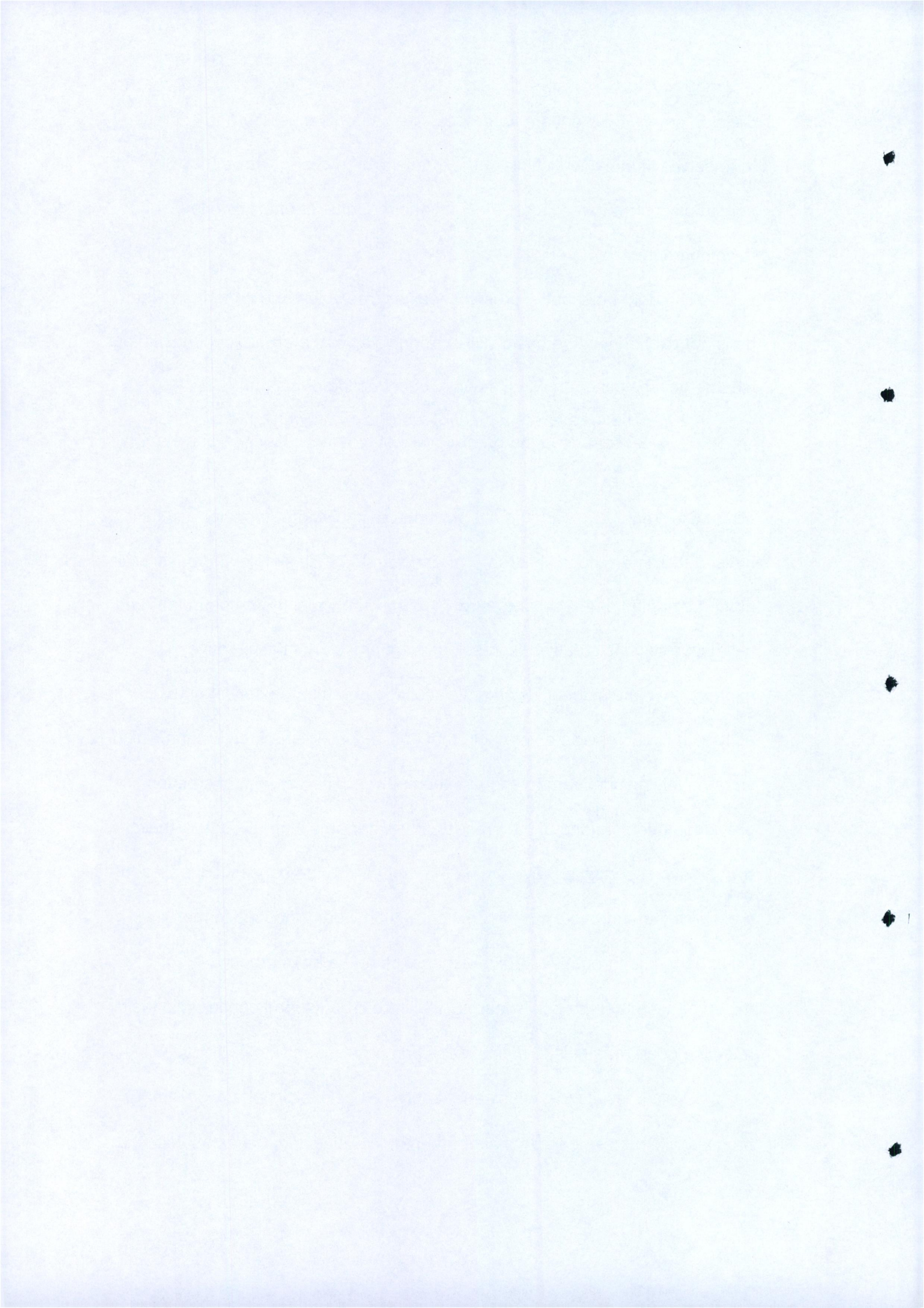
develop creativity as a learning process the students must learn to express themselves in their work . This self-expression however gives vent in constructive form to feelings, emotions and thoughts at one's own level of development.

A student must not express himself as freely and spontaneously when he is not confident in the basic skills or principles of the art project in question whether it is painting, drawing, sewing, constructing or carving.

