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Title: Is Creativity Aided by Guidance ?

This study is primarily an investigation into whether creativity in the classroom is aided or hampered by teacher guidance.

The literary review touches on several definitions of creativity, before looking at the idea of creativity in a classroom setting and the role of the teacher to this end. The chapter ends with various theories on the importance of skills, knowledge and information in aiding the creative process.

Chapter three is a detailed description of a research project undertaken by the author in a south county Dublin community school. The project took the form of an eleven week scheme of work, divided into four stages, with differing levels of guidance given at each stage. The work produced at each stage was then assessed for creative input.

Chapter four is a conclusion to this study, giving an analysis of the findings of the research project and recommendations for the advancement of creativity in the classroom.

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NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART AND DESIGN
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IS CREATIVITY AIDED BY GUIDANCE ?

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Education
in
Candidacy for the

DIPLOMA FOR ART AND DESIGN TEACHERS

by

S. COOPER

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This study is primarily an investigation into whether creativity in the classroom is aided or hampered by teacher guidance. If we give students our ideas, even as guidelines, do they concentrate on them to the exclusion of any new ideas of their own, thus inhibiting creativity, or do they take these new ideas and use them to further their own creative experience?

Chapter two is a review of literature relevant to this study. The review touches on several definitions of creativity, before looking at Guilford's "artistic-creative factors" under which heading comes "divergent thinking." (1) The idea of creativity in a classroom setting and the role of the teacher to this end is explored through assorted views on the subject, ranging from John Dewey's belief in a child's right to self-expression without teacher interference, (2) to Maxine Greens' view of the teacher as a "facilitator," opening gates and taking away barriers to creativity. (3) The chapter ends with various theories on the importance of skills, knowledge and information in aiding the creative process.

Chapter three is a detailed description of a research project undertaken by the author in a south county Dublin community school. The project took the form of an eleven week scheme of work, divided into four stages, with differing levels of guidance given at each stage. The work produced at each stage was then assessed for creative input under three criteria - problem-solving

skills, use of available materials and originality of product.

The scheme of work was organised around a packaging project, the aim being to investigate the functional and aesthetic value of three-dimensional packaging through mark-making, colour, pattern, lettering skills and construction.

Chapter four is a conclusion to this study, giving an analysis of the findings of the research project and recommendations for the advancement of creativity in the classroom.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 1

1. J.P. Guilford, "Creative abilities in the arts" in Readings in Art Education ed. Elliot W. Eisner and David W. Ecker (Massachusetts: Blaisdell 1966) p.285

2. Elliot W. Eisner on John Dewey, "Art Education and Creativity" in Readings in Art Education p.8

3. Maxine Green, "Art, Technique, and the Indifferent Gods" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education ed. Ralph A. Smith (Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1971)

CHAPTER 2

IS CREATIVITY AIDED BY GUIDANCE ?

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The Nature of Creativity

When trying to find a conclusive definition, one is mindful of the thoughts of Sprinthall and Sprinthall on the subject. For them, the definitions are "almost as broad as the use of the word itself, and a word that may have so many uses can end up as meaningless." (1). Norman C. Meier, on the other hand, writing in the late 1930's, saw no need for mystification. For him, creativity was the "ability to utilise vivid sense impressions effectively in the creation (organisation) of a work having some degree of aesthetic character." He thought the act of creativity to be constructed from one's life experience, or as usually the case, from "composites of experience." Using the art-work of young children as an example, Meier believed that because the experience of children is usually "simple, uncluttered and vivid," so too are the constructions they create - quite different from those created by older children and adults. (2)

Comparing the creative abilities of children and adults, Robin Barrow, a British educationalist, suggests two different senses of the term "creative," one for the child and one for the adult. When dealing with adults, "creative" generally suggests a production which meets the two criteria of quality and originality. Applied to children these criteria are rarely met, though as Barrow points out

> ...the child's work, though not original and of high quality in any objec-

> tive sense, may nonetheless represent originality and quality in terms of the child's progress." Creativity in children is more often used as a synonym for "self-expression," or "productivity," or "inventiveness,"or "good problem- solving ability." (3)

This train of thought, which differentiates, yet makes parallels between children and adults in terms of creativity, continues in the work of Morris I. Stein. In his paper, "Creativity and Culture" he defines a creative work as "a novel work that is accepted as tenable or useful or satisfying by a group in some point in time."For Stein, "novel" means a "creative product which did not exist previously in exactly the same form."Stein goes on to qualify his definition - "The extent to which it is novel depends on the extent to which it deviates from the original or the *status quo*...This may well depend on the nature of the problem being attached, the fund of knowledge or experience that exists in the field at the time, and the characteristics of the creative individual."

In his paper, Stein sees it necessary to make a distinction between the creative product and the creative experience. In an example, He describes the case of a child who fixes the bell on his bicycle for the very first time -

> ...In the process of this challenge the child may go through stages that are structurally similar to those which characterise the work of a genius. His finished product, however, is a return to a previously existing state of affairs. The product of an inventor's labour, on the other hand, may strike one as creative immediately because it did not exist previously." (4)

As Stein sees it, though the child creates nothing new, its creative experience is no less valid than that of the inventor.

One of the simpler definitions, and one which goes some way towards unifying the others, is that of David Fontana, who describes creativity as "a special kind of thinking, a kind of thinking that involves originality and fluency, that breaks away from existing patterns and introduces something new."(5) The qualities of originality and fluency, together with that of "flexibility" are also mentioned by Sprinthall and Sprinthall, when describing the key cognitive operations involved in the act of creation.

They see originality as "the ability to come up with unique or new solutions or concepts." For them, as for Stein, the inventor is used as the most common example of this aspect of creativity. Fluency is thought to be the "ability to express meaning through multiple ideas and concepts ...to be able to symbolise experience broadly."Flexibility implies the "ability to change your 'mind-set," to search for alternative solutions when the obvious ones are wrong." (6)

Fontana's definition of creativity, as well as Sprinthall and Sprinthall's reading on the creative process and Barrow's criteria for a creative act can all be traced back to J.P. Guilford, an American psychologist, writing in the 1950's and 60's. Guilford, who did much to highlight the importance of creativity, talks of "artistic-creative factors" which fit into the general scheme of the intellect. These factors fall into one of three groups, depending on the kind of action performed. The first group, of cognitive factors, deals with the becoming aware of the things with which we are confronted. The second group, of production factors, is involved with the production of something of our own in response to that awareness. The third group, of evaluation fac-

tors, makes evaluations on our products or thoughts. For Guilford, a total creative act involves all three aspects - cognition, production and evaluation. Of the three groups, in view of the active nature of creative performances, Guilford saw production factors as being the most conspicuous and probably most crucial. These factors could be subdivided into two groups, two separate thought processes - convergent thinking and divergent thinking. (7)

Divergent Thinking

Broadly speaking, whereas convergent thinking individuals are said to converge upon the single acceptable solution to a problem, divergent thinkers have the ability to generate a range of possible solutions, in particular to a problem where there is no single right answer (like, 'think of all the meanings you can for the word "bolt"). Guilford points out that it is in divergent thinking that we find the most obvious indicators of creativity, the previously mentioned qualities of originality, fluency and flexibility were seen by him to also come under this category.

