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**Faculty Of Education**

**LEARNING THROUGH DRAWING**

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Education

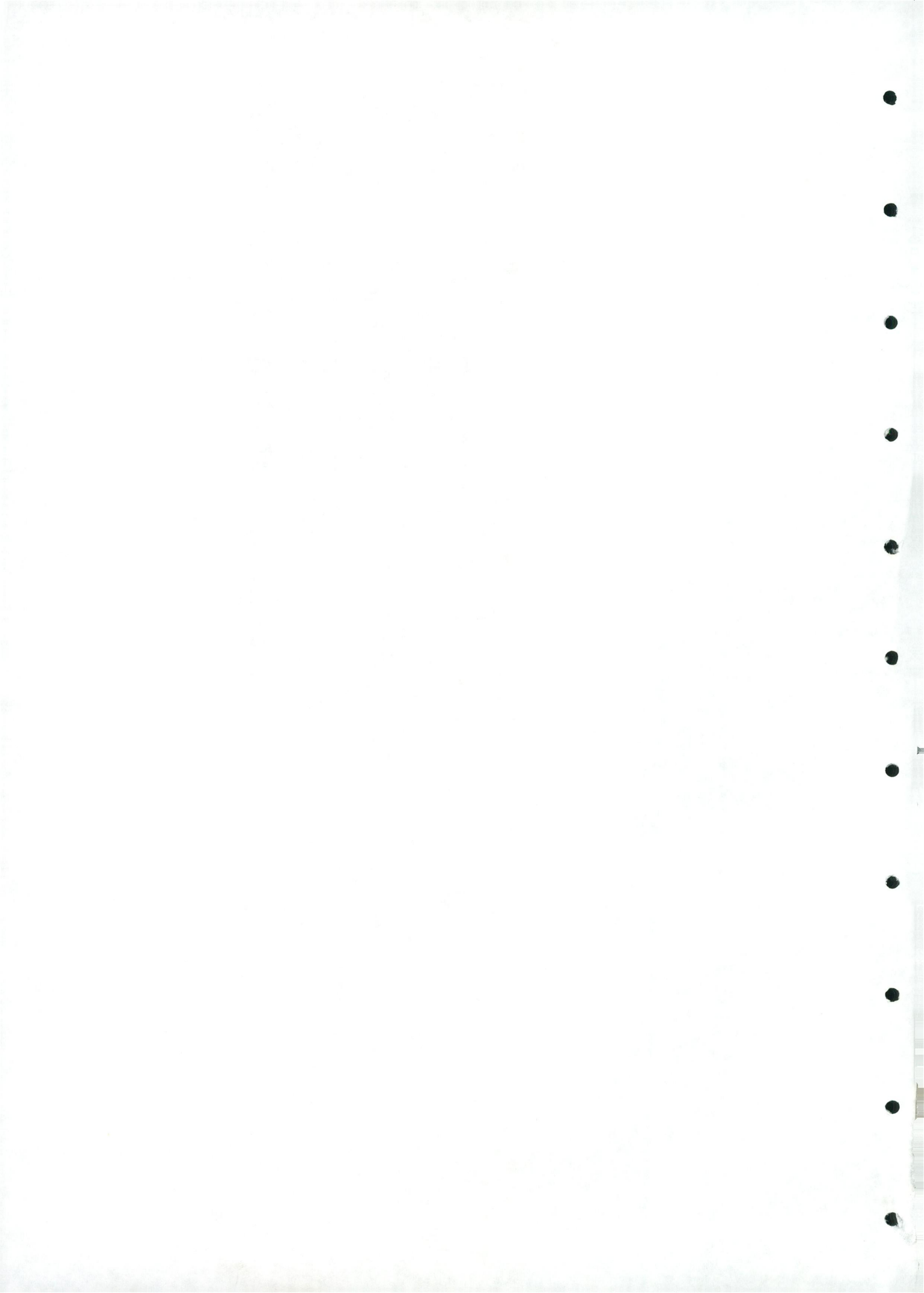
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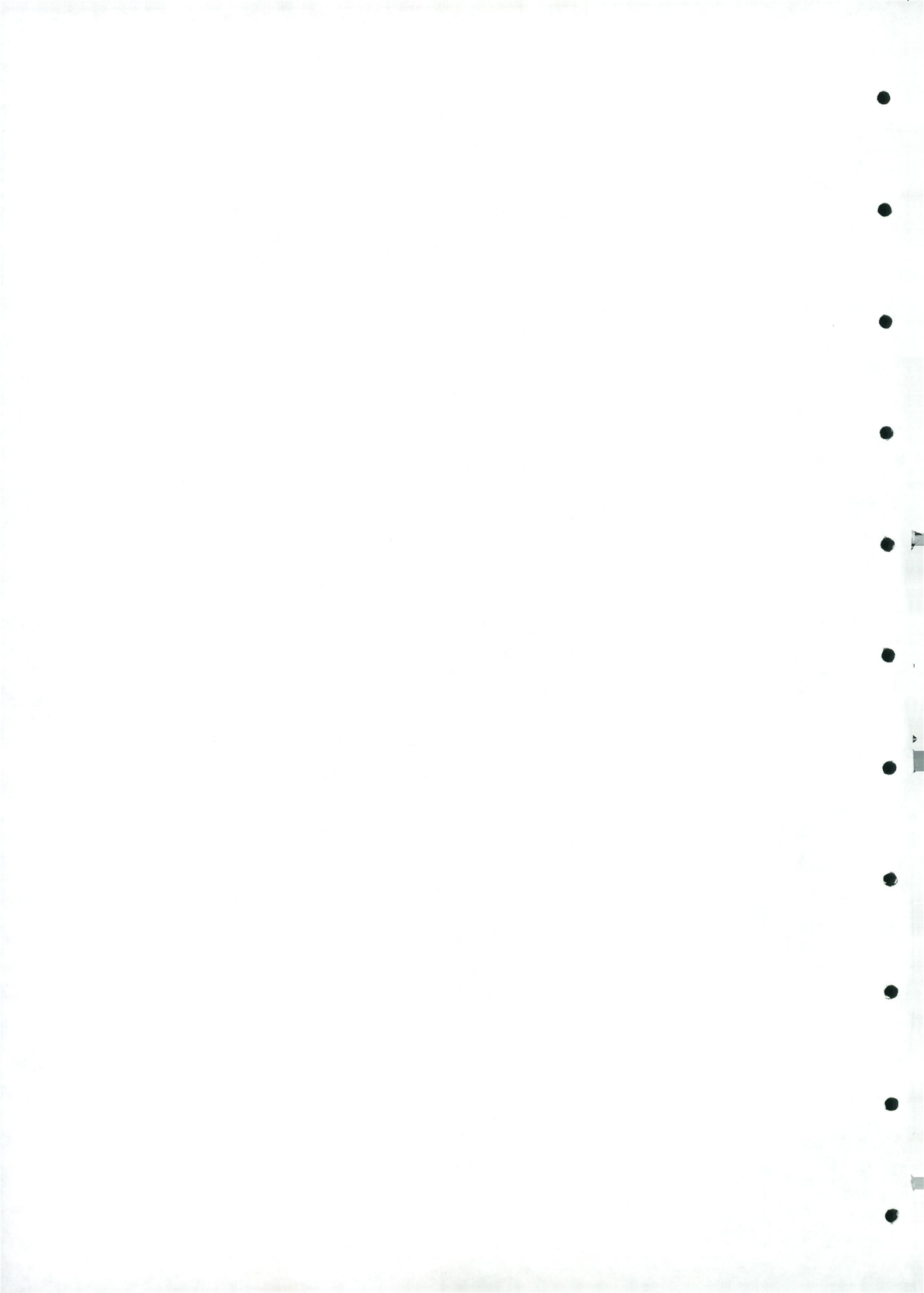
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## Introduction