The greater the variety of materials with which the child has experienced the greater, we note in his confidence of his ability to express his ideas.(4)

Children create with the aid of whatever knowledge they happen to have at the time. Those children provided with the very simple and basic skills at the beginning of any artistic activity will inevitably feel more competent and self assured in his creative expressions. The process of this creative expression in the student's work involves incorporating the self into the activity. It is and can be a very personal and satisfying channel through which young adolescence learn to express themselves. The very act of creation provides understanding of the process that other artists go through in their own artistic experiences. Everything that appeals to the senses influences the creative mind and has a major effect on any art work produced in the classroom. It is through first hand experience and a lot of practical experimenting that the pupils learn to be more creative and confident in their handling of art materials, creative ideas and problem solving skills.

It is impossible to discuss and teach the basic skills of any artistic process without taking into consideration the creative developments involved.



Art education has the special mission of developing within the individual those creative sensitivities that make life satisfying and meaningful.(5)

Ideally art and creativity go hand in hand but creativity does not just happen. It is an essential part of the learning process . The art teacher must be aware of this issue and not allow spontaneity to become an easy way out of all problems to be addressed within the classroom. Thought should be put into the actual creative process itself. Creative children have to be smart enough to deal with their creativity in a constructive way(6). Not only should art teachers promote and spark off new, exciting and creative ideas but also teach the pupils to channel this creative spontaneity into a well structured piece of work. Spontaneity can, if not well instructed, bring with it carelessness and unbalanced work by the over enthusiastic self-expressing students. It is the skill of combining the basic principles of any art activity with the creative self that results in a successful learning process and end product. According to Dewey art education shifted from a concern with correct drawing, picture study, and hand-eye co-ordination to an emphasis upon unlocking the creative capacities of children(7).

The emphasis should lay equally on both aspects but in order to develop the student's confidence to experiment and express themselves, they need a basic education. The teaching of the fundamental principles of any artistic activity followed by creative expression allows the students to grow and strengthen their skills on what knowledge they have already received. The more confident a student is in his work, the more he can express himself through his own art whether it is drawing, painting, sculpting or printing.

In the future, as society turns towards the unknown and schools will of necessity have to teach not only what is known but also teach toward what we do not know.(8)

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 4

1. Viktor Lowenfeld and W.Lambert Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p.76
- 2.. Ibid., p.14
3. Hughes Mauns, Creative Power : The Education of Youth in the Creative Arts, p.252.
4. Ibid., p.250
5. Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p.14
6. Ibid., p. 77
7. Georges Pappas, Concepts in Art Education, p.20
8. Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, Creative and Mental Growth, p.98

CHAPTER 5

METHODOLOGY

I have devised a scheme of work for a period of six weeks suitable for fifth year students. I have completed this with a small group of pupils in whom I have seen a lot of changes, both in their work and attitudes. It was not possible for me to teach this scheme to first years as I had wished, however it was very suitable for the fifth year students in question.(1)

Week one began with a drawing project of three still lifes entitled 'Seasonal Walks'. The pupils did observational drawings, concentrating on their drawing skills, some students converting all of the objects into very basic shapes. They learned how to hold a pencil properly, how to sharpen it as the great artists did and how to create different effects by varying the tension on the drawing media. These basic but important skills lay the foundation to the beginning of any research undertaken. I introduced this lesson in the form of oral instructions, demonstrations on the black board and line drawings by the artist Cezanne.

Week two of the scheme entailed arranging the compositional elements. With the aid of a viewfinder the pupils played around with the shapes and lines of their work from the previous week. After coming up with a satisfying balance within their compositions the students enlarged this chosen sections onto a bigger page and their drawing skills extended into their ability to design a composition. A lot of the students had already



experienced using a viewfinder therefore I gave a very basic demonstration of how to use one to reinforce what they already knew.

We discussed compositional arrangement and included works by artists which portrayed balanced and unbalanced compositions. Some of the artists included Degas, Van Gogh and Renoir. More experimentation took place on the third week. The students after several weeks of studying the Impressionists and Post Impressionists artists experimented with the various techniques of each artist studied. The history of art played a major role in this scheme of work for it was our main source for colour and tonal application. Each week a different artist's work was viewed, discussed and learned therefore their practical work reinforced what they had already learned in those art history classes.

Demonstrations were very important at this point in the painting process. A demonstration of each painting technique by each artist we had recently encountered in our studies. I clearly showed the students the different materials they can use to get certain textures and paint effects and how the various basic application techniques used by each artists studied. After the six boxes on the worksheet were completed with the various chosen artist's painting methods, the students chose one and/or two of the techniques which they wished to continue working with in the weeks to follow.