David Fontana, citing Guilford, explains that

> ...such an ability (divergent thinking) is likely to play a part in the creative act, since the artist will often need to explore a range of possible ways of painting a picture, or finishing of a novel, or writing a poem before finally deciding on one that looks best...we also expect a creative act to bear the stamp of originality, but here again divergent thinking will play a part, in that the wider the range of possibilities we are able to generate, the more likely it will be that one of them will carry originality." (8)

Since divergent thinking is so important to creativity, it would seem to follow that this type of reasoning would fit well into a creative classroom setting.

Indeed, Fontana, speaking on the place of divergence in the classroom asks teachers to bear in mind that "whatever their subject, they must be alive to opportunities for the encouragement of divergent thinking in students." However, a study in 1962, by Getzel and Jackson, which investigated divergent thinking in children found that high divergers were less popular with teachers than high convergers; the conformist child was more comfortable to live with than the non-conformist, highly imaginative one.

Basically, the problem with divergent thinkers is that though their ideas can be original and valuable, they can also be bizarre and silly, leading the teacher to believe the child is just playing up. If the teacher does not learn to recognise when children are trying to use their imagination, he or she is running the risk of stifling the good ideas along with the not-so-good, and giving the class the impression that originality is not welcome when teacher is around. (10)

This problem is highlighted in the argument put forward by Carl Bruner that "within education we tend to reward only the 'right' answers and penalise the 'wrong'. This makes children reluctant to attempt novel or original solutions to problems, since the chances of error are inevitably greater when they do." (11)

Fontana decides that the teacher should be prepared to "operate in an atmosphere where this endeavour is encouraged and rewarded, rather than one where only cautious, convergent solutions are countenanced." (12)

As Guilford points out: "in the arts there is usually no one right answer. Some answers are regarded merely better than others. There is a matter of evaluation". (13)

The idea of breaking away from the norm is discussed by Elliot W. Eisner in his paper, "A typology of creative behaviour". Eisner describes how a child of two or three months examines an object - smelling it, feeling it, hearing it and tasting it, experiencing the object through all his senses. Eisner surmises that the child is seeking experience "free from the social framework that latter stereotypes and restricts his behaviour and the object limits." (14)

In the course of his paper, Eisner mentions Ernest Schachtel's study of infant behaviour. Schachtel talks of an 'active-coping' behaviour which can be encouraged in infants, which teaches them to rely more on their own activity. Schachtel goes on to say that an "over-protective or punitive parent may well prevent a congenitively active child from coping effectively with his environment." (15)

When discussing creativity, Eisner introduces the idea of "Boundry Breaking", defined as "the rejection or reversal of accepted assumptions and making the "given" problematic." According to Eisner, there are two behaviours characteristically displayed by boundry breakers - insight and imagination.

> ...insight might help the boundry breaker group relationships between seemingly discrete events. It might also enable him to recognise incongruities or gaps in accepted explanations or descriptions. As he

> recognises these gaps his imagination may come into play and enable him to generate images and/or useful ideas for closing these gaps. Through the production of these images and/or ideas he is able to recognise or even eject the accepted, in order to formulate a more comprehensive view of the relationships between the elements that gave impetus to the initial insight." (16)

Eisner believes that to engage in boundry breaking, the individual must "reject and or reverse the premise on which the problem rests." To illustrate this point, he uses the work of Alexander Calder and Kandinsky.

> ...Alexander Calder's rejection of the assumption that sculpture had to be static was a precondition to his creation of moving sculpture, the mobile. Kandinsky's rejection of the assumption that painting must represent was a precondition for his creation of the non-objective painting. (17)

For Eisner, boundry breaking is rare, dependent upon the individuals ability to escape heavily embedded cultural expectations.

Eisner's theme, the difficulty inherent in breaking away from the norm is taken up by Morris Stein, who also touches on the role culture plays in shaping the individual and ultimately perhaps, inhibiting creativity. Stein asks

> ...does the culture tolerate deviation from the traditional, the *status quo*, or does it insist upon conformity, whether in politics, science or at school? Does the culture permit the individual to seek new experiences on his own, or do the bearers of culture (parents, teachers and so on) "spoon-feed" the young so that they constantly find ready made solutions available to them as they come upon a solution that is lacking in closure? (18)

Earlier in this review, I mentioned Stein's example of the distinction between the creative product and the creative experience - the child who fixed his

bicycle bell. Using this example again, Stein wonders how this creative experience would be handled by adults

> ...would it be depreciated and verbalised as "Oh, anyone could have done that!" or would the magnitude of the experience, from the child's point of view, be recognised and cherished with the hope that the child would be encouraged to seek similar experiences in the future. (19)

This distinction, between the creative product and the creative experience is evident in the philosophy of John Dewey, an American educationalist. For Dewey, the 'art object'- the product, was only one ingredient in an aesthetic experience, in which

> ...no distinction of self and object exists...since it is aesthetic to the degree in which organism and environment co-operate to institute an experience in which the two are so fully integrated that each disappears. (20)

Creativity in the classroom

On the subject of creativity in the classroom, Elliot W. Eisner writes

> ...Once considered an elusive, almost mystical gift belonging to a special few, creativity is now being seen as a capacity common to all men, one that should be effectively developed by the school".(21)

How to achieve this end ? When dealing with the logistics of creativity in a classroom setting, John Dewey wrote of the need for schools to "provide physical, emotional and intellectual freedom for the pupil, freedom that could be attained only if the student had the opportunity to exercise his intelligence on problems that were meaningful to him." Dewey's thinking led to one of the key ideas of art education in the twentieth century - the belief in a child's right to self-expression without teacher interference.

> ...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. Creativity, a concept seldom found in the literature prior to the 1920's, now became one of art education's major organising ideas. If a child by nature had the capacity for intelligent creative action, perhaps art education could be instrumental in helping the child realise it's latent creativity...The teaching of art became an instrument for creative development in all walks of life; it was to be a process oriented activity which was to have as one of it's major goals the development of children's creative thinking. "Creative self-expression was soon to become the watchword of the new education that emerged during this period. (22)

The Role of the Teacher

The teachers role in giving a child the freedom to create is a theme taken up by Piaget - "Each time one prematurely teaches a child something he could have discovered for himself, the child is kept from inventing it and consequently understanding it completely." (23)

For John Newick, a British educationalist, the teacher should "confine himself to facilitating the participants involvement" in a creative act, "concentrate his efforts on increasing motivations to participate in the arts," or act as a "psychological support." For him, failure to do this can result in "narrowly conceived teaching methods and to outcomes so simple in character that they are virtually predictable - in short, to attitudes which negate the possibility of experiencing the arts in any real sense." (24)

Lowenfeld and Brittian, when describing the art teachers place in creating an environment for creativity, talk of the teachers

> ...extremely important position. It is through him that the direction and atmosphere for learning takes place. He must have a genuine faith in students and be willing to accept their values as well as his own. He must provide an atmosphere where creativity can be fostered... (25)

The role of the teacher, as seen by Maxine Green in her essay "Art, technique and the indifferent Gods", is one in which the teacher acts as a facilitator, 'opening gates', taking away barriers to creativity and "introducing young people to ways of doing a variety of interesting things, enabling them to participate and make independent moves on their own initiative."
Green goes on to qualify her statement - "It is unlikely that an intentional process of this sort can be carried out spontaneously, even though good teaching may create situations in which spontaneous activity can occur." (26)

Creativity and Skills

The problems involved in giving children the freedom to create while at the same time teaching them the skills to do so are explained by Pamela Sharpe, citing Elkind -

> ...children are only able to extend their thinking and learning when given opportunities to talk and reflect. Merely exposing them to new skills, knowledge, information and experiences *per se* is unlikely to have much effect. We often fail to appreciate that children's thoughts and abilities are childlike and spontaneous and that children cannot see the world in the same way as the adults who have conceptualised it for them and who take it for granted. (27)

"Undirected child art", as termed by Brian Sutton-Smith brings with it a

child's "satisfaction of freedom", but unfortunately necessary skills such as drawing and painting are not learnt, "except by accident or their own insistence." (28)

But is this lacking in skills important ? As Willem de Kooning said "Painting isn't just the visual thing that reaches your retina - it's what is behind it and in it." (29) In other words, it's the creative process that matters, not the product. Harry S. Broudy writes of the educational goal of creativity as the

> ...ability to objectify in sensuous form the emotional significance to the artists own satisfaction. If another can contemplate it aesthetically and derive pleasure from doing so, ie., if their is a successful communication, that is all to the good - but the latter is not essential. Creative art whose purpose is self-expression only, need not be good by any universal standard. (30)

- As long as the child is satisfied with it's efforts no further requirements should be made by the teacher.

