

## **Teacher Education Institute (TEI)**

Director: Dr. David L. Mollet, 6656 Reservoir Lane, San Diego, CA 92115

Tel: 619-463-1270 Email: [tei@cox.net](mailto:tei@cox.net) URL: <http://members.cox.net/tei>

### **Visual Media, Folk Arts**

Art education forms an integral part of our approach. Subjects of painting, drawing, media and folk arts are all important ingredients of art education and are covered in this presentation. However, other subjects and subject areas that are part of art education, and that are only mentioned here, are covered in greater detail in other presentations.

For example, form drawing is taught from grade 1 and is a subject in its own right.

See <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectFormDrawing.pdf>

It also forms the basis of other subject areas, namely learning to write

<http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectReading.pdf>

and geometry <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectGeometry.pdf>

and drawing - see below.

Any examination of art education would include colour and we also provide a separate presentation on colour <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectColour.pdf>

and working with colour <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectWorkingwithColour.pdf>

One art form that is rarely mentioned in education is storytelling. Storytelling forms an integral part of our approach and details of its importance and its place in our content and methodology are available at:

<http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectStorytelling.pdf>

and [http://members.cox.net/tei/lessonSamples/L\\_Fractions.htm](http://members.cox.net/tei/lessonSamples/L_Fractions.htm)

and [http://members.cox.net/tei/lessonSamples/L\\_XTables.htm](http://members.cox.net/tei/lessonSamples/L_XTables.htm)

and <http://members.cox.net/e-lessons/Perlustrations/Stories.htm>

Our approach is child-centred in as much as we believe that content and methodology needs to relate to the mindset of recipients; in this case young children. Almost without exception the majority of children at the lower end of elementary school love to draw and colour. They not only love to draw and colour but they possess an instinctive sense of the pictorial and artistic. Such children possess a deep-seated desire to relate inner experience to outer form. They have an instinctive feeling for all types of forms and need to express these feelings in creative and artistic format; the act of drawing and colouring the forms satisfies an inner need.

In this context the teaching of form drawing is important and children engage in this form of drawing from the time they start school. In particular, children experience the two polaric principles of form: the straight line and the curved line. Our approach recommends that initially we start with the children themselves. They can be involved in a variety of movements that relate to both straight and curved lines. Part of this process can be the relationship of these lines to their own bodies; part can be different shapes and movements that can be expressed through walking, marching, skipping and movements of the arms and hands.

Later, and through experiencing the straight line and the curved line, children come to understand the forces that exist in nature. Everything in nature has been created through action and movement coming to rest. Each leaf or whatever is the result of form that has been created, of growth that has eventually come to rest. An integral part of art education is the feeling for symmetry, balance, proportion, colour, form and content and children can learn to appreciate an awareness of these ingredients through form drawing.

When painting, children can explore the inner qualities of colour. The main point is not the representation of external objects but to be aware of the meaning of colour within. In our approach children create their own books and illustrate practically every page. Continually children should be involved in finding their own individual balance between external activity and inner experience.

Teachers have the task of providing the structure so this balance can be retained and worked on as children move through the grades. For details of how this is achieved in and through the different phases and stages of development please visit

<http://members.cox.net/monumollet/OverviewChildDevelopment.pdf>

As indicated previously, nurturing the creative, artistic and imaginative is basic to our approach and we have provided links for relevant areas. These are for Form Drawing together with Reading and Geometry, Colour and Working with Colour, Storytelling together with Fractions and Multiplication Tables. The following are additional to these and relate to other “art” areas.

Drama - <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectDrama.pdf>

Music - <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectMusic.pdf>

Other areas are (in alphabetical order) drawing, folk arts, media arts and painting. We will now cover these in this presentation.

### **Drawing**

As far as the teaching of drawing is concerned and for grades 1-5 please see Form Drawing. An important aspect of teaching Form Drawing to children includes developing the students’ awareness of space. In grade 6 this awareness is expanded to include pictorial representation in terms of light and shade (chiaroscuro). This subject area is usually introduced through the use of charcoal although as we shall see later it can also be introduced through painting.