Week four saw the beginning of the pupils paintings. The students used different tools to apply the paint onto the composition they has previously designed in week two. Some pupils used brushes, flat and round types, others used knives and sponges etc... according to the requirements of

the artist style they had chosen. Most of the pupils used similar pigments to the artist's work which they preferred, however their colour became more exaggerated as the process took place.

The following week the fifth year students continued practising their painting and colouring techniques. The final weeks work entailed finishing off the paintings.

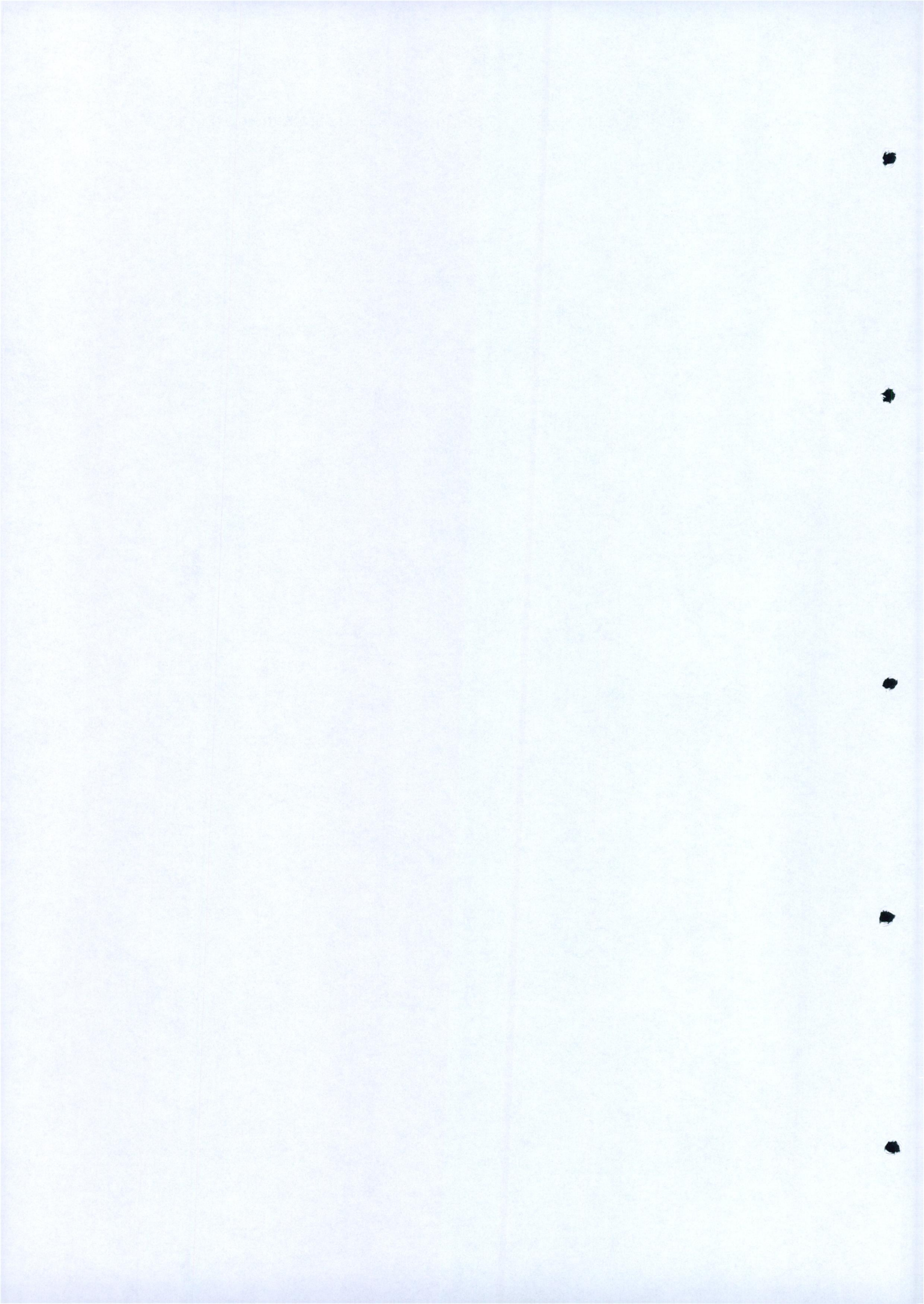
Demonstrations were important at this stage of the production. Some of the students applied P.V.A. for a glossy finish, others mounted their work with card. Some framed their work. A lot of students used the same painting methods but the results were all quite different.

