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PED 232



**Aesthetic Expressions in
Primary Schools
Module 1**

PED 232 (Aesthetic Expressions in Primary Schools) Module 1

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Unit I Introduction to Aesthetics

1.0 Introduction

This unit explains what aesthetics means, its nature in expressing appreciation and tastes for what is beautiful. Your knowledge of aesthetics will make you understand why and how people, especially your pupils behave the way they do. Aesthetics describes perception and their responses to beauty in general and artwork in particular.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- recall the basis of the principles of looking, seeing and appreciating what is beautiful in an artwork
- appraise and as well as be very objective as much as possible when evaluating your pupils' artworks.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Introduction to Aesthetics

Aesthetics is a branch of philosophy that makes clear the laws and principles of beauty. These principles and laws are contrasted with morality and utility. Thus aesthetics is that branch of philosophy which tends to explain matters pertaining to values. These are the intrinsic values of a particular object or things. Furthermore, the nature of aesthetics is to express appreciation and admiration. In essence aesthetics seeks to clarify tastes in terms of what is beautiful. Aesthetics is the formal study of art especially with relation to the idea of beauty. One of the central questions in aesthetics is whether beauty is in the eye of the beholder or whether there is something else within an object that makes it beautiful.

Psychology – a science study of the mind and its process plays a prominent role in the study of the beauty of art. As Oluwasina (2004) puts it, there is no art without aesthetic value. To buttress this view, Counts (1973) opines that tastes differ but no artwork is bad. It is therefore the perspective of view that gives a good or bad impression of an object or a thing. Thus taste differs from one person to the other; just as it is natural for man to admire or appreciate a particular object.

Art communicates to us through our eyes. Art is observed or looked at and we try to read meanings into it. Through this, we are trying to locate some meanings in the experience; that is the experience derived from looking at an art object. Thus communication takes place through seeing which the mode of perception is. Science has confirmed that such mode of perception is the interpretation of sensory data. Seeing is made possible through the eyes. In visual perception, the eye takes in information in the form of light patterns while the brain processes these patterns to give meaning (Geltin 2002).

However you should note that we do not see things the same way and in some situations, we do not all see the same things at the same time. These facts should be born in mind when you are in contact with learners.

Perception of an art work brings pleasure. The pleasure of mere looking at a work of art leads us into the process of making some pronouncements of what we see in form of appreciation, appraisal and evaluation. In the process of appreciating, appraising or evaluating the art work, the individual takes into consideration some factors in arriving at a conclusion; whether an artwork is beautiful or ugly or good or bad. In visual arts, certain factors are taken into consideration when looking at an artwork for example in the assessment or appreciation of a work of art the following may serve as reference point.

- The use of colours as in painting
- The use of line, forms, theme, depth and space
- The use of light and shade, etc.

It is keen observation that gives the individual an unbiased assessment or appreciation, whether the work is beautiful or not. Getlein, 2002 puts it that;

“Beauty is deeply linked to our thinking about art. Aesthetics, the branch of philosophy that studies art, also studies the nature of beauty.”

Visuals arts more especially are primarily concerned with the manipulation of materials to express ideas. This manipulation of materials in expressing ideas could be in a two-dimensional or a three-dimensional form. Those that are expressed in two-dimensional forms include:

- Drawing
- Painting
- Textile design
- Graphics.

They are referred to as two-dimensional because in most cases, they are created on flat surface areas that can only be seen through their length and breath. Those grouped and expressed in three-dimensional forms includes:

- Sculptures in metals
- Woods
- Ivory
- Soap
- Stone
- Wax etc.
- Ceramics (pottery).

These visual arts forms have length, breadth, and volume or depth. They three-dimensional forms because of the nature can be view in the round. This refers to their being appreciated

from all angles either from the top, below, sides, back or front. However, you should note that some two-dimensional arts forms like graphics can also be in three-dimensional designs as observable in packages and industrial designs.

Design as a concept could be a plan to serve a special purpose. In the visual arts design could be in form of an outline drawing, (prepared) or a columned layout. Design is the art and service involved in the planning and making of a product a tool an artifact, building or service while designing. Design therefore, is the deliberate act of bringing into being new artifacts, tools, buildings, products or services (Encarta, 2005).

Design is also conscious activity, guided by aims and objectives. It refers to planned and organized actions intended to bring about some predetermined outcome, although there may also be accidental or unexpected results. Design activity usually displays expertise, knowledge, creativity and thoroughness.