The title of the dissertation is "Learning through drawing". In Chapter one, the literature review several aspects of how drawing can be used as a visual language have been researched. The means and important influences on developing this visual language have also been examined.

The first point of research was to examine the nature of drawing and how important it is to a child's learning and development; the duty of the teacher with respect to developing visual perception. The position of drawing within the syllabi in comparison with the new draft syllabus for the Leaving Certificate was important to consider in order to make the issue contemporary. As well as the examination of the syllabus, the reviewed input of the teacher was also a relevant aspect of inquiry.

The status of art within the school curriculum and the promotion of the subject was also examined. Modes of learning and possible ways of understanding have been investigated at the end of the literature review.

In chapter two the process and very nature of drawing within schools was examined, the art of drawing, the results and the conventional concepts directed at the process.

Drawing is a learning process and a language for communication of no less importance or application than a verbal or written language. The examination and evaluation of the assessment and its uniqueness in relation to the assessment of other subjects was investigated.

The attitudes of parents and teachers towards art as a subject which might benefit a students future career was also looked at. The development of interest and





contribution by the teacher as a provider of information in relation to pupil development. At the end of this chapter there is a brief summary of the scheme chosen to promote the drawing process and development of perception through observational drawing.

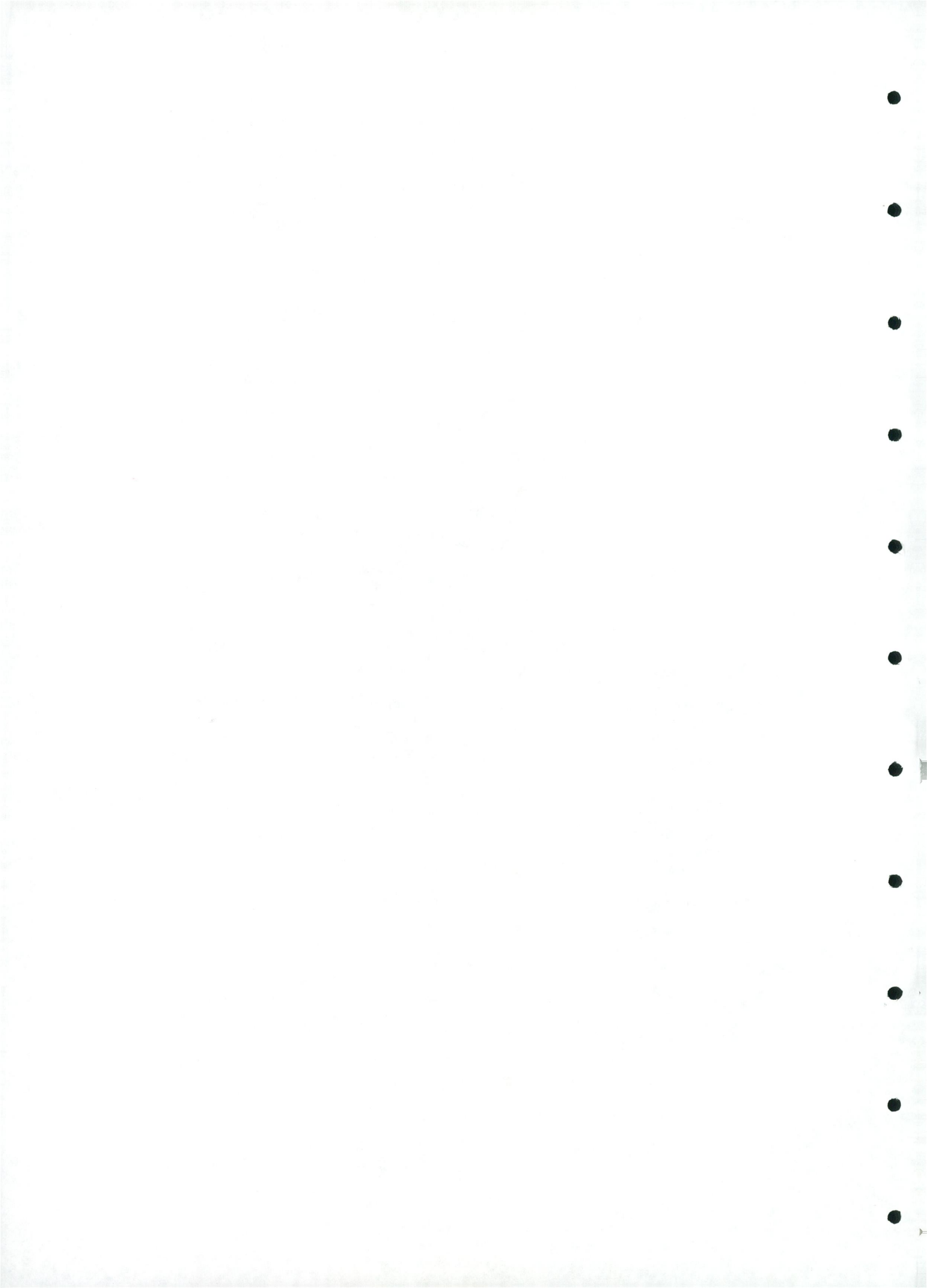
In chapter three, the Methodology section a study was made of how the drawing process can make intelligent sense of the environment around the individual. This pupil-centered section observes the cognitive and psychomotive development of the pupil.

An examination of how student interpretation and perception could be enhanced for the pupils benefit is undergone by developing interpretation skills primarily through visual images and then through symbols and written communication.

Interpretation of images should then sequentially develop as a language with its own grammar and syntax in order to understand compositions and various styles.

Finally, an examination of how the use of primary and secondary source material enhances or inhibits the observed and drawn results of the students was investigated. This was in order to support my opinion that interpretation does not occur just through the single sense of vision but through the collaboration of all the senses.

Chapter four is the concluding chapter where the combination of the three previous chapters is summed up and the argument of drawing as a fully comprehensive language is concluded.



## Chapter One

### Literature Review

For this chapter of my dissertation "Learning through drawing" the Literature review incorporates a number of aspects.

Firstly I have examined what people artist's teachers and students have said about the nature of drawing. What is drawing? How do we draw? Why do we draw?

From infancy a child's first scribble should be seen as part of a learning Process. If we use the analogy of a child trying to verbalize something for the first time, he/she will falter and stutter and make mistakes in trying to describe verbally. It is through this stumbling faltering process that the child learns. The mutterings, like the initial tentative lines drawn, should receive more attention than is often the case.

If we are to learn through drawing, then drawing must be seen as a thinking process and if it is a thinking process, then you can learn it like any other subject. Drawing is the foundation for visual perception. Development of this perception is fundamental in any field. To become visually literate requires a similar method and process of learning as any other form of perception development. What is visual perception? A child must have a knowledge of concepts before the images taken in through the eye are identified. This process is carried on throughout our lives and becomes part of our thinking process.

Visual perception is the ability to use imagery to perceive objects in space, to comprehend maps, blueprints, to see visual order and recognise beauty.



Both Aristotle and Einstein say that “symbols and images first encouraged their creative thinking, not written words”. (1) In the education of today the perceptual development of the learner is being overlooked yet it is as valid a learning development process as any other.

Why teach drawing or art? What is the justification for wanting to develop drawing skills? Art concepts can be taught and learnt and they offer each student an alternative way of growing and developing. The fact that some people have more ability than others is no reason to take all understanding away from the less talented.