How long does this satisfaction last ? As Broudy says

> ...educators have been rightly impressed with the artistic originality and facility of children, and some of them have elevated this fact into an educational principle...and their is nothing wrong with the principle so long as the creator is satisfied. But with age, the distinction between fantasy and reality becomes clearer...I would hazard a guess that for every individual in every aesthetic medium their comes a critical time when either techniques have to be cultivated consciously to keep pace with his expressive needs or the medium is abandoned. (31)

This "critical time" generally occurs during adolescence, the

> ...drying up of artistic originality is accompanied by a shrinking of aesthetic literacy, so that most adolescents are lucky if they can express

> themselves to their own or anyone else's satisfaction even in one medium - and , of course, some can't manage even one...aesthetic activity is arrested for most people at the intellectual and emotional level of adolescence...caused by such factors as the lag of techniques behind the need for expression and the pressure of socially unavoidable stereotypes. (32)

Giving children the skills/techniques to manipulate materials to fullfill their creative urges is seen by F.E.Sparshott as the most important and necessary job a teacher can undertake.

> ...One may seek not to instill the actual practice of the arts but to impart skills that may or may not be used. One may make it ones educational aim not to influence a persons choices but to equip him to carry out effectively whatever choices he may make...anyone who has learnt to play trombone can play trombone if he wants to, but he will not necessarily want to, nor will his skill necessarily make him more creative, more receptive to new artforms, more sensitive to any aspects of his enviroment, more sophisticated about media, or better able to tell good music from bad. But presumably, in acquiring his skill, he will have become knowledgeable about at least some sorts of music and familiar with the rudiments of music criticism. (33)

Encouraging creativity in the classroom through" revealing the potentiality" of materials is discussed by Max Black in his essay 'Education as Art and Discipline.' Seeing art as "a process of education of the artist in the possibilities of the medium", he sees "genuine artistic creativity" as a series of exercises in experimentation, investigating what the materials can do and how far they can go to satisfy the artists creative intentions. (34)

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 2

1. Norman A Sprinthall and Richard C Sprinthall, Educational Psychology-A Developmental Approach (New York: Mcgraw-Hill 1990) p.352

2. Norman C. Meier, "Factors in Artistic Aptitude : Final Summary of a Ten year Study of Special Ability" (1939) in Readings in Art Education ed. Elliot W. Eisner and David W. Ecker (Massachusetts: Blaisdell 1966) p.113

3. Robin Barrow, "Some Observations on the Concept of the Imagination" in Imagination and Education ed. Kieran Egan and Dan Nadaner (London: Open University Press 1988) p.886.

4. Morris I. Stein, "Culture and Creativity" (1954) in Readings in Art Education p.340

5. David Fontana, "Psychology for Teachers" (London: B.P.S.Books 1995) p.127

6. Norman A Sprinthall and Richard C Sprinthall, "Educational Psychology--A Developmental Approach p.352

7. J.P. Guilford, "Creative Abilities in the Arts"(1957) in Readings in Art Education p.285

8. David Fontana, "Psychology For Teachers" p.127

9. J.P. Guilford, "Creative Abilities in the Arts"(1957) in Readings in Art Education p.285

10. David Fontana, "Psychology For Teachers" p.135

11. *Ibid.*, p.134

12. *Ibid.*, p.134

13. J.P. Guilford, "Creative Abilities in the Arts"(1957) in Readings in Art Education p.285

14. Elliot W. Eisner, "A Typology of Creative Behaviour in the Visual Arts"(1965) in Readings in Art Education p.326

15. *Ibid.*, p.325

16. *Ibid.*, p.328

17. *Ibid.*, p.333

18. Morris I. Stein, "Culture and Creativity" (1954) in Readings in Art Education p.345

19. *Ibid.*, p.345

20. Elliot W. Eisner, "A Typology of Creative Behaviour in the Visual Arts" (1965) in Readings in Art Education p.323

21. C. M. Smith, "The aesthetics of John Dewey and Aesthetic Education" in Aesthetics and problems of Education ed. Ralph A. Smith (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1971) p.72

22. Elliot W. Eisner on John Dewey, "Art Education and Creativity" in Readings in Art Education p.8

23. Pamela Sharpe on Piaget, "Children's personal problem solving" in

Overcoming learning and Behaviour Difficulties ed. Keith Jones and Tony Charlton (London: Routledge, 1996) p.147

24. John Newick, "Study on the Context of Participation in the Arts" in The study of Education and Art ed. Dick Field and John Newick (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973) p.92

25. Lowenfeld and Brittian, Creative and Mental Growth (New York: Macmillan Pub.Co.)

26. Maxine Green, "Art,Technique, and the Indifferent Gods" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education p.563

27. *Ibid.*, p.563

28. Brian Sutton-Smith, "In search of the Imagination" in Imagination and Education ed. Kieran Egan and Dan Nadaner (London: Open University Press 1988)

29. Harry S. Broudy on Willem de Koonig, "Some Duties of a Theory of Educational Aesthetics" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education p.105

30. *Ibid.*, p.107

31. *Ibid.*, p.111

32. *Ibid.*, p.110

33. F. E. Sparshott, "The Unity of Aesthetic Education" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education p.248

34. Max Black, "Education as Art and Discipline" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education p.531

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

My aim was to investigate whether creativity in the classroom was aided or hampered by teacher guidance. In order to do this it was necessary to devise a scheme of work which could be used to gauge responses of students to differing levels of teacher instruction. The scheme was planned in such a way that it could be tackled in four stages, with increasing levels of guidance given throughout the first three stages, the fourth a conglomeration of the learning which had proceeded it - the idea being to discover whether the information the students had learnt earlier in the scheme would be integrated into this final stage. The scheme was designed for a mixed ability second year class, and incorporated into my teaching practice year in a south county Dublin community school.

Scheme of Work : Outline

The scheme of work was organised around a packaging project, the aim being to investigate the functional and aesthetic value of three-dimensional packaging through mark-making, colour, pattern, lettering skills and construction. As mentioned previously the scheme was designed in four stages:

Stage one, weeks one to three, was a mark making exercise, an opportunity to experiment with coloured inks, to find different ways of expressing line and pattern. The marks created were then used to decorate cardboard cubes. Teacher guidance at this stage was minimal, the only stipulation being

that the marks made were to be contained inside six or more boxes, each measuring 15 mm. x 15 mm.