4.0 Conclusion

Due to our different tastes in aesthetic perception we may accept that completely. As science has also back this view. It is the subjective perspective of view in term of value that gives the good or bad impressions that we often communicate. It should be noted that what seems beautiful to you may not be to me. This determines how the teacher and his pupils work when producing artworks that are supposed to be beautiful.

5.0 Summary

Tastes differ from one individual to the other; this is the same for you and your pupils. This understanding must be allowed to reflect in your appreciation of your pupils' artworks. Although from your own perception an artwork may require some technical adjustments to make it more beautiful, you need to be very diplomatic when re-constructing a pupil's artwork, your comment should be constructive, you must encourage the young learners. This is why we say: 'No artwork is bad' when appreciating one.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Is beauty in the eye of the beholder or within an object? Discuss.
2. What factors will you put into consideration in appreciating children's artwork?
3. Differentiate by giving five examples for each of a three-dimensional arts and two-dimensional arts work.

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Unit 2 Esthetic Curriculum for Primary Schools

1.0 Introduction

As you are being prepared to teach the pupils at the primary school level, it is essential for you to understand the primary school curriculum as laid down by the National Policy of Education (2004). You should also be conversant with the aesthetic (Creative and Cultural Arts) curriculum for Nigerian primary schools as detailed by the National Implementation Committee. This unit states the major items of the policy statement and the various approaches it planned to adopt and the challenges of the teachers of Creative and Cultural Arts that will operate it. It also examines the various benefits that cultural and creative arts teaching naturally bestow on the teacher and the pupils.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- master the contents of the visual arts and the cultural arts curriculum that is design for teaching in the primary School
- explain the differences between them
- find the teaching of creative and cultural arts easy and enjoyable.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Esthetic Curriculum for Primary Schools

To discuss the aesthetic curriculum for Primary schools, it shall not be out of place to appraise the National Policy on Education (2004) for the goals of primary Education in Nigeria. The policy categorically states these goals as:

- Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy, and ability to communicate effectively;
- Lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking;
- Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribution to the life of the society
- Mould the character and develop sound attitude and morals in the child
- Content Elements which is a breakdown of the content into separate units you can handle with ease and within time limits
- **Objectives:** These are stated in terms of what every pupil should be able to do at the end of the module. It is imperative of you the teacher to check at the end of the lesson.
- **Pupils' activities:** Your pupils are to do these in their lessons, classes, schools, home and their society at large. It is only these that can lead to the achievement of the objectives.

- **Teaching aids (a) and teaching hints:** These are very important in your teaching especially at this age level of your pupils. Your job has been simplified with the recommendation of the teaching Aids to be used for every module. However, substitutes can be sort within your environment and used when these are not available. Teaching hints are also provided. You are advised to keep to the instructions and materials recommended therein.
- **Suggested Assessment Techniques:** These are the various assessment techniques for each of the activities under pupils' activities. You are to objectively assess your pupils with them.
- **Period:** these are the suggested number of week's you are supposed to spend.

The goals of the Curriculum at the primary school level include the laying of a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking and more importantly to give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable him to function effectively in the society within the limits of his capacity. These two objectives aim to prepare the child's Soul, mind and body; not just for the future of the pupil but also for his society. However, at these very young stage of life and because Creative and Cultural Arts naturally involve creativity through exploration and experimentation, special teaching approaches are required. They are essentially taught practically at the primary school level for certain benefits.

The benefits of Cultural and Creative Arts and visual arts in particular on primary school pupils are enormous. Visual Art is a creative challenge to children. It is of great pleasure and satisfaction in developing the child's skills, abilities, imagination and observations when involved. In essence, art is a natural means of learning and developing individuals in various ways. It trains pupils' senses of coordination, visions, craft, imagination, thought and expression.

Moreover, activities in arts create value, educate the emotions; and foster on ethical viewpoint in children (Ibuka: 1977). It is also an avenue for the release of physical and psychological energies. It encourages pupils to think for themselves and to develop their creative abilities, critical powers and muscle control. (Stanfied: 1956). With art experiences, learning is made easy for pupils at their own pace and own language. Experiences learnt through art are naturally retain and are easily recalled.

The teaching and learning processes are not static as the old generalizations about children can no longer be valid in the present day Nigeria. They have to be taught with regards for their different physical, social and psychological background needs, each child learns and retains what her/his needs and is best related to her/his experience.

