

Mentor's Introduction

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mentor's introduction

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"To us, it (learning to think) often looks a lot like art. Why art? In the first place, thinking, like art, involves making—as in constructing, forming, and composing; as in everyday expressions like 'making sense' and 'making up our minds.' Furthermore, art taps what Arnheim terms intuitive perception as well as intellectual analysis. It elicits the kind of total engagement for which Bruner borrows from a colleague the coinage 'perfink' to encompass perception, feeling and thinking. To that, we would do" (Kirby & Kuyedall, 1991, p. 35).

Edward Stewart graduated from the Kansas City Art Institute in 1974 with a B.F.A. in painting. After graduating he worked as a teacher aid in the 7th grade class in St. Louis, played flute in a band in California, and waited tables in Chicago while painting and exhibiting his work. While in Chicago he also taught art classes at a private studio workshop. In 1981 he received a teaching assistantship and began working on a M.A. in art education at Northeast Missouri State University. While at N.M.S.U. he taught beginning drawing, design, art education, art appreciation and humanities courses. He began teaching at Hickman High School in Columbia, Missouri in 1985 where he has taught beginning photography, commercial design, introduction to art, and advanced placement art. During this period Edward began working on his doctorate in Art Education at the University of Missouri.

His interest in the current study developed out of an involvement with the advanced placement class, personal experience as a developing artist and study in the areas of cognition and gifted and talented. Seeing how drawing causes the mind to think in terms of related structures, there seems to be a link between using this pattern of thinking in art and in other areas. Also the students encountered in his advanced placement class who were most successful seemed to have success in other academic areas or their academic motivation increased as their drawing ability increased. These observations roughly coincide with some ideas laid out in the work of Clark and Zimmerman.

Reference

Kirby, D. & Kuykendall, C. (1991). *Mind matters. Teaching for thinking.* Portsmouth; Boynten/Cook.