Stage two, weeks four to five, was a pattern making exercise - using a choice of given shapes the task was to create and colour a 'drop-grid' repeat pattern. There was more guidance given here - students were allowed pick any two shapes from a choice of six given examples. Every student was required to utilise a drop-grid of their own making, using their shapes within this grid in any way they liked. Colours were restricted to three colours of the students own choosing.

Stage three, week eight, was a chance for students to develop their typographical skills, through draughting letters onto a grid. Guidance at this stage was quite strict - students were given a worksheet to refer to, detailing the principles of a block letter grid. An empty grid was also provided for each student, the task being to mark out their names onto this grid, using the given example as a guide. Colouring was optional.

Stage four, weeks nine to eleven, was the packaging brief itself - the students were asked to design and make a package suitable for holding sweets.The package could be one of six given shapes or alternatively could be of the students own design.

Weeks six and seven were given over to the preliminaries of the packaging brief - initial thumbnails and rough sketches.

Assessment Criteria

The finished products of each stage were assessed for creative ability under three criteria - problem solving skills, use of available materials and originality of product. The criteria for appraising product were broadly taken from J.P Guilford's standard for divergent thinking - flexibility, fluency and originality. (1)

The Scheme

Stage one : Mark making boxes.

During the first week the class were interested in the task and liked the idea of using their finished work as decoration for three-dimensional cubes. Most worked quite independently and tended to find various effects for themselves, rather than copy their neighbours. Materials were a little scarce so some ingenuity had to be employed on the part of the students when it came to finding new techniques to make a mark. The second week of the scheme involved the students in sticking down the marks they'd made onto a flat plan of the cube. They were then asked to write their names between two parallel lines, in any style they liked, and colour in the letters using complimentary colours. This task took longer to complete then I had expected, the class were slow to work on their own initiative when it came to cutting out and sticking down marks, but once they knew exactly what was expected of them - further reinforcement from me - they completed the task quickly. Week three was the final week of this stage, and involved the assemblage of mark making cubes, after cutting out and positioning the type from last week onto a flat plan. The task were excited about this task as most were eager to see the completed cubes. Differences in levels of co-ordinational

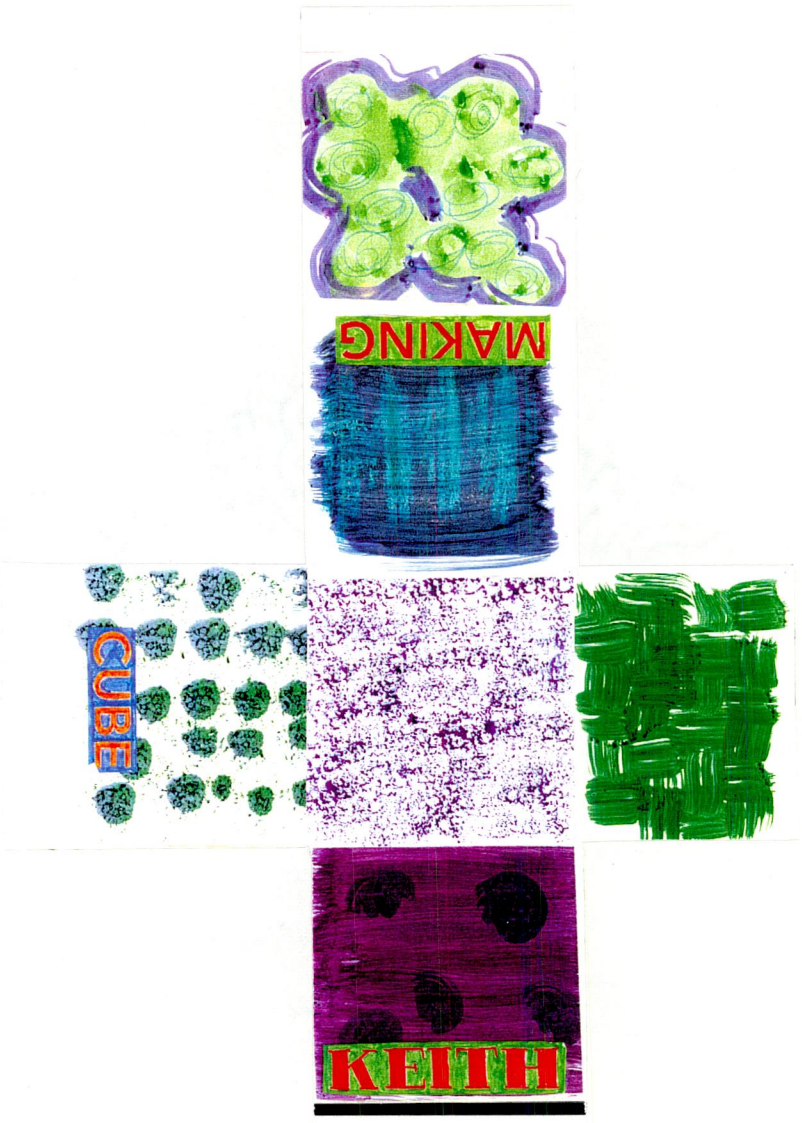
abilities came to light with this portion of the brief - some members of the class found it extremely difficult to manoeuvre the flat plans into the required shaped box, others did this with no visible problems.

Product Assessment - Table 1

Those students of good general artistic ability handled this stage well, they worked on their own initiative and were enthusiastic about the task. Their finished products showed good creative input and reflected the work they had put into them. (Illust. 1) Students of average ability were for the most part cautious in their response to this stage. They found it more difficult to work on their own initiative, though once they were clear about what they were being asked to do and confident in their abilities to achieve these ends, they worked well, completing the stage adequately. Students of poor ability needed constant reassurance throughout this stage, they found it difficult to come to terms with materials and spent time looking at what other people were doing. The finished product was generally poorly constructed without full realisation of the possibilities of the medium.

Stage two : pattern making

In the first week of this stage the class were asked to make up a simple 'drop-grid', using a given strip of cardboard as a ruler. This task was time consuming - even with a demonstration some members of class were confused about why they had to make their grids a certain way. When the grids were completed the students were allowed to pick their own shapes to use in a pattern.They enjoyed this aspect, liked having a general direction given