Children including your pupils at this level are supposed to be helped to develop their potentialities and abilities with regards for their individual strengths and limitations. Another benefit of creative Arts preaches to the pupils is the interest it naturally generates and this fosters concentration that leads to assimilation and eventually ensures good memory even in on other subject areas.

4.0 Conclusion

The teaching of cultural and creative arts is interesting. The teaching process is made easy by the National Policy on Education and the Primary School Curriculum as planned by the

Government for developing the sensuous and concrete expressions of pupils' ideas and feelings about the world around them

5.0 Summary

The goals of the National Policy on Education are well spelt out. Most of these goals are naturally achievable with the introduction of Cultural and Creative Arts and the Visual Arts in particular. The knowledge of aesthetic aspect has great implications on pupils. Apart from the use of its products, its processes are very significant in their creative and mental development. To achieve these, the curriculum has been carefully planned and arranged to ensure adequate and effective delivery of the contents.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What are the goals of the National Policy on Education at the primary school level?
2. In what ways can the visual arts contribute to achieving these goals at the primary school level?
3. As put together by the National policy statement. Cultural and Creative Arts (C.C.A) teaching at the primary school level is a collection of several subjects. What are these subjects and how do they differ from other courses that are taught at the primary school education level?

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Unit 3 The Art Teacher and His Pupils

1.0 Introduction

The important role of the teacher in teaching and learning process cannot be over emphasized. The teacher especially will have to interact with pupils at this level if teaching and learning must take place. The teacher must therefore have adequate understanding of young pupils' behaviours their likes and dislike. This unit therefore tries to find out who a teacher is, the qualities, trainings and potentials a teacher should have to effectively handle young pupils' visual arts.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the behaviour of young pupils
- identify the qualities, and potentials of an effective teacher of young pupils in a visual arts class.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 The Art Teacher and His Pupils

Researchers in education could not agree as to the qualities and the levels a teacher must attain to become professionally qualified. They however agree that he needs to be professionally trained. Arends (1994) is of the opinion that an effective teacher should be academically able, have command of the teaching subject, care for students and make students achieve academically. He also states four attributes of such a teacher. He must be kind and understanding, must realize that learning to teach is a lifelong process, must aim to develop his pupils and should not see education as a money-making venture, Nenji (2003) agrees with all the propositions in a discussion on qualities of a technology teacher'.

The Nigerian teacher-training programme recommend in the curriculum four groups of knowledge, they include: the general studies of basic academic subjects, foundation studies in principles and practices of education; student-teacher's elected field of study and the teaching practice exercise. This is in compliance with the National Policy On Education (2004), which recommends provision of teachers with intellectual and professional background found adequate for the teaching assignment that would make them adaptable to changing situations.

An art-oriented professional teacher for example, will have a developed power of observation, imagination and self-confidence. The job becomes easier when the art-teacher is equipped to face the challenges that attend her/his profession. The art-teacher particular need visual art, experience to produce suitable teaching aids as situations may demand in the class. Teachers also play the role of Guidance counselor. They should be able to recognize produce art products or processes that will solve that problem. Succinctly put, teachers should have the capabilities to adapt to all situations that may develop in the class.

Grant's (1972) provided us methods of teaching young learners, they include:

- imitating
- listening
- seeing
- doing
- understanding repetition
- habit forming by which young pupils learn.

It is not enough for teachers to know their subject areas; teachers should be able to impart knowledge. The art of teaching is therefore the art of motivating learning especially at the primary schools level. The teacher should also be an actor, a good communicator that has good personality and respected by pupils (Boorer 1974).

Teachers in classrooms so as to deliver information to pupils but the situation are not so in the Visual Art lesson that is prepared for pre-primary and primary levels. The reverse is the situation. The main problem of young pupils including the ones in your class is language. Visual arts lessons however provide learners the opportunity for expression using non-verbal language, it is a medium not of words but visuals.

As you realize, that language is essential in learning, the urge to communicate is basic impetus for language learning. Pupils feel more at home with visual arts language because of the opportunity it provides them to express what they think and feel about topic being taught to them.

The teacher therefore has to think of the most suitable medium desired for the level so that the pupils learn the use of simple and relevant materials are therefore recommended for the teaching at the junior levels. Which should become more sophisticated, as they grow older? Language is considered essential in learning. This is why the urge to communicate should be encouraged in young learners as it is the basic impetus for language learning and self-expression.

