

IMPLEMENTATION OF JOHANSEN'S ART CRITICISM MODEL WITHIN A
GRADE TWO CLASSROOM

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis reports an action research project which was undertaken to study, understand, and improve a teacher/researcher's pedagogy of art criticism in a grade two class, through implementation of Johansen's art criticism model. Concurrently, Johansen's art criticism model was tested for its suitability in the context of primary teaching.

Data for this study was collected within an operational grade two class through eight art criticism lessons, three semi-structured interviews, students' journal writings, and entries in the teacher's field diary.

Results from this study indicate that Johansen's art criticism model is suitable for guiding second graders through the art criticism process provided it is appropriately implemented. The study also found that, on the whole, the subjects are at the second stage of aesthetic development as proposed by Parsons (1982).

The study concludes with recommendations as to how Johansen's art criticism model can be effectively implemented within a primary class and what generalist teachers need in order to incorporate art criticism into their art program to bridge the gap between theory and practice.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Art criticism may be defined as "talking or writing about art" (Anderson, 1993, p.199). There are two different types of art criticism. One is talking about students art work, generally in the form of formal or informal critiques, and the other is talking about professional art. This distinction is important because the purposes of these critiques are different. Talking about student art is intended to further students' artistic development in their making of art (Anderson, 1986). The main concern in talking about professional art is to understand professional artworks for the enjoyment, aesthetics, and meanings they contain (Anderson, 1986) and to help students make connections between art criticism and art production.

For this study, art criticism involves an organization of student responses to professional art. How these responses and ideas are arranged in an art criticism model is a matter of preference, indicative of values and beliefs toward students abilities to perceive and understand works of art (Hamblen, 1986).

Teaching students methods of art criticism should assist them to evaluate and respond to art as independent art consumers (Anderson, 1986). Understanding art takes conscious effort, cognitive skills, and practice (Anderson, 1986). Results from Koroscik's (1983) research indicated

that verbalization about works of art can significantly improve student's retention of meaning and structural features (e.g., shapes, lines, etc) of artworks. These results confirm the importance of incorporating art criticism in the visual arts curriculum. Current art education theorists and practitioners believe art criticism to be an essential component of the art curriculum (e.g. Barrett, 1991); it is one of the four strands of discipline-based art education which includes art production, art history, aesthetics, and art criticism. According to the B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document (1993), it is important that young children have the opportunity to respond to art, as well as to create art. The Primary Document indicates that students respond to art by describing images, interpreting images, and using descriptive and interpretive information to judge images. The Primary Document suggests that learning to describe, interpret, and judge art helps the student become a more involved critic, consumer, and creator of art.

However, there are discrepancies between the stated goals of art education and actual elementary classroom practice (Bresler, 1992, 1993; Gray & MacGregor, 1991; Hamblen, 1984, 1986). For instance, Gray and MacGregor (1991) reported that art programs are based on teachers' personal programs which in turn are based on their experience, educational theories, and the realities of the

school. The major emphasis in practice has been upon art production, while art criticism has often been neglected (Eisner, 1984; Hamblen, 1986; Stewig, 1994).

Bresler's (1992) 3-year study of the visual art practices of primary classroom teachers indicate that the great majority of art lessons are towards rote activities. An example of a rote activity orientation is one which is procedure oriented. Here all students follow the teacher's directions in order to achieve an end product that resembles the teacher's sample. While Bresler found that art lessons are production oriented, lessons on aesthetics, criticism, or history are rare.

One explanation for the heavy emphasis of art production is the belief that adult influence can harm children's creative potential and artistic development (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1987). Educators with this belief view the primary role of the teacher is to provide stimulation, encouragement, and an atmosphere favorable to open expression (Dunnahoo, 1993).