1. Flat Plan of Mark Making Cube - Good Ability

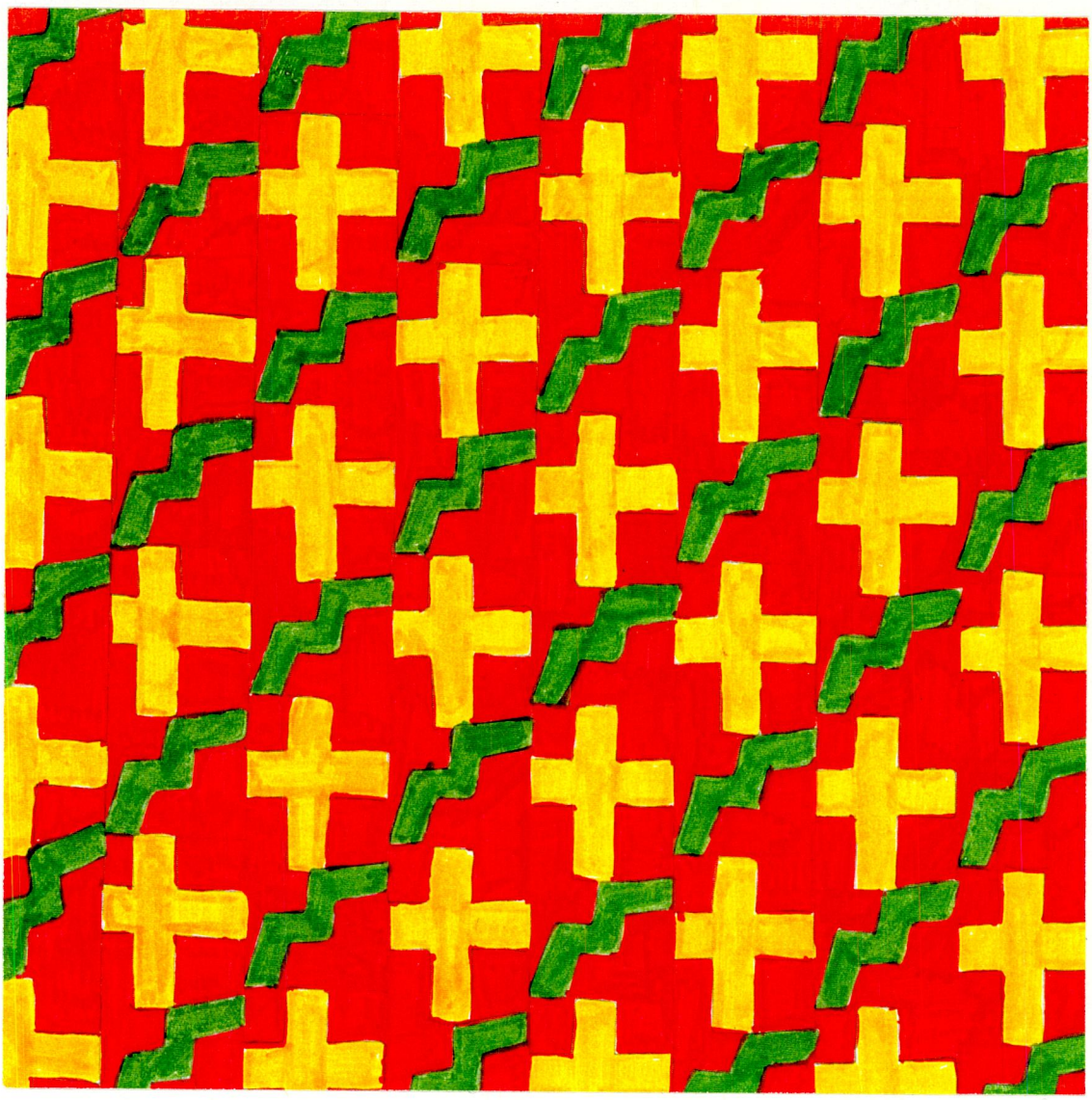
to them, but at the same time were motivated by their chance to choose shapes individually. Getting down to work took longer for some - working out initial patterns proved to be a problem. The second week of the stage was mostly a colouring-in exercise, completing the patterns from the week before. Some members became bored with this aspect quickly and needed cajoling to keep going.

Product Assessment - Table 2

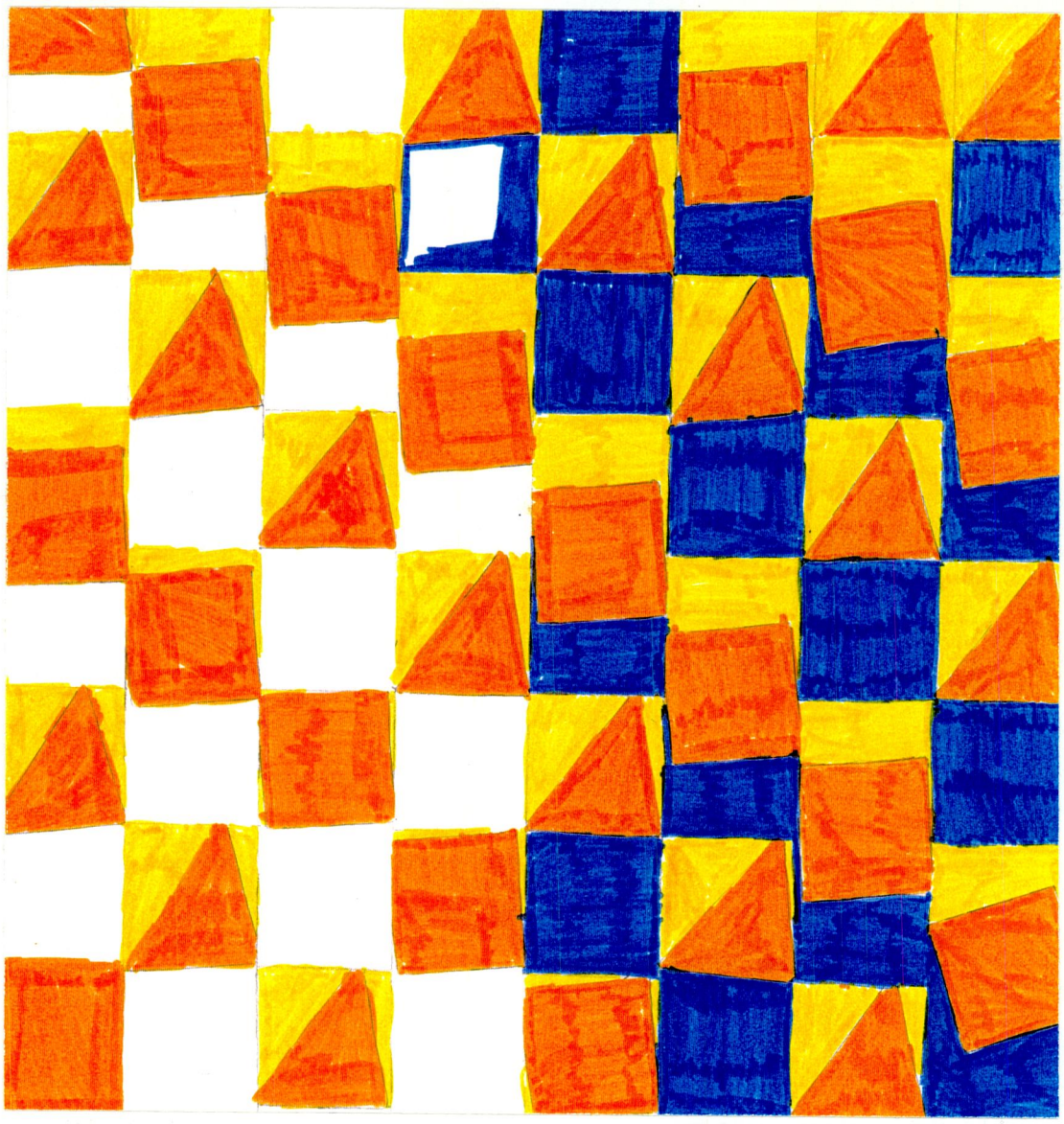
This task seemed to suit the less able students in the class. They found it an absorbing exercise (after early problems) and applied themselves well (Illust. 2). Those with good ability tended toward boredom after a while, enthusiasm petering out towards completion of the task (Illust. 3). Finished products were largely creatively uninspiring, students with good manipulation of materials skills producing neat but unexciting work, those less adept showing a willingness to get the task finished but a lacking in the skills necessary to match their interest (Illust. 4).