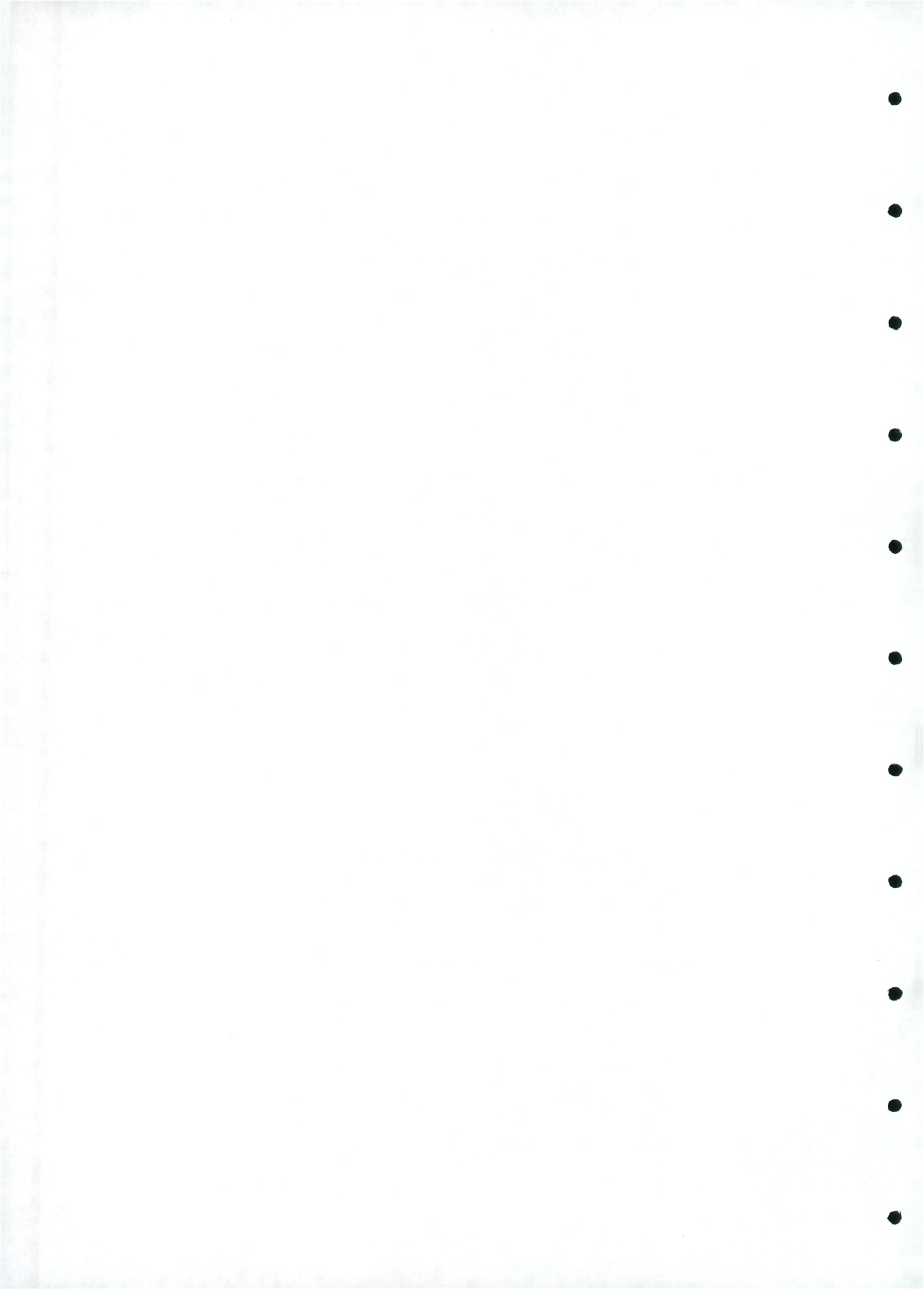
The context of what is taught, visual thinking, skills and evaluative processes will carry over into all areas of life. Visual thinking is not the exclusive reserve of the artist, it is used by every truly productive person.

From the point of view of the teacher and education, a more enriched and deepened understanding of an object is acquired by drawing it. A visual language is created.

*The impulse to draw is as natural as the impulse to talk,  
The art of correct observation is by means of physical contact  
through all the senses with all types of objects. (2)*

The teachers job is not to teach how to draw but how to learn to draw.

A method must be acquired for finding out facts for the students themselves, otherwise they will be limited to the facts given by the instructor. The teachers input



therefore is to plan things to do things to think about and contacts to make. Creating an experience as such, builds results.

It is the experience of objects and things, which make us draw them successfully through use of all the senses to observe an object.

***Observation is not merely a visual thing it is simply an element of the practice of observation along with other senses like smell, touch and sound which contribute to the experience of observational drawing.***  
(3)

Let us now examine drawing as a learning tool within the context of the National curriculum. What is the general consensus on the importance or contribution of drawing to art. The perception is that drawing is a precursor to painting, sculpture or modeling. This predominant attitude was also evident in 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Florence where artists believed that if something were drawn well enough then it could be painted well enough. I am of the opinion that drawing is a discipline in its own right and is no less a discipline than painting or sculpture.

If we examine the new draft proposal for the Leaving Certificate art syllabus are divided into knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes. The degree of emphasis on drawing is strongly evident .

By looking at these objectives and their dependence on drawing skill, one can clearly see that a visual language is being encouraged. How else might one investigate, select and interpret information from a variety of sources? Or develop an understanding of structure, process and technique?