Although many painters may use the same techniques, the individual's style is usually determined by his personal touch or handwriting, it develops out with much practise and experimentation.(2)

It was my first experience working with this fifth year group. I felt that there was a need for more concentration on the technical skills involved in painting more so than the creative side of their nature. It is important to lay down a good foundation of basic knowledge for any work before the students become too occupied with creativity and freedom.

This class had little experience in painting previous to my encounter with them. In order to increase their confidence in this area, I taught the very basic skills involved in producing a painting. I did not intend to concentrate on creativity as much as the technical side of this activity in the beginning. The intention was not to produce very creative pieces but rather samples of more confident and experienced painting. Fortunately the creative students felt

competent enough to experiment further and incorporate their expressive selves into their work.



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 5

1. It was requested that I carry out the specific tasks set to the first year class by the permanent teacher at the school in question
2. Frederick Gore, Principles of Painting, p.43

CHAPTER 6

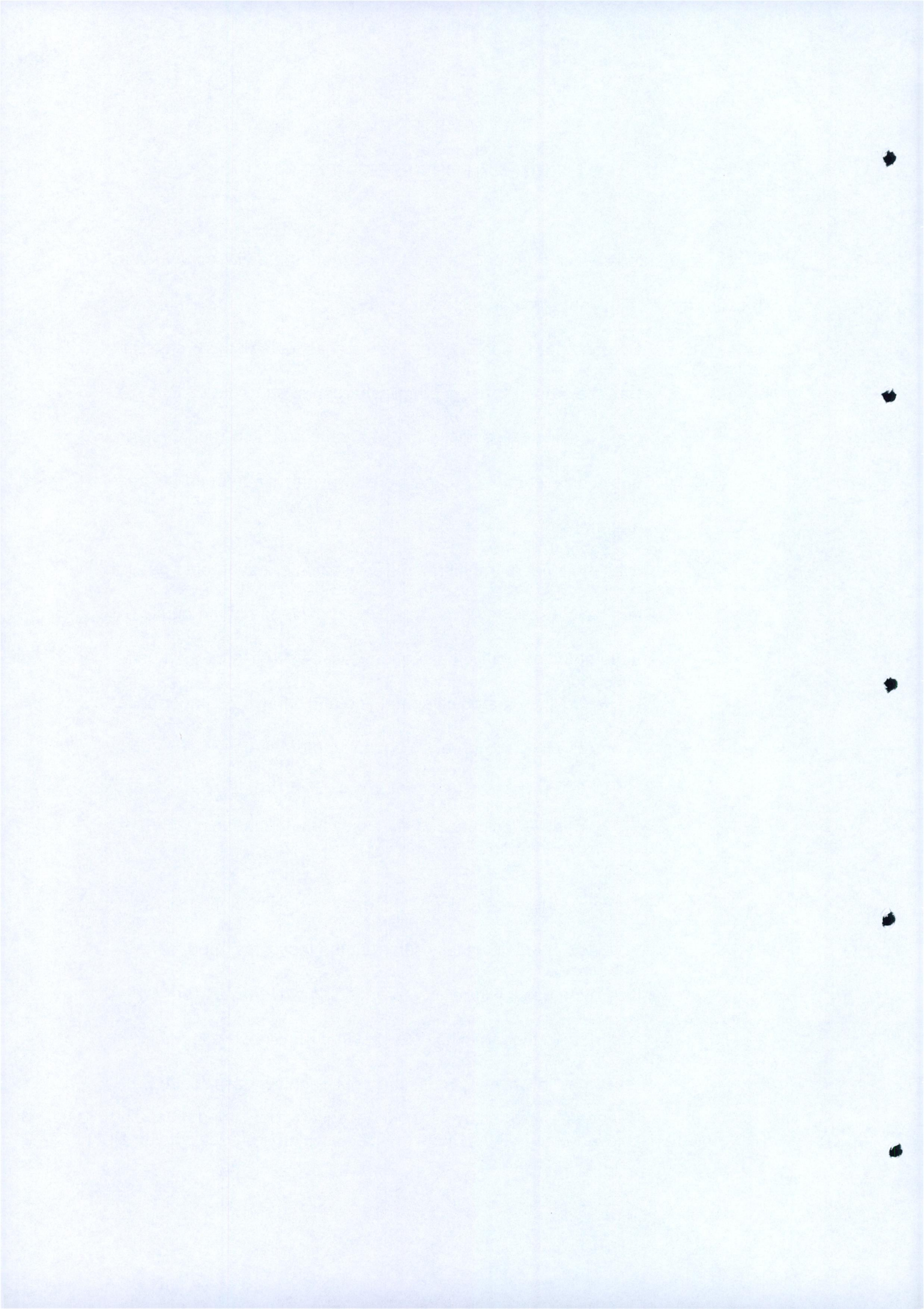
CRITERIA FOR ASSESSMENT

The criteria which I have considered throughout the entire scheme for assessing the fifth year class are as follows;