Among the many subjects covered through chiaroscuro is in physics where students gain an understanding of how the lit surface of an object relates to its shadow. They will learn about the interplay of light and shadow in regard, for example, to the sphere, cylinder, cone, cube and other shapes on, or as if on a surface, and the quality of being veiled or partly in shadow. Various other stages and subject matter are introduced in grades 7 and 8.

### **Folk Arts**

It is important that students learn about their culture through their heritage. An integral part of such heritage are the ways traditional social values and have been passed from one generation to the next. In addition, in many cultures specialized craft activities have also played an important part in the creation of a culture that is unique and enduring.

However, probably the most popular area of folk art is dance and the following is but one example of subject matter that could be taught to students in order for them to appreciate their cultural heritage. Here, our example is English Folk Dance but we assume students will learn about folk dances from the cultures represented in their classroom and hopefully some steps or part or whole of a dance from those cultures. We should also be aware that such dance forms are continually being modified, on many occasions due to local inventiveness.

In past days any sort of festive occasion was the opportunity for natural spontaneous behaviour and integral and important sources were song, music and dance. In England through years of performance English Folk Dance became an established and recognised part of local tradition. There were several main strands to its development including, for example, Morris dancing, Sword dancing and later, social dancing (men and women together).

In Medieval times people would “carole” that is they would link hands in a line or a circle and sing as they danced in order to provide their own accompaniment. Later, and with the introduction of musical instruments, singing as the main way to produce the sounds or music for the dancing became optional.

Dancing up until Victorian times was mainly a group activity. It was an integral part of the majority of social occasions especially in rural areas and the descriptions of certain country dances in the works of writers such as Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy testify to this.

The Victorian era saw a shift towards couple dances brought in from the continent, namely the waltz and the polka although a strong interest in traditional English folk dance, song and music has remained up to and including modern times. On some occasions the participants may not realize they are involved in folk dance and probably those who have danced the Conga or the Hokey Cokey have rarely realized they are involved in the activities of the medieval carollers! Although folk dance is probably the most popular form of folk art it is worth remembering that in many cultures craft activities have been very important and, historically, a main part of the culture. One example that is international, and certainly one that children enjoy, is origami.

### **Origami**

Many believe that origami was invented by the Japanese as “ori” is the Japanese word for folding and “kami” is the Japanese word for paper. However, origami began in China in the first or second century and then spread to Japan sometime during the sixth century and it was in Japan that it became popular. At first, there was very little paper available so only the rich could afford to do paper-folding. As easier papermaking methods were developed, paper became less expensive. Origami became a popular art for everyone, no matter if they were rich or poor. For centuries there were no written directions for folding origami models.

The directions were taught to each generation and then handed down to the next. This form of art became part of the cultural heritage of the Japanese people. In 1797, “How to Fold 1000 Cranes” was published. This book contained the first written set of origami instructions which told how to fold a crane. The crane was considered a sacred bird in Japan and now has become a global peace symbol. It was a Japanese custom that if a person folded 1,000 cranes, they would be granted one wish. Soon origami became a very popular form of art in Japan. Not only were the Japanese folding paper, but the Moors, who were from Africa, brought paper-folding with them to Spain when they invaded that country in the eighth century. From Spain it spread to South America. As trade routes were developed, the art of origami was introduced to Europe and later the United States.

### **Paper-cutting**

Paper-cutting was invented in China about 200 C.E. and later spread to Japan. Prior to that time gold and silver leaf had been cut to make designs that decorated pottery and architecture. By 400 C.E. when paper became more easily available, artisans began to cut designs for covering screens, decorating windows and as patterns for embroidery.

Paper and paper-cutting appeared in the eighth or ninth century in West Asia and a guild of paper-cutters existed in Turkey in the 16th century. Within a century, paper-cutting was being done in most of middle Europe. However, paper was still made by hand, and was largely reserved for religious purposes. In the monasteries hand lettered and hand painted scrolls were decorated with cuttings as well.

Over the years paper cuttings were made into stencils, used as patterns for veneers, furniture, and embroidery. In Germany, by the 1600s, scherenschnitte, as it was called, was very popular. The Swiss made very intricate cuttings, often symmetric. The Dutch and Poles also did quite a lot of cutting, called knippen and wycinanki, respectively. The Dutch used paper-cuttings to decorate legal documents, as well as religious commemorative papers. The Polish style developed later, though they had cut designs in sheepskin coverings for windows for many years earlier. It was they who began the layering of various colours to make colourful collages. The pieces are largely symmetrical, and always decorative.