The use of drawing in the new Leaving Cert. Draft is more explorative than in the present syllabus. The pupil is not shown how to draw but is presented with a plan of how to learn to draw through various sources and techniques. The student concentrates not on finished drawings but on the process of recording information visually. At this particular time, with the coming of the new draft for Leaving Certificate art and its intense curriculum development, is there a danger that individuality and instinct might be lost? What is the core of Art and Design learning and indeed of drawing? In my opinion, there must be a good teacher-student relationship. This is the most important element as if the student respects and trusts the teachers judgement, quality creative work will come. It is this amalgamation of student creativity with teacher experience that results in the greatest learning.

With regard to teacher input, it is important for he/she to assess the nature of the content of what is being taught. The teacher's personal philosophy must be questioned in relation to what the student learns, how it is learnt and so on.

Any sound curriculum pertaining to art craft and design must require a broad, balanced and developmental programme, which has coherence and respects the experience, strengths and weaknesses of individual children whereby enabling them to think, respond and act for themselves.

This last paragraph could quite easily equate a teachers philosophy on his/her beliefs and methodology. The real measure of a good teacher is whether students can proceed independently with their learning when that teacher is no longer



responsible for them. As in the context of drawing, what is known about drawing is common knowledge but how to acquire and inquire about visual information is a design problem for the teacher.

The art of drawing is interactive. If one interprets an object as a two dimensional surface, this inquiring nature promotes social development. Children explore the elements of art and design by constantly having a wide variety of materials and sources around them. The school which wants to help children communicate express and learn in the visual form has to have a strong integrated school policy. Problems arise for teachers where there is no management backing for a policy on art or drawing in particular. The reasons for these usually stem from the insistent demands of core disciplines. A school may have a stronger inclination and tradition within the realms of sport or science. Indeed the school ethos certainly determines the degree of emphasis that is placed on a subject.

In the past, visual perception would certainly not have been considered as a learning process, let alone a method of education. But who determines what is best for the individual? What is the right emphasis for some may not be for others. Is it not beneficial for young children from a foreign country with little English to be allowed to express themselves through the visual language of drawing?

The dilemma of the art teacher is a serious one, because in Ireland there are many math and science departments in schools, but few art departments. Art teachers in a



lot of situations, are on their own in representing their subject and have no-one within the school to consult on justifying further developments for their subject.

Teachers have always known that students learn in different ways. There is the spatial relational holistic aptitude, which resides in the right side of the brain and the verbal, symbolic and logical left hemisphere of the brain, which takes more precedence in traditional education than the right side. When teachers can pair these complimentary hemispheres successfully, teaching and learning will become a more precise process. The ultimate goal would be to develop both sides of the brain together to their limits in order to provide the most positive atmosphere for teachers to teach in the future and for students to learn.

I believe that this is an important aspect of education because society is changing rapidly and the difficulties of forwarding what kind of skills future generations will require are increasing.

Without abandoning traditional teaching in verbal and communicative skills which are very relevant and important, teachers are looking for teaching techniques which will enhance students intuitive and creative powers. The instruction of visual perception and increased awareness of a visual language incorporated with a verbal one, may tap into these creative powers and also pave the way for an increasing amount of students can develop their creative powers.



## **Chapter one**

### **Footnotes**

- (1) Sedgewick, Dawn, Sedgewick, Fred, Drawing To Learn.  
London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1993. P9
- (2) Nicholaidis, Kimon, The Natural Way To Draw: A working plan for art study.  
London: Andre Deutsch, 1972. P3
- (3) White, Roger Crombie, Curriculum Innovations.  
Philadelphia: Open Uni. Press, 1997 P25





## Chapter Two

### Drawing: Children, Teachers & Artists Point Of view

What is drawing? Can we define it? Philip Rawson defines drawing as "*Marks on a page.*"(1) What do these marks represent? Do marks need to represent anything in order to qualify as a drawing? Our fundamental thought process needs to define drawing first of all, without discussing what drawing actually is. It is difficult because of our thought process to see drawing as its own definition rather than a representation of anything. For example, a student may be unsatisfied with his drawing, may constantly be rubbing out and become less confident in his work if his representation of a still-life is not a good likeness.

The art of drawing, is defined as a process from urge to idea to movement to trace. It is not defined as any one art or concept nor the object it portrays.

Drawing is a language, a vehicle through which to communicate. It is no less important than a verbal language.

*We accept that it is a good thing to be literate in our native, spoken and written languages....similarly to draw and understand drawing can vastly deepen our understanding of the world of man.(2)*

Children draw regarding it as a non-verbal form of play. Children use drawing to explore their environment and represent things as symbols. It is a method of ordering and defining what is around them. Drawing becomes a process which feeds the individuals intellect. The development of drawing as children grow into adults is the development of perception. It is the relationship between what we see and what we



know. As we grow older we gain more experience of things. There are conventional means of interpreting objects and things which only happens through interaction and experience within a particular society. Picasso wanted to be able to draw like a child because he felt that it was drawing without inhibition or the constraints of conventional attitude.

