

Drawing

“Teacher, Teacher
I can’t draw cats!”

The drawing objectives in the primary school curriculum might be summarised as follows (for all class levels). Children should be enabled to:

- | experiment with a range of drawing materials and surfaces to explore line, shape, colour, texture and pattern;
- | make drawings about their own experiences;
- | make drawings about imaginary themes;
- | make drawings from observation; and

KEY MESSAGE

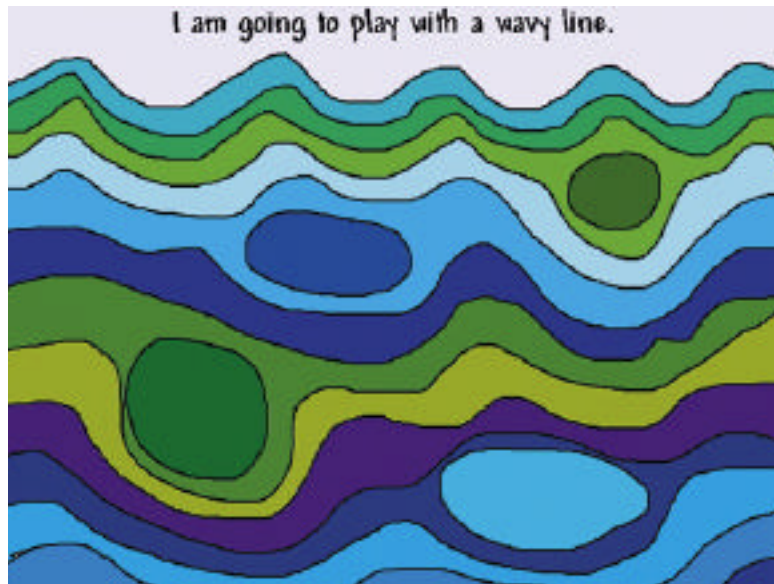
Children need to experiment with the characteristics and possibilities of a wide range of materials.

These might include:

- | found objects fingers
- | pencils crayons
- | chalk/charcoal markers
- | pastels paints and inks
- | surfaces of different sizes, shapes and textures.

look at and respond to their own and others drawings (to include drawings by artists). The ultimate aim of the drawing curriculum is to encourage children to develop their own personal style of drawing and the suggestions therein are firmly based on the following principles:

- | everyone can draw;
- | children proceed in sequence through a series of discrete and recognisable stages in developing their drawing;
- | children’s drawings are about communicating messages and meaning and represent the world as they see it, their purpose is therefore different than



Using a mouse as a drawing tool to draw water patterns. (Explore & Experiment)

KEY MESSAGE

The stages of development in drawing might be summarised as follows:

- | scribbling stage;
- | stage of symbols;
- | stage of dawning realism;
- | stage of realism.

An article in this journal will be devoted to these at a later stage.

drawing merely to achieve representational images;

- | success in drawing comes through exploring the possibilities of all the materials;
- | drawing cannot be ‘taught’ through the use of demonstration, or through following steps in ‘how to draw’ manuals;
- | the most important part of learning to draw is learning to look.

Therefore, the teacher need not worry that s/he cannot draw, his/her vital role is to

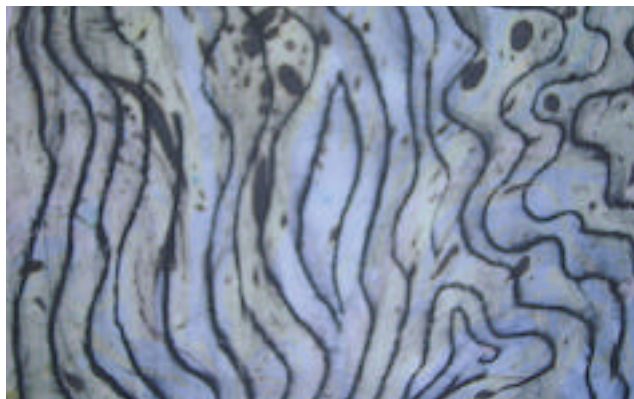
provide access to the materials, to encourage children to explore with these, to provide stimuli, to recognise and encourage individuality and above all else to develop the children’s skills in observation.

Explore and Experiment

Children should be encouraged to explore the elements of art (line, tone, texture, shape, pattern and colour) in a free way. Try taking away the pressure of having to represent something.

Here are some ideas for this type of activity.

- | Choose a favourite type of line. Choose a favourite drawing material. Draw your line all over the page – add colour to the spaces you have created.
- | Use white chalk and charcoal to make light and dark patches on grey paper – smudge them together – talk about what happens when they meet.
- | Use a viewfinder to look closely at part of a pineapple – draw the texture of the part you see.
- | Listen to a piece of music and draw the lines, shapes and colours it made you think of.
- | Choose an object eg a fork. Draw the outline shapes repeatedly, overlapping your shapes. Add colour to the shapes and spaces you have created.
- | Use the paint programme on your computer to play with lines and shapes.



Charcoal drawing of wood patterns on marbled paper (Explore & Experiment)

Draw about Experiences and Draw about Imaginings

Give children many opportunities to draw about their own

lives and about what they imagine, throughout the curriculum. Think about opportunities such as drawing about family celebrations (SPHE), illustrating their own stories (English / Gaeilge) and recording experiments (Science).

- | Draw a design for the cover of your favourite novel.
- | Draw a map of your route to school.
- | Draw what you imagine a particular historical scene might have looked like.

Draw Observations

If learning to look and to observe is the key to learning to draw, then this section of the drawing curriculum is probably where we need to place more emphasis. We can take the children out into the local environment on drawing expeditions and in the classroom engage in 'Drop Everything And Draw' activities eg

- | Draw a collection of classroom toys, a nature collection, etc.
- | Empty your pencil case on the table and draw what you see.
- | Draw the scene out the window.

Look and Respond

Use the strategies outlined in last month's article to encourage children to:

- | Talk about their own drawings.
- | Look at the work of book illustrators such as Quentin Blake.
- | Look at artists such as Picasso, daVinci, Matisse and Durer.

n Compiled by members of the Visual Arts Team of the Primary Curriculum Support Programme.

Visit www.pfsp.ie for more information on drawing. Also, check out the new www.iama-nartist.ie website – for details of a new and exciting TV series on visual arts.

REFERENCES

Edwards, Betty: *Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain*. 0 00 711645 4
 The Primary Art Handbook.
 Topical Resources. 1 872977 28 6
 Fitzsimons, Su: *Start With Art*. 0 7487 2395 1



Coloured pencil drawing of 'My Cat Playing' (Experiences & Imaginings)

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Pastel drawing of 'My School' (Observations)