

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 415 258

TM 027 943

AUTHOR Hale, Judy A.; Boozer, Sandra T.
TITLE Assessment: Young Children and the Visual Arts.
PUB DATE 1997-11-00
NOTE 14p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association (26th, Memphis, TN, November 12-14, 1997).
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative (142) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Art Products; Child Development; *Childrens Art; *Early Reading; Educational Assessment; *Elementary School Students; Evaluation Methods; Grade 1; Primary Education; Qualitative Research; Readiness; *Reading Ability; Student Evaluation; Transitional Programs

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to assess the use of young children's artwork in the assessment of reading abilities. The research method for the study was qualitative, and the design followed an interpretive approach. Subjects were 12 transitional-first grade students (a transitional-first grade allows a child with normal academic ability more time to develop the maturity for first grade) from an elementary school in Alabama. A portfolio for each child consisted of artwork and documentation of reading abilities recorded each month. Indicators for the stage of art development were based on the work of Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987). Findings are reported for the first 3 months. Five children were still in the preschematic level of art development, with some growth being demonstrated in the emergent reading level of each child. Two were in transition between the preschematic and schematic stages of art development as they moved into the third emergent reading level. Two remained constant in both artwork and emergent reading level. Two others had not moved into the third emergent reading level, but their artwork indicated that they were ready to make connections. One had moved into the third emergent reading level even though her artwork indicated that she was not ready to make connections. Findings suggest that children's artwork may offer insights into the development of literacy, and that it may be a tool for the assessment of reading level or ability. (Contains 5 tables and 10 references.) (SLD)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ASSESSMENT: YOUNG CHILDREN AND THE VISUAL ARTS

Judy A. Hale, Jacksonville State University

Sandra T. Boozer, Calhoun County School System

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Judy Ann Hale

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Presented at the annual meeting of
Mid South Educational Research Association
November 11-14, 1997

ASSESSMENT: YOUNG CHILDREN AND THE VISUAL ARTS

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the use of young children's artwork in the assessment of reading abilities. According to Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987), if the objects in a child's drawing are unrelated to each other (a characteristic of the preschematic stage of art development), then that child does not have the ability to relate letters to each other and is not ready to learn to read. Adults can encourage the development of literacy by providing children with a variety of drawing materials. Literacy can be encouraged by helping children to become more aware of their environment and their relationship to that environment. This developing awareness of their relationship to the environment is reflected in the child's drawing.

Literature Review

Young children have a difficult time expressing themselves verbally (Protherough, 1983; Smith, 1976). Art offers children an opportunity to create something with which they may identify (Carson, 1985). According to Goldberg (1992), artistic expression allows children to express what they know and what they understand in another medium. Britsch (1993) further stated that children use their drawings to tell a story.

In an effort to investigate multiple ways of knowing, Clyde (1994) entered a first grade classroom as a co-teacher instead of as a visitor. She found that, through artwork, one child was better able to express his thought and his knowledge on a particular subject. According to Clyde, "the more global nature of art provided a more compatible format for Douglas' ideas" (p. 28).

Through the incorporation of art and drawing into high school honors English classes, Claggett and Brown (1992) found that students were better able to make meaning as they read and as they wrote. They stated that students were able to move from the visual to the verbal by talking about their drawings. Drawings enabled them to discover, develop, and confirm their own ideas and perceptions.

In conclusion, artwork allows younger and older students an avenue of self-expression. Through various media, children are able to express what they know. Later, this lends itself to the enhancement of verbal expression.

Methodology

Research Design

The research method for this study was qualitative and the research design followed an interpretative approach. This design allowed for observations, interviews, artifacts, and content analysis (Vierra & Pollock, 1988). This design was chosen because

children's artwork and reading levels could better be analyzed and understood through observation.

Subjects

The subjects for this study consisted of a group of 12 transitional-first grade children from an elementary school in Calhoun County, Alabama. Traditionally, first grade has been the place and time to begin formal instruction in reading (Shuman, 1979). A transitional-first grade class was chosen for this study because these children are in transition between kindergarten and first grade - a transition between non-reading and reading. The transitional-first grade was designed for the child with normal academic ability but who needs more time to develop the maturity needed to succeed in first grade. It may not be appropriate for special education candidates, nor is it for students who are basically behavior problems.

Procedures

Each participant in the study constituted a case study. All participants were observed and participated in the same activities. A portfolio was developed for each child and consisted of artwork and documentation of reading abilities. The stage of art development and reading level of each child was determined. Artwork was collected from each child on a monthly basis throughout the school year and reading levels were recorded.