From a tutoring aspect, how do we draw? Correct and careful observation is the only right way to learn how to draw, in my opinion, along with the physical contact with all sorts of objects through all the senses. By learning how to draw, one will learn how to see differently which in turn enhances learning and creative thought. Drawing is a natural act, anybody can learn or develop their drawing perception just as reading can be learnt by understanding basic perceptual skills. Using the two communication modes together, visual and verbal, one can learn to think more productively. The level of intelligence can be deepened and developed to its highest level. This is appropriate if you define intelligence as Philip Rawson does in his book

#### Seeing Through Drawing.

*Intelligence is the ability to solve problems or to fashion a product, to make something that is valued in at least one culture. (3)*

The status and development of drawing within schools, and the learning benefits that result is the argument of this paper. The position or emphasis on art in secondary schools is difficult to assess.

From this assessment point of view, drawing or other development with an art medium is not something that can be examined and judged as right or wrong. Unlike



math or science there can be no application of a Q.T test. Although such subjects can develop into creative work, this does not occur at a second-level stage. The subject of art in a lot of ways, is about getting to know the subject in detail in order to translate it into other new modes.

As with any subject, but more particularly art, the assumption is that not all people have the same minds and every possibility can be determined differently. To specify drawing, there will be varying standards and more importantly a large apparent scope for varied interpretation.

As with most subjects, there is a single calibrated system of assessment which fits in with the second level curriculum. There is a marking system for both Junior and Leaving Certificate art, which is not judged on a right or wrong basis.

The general perception with schools and homes may well be that secondary school students receive a concrete education. It may primarily be seen as a process concerned with helping pupils to enter into a higher level of education for greater financial gain. If parents of students place a high priority upon the vocational and social sides of schooling, then it stands to reason that art, drawing and creativity be given a prominent role within the school curriculum.

The extreme importance of art activities can be weighed up in that children with strong intellectual capabilities will succeed at school. The self confidence generated from this will carry them a long way. If children believe that they are intelligent because they have means to prove it, they will grow in confidence and character. The point is, not everybody's intelligence will comply with a single type of assessment.



Students have to be encouraged to develop and nourish according to their strengths. The aim: to connect students with his/her strong point is of the up-most importance if better progress is to be made.

The fundamental objectives of the curriculum in the realms of art education should be to develop the student's interest by addressing self-confidence and competence. The structure should be so that the progression and advancement of skills, perception and understanding are easily apparent.

The art discipline of drawing at second level can be, and is essential to all project and research work. If a priority should be placed on developing any discipline at this level, it should be drawing. It can form the basis of any idea concept or research. Drawing should be a discipline that is assessed in an on-going fashion from first to sixth year.

What role does the art teacher have in developing the self-confidence and competence of the art student? Having looked at the status of art in second level schools how does the art teacher optimise his/her situation? Drawing can be an integral part of any project. Teachers believe in exposing the students to a wide range of media. This could be beneficial but may also become a hindrance. Pupils may be stimulated with the range of media initially, but rarely have the ability and time to develop expertise in all. If they begin to realise the lack of competence that they possess they may become disillusioned with art and eventually abandon it. This may appear initially to be an inadequate theory, but in reality, students' idea of quality work is representative of a perfect likeness whether the media be clay, paint or cloth materials. If one exposes students to a barrage of media, they may not realistically develop a process and technique to any great standard. Of course the better students will be able to grasp





it but this barrage of different media does not comply to the student who is of an average ability as they will not be able to develop the skills as quickly.

The structure of projects and schemes of work is very important but their content and assessment is equally so. If every project is drawing based, no matter what media it develops into, then drawing skills can only improve throughout the months and years. If the technique and various ways of looking are addressed at the drawing stage, then the student has been given a constant input of vocabulary to apply to drawing. Finally, if during assessment, the drawing section of each assessment is given as much if not more than the process and product, the students attention will be drawn to the fact that their major discipline, drawing, is developing steadily. This develops self-confidence and competence because of the close attention to the discipline.

If the art-room environment is about developing and encouraging expression, other aspects of the students life will be drawn into the school environment. If a student feels comfortable enough in an environment to express him or herself, the environment can only be a healthy one. This hidden curriculum is established by the art teacher. If the student/teacher relationship is sound, Inhibitions can be lost and creativity and expression can be brought beyond all boundaries. A teacher who encounters a group of students for the first time, has a great opportunity to develop this creativity by firstly establishing that good teacher/student relationship.

What other factors can encourage this creativity? Good management by the teacher and the support and co-operation of not only the principal in the school but also members of the local community and locality.



Exposure to all types of criteria and materials are important, so the teacher must build up the art department resources. The teacher must constantly add to and evaluate the resources. Visits to galleries and museums are another form of resource building for both the teacher and student. Having an artist in residence is beneficial in that students can see the complete professional process. The approach to work, the manipulation and organisation of materials will also be apparent for the students to observe.

With regard to drawing and the social integrated aspect of it I have designed a scheme of work for a second year group. It is very much based around drawing and drawing techniques. The source for the scheme of work is the National Museum. My reasons for choosing the museum as the primary source for the project is because I believe that the inquiry and communication skills necessary to fulfill this first drawing task develops not only drawing skills, but the student's social skills as they interact in an exciting way with the teacher, other students and staff of the museum. Using the museum as a source could be an idea for other teachers to deviate from many preconceived attitudes about drawing and art based activities being confined to the limits of the art room.

