



Step-by-step instructions in Art and Craft books are offered to you - the teacher - as a guide, but if they are delivered word by word to your students, the outcome would be very uncreative. It is in this context that we introduce to you the DREAMER Steps to teaching art. DREAMER stands for Discussion, Research, Experiment, Art Making, Exhibit and Response. Currently in Australia, each state has its own curriculum guideline that comes with a unique language and formatting style. Moreover these curriculum guidelines are under constant review and change. DREAMER is our initiative to create a common language among teachers in art education. We hope it will stand the test of time and we would like to encourage you to use it in your art making classes.

The DREAMER steps should be undertaken with thoughtfully directed questions, so that the teacher challenges thinking and harnesses creative outcomes from each individual. "Teacher talk" - or more precisely "teacher questioning technique" plays a huge role in determining how students are encouraged to achieve their individual potential.

Some activities are more challenging than others and so the teacher must know the students' skill level and interests when choosing activities. Moreover, assessment should be ongoing throughout the learning experience, rather than just an evaluation of the final artwork.

## **DISCUSSION** DREAMERSteps

Discussion is the first DREAMER step and it is initiated through questions that will encourage students to share their knowledge of a particular story or theme in response to the book being read or topic of focus. Students share what they know and raise questions about what they want to know. It is a time to exchange experiences, to learn from one's peers. How can this communication take place?

## **RESEARCH** DREAMERSteps

At this step students find out the answers to the questions they have asked. Research on different themes, is a starting point for students to delve into other aspects of that topic. Students also discover more about it and associated links that may take them in a completely different direction. They research and collate information about the topic, through library books, magazines and the Internet. Family and friends are sometimes a great resource to gain experience from. Based on their research, they build up a record of elements that might be incorporated into their own artworks.

## **EXPERIMENT** DREAMERSteps

Art making can be a multi-media exploration and there are techniques, skills and processes that have to be learned, such as, colour mixing, joining techniques of different media, printmaking, collage and construction to achieve the desired results. Allow students time to experiment with a variety of media for different activities in response to the words and illustrations of the books being read and enjoyed.

## **ART MAKING** DREAMERSteps

The steps taken prior to Art Making will allow the students to make informed decisions about their artwork and provide them with the confidence to create a unique work of art. They must remember to respect the work of the artist, author or illustrator, but the desired effect and the overall impression are in their hands. Students will present their own interpretations of what they see and know and they will use their skills to convey this in their own work.

## **EXHIBIT** DREAMERSteps

Exhibiting the artworks may take on a whole new meaning if the results of discussion, research and media experimentation are included. Visual Diaries may record their findings and be worthy of viewing along side the finished artwork. Some thought needs to be given to the exhibition space and the type of audience anticipated, for example, can the exhibition space be enhanced with draped fabric or boxes of varying height on which to place any 3 dimensional work? What information does the audience need to know?

## **RESPONSE** DREAMERSteps

Response to the artwork should take on some form of self-assessment. The process should be discussed and through exchange of ideas and opinions students may learn from their peers.