

Analyzing and Researching A Child's Drawing

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Pablo Picasso once said, "All children are artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." Children develop at different ages and rates, and the same applies to their art development. As teachers it is our job to help our students grow and expand their development in art.

Description and Analysis

The drawing below (figure 1) comes from an elementary student. From the characteristics of the illustration, we can make the assumption that the artist is in The Schematic Stage, According to Brittain (1970), which occurs in children ages seven-nine years, it shows the



(Figure 1 to the right: a drawing of a girl who is either running or jumping.)

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Achievement of a Form Concept. The artist's illustration shows a two-dimensional drawing of a girl. The image referred to as Figure 1 above, will be referred to using the pseudonym of Mary. The Mary's face has detail, showing that shape and proportion to the person's eyes and lips are a part of the human representation. The artist drew and correctly-placed Mary's arms and legs (476). The artist put detail into the subject's features and human representation, which lets us know that the artist is beyond The Preschematic Stage which is generally around children four to seven years old and known as the First Representational Attempts. In this stage Human figure their features are more distorted and are closer to scribbles (475).

The space representation in this illustration shows that the student has made two imperfect circles that run over the subject body. It is unclear what these circles are supposed to be and represent, which is another suggestion that this student is in The Schematic Stage which occurs at seven to nine years of age. In this stage there are often two dimensional organizations of objects and simultaneous representation of plan and elevation (Brittain ,476). When examining the space in the student's illustration we also see that the student is not quite to the level of The Gang Age, Nine- Twelve Years: The Dawning Realism. As stated in Brittian article (1970), in this stage space representation includes the artist showing depth through the size of the object and a disappearance of the baseline (477).

Given the drawing characteristics of this illustration, with the way that the artist drew Mary's legs and hands, it seems that they want to show that Mary is in motion. By the representation of the body it looks like Mary could be either running or jumping. According to Brittaon (1970), Having one leg and one arm bent was the artist's way of showing this concept to the drawing (476).

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Encouraging creativity in the classroom is becoming more necessary with the world starting to move into an era where *R-Directed Thinking* is becoming more of a demand in the work force. According to Pink (2005), "Leading a healthy, happy, successful life depends on both hemispheres of your brain (p. 26). It is important for children to use and fully develop both the right and left hemisphere, having students consistently practice their art skills is a key way to enhance right brain thinking. Right brain thinkers are becoming more in demand, and with this information teachers will need to not only support student's creativity but also encourage students to reach out of their comfort zones and activate their inner artist.

Conclusion

There are many ways for teachers to get started on stimulating right brained thinking in their classrooms and encourage creativity. According to Johnson (2008), a few of these strategies are to refer to children as artist, connect art with other areas of learning, share art experiences, and talk with children about artists from various cultures and countries (p. 75-76). Encouraging students to explore and talk about art will enable students to be more successful, confident and creative artists. According to the Learning to draw: Nurturing the Natural (2013), children grow in art best is through practice and observation. (p. 47). Consistently incorporating art into children's lives will help these students succeed.

It is our responsibility as art educators to expose children to different types of art, build on their artistic development and celebrate their inner artist. In order to help our students, teachers need to advocate for art programs in school. We want to be able to help students like the artist of figure 1 to be able to enable their creativity and art skills to their full potential.

References

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