1. Competency in handling the technical aspects of the project.
Can the students use a pencil, sharpen it, carry out various mark making skills, hold and use a paint brush correctly? Do the pupils now wash, clean and store away this piece of art material?
2. Has the student transformed the visual information onto paper in a logical sequence? Is there strong evidence of the pupil's understanding of this the sequence involved? The class must know why they are doing something and what is it's importance in order to fully comprehend each stage of the activity.

Shapes, colours and lines only take on meaning in the light of man's own ability.(1)

3. The pupil's level of understanding of the basic painting skills.
Although students usually carry out the tasks assigned to them, they often do so without comprehending why they are so important in their training. It is vital that they see the logic reason as to why they must carry out each task as required.
Unnecessary for enjoyment but necessary for full understanding is to learn something of the principles which are necessary to all forms of painting.(2)



4. Design skills. students should be aware of the development of an idea through it's various stages. Can the pupils make critical decisions and trust their own judgement throughout the design process? According to Frederick Gore, in any case, he must select, simplify, exaggerate (3). Creativity, although it is not the most significant aspect of this scheme will be taken into account. The pupil's own response to the brief given to them at the beginning of every class will also be assessed.
5. Skills in communicating ideas and emotions. Do the students have a good ability to see the potential in various materials, exaggerate, enquire and discover with these materials?

The renewal of art is by mixture, new materials, techniques and ideas (4).

Again creativity will inevitably enter into this stage of the project

6. Social skills. Do the students have the ability to communicate as part of a team? Can they communicate their ideas both verbally and visually? The overall commitment and co-operation of the pupils through the scheme of work will also be considered.

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 6

1. Frederick Gore, Principles of Painting, p.12
2. Ibid ., p.20
3. Ibid .,p.12
4. Ibid .,p.18

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

I have completed my teaching practice with the students of St. Mac Daras school in Templeogue. During my work experience there I chose two specific schemes of work suitable for the fifth years students in question and deliberately connected this to my dissertation. I have already discussed the first sequence of work in chapter five and will go on to briefly mention the second at a later stage. I began both of these schemes with a positive outlook however, it was my first time to teach art history in conjunction with the practical aspect of art. At the beginning I was unsure as to how this would be received by the students and feared this may affect learning within the art room.

In hindsight I can fortunately say that the students worked hard and accepted this novel approach of combining the art history and the practical class together. The response was a positive one.

They learned to explore, examine, experiment, discover, resolve and create throughout this scheme based on the four basic painting principles. Their problem solving skills improved. I found that the pupils began to trust their own judgement and became much more independent and confident within their practical work.

In using art history to reinforce the process involved in the fundamental principles of painting, the pupil's critical analysis of the artist's work showed a

lot of improvement. They began to form their own opinions through more experienced and knowledgeable eyes. Their self evaluations portrayed their maturity and critical acceptance of their work.

Throughout the work the pupils discussed their ideas and solutions with me and some of their class mates. They learned to communicate and accept advice and constructive criticism when it was required. In both schemes of work I have carefully considered the criteria for assessment which is clearly stated in chapter six. I feel that the students have not only fulfilled these requirements successfully but also some unrequested skills and working processes.

Finally I would like to discuss the student's understanding and handling of the basic painting principles. I will do so while referring to the stated scheme of work in chapter five.

During the initial drawing stages I found that the student's work was not very strong or confident. As the drawing progressed, so too did their handling of line and shape. A small improvement was apparent.

The overall concept of balance within a composition was well received and applied to the student's own work. I discovered that by pointing out the obvious facts to begin with, provided the pupils with a good solid foundation of information. For example the difference between a very balanced and unbalanced composition may appear quite obvious to some but not to other students. This was discussed and clarified. I found that by returning to and reinforcing even the most basic facts is a vital part of teaching practice within the art room.

