

Early Career Teachers



start UP!

While being lucky in the beginning can be everything,
the 'luck' may really involve great planning.

Teaching Art - The First Weeks

As the tone for the year is set and you and your students learn about each other, consider these thoughts when choosing your first few art projects:

- Base the project upon individual students as opposed to cooperative or group work.
- Choose a dry medium such as wax crayon or pencil crayon or pencil as opposed to paint or ink.
- Contain the work to student desks and avoid movement in the room.
- Mount and display every child's work in the classroom to create ownership and pride.

Possible Artwork

Art Activity Area: Drawing or Picture Making (a subject and its background)

Image Source: Observation or Imagination or Memory

Medium: Wax crayons or Pencil Crayons or 2-B or 3-B pencil

Idea (subject or theme): Decide using the motivational strategies below.

Motivational Strategy:

Read a story and have it illustrated.

Bring interesting objects for observation.

Draw using magnifying glasses.

Recall an event (ie. the playground at recess).

Sit and pose for your class. Yes, you are the model.

Create a still life using plants from outside (flowers and/or dried weeds and grasses).

More Later

The following pages outline some other interesting projects which you and your students will enjoy and learn from later in the term.

Try them yourself first. You'll then know what to do and what not to do.

Remember the headings from *Possible Artwork* above.

Before starting, clearly know the skills, vocabulary, and content you intend to teach.

Drawing

- with

Crayons & Paint



Crayons

In the elementary school wax crayons are a standard but very versatile medium. To create strong intense colour students need to be encouraged to press hard. As their project progresses have them step back three or four metres to look at their work. This helps them see how well their pictures appears from a distance. They may then see the need to press harder. Wax crayons have a colour range which is wide and includes silver, copper, gold, and fluorescent colours. They are an excellent medium for picture making and design projects on white construction paper.

Paint

Tempera paint can be used as a drawing medium. Choose one of the darker colours such as blue or brown and thin a small amount in a bucket. Test the darkness to ensure that the paint is still strong but also that it is quite fluid. When drawing with paint use a soft squirrel type of paint brush. A #8 or #10 works well. Emphasis can be placed on the calligraphic nature of the lines, the variety that is possible in line thickness, and the careful consideration which is needed before touching the brush to the paper.

Scratchboard

- Choose a lightweight smooth finished card stock (ie. white tag, Bristol board (a.k.a. railroad board) about 8" x 10" or 9" x 12" in size.
- Have students cover their desks with a single sheet of newspaper.
- Students then need to cover the surface of the cardboard with a heavy coating of wax crayons, using the lighter colours.
- Students must print their names on the back in the centre. Once painted they all look the same!
- Add some liquid soap to a container of black tempera paint to ensure that the paint will actually cover and stick to the crayon without crawling and resisting. Too much soap can make the paint have a streaky whitish finish when dry.
- Too much paint can cause the paint to chip during the drawing (scratching) process.
- Cover a table with a single sheet of newspaper and have all the projects laid out there.
- Using a wide house painting brush coat the crayoned cardboard pieces.
- Leave the projects to dry for at least a day.
- Students should have some idea as to what they want to draw. A preliminary drawing on another piece of paper helps. Drawing from an actual object works well too.
- Drawing may be completed by scratching with a push pin which has a plastic end, a pottery needle or a scratch knife blade inserted into a straight nib pen handle.



Drawing Chalk

- a unique medium



Chalk Qualities

Drawing chalk is very soft and will be found in packages of either twelve or twenty-four colours.

The colours are strong and brilliant, making them an excellent medium for picture making and design projects.

Do not use coloured chalkboard chalks for artwork as they are hard and the resulting colours are weak and unimpressive.

Construction paper works well with drawing chalks because it has 'tooth' - a slightly rough surface - which 'bites' the chalk. Consider working on black construction paper.

Manila paper works but it is more easily torn and is only available in its cream colour.

The Work Area

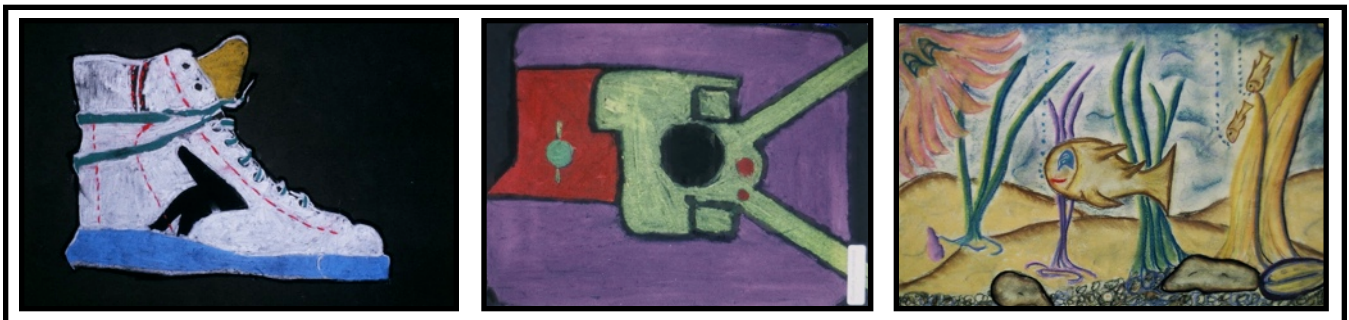
Before beginning, cut cover sheets from either newsprint or newspaper the same size as the paper to be worked upon. Taping these at one end or the top edge with two pieces of masking tape allows the cover sheet to hang over the edge of the children's desks. At the end of the lesson, cover sheets will keep the chalk from smudging across the project and from transferring to the underside of other projects in the pile.