A journal was maintained throughout the study by the researcher. Copious notes were kept as to the responses of the participants and the activities of the researcher.

Data Analysis

Indicators for the stage of art development were based upon the theories of Lowenfeld and Brittain (1987). Lowenfeld and Brittain's theories are based upon the premise that the child represents what he or she knows rather than what he or she sees. Those indicators are described in Table 1. Subjects that demonstrated characteristics of the preschematic stage and schematic stage of art development were classified as being in transition.

Criteria for the establishment of a reading level were based upon teacher observation. Since all participants were emergent readers, a scale was developed in order to determine the level of emergent reading. That criteria is described in Table 2.

Findings

Since this study is longitudinal and still in progress, only the findings for the first three months, August-October, will be discussed. The findings indicated that Chester, Justin, Ricky, Cameron, and Mark were still in the preschematic level of art development with some growth being demonstrated in the emergent reading level of each child. The artwork of Joshua and David

indicated that they were in transition between the preschematic and schematic stage of art development as they moved into the third emergent reading level. Megan and Payton remained constant in their art stage and emergent reading level. While Terrance and Michael had not moved into the third emergent reading level, their artwork indicated that they were ready to make connections. Lanae had moved into the third emergent reading level even though her artwork indicated that she was not ready to make connections. For an overview of all students, refer to Tables 3, 4, and 5.

Implications

Protherough (1983) contended that young children have a difficult time expressing themselves and what they know orally. The findings of this study are significant in that they suggest to the classroom teacher that children's artwork offer many insights into children's development of literacy. Artwork may be used as a tool in the assessment of reading level or ability.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Table 1

Indicators for Art Development

| Scribbling Stage Stage 1 | |
|---|---|
| Children begin by making random marks on paper. Random marks become organized and controlled. Color is subordinate. | |
| Preschematic Stage Stage 2 | |
| Space | Objects appear to be represented randomly in space. |
| Color | No relationship between object and color. |
| Design | No indication of design. |
| Details | No details, only generalizations. |
| Schematic Stage Stage 3 | |
| Space | Use of baseline to connect items of the environment. |
| Color | There is a relationship between the object and the color. |
| Design | Repetition of forms (or schemata). |
| Details | Detailed drawing, indicating an awareness of the environment. |
| Stage of Dawning Realism Stage 4 | |
| Space | Disappearance of baseline and emergence of the plane. |
| Color | Greater understanding of color differences. |

Table 3. Continued.

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Design | Discovers beauties of nature. |
| Details | Greater awareness of details. |
| Pseudo-Naturalist Stage Stage 5 | |
| Space | Attempts at perspective. |
| Color | An increasing awareness of color. |
| Design | Interesting and intricate designs. |
| Details | Wrinkles and folds are important. |
| The Period of Decision Stage 6 | |
| Space | Draws in perspective. |
| Color | Uses light and shade. |
| Design | Recognition of patterns within natural objects. |
| Details | Exaggeration of detail for emphasis. |

Table 2

Criteria for Level of Emergent Reading

| LEVEL | CRITERIA |
|-------|--|
| 0 | <p>Unable to make one-to-one correspondence</p> <p>Very little phonemic, graphemic, & semantic identification/association</p> |
| 1 | <p>Beginning to understand one-to-one correspondence</p> <p>Just beginning to understand phonemic, graphemic, & semantic identification/association</p> <p>These children know that there is a reason to read and are afraid to take any risk to try</p> |
| 2 | <p>Further development of one-to-one correspondence</p> <p>Further development of phonemic, graphemic, & semantic identification/association</p> <p>Beginning to take initiative to try to read</p> |
| 3 | <p>Starting to transfer knowledge of one-to-one correspondence, phonemic, graphemic, & semantic to reading</p> <p>Developing confidence about the concept of reading independently</p> <p>Starting to make predictions</p> <p>These children want to make sense of print</p> |

Table 3

August: Reading Level and Art Stage

| STUDENTS | READING LEVEL | ART STAGE |
|----------|---------------|--------------|
| Chester | 0 | Preschematic |
| Joshua | 2 | Transition |
| Megan | 2 | Preschematic |
| Justin | 0 | Preschematic |
| Terrance | 1 | Schematic |
| Michael | 0 | Preschematic |
| Payton | 2 | Preschematic |
| Ricky | 1 | Preschematic |
| Lanae | 2 | Preschematic |
| Cameron | 0+ | Preschematic |
| David | 2 | Preschematic |
| Mark | 0 | Preschematic |