As the painting began, the fifth year pupils were inhibited with their painting techniques. I encouraged them to be more spontaneous and free in their paint application. To allow the paint to spread itself over the white surface of the page and create new marks, splashes, strokes, drips and dashes.

The results were interesting. The new colours, textures, patterns and finishes are quite different from the previous timid and uncertain brush strokes created by the pupils. The class is quite pleased with their own work and fortunately the more creative students channelled this energy into their compositions. The illustrations shown overleaf portray some of the exciting results. The overall handling of the technical skills involved in the four basic painting principles improved immensely as the weeks progressed.

The second sequence of work I carried out with this fifth year group again entailed the combination of the art history class with the practical activities. Basically the scheme of work consisted of portraiture studies varying from Munch to Robert Ballagh. The students incorporated this information into portraiture compositions of their own. It was a very interesting scheme and the results were more than satisfying.

We got to experiment with painting and we tried different styles, for example the Impressionists, which we would not have done on our own (1).

I thought the classes were very good because we learned new techniques and styles of painting, we also learned about different artists (2).

FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 7

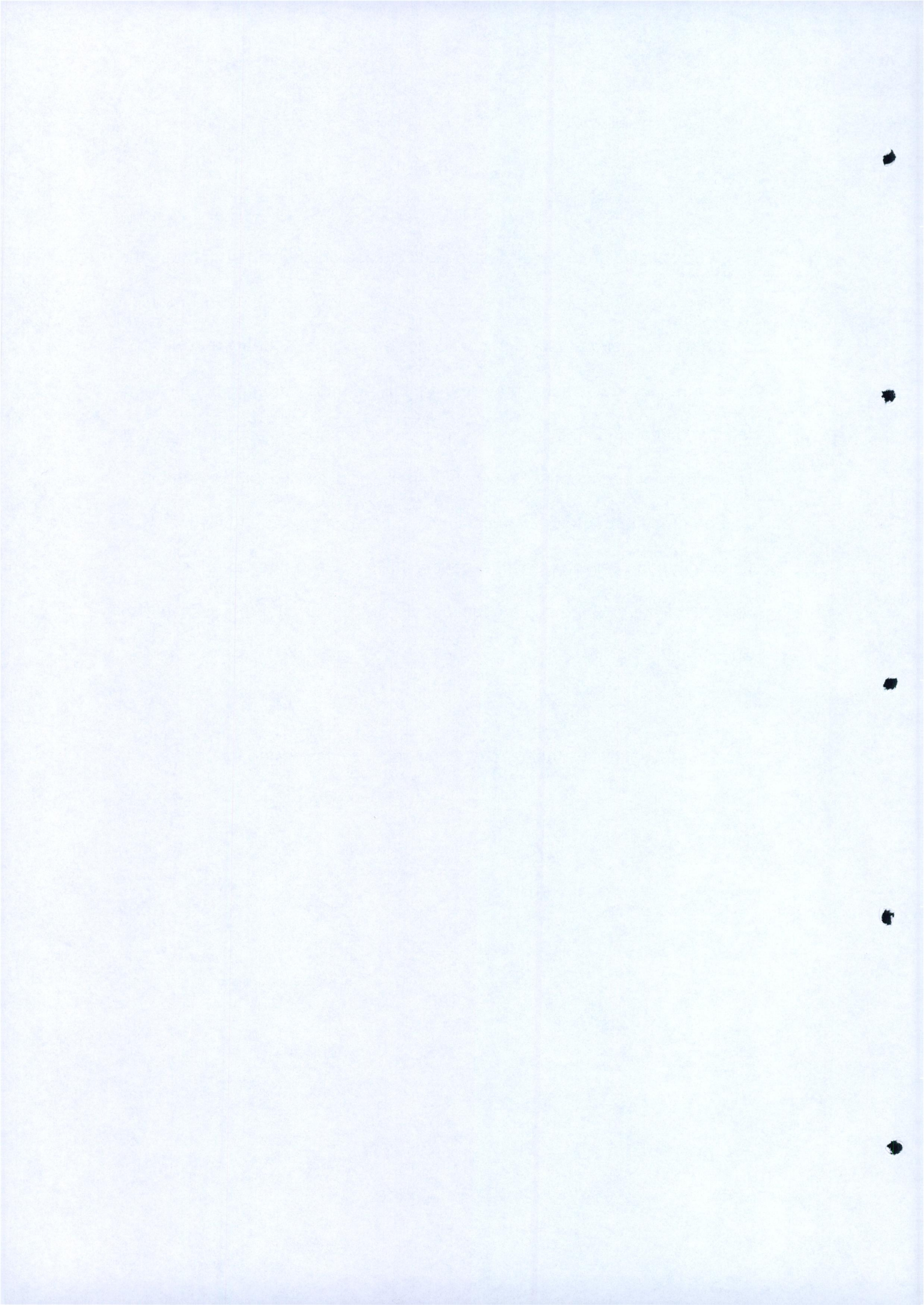
1. 5th year student, Paula.
2. 5th year student, Suzanne.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

