



ZART

Extra

ZART ART 4-41 LEXTON ROAD, BOX HILL, 3129
PHONE: (03) 890 1867 FAX: (03) 898 6527

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AUTUMN ART AND LANGUAGE

Autumn is my favourite time of the year. All my senses enjoy this season. I welcome the scent of the cold, damp air in the mornings and the smell of dinner cooking in the kitchen in the evenings. Soups are on the menu again, all the colours and the textures of the vegetables delight my eyes and tongue.

Of course red, orange and yellow seem the Autumn colours with the wonderful harvest of berries, hips and leaves from our European plants. Where I live, the russet carpet of pine needles is thick on the ground and the bright gold and orange native Banksia flowers unfold and keep the honey-eaters very busy. Dewy green mosses are beds for fascinating toadstools and mushrooms that appear in subtle, strange colours and shapes. Interesting cocoons, nuts and seed pods add to the season's treasures.

When encouraged, children value their sensitivity and awareness. "Treasure hunts", cooking, viewfinders, magnifying glasses and mirrors (for looking *under* fungi without having to pick it) are all good ways to enjoy our senses and to step off into art lessons that explore COLOUR, SHAPE, TEXTURE, LINE and CHANGE.

ACTIVITIES:-

Autumn leaves are abundant and provide good starting points.

- Collage charts of leaves, sorting their colour, shapes and sizes. Write down lists of appropriate words the children use to describe them. Find more words for red - such as vermilion and claret - look at their origins. Watch the changes in the leaves as they wither on the charts.
- Ask the children to collect three special coloured leaves each. Let them experiment with mixing their paint to colours that match their leaves. Paint these new colours as backgrounds on three sheets of paper. Glue the leaves onto their matching backgrounds, do they match? The following week look to see how the leaf has changed. Then use these leaves and backgrounds as starting points for paintings. What does the leaf remind them of? What could it be part of?, etc. etc. Practice using a familiar tool, such as a stick or piece of cardboard, and black paint on an experiment sheet of paper to make marks. When the children are ready they can use selected marks around and on their leaves to turn it into their idea. Let them look at all the clever ways the leaves have been used.
- The shapes and colours of leaves can be celebrated in waxed lunch wrap paper banners. For this "stained glass look" use long strips of waxed lunch wrap paper. Fold the strips in half with the *waxy sides touching*, insert a wire coat hanger at the fold. Arrange your special leaves in *well spaced* patterns on one waxy surface, iron the other half of the waxed paper over the top of them so they are sealed inside. Extra leaves can be strung on cotton to hang from the bottom of the banner.



AUTUMN ART CONT'D



Banksia flowers last for weeks in a vase of water, and are tough and strong for handling. Let the children examine them carefully. Then use oil pastels to make marks; try making marks that could be different parts of the flower, leaves or stem. Practice putting the marks together to build up the whole flower. When the children are happy with their combinations give them a large sheet of paper to "draw" a branch of large and small flowers using their most appropriate marks.

Fungi - study the different varieties. Look at the stems, caps, petticoats, gills, what are the different parts used for? Let the students experiment with lines made by fine line black pens. Can they make interesting lines?, new lines?, patterned lines? Can they make lines that describe the edges of the fungi caps?, the gills?, the stems? Can they make lines that join to form shapes that could be fungi caps? Thinking about the parts of fungi and fungi-like shapes, can they invent "new" fungi using interesting lines. Add delicate lines, dots, etc. to tell us about the surface of their fungi. All their new fungi could be "patchworked" into a border or enlarged into a mural. For gentle, intriguing colour, overlapping layers of carefully used coloured pencil would be suitable.

For more art activities with Nature see Kate Hart's books:

"I Can Paint"

pages 108-114.

"I Can Draw"

pages 73-74, 130-131.

"The Environment"

(Booklet) pages 18-20.

Ann Bidstrup



HAPPENINGS...

CROSS ARTS CONFERENCE

The Inaugural Cross Arts Conference was held on Saturday, 18th and Sunday, 19th February at Melbourne University. Chairperson, Kate Donelan, gave us the good news that the number of students engaged in the Arts is rising, particularly at upper levels. The performance by the dancing duo "Desoxy" was sensational.