In almost every country, silhouettes were cut. Before photography, the only way to have a picture for posterity was to have a painting or drawing, both relatively expensive. A shadow, traced on paper hung on a wall, and then cut out, was much less expensive. Itinerant cutters went from place to place, often making pictures of whole families. In England silhouettes and the art of paper-cutting for its own sake were practiced in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. As photography developed, silhouettes became less popular, though still practiced occasionally. Paper-cutting came to the American colonies first, when middle Europeans, mostly Germans, fleeing religious persecution, came to Pennsylvania in the late 17th century.

Paper-cutting is a subject area in one of our lessons – please view at: <http://members.cox.net/monumollet/SubjectPaperCutting.pdf> . Paper-cutting together with origami and folk dancing are ways in which children can understand and learn about their own cultural heritage and the cultural heritage of other nationalities and ethnic groups. All three lend themselves to a learning process that is enjoyable and worthwhile.

**Media Arts** - For the most part our approach concentrates in the area of art education without the assistance of technology. However, we appreciate that especially for older elementary school students learning about media arts can be instructive and valuable. We will include various aspects of what can be referred to as “New Media Arts” as time and resources allow. This will include, but not be exclusive to, the following. Our approach will encompass and combine interactive electronic media including digital filmmaking, animation and website authoring, and sound design appropriate to the level at which students are working.

**Painting** - Painting falls into two categories in our approach. The first involves the depiction or representation of external objects. The second is expressing and working out what are, in essence, inner experiences. In the early grades we are concerned with the latter especially the significance of colour and its relationship and importance as a means whereby young children can express individual artistic and creative inner experiences. Water-colour painting provide an excellent way for children to initially learn about colour. Young children can express their individual experiences and also learn about the attributes of colour by painting on slightly damp paper (wet-on-wet). In this regard form is created out of colour and any outer form is an expression of inner experience.

Teachers can provide additional guidelines by defining specific psychological attitudes and feelings. For example, describing experiences or particular dispositions such as feeling warmth or coldness and, when appropriate, complimentary attributes such as expansiveness or hardness. Following on from this the children can learn qualities when the mixing of colours occurs. When young children have experienced the expression of individual colours and also the mixing of colours they can move on to the next stage.

One alternative is for the teacher is to tell or read a narrative. The teacher encourages the children to imagine a scene from the narrative and to paint it. In this context we do not want the childrens’ painting to represent a scene but to reflect what they feel in regard to say the beautiful green valley, the lovely pink dress of the princess, the large red cloak of the king, the dark forest and so on. Later, the children can gradually move on to where their forms are more figurative.

In grade 3 childrens’ paintings can relate to some of the themes they are taught such as farming and house-building as well as some of the narratives in storytelling. In grade 4 further emphasis on the latter occurs while the colouring of maps of local geographical areas provides variety and some degree of preciseness. Students in grade 5 are involved in a further progression. This is where the main subject is the ever changing colour processes at work in nature. Nature provides us with considerable and significant scenarios that teachers can use in their teaching throughout the year. For example, the birth of young plants in Spring, the full bloom of flowers in Summer, the magnificent mixture of colours as trees lose their leaves in Fall, and the withdrawal of the majority of the plant kingdom in Winter.

The emphasis is still on encouraging the children to let form be created from colour but gradually and gently external forms are now being depicted. One area that lends itself to greater preciseness that usually is lacking as far as external representation is concerned is in the colouring of maps. This process began in grade 4 but a greater degree of care and exactness is now required. In grade 6, students are introduced to pictorial representation in terms of light and shade without regard to colour (chiaroscuro). This subject area can be introduced through painting although a more usual way is through the use of charcoal (see Drawing above). If students are taught chiaroscuro through painting they will learn how to obtain black and various shades of grey from the mixing of colours and this is usually achieved in different stages. They will learn about the interplay of light and shadow on or as if on a surface and the quality of being veiled or partly in shadow. Various other stages and subject matter are introduced in grades 7 and 8.