In conclusion to my discussion and studies of teaching art through the basics principles , I feel that it is now a necessity to do so. In order to achieve a high level of competency and confidence among the students and within their work , it is essential to provide the pupils with the fundamental aesthetic facts and information. It is upon this foundation of knowledge that they learn to experiment and create with new and exciting possibilities and avenues. The progress through which the students go can be an opportunity for fascinating and very rewarding experiences. In doing so they learn to appreciate not only the end product but also the important process involved in any practical activity.

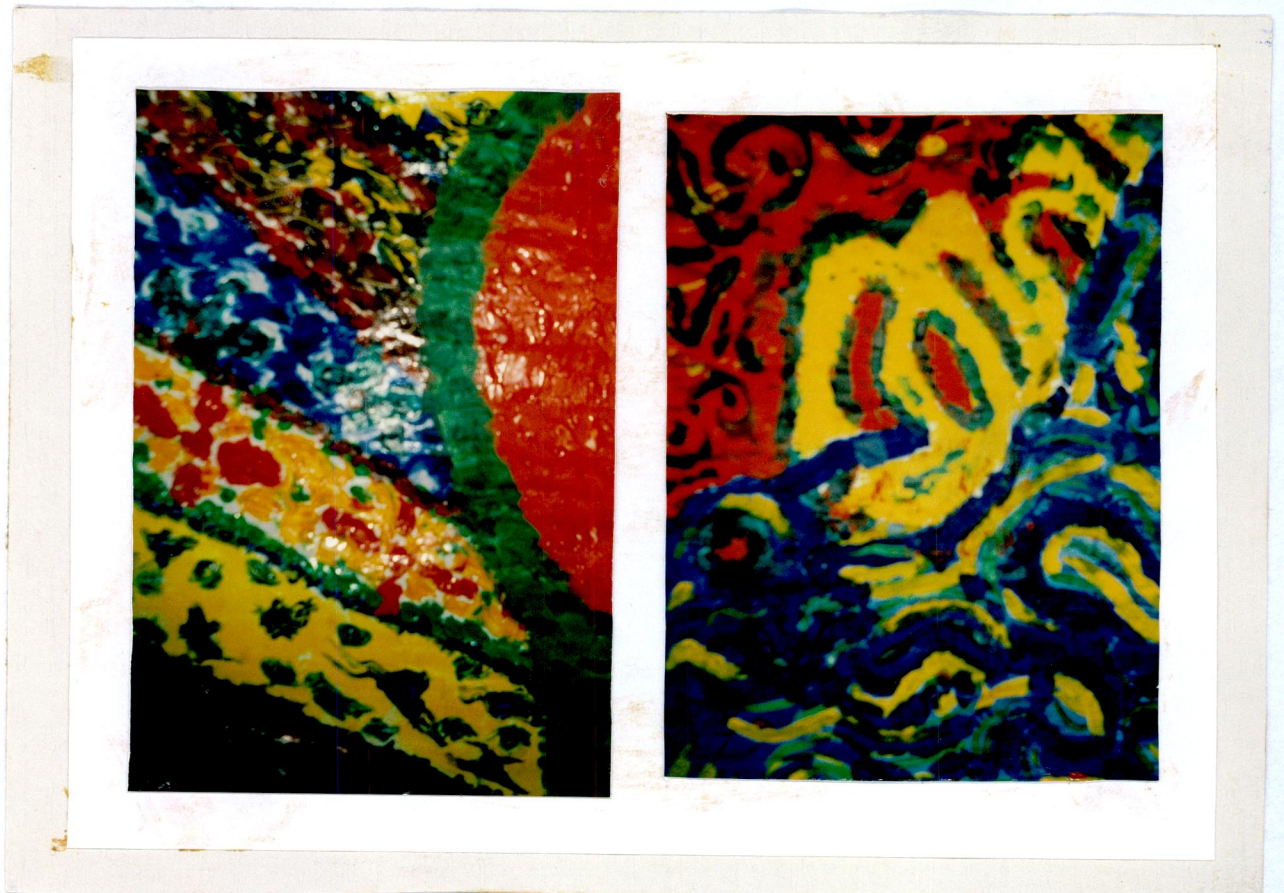
Painting is one of the most enjoyable and expressive exciting activities that teachers and parents can provide for children (1).