To develop and advance visual perception was the main objective of the hand-out questionnaire designed for the trip. This will require students to look closer in examining the criteria within the museum. (See fig. 1)

The work in the museum will be partially group based, so there will be individual input combined with group effort. Together they can develop communicative and



collaborative skills. There will also be a historical cross-disciplinary connection, whereby students will be learning about a society and civilisation that is a thousand years old. All the interpretation and learning will manifest itself in the form of working drawings and illustrations which will be the essence of a quality finished product.

This type of research work will be of great benefit to the students when they begin their Junior Certificate projects because they will already have undergone a process of selecting and organising relevant criteria for a project.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Footnotes**

- (1) Rawson, Philip, Seeing Through Drawing.  
London: BBC 1979, P11.
- (2) Ibid P14.
- (3) Ibid P17.
- (4) Forsyth, Ian; Jolliffe, Alan; Evaluating A Course.  
London: Collins Publications, 1995.



## Chapter Three Methodology

I would like to examine a statement by Philip Rawson in Seeing Through

Drawing:

*Drawing is a learning process which can feed the  
Individuals intellect. Several topics can be made from  
the discipline of drawing to research and base a discussion on. (1)*

The first part of the statement which states that “*drawing is learning*”, is very important in its own right because if learning and understanding occur because of an act of drawing, how many applications can this activity have in the enhancement of understanding ourselves and our environment?

If we can accept that it is a learning process, can we learn as much through drawing as we can by reading and writing? Can we apply the act of drawing as a means of direct communication and interpretation to situations where reading and writing cannot apply? This may occur in situations of a cultural language barrier or in situations where students have genuine literacy disabilities.

If we examine the second part of the statement “*learning process*”, we understand that drawing is an activity that contributes to a learning process. This process may be, as specifically as drawing is, a process whereby the individual endeavors to define or make intelligent sense of what they can see. One can subsequently observe, and through interpretation attempt the composition.





Because drawing is a learning process, and processes never stop developing, the way in which we look and the experience of what we are observing can progress. As a learning process develops it becomes more sophisticated and interpretation is also elevated. This is evident in the work students achieved at the museum (See fig. 4-6).

The last part of Rawsons statement "*Drawing feeds the individuals intellect*" relates back to the first part of the statement. The individual develops as an intelligent being, who through an active learning process, develops self-esteem and confidence together with a multitude of cognitive and psychomotive skills.

I do wish to investigate the question of drawing as a learning process but primarily, I want to explore the development of perception in children. I would like to see from research how an environment can stimulate or inhibit interpretation of observation. Is it possible to gauge an individuals intelligence through their powers of perception? A possible mode through which to carry out such research is with the study of a child with literacy problems. If such a child were asked to communicate written and verbal linguistics through a visual language, the images could develop their spatial intelligence.

The research for this could be conducted from children at play-school and Montessori level as well as children of remedial standard in primary school. Perhaps by looking at the research from these children it could be possible to decipher how best to use the powers of interpretation and perception within all of us. What kinds of cognitive processes are used in reading texts and how do these processes compare with those used to secure meaning from visual images?



With regard to interpretation and perception of the environment or objects within the environment, I would like to examine how perception is actually realised. We know that by the act of drawing from observation we must engage the senses, the most important one being that of vision. However, the other senses of sound, touch and smell affect and enhance what is being visually interpreted. This refining of the senses is another form of learning process. One's awareness as an observer is developing further and learning is being constantly processed and developed.

Careful observation is the only way to learn how to draw incorporating the physical contact with all the senses. If drawing can be used to communicate feelings and ideas through a series of marks on a flat surface, then drawing is a language, a visual language represented by images rather than symbols.

There are many ways therefore, in which to apply such an opportune language within the realm of reading skills. I do not wish to say that drawing hasn't got what it takes to be a language in its own right as it certainly can support itself; what I mean is that it is a fundamental mode of perceiving and could form as a more successful route for some persons in interpretation and understanding.

Is it easier to create meaning out of images or symbols? My belief is that we know what we know in a variety of ways and not just in one way. We must consider that learning to read is a process whereby we decide the expressive forms we create. We decide a series of symbols, which are letters and words engaged by syntax and



grammar. If we compare this to the visual interpretation of a narrative passage, the images we see can be related to past experience. By decoding the scene in the pictures we can interpret the scene and read the visual language.

Would it be easier to understand a verbal and written language after we'd been introduced to a visual language? This exercise would primarily deal with nouns, verbs and adjectives, and later when reading skills have developed, the results of visual image decoding could be much more impressive. This will greatly enhance creative and expressive writing.

Take for an example, the decoded expression from a drawing by Rubens, Rembrandt or Van Gogh. If one gets to this stage of successfully decoding expressive marks, this developed interpretation would greatly enhance writing skills.

If we are asked to prove that drawing is a language, how could it be proved efficiently and directly? Like any language it must have a structure for interpretation, so it must have grammar and syntax. Quantitative syntax is the term given to syntax in the visual language. It is as syntax, the focus within which the piece is created and equates with Expressionism, Surrealism, Cubism and so on. If we understand the syntax, ie. If we understand the principals of Surrealism Cubism etc., we can interpret the images clearly.