Stage 3 : Lettering

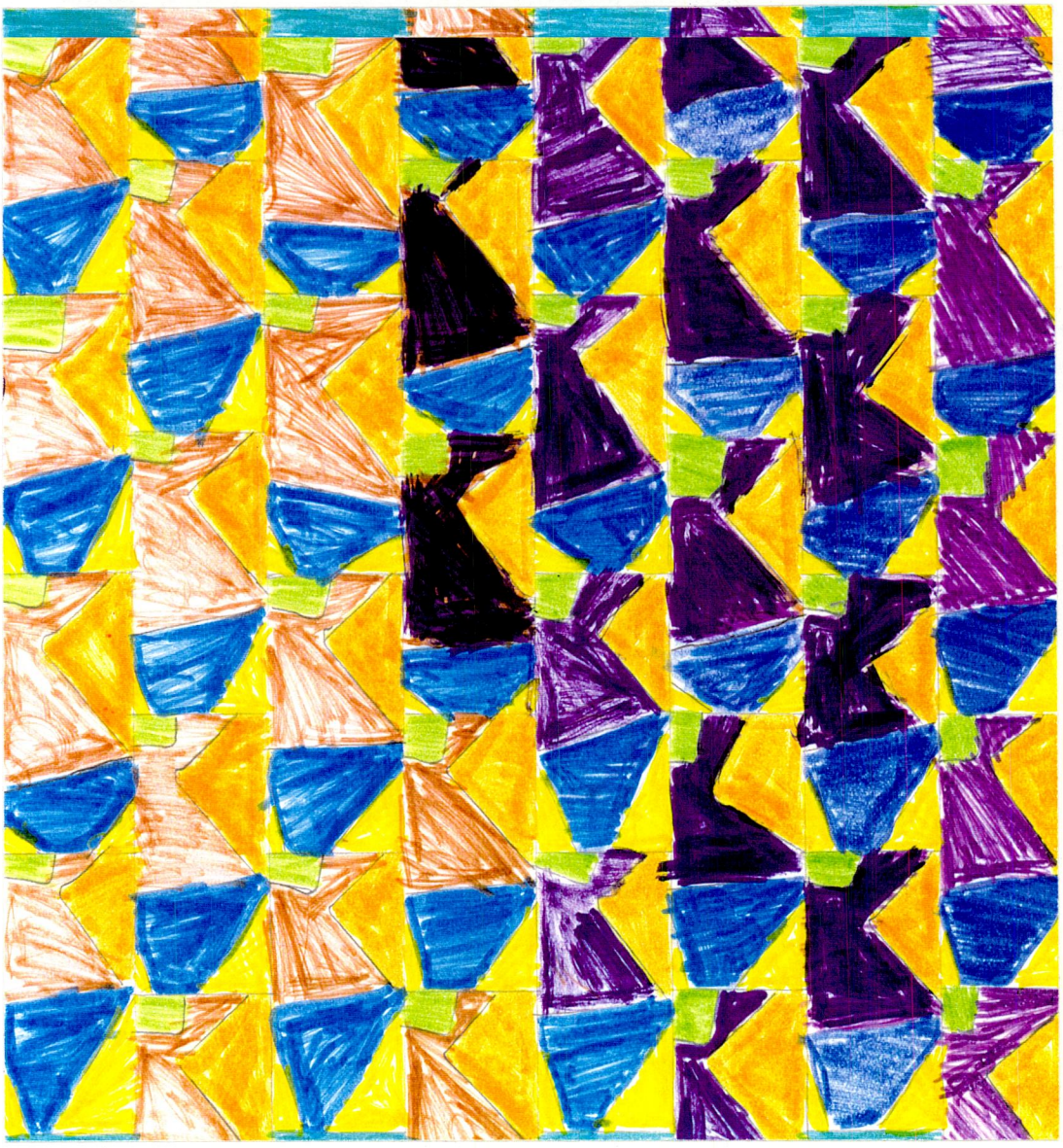
This exercise was approached keenly by most members of the class. It was a very structured lesson - the class was clearly presented, with little room for creativity or divergence from the norm. Weaker students responded well to the task and completed it within the time-scale allowed. Two of the most able students, Carl F. and Keith, dawdled around the task, both deciding to make up their own lettering instead of using the given.



2. Drop-Grid Repeat Pattern - Average Ability



3. Drop-Grid Repeat Pattern - Good Ability



4. Drop-Grid Repeat Pattern - Poor Ability

Product Assessment : Table 3

Finished products were of a mixed standard, students of average to weak ability managed to finish the task, colouring in the lettering creatively, with varying levels of expertise. (Illust. 5, 6) More able students showed a lack of eagerness to finish the task as planned, choosing instead to play about with the concept of the grid, using their imagination when it came to filling the given space with letters. (Illust. 7)

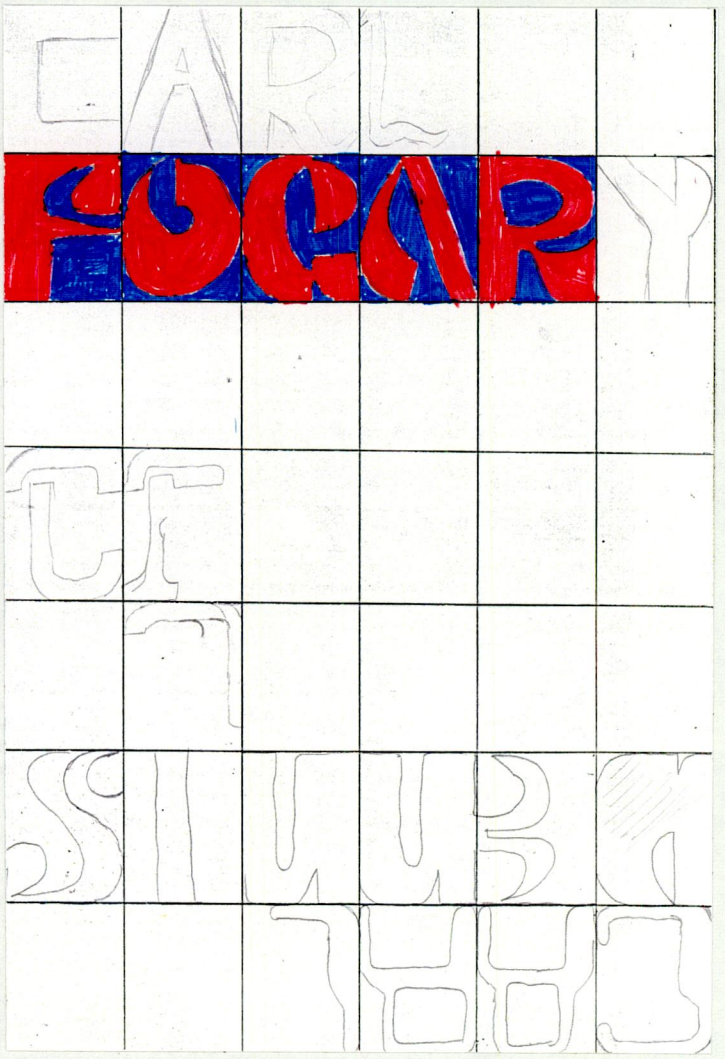
Stage four : Packaging Brief

This, the fourth stage of the scheme was designed as a chance for students to use (if they chose to), the skills they had developed over the preceding weeks. In the first week the students were required to think of a shape for their package, a simple design which could be used on it and a name for the product. A number of the students began this stage half-heartedly, without much interest, seeing the design process involved more as a chore than a necessity. When picking a shape to work from, a lot of students, especially at the weaker end of the class, opted for cubes, even though they were allowed any shape at all. One boy, Keith, of good ability, designed his own uniquely shaped package, others chose pyramids, hexagons etc.