FOOTNOTES CHAPTER 8

1. Keith Gentle, Teaching Painting in Primary School, p. 32

ILLUSTRATION No. 1.



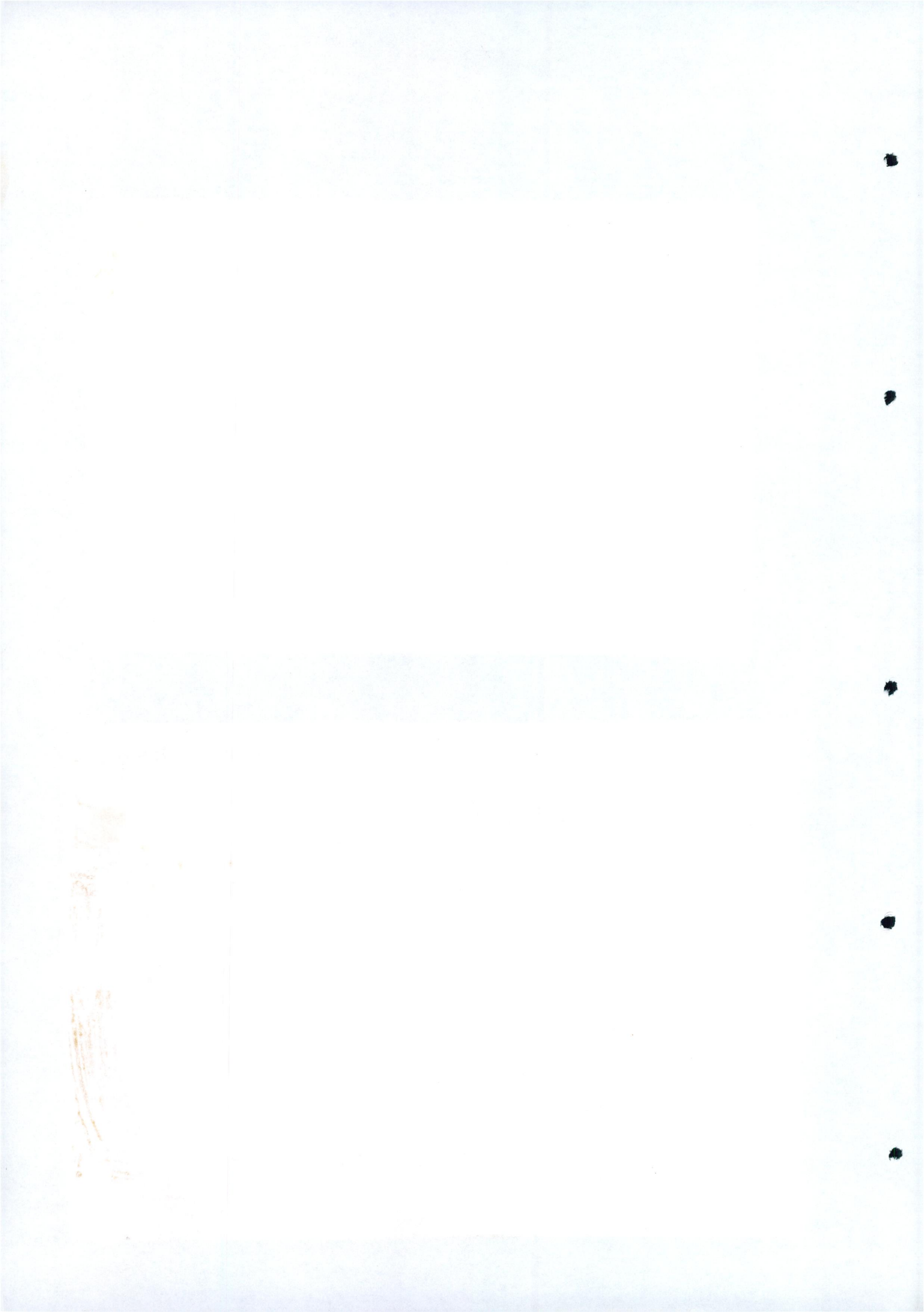


ILLUSTRATION No. 2





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