If a student says that they do not understand Modern art, this is simply that they do not comprehend the form and syntax in which it is expressed. When this syntax is



understood then we can interpret and ask the correct questions about the work in question. It is precisely this type of art criticism that that makes the connection between print literacy and literacy.

With regard to the title of this dissertation, 'Learning Through Drawing', I used the trip to the National Museum as a mode of supporting my claim that we can only learn to draw properly by using all the senses to draw objects. I designed a worksheet to embody this, onto which the students had to make observational drawings of the of artifacts from the Viking exhibition. The drawing skills of the class is of a good standard and they were provided with the best of sources for observation. The most important aspect of the trip, in my opinion, is the fact that the students are in this environment where use of smell, touch, sound and vision are all actively engaged. Therefore only a clear understanding and interpretation of the objects is possible. Many of the objects on display appear much different in reality than in the photographic reproductions the students have seen in books from the art room. This further emphasises the fact that secondary source material can be very limiting in its effects for a starting point in a drawing project. The degree of information that can be interpreted from the object in a photo is a lot less than actually witnessing the object itself.

When the observer gets a chance to work within such an environment, it is my experience that they become much ore motivated and excited. They may discover things about the act and experience of drawing that they may not have encountered before. Drawing in this way becomes a series of experiences, some pleasant, some not so pleasant, but each one real and provoking a reaction.





For example the pungent smell inside the museum evoked many remarks from the students. The scale of the artifacts was unexpected and students experienced the feel of textures such as worn oak wood, tarnished leather and fibrous textures from woven materials. The students were asked in the worksheet to describe what they could smell, feel (when touching the objects) and decipher between touching and smelling objects.

My scheme has placed firm emphasis on the act and experience of drawing and the students observational skills have developed noticeably. They have come to realise that observation is not just about a single act of decoding. This also has helped students in the analysing of artist's work in the classroom. Now, when they are asked to comment on a piece of work or remark on the mood/atmosphere of the work in class, they have the ability to decode it more successfully. If we know art criticism to be the encouragement of students to perform, essentially the same should apply to shapes, locations and variations of mark-making that teachers of language want students to perform with words. In teaching students about how drawings are made and executed, we encourage students to apply the same sensitivity and level of awareness to their own drawings. By doing this, they are developing their power to decode information from many sources through many methods and processes. Pupils apply this experience to particular instances of visual form.

With regard to the position of drawing within the new Leaving Cert. Art Draft, I want to examine how drawing is being applied to various design processes. The draft requires a submission of sketchbooks, observational and life drawing. I feel that the



inclusion of sketchbooks is very important. If students use the sketchbooks for the storing of information and development of drawing skills, (on the bus, at home, at lunch-break) they are physically addressing the thought processes in an illustrative manner. This constantly reinforces spatial and comprehension skills. The student thinks visually rather than literally so the processes and finished compositions can only show more carefully observed and analytical properties than could be achieved within the ninety minutes of class time.

The most positive aspect of the sketchbook is that it is a good investigator for visual thinking and thinking in a three-dimensional manner. There is also greater emphasis than before on the process within a project. This demands more observational drawing practice.

I want to speak with teachers and ask them which aspects of the new syllabus appeal to them and which aspects they approach with trepidation. How prominent is drawing within the draft and, if any, what direction does the drawing element take. It is important to include here, a question as to how the role of the teacher might change with the coming of the new syllabus. What new aims and objectives should the teacher compile?



## Chapter Four Conclusion

The previous three chapters have addressed the nature and application of drawing. The nature of drawing has been developed and elaborated upon to be defined as a definite fundamental learning process.

Perception, or making order and sense of what is around us is an innate process within all humans. From an early age, observation develops the individuals concepts and awareness of the immediate environment. This is fundamentally how we learn.

There are various means of communication between individuals: languages, written symbols of words and visual images. Can these visual images be represented as drawings? Is creating a drawing a form of communication? Drawing is a language in its own right. A succession of drawn images can tell a story or convey a certain feeling or message more directly at a child's level than symbols such as words or sentences can.

I am of the opinion, based on my research, that more emphasis should be placed on drawing and creating images through drawing to enable students to develop their innate abilities. If young students were allowed more time and given more encouragement to observe their environment through drawing, then their visual perception would advance and accelerate learning.



Advances in curriculum have been made at both Junior and Leaving Certificate level. Progress has also been made regarding the status of art syllabi within school curricula. While the ethos surrounding the subject has been given more attention in recent times, I still feel that an attitude prevails which regards the subject as one that doesn't apply to a serious, solid career. This of course is what most parents want for their children. There are multitudes of reasons for the presence of this attitude. Many parents may be of the opinion that the self-directed project of the Junior Cert. Is too much responsibility to be taking on at such a young age. The fear may be, that there is too much room for the underachiever. A second reason may be the assessment procedures. Creating a picture is unlike solving a math equation where there is invariably a single outcome or solution. An imaginative composition or piece of ceramics can address all the given criteria but can differ immanently in appearance from one persons solution to another.

How does one promote art and drawing in order to give the correct awareness and encouragement to parents and students to take the subject as a serious personal developer? The input of the teacher is probably the most important element. It is up to the teacher to promote the subject as a wide, exciting field which will stimulate and nurture creativity and intelligence. The ethos of the school must also incorporate and promote the subject in a healthy light.





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