In the second week, students were given a cardboard plan of their chosen shapes and were asked to design around this plan, fitting in a pattern, symbol, or both and organising type. The class worked better with a definite shape and size to refer to, but tended to go for the easiest possible option when it came to designing their package - generally the first idea thought of.

5. Gridded Lettering - Average Ability

6. Gridded Lettering - Poor Ability



7. Gridded Lettering - Good Ability

Those of poor ability came up with ideas which involved the drop-grid patterns, but didn't take the idea any further than had previously been explored - only one boy, James, decided to apply the principles of the drop-grid to his own personal design, a simple shape representing a bite mark. (Illust. 8) Others used the grid but stuck to circular shapes, an obvious solution when looking for a shape to represent a sweet.

In the third week, students were asked to produce a final visual for their packages, utilising complementary colours. Students spent a long time setting out their finished designs - they had been given a handout which told them exactly how to lay out their finished rough sheet - how to label the drawings, where to write their names and the date etc. Even with this there was confusion for some students, not seeing the connection between the blank sheet of paper in front of them and the handout which told them what to place there.

The fourth week of this stage was spent taking finished designs and transferring them to flat plans of the packages. These plans were then to be painted in complementary colours. A lot of organisation was needed for this portion of the project - when confronted with their own designs and flat plans many class members struggled and needed to be brought through the process again individually.

The last week of this stage, and the scheme of work itself, was an exercise in painting and assembly - the painting of flat plans was to be continued, the

8. Flat Plan of Sweet Package - Good Ability

plans then assembled into packages. The painting of the flat plans went smoothly for most students, the assembly of the plans more difficult. Students who chose cube shapes managed to assemble their boxes successfully, on the most part. Those with pyramids, diamonds and other more unusual shapes did find it more difficult to put their pieces together - there was enthusiasm, but with this came a tendency towards impatientness, and as a result, messy work.

Product Assessment - Table 4

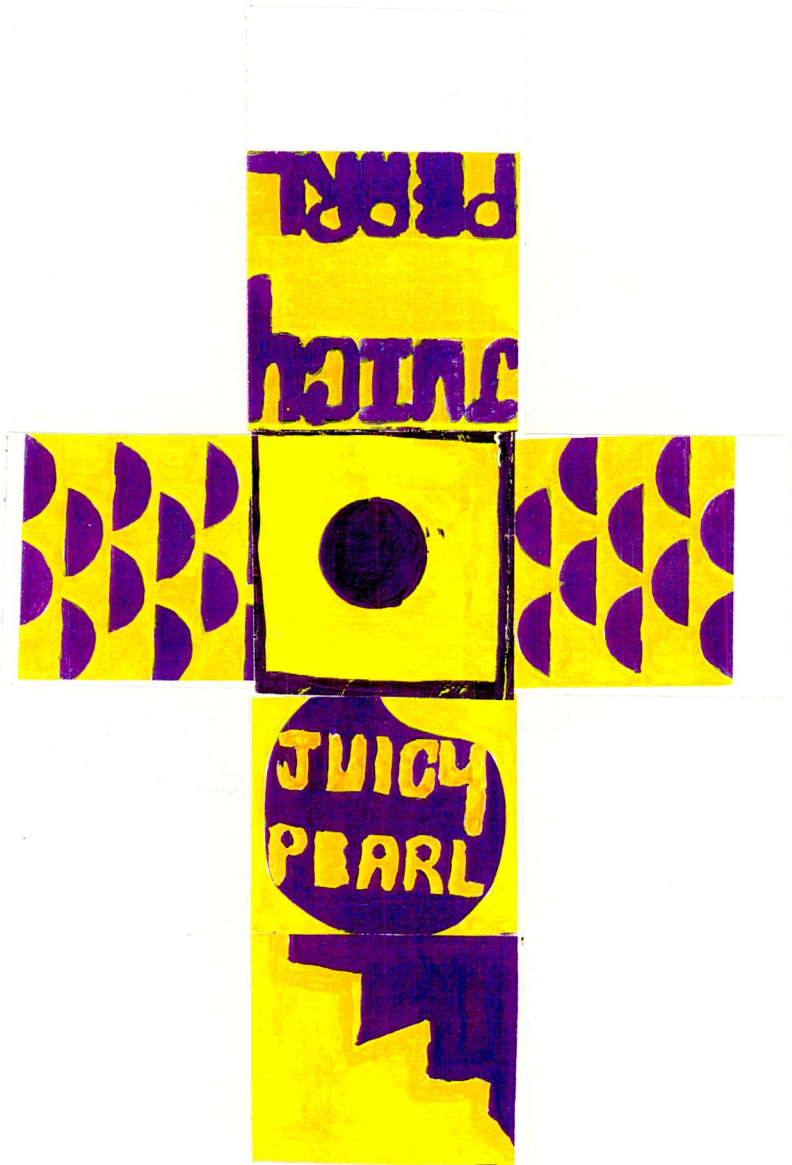
Students of good ability, such as James and Keith S. produced finished work which while retaining elements of stages two and three, showed originality of thought. In James' case, the drop-grid repeat pattern and gridded letters were used to further his design. (Illust. 8) Keith S. designed and constructed an originally shaped package, using a grid to form his letters, the lettering itself sophisticatedly placed on the product. Keith did not use any gridded pattern but made up his own symbols - cross-sectional drawings of gob-stoppers. He was willing to take advice however, the sides of the package were decorated after discussion, a suggestion to use ribbon shapes was utilised in the finished piece, Keith deciding to let the ribbons form sweet-like circles. (Illust. 9)

Students of average ability were inclined to use the skills they had learnt, but only so far as it made the job of designing their packages a less strenuous task - they did not use their previous experiences as stepping stones to a good creative solution, rather they took the essentials of what they had

9. Flat Plan of Sweet Package - Good Ability

learnt and duplicated them onto their packages. Ashleigh, a girl of average ability, used a repeat pattern and gridded letters, but did not produce a package which reflected a sense of originality, the finished product is instead a display of gridding skills. (Illust. 10)

Students of poor ability produced products which were mostly safe in design and construction, sticking to the cube shape from stage one and simple gridded patterns. These students did benefit from the structured nature of the various grids - confidence was aided by the organisational qualities of the grids provided. Although finished pieces were not very individualistic, they did show a willingness to try to use their new familiarity with various design methods.



10. Flat Plan of Sweet Package - Average Ability

TABLE 1 - Assessment of Mark Making Task in relation to Creativity

	PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY	USE OF MATERIALS	ORIGINALITY OF PRODUCT	TOTAL
Good Ability				
Alain	4	4	5	**13**
Caroline	3	4	3	**10**
Karl F	5	4	4	**13**
Keith	5	5	4	**14**
James	4	3	3	**10**
Stephen	3	3	3	**9**
Average Ability				
Aaron	2	3	4	**9**
Ashleigh	3	3	3	**9**
Karl D	3	3	3	**9**
Lisa	4	4	3	**11**
Lynn	2	4	3	**9**
Melissa	2	3	3	**8**
Rachel B	3	3	3	**9**
Rachel Mc	3	4	3	**10**
Rachel S	2	3	3	**8**
Robert	3	3	4	**10**
Rowena	3	4	4	**11**
Tara	2	4	3	**9**
Poor Ability				
Catherine	1	1	2	**4**
John	3	2	3	**8**
Kim	2	2	2	**6**
Linda	3	3	2	**8**
Susan	2	2	2	**6**

Marking System: 5-Very Good; 4-Good; 3-Fair; 2-Poor; 1-Very Poor.
Totals: 0-5: Poor; 6-10: Fair; 11-15: Good.