There was a wide range of workshop topics based on the CSF. We look forward to the next one. (See CSF and Visual Arts article on page 3.)



THE ACTA CONFERENCE AT THE ZOO

The Conference was held on 25th and 26th March at a most exotic venue. The link of environment and art was carried through the many speakers and "hands on" workshops which were well supported by ACTA members both primary and post primary. The benefit of this conference will be long lasting, as the spirit of art will be carried back to the art room with great vigour.

"I CAN PAINT" - BOOK LAUNCH

On 13th February Zart Art launched Kate Hart's "I Can Paint". It was a tribute to Kate that so many people attended in spite of the searing heat.

Ray O'Farrell, who edited the book, spoke of the difficulty he had in "encapsulating this unique art educator" into the confines of a text book. Kate described her journey to writing the book. Over the years children had retorted "I can't draw" and "I can't paint" when faced with such challenges. Hence, "I Can Draw" and "I Can Paint" - both of which are selling very well in both Australia and the USA and are also available at Zart Art.



THE CSF AND VISUAL ARTS

In his opening address at the Inaugural Cross Arts Conference, Leo Schofield, Director of the Melbourne Arts Festival, was asked to give his perspective on the value of the Arts in schools today. "The lack of developing the arts in schools," he declared, "is the greatest threat to our culture. It would be like the absence of sunshine." Here stood a man whose own earlier education in the Arts was at its best, fairly miserable. He went on to assert the Arts are essentially civilising and as well as providing society with brilliant artists, education in the Arts cultivates an active and appreciative audience.



It's doubtful if Leo Schofield has ever heard of the Curriculum and Standards Framework but his speech reflected some of its philosophy. The CSF (and National Curriculum) writers, like Mr Schofield recognise the value of the Arts in education and to society and have given it equal status to other key learning areas. (Hooray!)

In providing us with a framework for curriculum planning and assessment, the CSF has also provided teachers with a common language. We now have a common basis for communicating in areas of the curriculum where we previously had no idea what was going on. Teachers of the Arts can talk to each other as well as understand each other. Hopefully, this will give rise to more adventurous and creative collaboration across the curriculum.

Furthermore, as a parent it is reassuring to know that if I decided to move from Melbourne to Woop Woop, the local school in Woop Woop would work within the same educational framework as the Melbourne school. It makes sense to have this cohesion and yet still allow teachers to refine their curriculum according to student needs and retain their creative powers in curriculum planning.



What is the CSF designed to provide? Essentially three things:

- (a) A basis for curriculum planning in Victorian school, P-10.
- (b) A common basis for reporting students' achievement within broadly defined outcomes.
- (c) A means for schools to place their work within a statewide context.

The CSF is not prescriptive. You are not required to reinvent the wheel. Moreover, you don't have to start from scratch. Teachers should be asking "How can it help me?" not "How can I fit into it?". Therefore, 1995 is the year to review the existing curriculum in light of the CSF in order to define one's needs. Most schools have already started this process. Undoubtedly the CSF is very affirming for those of us who have always believed art is more than just "making". We are being asked to treat students as artists in their own right. Teachers are to create a co-operative learning environment in which the child artist is engaged in problem solving and inquiry learning and is able to create, make and present his own works of art, as well as analyse and appreciate the art works of others. As his awareness, skills and understanding unfold, the child artist is to generate his own ideas, express his relationship to himself and his environment, learn about the principles, concepts and elements of art and about the tools and materials used in making art works – in his own works and the works of others. He is to be taught "No man is an island" and "every man lives and works in a certain context."

While the generic development of a child is implicit in the CSF, in the Visual Arts (particularly at primary level), we have traditionally provided a curriculum which is intertwined with the stages of child development. Teachers must know and understand art and how children learn through art. When teachers feel comfortable and are confident with a curriculum which focuses on all the above, they will be empowered to facilitate effective learning and achieve the (CSF) learning outcomes. Indeed, it would seem that inservicing has become an integral part of a teacher's professional life. Finally, in our zeal to implement the CSF, let us not forget that our aim has not changed: to focus on 'the development of the whole person – his intellectual, expressive and perceptual growth – so that his potential creative abilities can unfold'¹. Hopefully this "whole person" will, in whatever shape or form, contribute to our culture's future and ensure not the "absence of sunshine" in the state of Victoria but rather a brighter sunshine.