The desk or work area is best covered with a single large sheet of newspaper. At the end of each class these can be carefully folded inward and placed into the recycling bin. This helps keep the dust under control.

As children are working they should not blow the excess chalk dust or tip their papers onto the floor. Again, this controls the chalk dust.

Drawing Strategy

- Apply the lightest colours first, darkest toward the end of the project. This keeps the colours bright and avoids having the dark colours muddy the lighter ones.
- Starting with light colours allows children to change their minds as they plan the drawing or picture.
- Pressing heavily on the chalk ensures a rich and colourful effect.
- Colours can be blended with a finger or a stump, either a purchased stump or one made by wrapping a piece of paper towel around the end of a pencil.
- Create highlights by using white, yellow, and so on toward the end to provide depth and interest.
- Add details last.





Drawing People

- and their features

Calculating Distances

None of these estimated measurements are perfect and exact.

They represent guidelines which must be adjusted from person to person.

For example, one person may have long legs and a relatively shorter torso.

Drawing a Full Person

A front view of a standing person is the best way to provide success.

Choose a student to be the model and have the boy or girl stand on a table or counter at the front of the room.

Have the students make light horizontal marks to indicate the top of the head, the bottom of the feet, and the middle. Temporarily turning the paper horizontally can make finding the middle much easier.

Then, hold a metre stick horizontally and raise and lower it in front of the model.

Ask the class to raise their hands when you are halfway between the head (top) and the feet (bottom) and to lower them when you've passed by. Students viewpoints will vary because of their place in the room.

Students then draw what appears to be at the mid-point (ie. a belt, top of a pocket, ripple in a shirt and so on).

Drawing a Head

Make light horizontal marks to represent the crown and chin of the head.

Then discuss where the eyes are. Have students look at one another.

A full head of hair provides the illusion that the eyes are near the top of the head when they really are about halfway between the crown and the chin.

A person's head is about five eyes widths wide. The eyes are about one eye width apart.

Have students trace a finger from the side of an eye to an ear. The point where the ear connects to our head is at that point.

Then trace a finger from the bottom of the nose toward the ear. That's where the bottom of the ear connects.

The bottom of the lip is about halfway between the bottom of the nose and the chin.

In drawing the mouth, make a mark in the centre between the lips. Then make two more marks for the corners of the mouth. By connecting these three points the basic character of the mouth is captured.

Continue by drawing the lower and upper lips.

The bridge of the nose is best left undrawn if a single line is going to be used. Emphasize the nostrils instead.

The Materials

Drawings can be completed with a wide range of materials.

Try 2-B and 3-B pencils, wax crayon, oil pastel, and thinned tempera paint with a soft brush.



Painting with Crepe Paper - on tissue paper

Painting with Crepe Paper Dye

Crepe paper dye can be used to create a painting medium which is very different from other paints. Crepe paper is readily available in most elementary schools. When other paints are not stocked, crepe paper dye can still provide students with a painting opportunity.

The Materials

Soft squirrel or synthetic sable paint brushes (4-6 per student),
Folds of crepe paper in most colours, excluding black,
Manila or construction paper (1 sheet per student),
White tissue paper (1 fold per student),
Permanent felt markers (1 for every two to four students),
Fine tipped pens (1 per student),
Ice cream type buckets (1 for every colour of crepe paper dye),
Rubber gloves for the teacher. Small containers for students.

Preparing the Dye

Cut the folds of crepe paper into strips roughly 5 cm (2") wide.
Place individual colours into their respective buckets.
Add hot water from the tap and immediately squeeze the dye from the crepe paper, adding more water if needed. Leaving the crepe paper to soak allows the paper to disintegrate.
Allow light colours such as yellow, pink, and light blue a chance to evaporate for a week or more. This lets the colour become more intense. Black crepe paper doesn't create black dye. Regardless, black in itself is somewhat too strong for the effect which this process produces.
On the day the dye is used tape a strip of construction paper to each bucket and paint a colour sample on each.

Planning the Project

Using photographs or sketches prepared out-of-doors have students draw or transfer their drawings onto the manila (construction) paper which has been cut the same size as the folded tissue paper.
Once the drawing is simplified and finalized outline with a permanent black felt marker.
Tape the tissue over the manila paper with two small pieces of tape on the same edge.

Painting and Drawing Details

From the buckets students can take very small amounts of dye to their desks in small containers.
The dye is very fluid and can be allowed to run and mix with other colours.
However, if distinct edges are needed let the tissue paper dry thoroughly before painting an adjacent colour.
Once dry, separate and cut apart the two almost identical pictures. Add details using a fine tipped pen.

Mounting

Use a glue stick to apply dabs of glue to the top two corners and mount on white Bristol (railroad) board.

Conservation of Materials

Students can mix the colours but these creative colours should not be returned to the buckets.
Unused dye can be left in the buckets, allowed to dry, and re-dissolved next year!

Two almost identical pictures will be painted if the tissue is left folded and doubled.