Large numbers of Nigerian primary schools teachers are NCE holders that teach all subjects to the pupils in class. Some of these teachers are not trained in visual arts practices and they detest teaching it. The feelings of these teachers are that they cannot perform well in this subject area because they do not know how to draw and paint. Whereas it is not compulsory that you must be a good artist to handle a visual arts lesson.

As earlier mentioned, it is not the teacher that will be doing the drawing; the pupils do. It is considered good if you are an artist that has a good knowledge of the visual Arts. You will however need to develop an objective sense of appreciation and keep to the various guidelines, and the dictates of the Primary School Curriculum in respect of Creative and Cultural Arts lessons.

Unlike adults, young pupils' do not have the full control of the muscle that is needed for fine and intricate details. This should be borne in mind when considering the materials, subject matters and tools for their self-expression. Muscle control is only developed with constant

practice. The choice of materials for these pupils should be simple while the paper format and items for use should be large for the pupils to manipulate. Children need to represent boldly hand by hand. This is how to develop their muscle control. Others are by playing with toys, painting, modeling with clay, carving, playing etc. and it is suggested that the younger the pupils the larger the materials. They are provided to work with.

4.0 Conclusion

The roles of the trained teacher of young pupils generally demand some potential for her/him to be able to go about the challenges of his job. Teaching is an adult function, a competence and activity-based job. Effective teachers are supposed to view learning to teach as a lifelong process and have good dispositions and skills for working towards improving their own teaching as well as their pupils learning. You are to assist these pupils to develop their senses of observation, the environment, and the details of things relative sizes of objects and people generally.

5.0 Summary

Teachers of visual arts are not just like other regular teachers. Their potentials, professional trainings and some other qualities are challenged in a visual arts lesson. The teachers' therefore need to be on their toes all the time so as not to destroy what they are planning to build. Remember your students are to be involved in activities while you guide and direct them. It is not compulsory that you must be a professionally trained artist since Visual Arts lessons are essentially activity-based, hence you should involve children in the use of simple material, tools and subject matters that will interest them the common things like pet-animals, home, parents and nature. These topics can be easily managed at their level.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. What is a Visual Arts teacher and what are qualities and potentials expected of him in an art class?
2. What are far of the differences between you – the Visual Arts teacher and your pupils?
3. The teaching of Visual Arts lesson is different from the teaching of other teaching subjects. Discuss?

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Unit 4 Planning an Art Studio

1.0 Introduction

To young pupils, the Visual Arts studio is not like other classes. It is a special class where visual practices and experiences are shared mostly in groups. Learning is made easy in such as class for young pupils, they are excited, and they are also motivated as they get exposed to activities. This unit examines the facilities and the environment that should be providing in a regular Visual Arts studio for young pupils. An ideal studio should have various types of improvised facilities and materials for learning.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the facilities and the environment that required as an ideal Visual Arts studio for teaching young pupils
- identity and provide an ideal Visual Arts studio
- improvise at least an art type of studio even when your school is located in a very remote area.

3.0 Main Content

A visual art studio structure is a room like all regular rectangular classrooms found in any school. However it is only the furniture and their arrangements that are different. Visual art lessons are always activity-based and the way you arrange a class determines the activities to be carried out in it. Being activity based, most of the teaching shall be better handled in groups. The normal regular classroom arrangements of three or four row of desks in a regular class are in adequate for a visual art lesson. The teacher needs to monitor all the pupils and their activities throughout the lesson and to make this possible the art studio needs re-arrangement of the regular classroom furniture.

3.1 An Ideal Studio Arrangement

An ideal studio arrangement is always an oval shape setting facing the teacher's table and of course in the direction of the chalkboard. However, a visual art studio design and size depends much on the type of tools, equipment, materials and the number of pupils to be taught conveniently, at a time and with consideration of safety. However, some of the suggestions of Oladimeji (1999) are found adequate and are recommended for an ideal visual art studio. The suggested ideas are:

The studio building must have adequate humidity, heat transmission and insulation. If it can be afforded, ceiling fans or any other air-conditioner cab help to maintain the heat for comfort in an ideal studio.

- Electricity and water supply are essentials in the studio. Electricity is mainly for illuminations and driving of electrical items like fans. Water is required for mixing colour or solvents. Water is essentially for cleaning up at the end of the lessons.

The floor of the studio should be covered with linoleum that is not too smooth or too rough. The colour, texture and the height of the walls should equally be enticing to the pupils and at the same time easy to clean up after being messed. Your pupils will prefer bright colour.