Table 4

September: Reading Level and Art Stage

| STUDENTS | READING LEVEL | ART STAGE |
|----------|---------------|--------------|
| Chester | 0 | Preschematic |
| Joshua | 2 | Transition |
| Megan | 2 | (no data) |
| Justin | 0 | Preschematic |
| Terrance | 1 | Schematic |
| Michael | 0 | Preschematic |
| Payton | 2 | Preschematic |
| Ricky | 1 | Preschematic |
| Lanae | 3 | Preschematic |
| Cameron | 1 | Preschematic |
| David | 2+ | Transition |
| Mark | 0 | Preschematic |

Table 5

October: Reading Level and Art Stage

| STUDENTS | READING LEVEL | ART STAGE |
|----------|---------------|--------------|
| Chester | 1 | Preschematic |
| Joshua | 3 | Schematic |
| Megan | 2 | Preschematic |
| Justin | 1 | Preschematic |
| Terrance | 2 | (no data) |
| Michael | 1 | Schematic |
| Payton | 2 | Preschematic |
| Ricky | 2 | Preschematic |
| Lanae | 3 | Preschematic |
| Cameron | 1+ | Preschematic |
| David | 3 | Preschematic |
| Mark | 1 | Preschematic |

References

- Britsch, s. (1993). How to nurture early literacy. Instructor, 103(4), 47-49.
- Carson, J. (1985). Tell me about your picture. Instructor, 94(8), 40-44.
- Claggett, F., & Brown, J. (1992). Drawing you own conclusions. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Clyde, J. A. (1994). Lessons from Douglas: Expanding our visions of what it meant to "know." Language Arts, 71(91), 22-23.
- Goldberg, M. R. (1992). Expressing and assessing understanding through the arts. Phi Delta Kappan, 73(8), 619-623.
- Lowenfeld, V., & Brittain, W. L. (1987). Creative and mental growth (8th ed.). New York: Macmillan.
- Protherough, R. (1983). How children judge stories. Children's Literature in Education, 14(1), 3-13.
- Shuman, R. B. (1979). Elements of early reading instruction. Washington, DC: National Education Association.
- Smith, L. H. (1976). The unreluctant years. Auckland, New Zealand: Penguin Books.
- Vierra, A., & Pollock, J. (1988). Reading educational research. Scottsdale, AZ: Gorsuch Scanisbrick.



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

| | |
|--|---|
| Title: <i>Assessment: Young Children And The Visual Arts</i> | |
| Author(s): <i>Dr. Judy A. Hale Ms. Sandra T. Boozer</i> | |
| Corporate Source: <i>Jacksonville State University</i> | Publication Date: <i>November 1997</i> |

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education (RIE)*, are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic/optical media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) or other ERIC vendors. Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following two options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2 documents



Check here
For Level 1 Release:
Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical) and paper copy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 1



Check here
For Level 2 Release:
Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical), but not in paper copy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 2

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

"I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic/optical media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries."

Sign here → please

| | | |
|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| Signature: <i>Judy Ann Hale</i> | Printed Name/Position/Title: <i>Judy Ann Hale / Assistant Professor</i> | |
| Organization/Address: <i>Jacksonville State University College of Education & Professional Studies Jacksonville, AL 36265</i> | Telephone: <i>(205) 782-5167</i> | FAX: |
| | E-Mail Address: <i>jahale@jsucc.jvu.edu</i> | Date: <i>November 13, 1997</i> |

(over)

III. DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY INFORMATION (FROM NON-ERIC SOURCE):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price:

IV. REFERRAL OF ERIC TO COPYRIGHT/REPRODUCTION RIGHTS HOLDER:

If the right to grant reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please provide the appropriate name and address:

Name:

Address:

V. WHERE TO SEND THIS FORM:

Send this form to the following ERIC Clearinghouse:

ERIC Clearinghouse on Assessment and Evaluation
210 O'Boyle Hall
The Catholic University of America
Washington, DC 20064

However, if solicited by the ERIC Facility, or if making an unsolicited contribution to ERIC, return this form (and the document being contributed) to:

ERIC Processing and Reference Facility
1100 West Street, 2d Floor
Laurel, Maryland 20707-3598

Telephone: 301-497-4080

Toll Free: 800-799-3742

FAX: 301-953-0263

e-mail: ericfac@inet.ed.gov

WWW: <http://ericfac.piccard.csc.com>