TABLE 2 - Assessment of Pattern Making Task in relation to Creativity

	PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY	USE OF MATERIALS	ORIGINALITY OF PRODUCT	TOTAL
Good Ability				
Alain	5	5	4	**14**
Caroline	2	4	3	**9**
Karl F	5	3	3	**11**
Keith	5	5	4	**14**
James	4	4	3	**11**
Stephen	3	3	3	**9**
Average Ability				
Aaron	2	3	3	**8**
Ashleigh	3	3	3	**9**
Karl D	3	3	3	**9**
Lisa	4	4	3	**11**
Lynn	3	4	3	**10**
Melissa	3	3	3	**9**
Rachel B	4	3	3	**10**
Rachel Mc	4	4	3	**11**
Rachel S	3	3	3	**9**
Robert	3	4	3	**10**
Rowena	3	4	3	**10**
Tara	2	4	3	**9**
Poor Ability				
Catherine	2	1	2	**5**
John	3	3	3	**9**
Kim	1	2	2	**5**
Linda	4	3	2	**9**
Susan	2	3	2	**7**

Marking System: 5-Very Good; 4-Good; 3-Fair; 2-Poor; 1-Very Poor.
Totals: 0-5: Poor; 6-10: Fair; 11-15: Good.

TABLE 3 - Assessment of Lettering Task in relation to Creativity

	PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY	USE OF MATERIALS	ORIGINALITY OF PRODUCT	TOTAL
Good Ability				
Alain	–	–	–	–
Caroline	3	3	3	**9**
Karl F	5	4	5	**14**
Keith	5	4	4	**13**
James	4	4	4	**12**
Stephen	4	3	3	**10**
Average Ability				
Aaron	3	3	3	**9**
Ashleigh	3	4	3	**10**
Karl D	3	3	3	**9**
Lisa	4	4	4	**12**
Lynn	–	–	–	–
Melissa	3	3	3	**9**
Rachel B	4	4	3	**11**
Rachel Mc	3	4	3	**10**
Rachel S	3	3	3	**9**
Robert	4	4	3	**11**
Rowena	3	4	3	**10**
Tara	3	4	3	**10**
Poor Ability				
Catherine	2	2	2	**6**
John	–	–	–	–
Kim	1	3	2	**6**
Linda	3	3	3	**9**
Susan	3	3	2	**8**

Marking System: 5-Very Good; 4-Good; 3-Fair; 2-Poor; 1-Very Poor.
Totals: 0-5: Poor; 6-10: Fair; 11-15: Good.

TABLE 4 - Assessment of Packaging Task in relation to Creativity

	PROBLEM SOLVING ABILITY	USE OF MATERIALS	ORIGINALITY OF PRODUCT	TOTAL
Good Ability				
Alain	–	–	–	–
Caroline	3	4	3	**10**
Karl F	5	3	5	**13**
Keith	5	5	5	**15**
James	4	4	4	**12**
Stephen	5	3	5	**13**
Average Ability				
Aaron	3	3	3	**9**
Ashleigh	2	3	2	**7**
Karl D	4	3	3	**10**
Lisa	4	4	4	**12**
Lynn	–	–	–	–
Melissa	2	3	3	**8**
Rachel B	3	3	3	**9**
Rachel Mc	3	4	2	**9**
Rachel S	3	3	2	**8**
Robert	3	3	3	**9**
Rowena	3	4	2	**9**
Tara	2	4	2	**8**
Poor Ability				
Catherine	2	2	2	**6**
John	2	3	3	**8**
Kim	1	1	1	**3**
Linda	3	3	2	**8**
Susan	3	2	2	**7**

Marking System: 5-Very Good; 4-Good; 3-Fair; 2-Poor; 1-Very Poor.
Totals: 0-5: Poor; 6-10: Fair; 11-15: Good.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 3

1. J.P. Guilford, "Creative abilities in the arts" in Readings in Art Education ed. Elliot W. Eisner and David W. Ecker (Massachusetts: Blaisdell 1966) p.285

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

Through my scheme of work I attempted to discover whether student creativity is aided or hampered by teacher guidance. Out of my study the following aspects emerged :

- The effect of guidance on creative production varies, mostly dependent on the natural ability of the student.
- Creativity is aided by guidance in the case of weaker students who may flounder without it, but these students can tend to rely too much on the teachers influence, often seeing this as the easiest way out of a creative problem.
- Students of average ability do take on new information - are guided by the teacher, but need prompting about how to assimilate this information into their own work.
- Above average students take guidance as an aid to their own creativity, coming up with solutions to problems which incorporate new skills but are not overpowered by them.

These findings support Morris Stein's' view, that breaking away from the norm is a difficult process, "ready-made solutions" are constantly available to students, and tend to be utilised to the detriment of finding new, individualistic solutions to problems. (1) However, this did did not happen in every case, some students did manage to 'break away from the norm', seeing their new skills as facilitators for creativity. These students had a disposition

towards divergent thinking, scoring highly under Guilford's criteria of "originality, fluency, and flexibility." (2) Although in many cases the *creative products* of the study were not of a high standard - in terms of these criteria, the *creative experience* was valuable in so far as the students involved were in themselves content, both with their finished pieces and with the work processes they went through to achieve them. If, as Harry S. Broudy says, the educational goal of creativity is the "ability to objectify in sensuous form the emotional significance to the artists own satisfaction," (3) then it could be said that this particular goal was met.

Recommendations

The "Committee on the function of art in general education" , writing in 1939, compiled a series of questions art teachers could ask of themselves, in respect of their role in encouraging creativity in the classroom. Nearly sixty years later, these questions still have relevance. For example:"Do I see each individual as a person with potentialities and need for expression?", "Do I enter sympathetically into his aims on his own terms, to help to clarify his desires and his means to express them?", Do I refrain from procedures which bias or coerce him to my way of thinking or doing?". The committee went on to comment, "Often in the desire to achieve good art work the teacher has no patience to wait for the individual to develop his own creative power, but instead imposes another's more successful expression on him, thereby destroying the opportunity for individual growth.

The role of the art teacher in the classroom should be of the sort which

encourages "thoughtfulness, resourcefulness, and desire to experiment...creation is not the making of something entirely new out of nothing, but rather it is the achieving of a new integration out of existing thoughts, values, materials, elements. Thus an atmosphere rich in stimulation serves to open lines of thought and feeling." (4)

The teaching and learning environment which I would seek to develop would be one in which a student could be taken at face value, and gradually be introduced to new experiences - new skills, the freedom to be imaginative, to develop creatively, leading towards a goal of realisation of the potential of the individual.

FOOTNOTES

CHAPTER 4

1. Morris I. Stein, "Culture and Creativity" in Readings in Art Education ed. Elliot W. Eisner and David W. Ecker (Massachusetts: Blaisdell 1966) p.345

2. J.P. Guilford, "Creative abilities in the arts" in Readings in Art Education p.285

3. Harry S. Broudy, "Some Duties of a theory of Educational Aesthetics" in Aesthetics and Problems of Education ed. Ralph A. Smith (Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1971) p.105

4 . Committee on the Function of Art in General Education, "Evaluation of Art Teaching" in Readings in Art Education p.394

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