The studio should not be too choky to your pupils. It can be used in batched groups if it is not large enough to take them all at a time. Sufficient working benches should be provided for the class.

A studio must have stores to keep materials, tools and pupils' finished works. Cupboards and drawers can also be provided.

The main studio hall should be arranged in a such a way that the teacher can easily assess what is happening generally at any spot within the studio right from his table. His/her table level may be raised up a bit.

A moderately equipped First-Aid Box is ideally necessary in your studio.

The furniture in a studio for pupils will consist of chairs and table of moderate size and height for an average pupil. Tables with Formica top or well finished wooded top are advised. You should ensure that these are of the same height so that they can be pushed together when the need arises for a wider working space.

3.2 Visual Art Studio Facilities

Besides the above recommendations, there are some other basic studio facilities a school studio may require. One or two pencil sharpeners (not razor blade), small stove, wires, nails, carving tools, bucket of varied sixes, wooden rolling pins, a small kiln, screw-drivers, mallets, rulers, tape measures, pliers, pen-knife, modeling sticks may be required. The list is inexhaustible, but the requirements of your studio depend very much on you and what you want to teach the pupils.

Leonardo and Adenuga (1963) also recommend Bulletin boards made from straw boards which we consider very necessary for displaying pupils' work during assessments and appraisal sessions. The other items include paper cutters, hammers and saws.

3.3 Studio Improvisation

An ideal studio and its facilities and how they will help you teach have been provided you. We should not lose sight of the fact that only very few schools in Nigeria have enough classrooms. It may not be possible to build an ideal studio recommended in this unit. This is where you have to demonstrate your ingenuity and creativity. You will need to improvise what you and your pupils require for an effective teaching and learning. We are here proposing two forms of improvisation that may or may not fit your situation. You are however advised to adopt and adapt to whatever situation you find yourself.

3.3.1 Improvisation in a Regular Class Room

Is the regular rectangular classroom you are occupying equipped with two or three rows of tables and chairs? You are lucky like most other primary schools in Nigeria. As earlier mentioned, your visual art lessons are activity-based; where pupils will have to work in a small or large group. If your pupils' chairs and tables are not big enough for use, please push three or four of them together to form a large one in an oval-shape arrangement as earlier suggested in this unit. You already have a studio arrangement. You can place the bulletin board on one side of your table while the chalkboard is on the other side.

Remember you don't need must use of your chalkboard in this class. It is a class of serious activities for young pupils, not you. If the wooden cupboard in the class or the drawer of your table is big enough it can serve as your stores to keep materials and pupils' works.

3.3.2 Improvisation in Remote Areas

In situations where some schools in very remote areas of Nigeria cannot provide the four-cornered classrooms, do not be discouraged with that situation. Remember the advice that you should always adopt and adapt to whatever situation you find yourself. You can still function under that 'mango' tree where other regular teachers had been using to teach. It is naturally airy and cooler than a regular classroom.

However, you will have to re-arrange the pupils' chairs and desks as recommended for a makeshift studio under that tree. You may keep your art materials and pupils' works in the Headmaster's office cupboard if available. If not, you can take them home for safe-keeping till the next lesson when they are to be reappraised.

4.0 Conclusion

Using a studio format for a visual art lesson is advantageous to both the teachers and the pupils. Materials like crayons, pencils, clay, paints, gum etc. can be shared in their smaller groups. The teacher will have opportunity to supervise and keep an 'eye' on the pupils as they express the selves using materials. Grouping style reduces the number of materials required and the plans often assist the teacher to achieve the lessons objective. It also builds in learners the spirit of cooperation in the pupils.

5.0 Summary

Visual art lessons should basically be full of activities, hence children enjoy it and they are often very enthusiastic about art. There is no permanent rule of arranging or planning a visual art studio. When a situation real item or a person is not available for one reason or the other, humans have learnt to improvise. There are several factors that determine the planning of a visual art studio. We have only suggested a photo type consider good. You may discover a better way that suits your peculiar situation. Go ahead and use them but note that you must achieve the set objectives for each of the lessons with whatever you choose.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. List all the facilities you will require in a visual art studio for your lessons?

2. What do you mean by Visual Arts studio? Explain the factors that will lead to an ideal art studio for your primary school
3. Describe in details how you will improvise for a visual art studio in a village primary school that has no regular classroom.

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