

Art Education Timeline

1300-1400: The Middle Ages

The apprentice system with workshops overseen by the Guilds was the focus of art and art education. The encouraged process of the time was mimetic and the philosophical orientation was idealist/realist. Artistic originality was not encouraged and there were no methods yet about teaching people to teach.

1850: Perceptive Drawing

Horace Mann modeled methods after how art was being taught in Prussia and Germany by Pestalozzi and Schmid. Students would learn by copying simple and specific drawings, working up to real models. The teacher would either draw an example, or provide one from books and cards. The emphasis was on skillful reproduction and the instrumental uses of art.

1460-1600: The Italian Renaissance

Academies were opened as a second step from the workshops. Humanism and a focus on classical studies was the most important. They were trying to link content with art through the use of the human figure, and Biblical/classic literature. Leonardo helped develop the idea of an academy, where art theory and philosophy could be discussed in relation to science. The art style of the time was mimetic/expressive.

1870-90: Industrial Drawing Movement

Walter Smith began to advocate for art education specifically, with the objectives of having industrial instruction, and regular teachers teaching art. The exercises were teacher directed copying, based on occupational learning. The emphasis was still on reproduction and the instrumental uses of art.

1660-1900s: French Absolutism

The academies continued as the ideals about art changed in France. Through teaching, art became a set of absolute rules. Arts and sciences were separate -d, and the arts were only permitted as a method of political propaganda. Specific rules were set for how to draw: starting with features and slowly working up to the live model.

1890-1925: Picture Study Movement

Henry Turner Bailey was a main advocate of this movement. The goal was to bring spiritual and moral values to children through the study of art, particularly what was considered the great works. These idealists kept the focus pragmatic, using art as an instrument to teach behaviors.

1900-1990: Design Theory

Arthur Wesley Dow initiated the teaching of design principles and elements. He came up with a list of aspects that he thought made art interesting. Later, Victor D'Amico supported creative self-expression, thinking that the study of design theory should not be rule bound, but intuitively achieved and incorporated into art-making. Next, design theory was given a sense of scientific authority and merged with Bauhaus concepts. DBAE later developed today's list of design principles and elements

VTS: Visual Thinking Strategies

One of the more recent developments in art education, VTS is a way for educators to lead discussions about art by leaving the questions open-ended. Students are asked to look carefully at works of art, and then talk about what they observe, giving evidence for why they see the piece the way they do. Students will discuss many possible interpretations and build flexible thinking and the ability to notice details.

Developmental Child Art: Craig Roland

Art begins with scribbling, where the young child is doing it for the sake of the movements. Then at 3 or 4 they begin to control their scribbles and give them meanings. Next "tadpole" figures begin to emerge and variations and symbolism are incorporated. Then a sense of space and baselines are used. Children will also begin to use cultural images in their artwork. By the age of 9 or 10, a crisis of realism occurs, where the child becomes focused on making their pictures look "right" or optically real.

1979: Betty Edwards- Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain

Betty Edwards published the book in 1979. She was inspired by Roger Sperry, a psycho-biologist who worked on split brain research. The brain has two ways of perceiving and processing: verbal/analytical and visual/perceptual. Edwards advocated suppressing the left side in favor of the right. In her drawing exercises, she encouraged disregarding preconceived ideas of what the drawn object should look like, and focusing on perception.

1980's-90's: DBAE

Discipline based art education took hold as the most popular strategy for teaching art in schools. This method was very much focused on step by step structures for lesson plans. It was a very rigid, strict approach to artmaking, where the end product would be expected and predictable. Arthur Feldman came up with a four-step method for art criticism. The viewer would describe what they saw using the elements of design, then analyze, interpret, and judge the piece.

Creativity in Art education

Creativity can be defined as the use of imagination or original ideas in the production of something. Viktor Lowenfeld saw creativity as a form of personality and identity formation. Torrance creativity tests helped to test for fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration in creative thinking. Psychologist Irving A. Taylor developed a creativity hierarchy of 5 levels. And art educator Marvin Bartel discussed ways that creativity can be "killed" in the classroom.

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