*Dani Chak
Director, Z.E.S.*

¹ V. Lowenfeld, *Creative and Mental Growth* p.2.

CSF VISUAL ARTS - USER FRIENDLY CHARTS

Due to demand, these A3 size charts have been designed to assist teachers in implementing the CSF. There are two charts for each level (1-4) and they include teaching strategies and skill development to help plan the visual art curriculum and achieve the learning outcomes and working examples based on different media. They are also an excellent resource for staff presentation.

Each spiral bound set of A3 charts – \$5.00

CROSS AGE TUTORING IN ART

Children from Grade 6 St Anthony's Noble Park and Year 11 Art students from Xavier College teamed up for an ambitious exercise in mask-making. What resulted reached far beyond the hopes and expectations of all involved. It proved that such a venture in the art curriculum crosses many boundaries and bridges many chasms - cultural, intellectual, emotional and physical to name a few.

Nervous children were partnered with equally dubious 'buddies' for four sessions. Throughout these they completed an assignment booklet detailing every aspect of the mask-making process, from brainstorming the initial idea to colouring and labelling a model of the proposed finished product.

What quickly became apparent was the high level of commitment, enthusiasm and co-operation shown by all students. The Grade 6's eagerly awaited each Friday, whilst heatedly debating who had the 'best' buddy.

The skills and technical processes of bandaging faces, sanding, joining additional features, cutting, decorating, varnishing and mounting, so patiently taught by the year 11s, were important. However, it soon became obvious that there was much more than 'art' going on.

The interaction between students, be it animated jokes to spelling lessons to problem-solving, was vital to the success and value of the project.

Many real fears, apprehensions and misconceptions about themselves and others were replaced by a high sense of achievement, confidence, self worth and camaraderie.

The fabulous masks at the end of the four sessions were a bonus.



*Andrea O'Gorman, St Anthony's, Noble Park
Daniela Parkinson, Xavier College, Kew*



VISITING ARTIST PROGRAM



SUSIE PARRY

Susie Parry is a freelance artist, illustrator and experienced art educator. Her subjects and themes range from portraits, urban landscapes through to scientific and fantasy illustration.

She is available to take senior art students through various techniques in composition, design and rendering, using gouaché water colour, watercolour pencil and oil paint to produce highly detailed realistic works of art.

*Maximum of 15 students per session - Suitable for Year 10 to Year 12.
All materials provided.*

Cost \$150 per session (1½ hrs) plus travel if applicable.

Please ring 890 1867 for further enquiries and bookings.



EXCERPT FROM "CELEBRATIONS"...

Celebrate with Masks


- Masks are an integral part of celebrations.
In early cultures, people painted their faces and made masks from natural materials. Masks can be made in many different ways, depending on the type of celebration they are to be worn at. Find pictures and information about masks.
Share what you have learned with your class.
- What sort of a mask would we design, make and wear for this celebration — 50 years of children's Book Week?
Discuss ideas. Share them.
Maybe a cover of your favourite book, photocopied, coloured and worn as a mask.
How many ideas can you come up with?

Activity: A Book Mask

1. On a piece of 20 x 20cm thin card, print the word **BOOK** as large as you can. Double the outline and let all the letters touch...

BOOK



2. Surround the word with an interesting shape and colour in black all the space up to the word...
3. Cut out your shape.
4. The two  will be for your eyes. Cut out the central circles.
5. Each letter will now hold the name of your favourite book. Four book titles you must choose.
6. Write the name and author in the letters...
7. Now use felt tipped pens to colour in the rest of the letters with brilliant colours and patterns.



8. Tape a ruler or a piece of dowel firmly to the back of your Mask to hold it in front of your face.
9. Wear your mask. Let people read the names of your favourite books.
You read the names of others' favourite books. Find someone who likes the same book as you. Talk about why you like the book.