Another explanation for the heavy emphasis on the studio approach to art education is related to the fact that there are more art teachers that are better prepared in the art studio approach than in other strands of the art program. These art teachers, like most people, are inclined to do what they know best. It is difficult to teach to others what you do not know yourself, and generalist

teachers often know less about art criticism than specialist art teachers (Eisner, 1984). Teachers' lack of training and background in art is one key barrier to a discipline-based art program (Bresler, 1992). The general lack of art criticism instruction in the schools, despite a variety of published art criticism models which give the teacher guidelines upon which to base art criticism lessons, suggests that more organization and more methodologies on teaching art criticism are necessary (Cole & Schaefer, 1990). This is also echoed by Gray and MacGregor (1991) who stated that in order for more application of art education theories in the classrooms of generalists, more specific art theory guidelines and methodologies need to be introduced to generalists.

Teaching art criticism is particularly difficult for those who teach early elementary age students. This difficulty results, in part, from uncertainty about how to conduct discussions about art with students who are so young (Taunton, 1983). Factors such as a student's age, experience, and background will influence the art criticism learning that takes place. Teachers also need to take into factors relate to the linguistic, conceptual, and perceptual processes in their preparation of art criticism lessons. Teacher questions are essential to focus student observations as they process visual information, but a teacher's ability to facilitate inquiry by effective

questioning is not automatic (Armstrong, 1993). While there are art criticism models available, it is not apparent which models are suitable for primary grades. It is also not apparent how these models should be implemented in the classroom. Teachers need more specific guidelines and methodologies on art criticism instruction if art criticism is to be widely implemented (Hamblen, 1984).

When art criticism is introduced into the classroom, other issues also emerge, such as how students will respond to different types of art, what vocabulary they will use at certain ages, how their previous artistic background and their aesthetic preferences will influence judgements of art works, and how personality types will relate to art interpretations. According to Armstrong (1993), pedagogic practice may be changed if art educators: (a) have a model to guide them in the transfer of theory into practice, (b) initially practice teaching lessons that correspond to the model, and (c) repeatedly analyse their teaching practice to check progress toward their goal. This study comprises all three components proposed by Armstrong.

The research approach used in this study is action research. Action research is also known as teacher research, classroom inquiry, reflective teaching, and a form of naturalistic research (Elliott, 1991). Action research in the classroom starts with identifying matters of concern as perceived by the practising teacher, rather than by an

outsider. The aim is to clarify the problem and, if possible, attempt to resolve issues as the research develops. As the research proceeds the problem may be seen in a new light and a new focus may be required. In an action research process, there is no attempt to control setting variables. To place controls on subjects and settings is to interfere with a naturalistic setting (Evens, 1991).

Action research is an educative process for me. It is about (a) asking how can I improve my practice; (b) considering what I can do about it; (c) developing a plan of action; (d) acting to implement the plan; (e) collecting data; (f) analysing the data; and (g) reflecting on it. The action research process itself will empower me to become more skillful in bringing about change, as I am studying my own work with a view to improving my practice.

Personal Ground

Art criticism is a strand of discipline-based art education which has not been taught by any of the teachers at the school where I teach. I have taught art criticism on an informal basis, but never as complete lessons; the students would view works of art and make an inventory of visual characteristics within the work. In addition, the students may have interpreted and judged an art work but they were never required to provide support for their

answers. My current art program consists of studio production, aesthetics, and art history. My studio lessons usually relate to one of the subject themes of the curriculum, with aesthetics and art history incorporated into the studio lessons. I have used aesthetic scanning to encourage students to analyse artifacts in preparation for craft activities such as T-shirt decorating, enamelling, and tie dyeing. During aesthetic scanning, students study artifacts (T-shirts, enamel jewelry or tie dyes) by analysing and discussing elements of design (e.g., line, shapes, etc), principles of design (e.g., balance, repetition, etc), and expressive properties (e.g., feeling, idea, mood, etc). I believe that meaningful aesthetic learning is increased through activities which produce products that are valued by students. The aim of craft activities is to help students learn how to create functional forms that reflect technical skills and aesthetic judgement.

Art history has been combined with either language arts or studio production. Art from Ghana and New Mexico are integrated into language arts when the class studies legends from these countries. In ceramics, students examine pottery from different cultures such as Chinese, African, and American Indian, in order to teach each culture's stylistic form, thereby giving students opportunities to discuss differences and similarities. In addition, the influence of

time and place upon the pottery, and the traditions and values the pottery reflected, were also examined.

I feel comfortable incorporating aesthetics and art history into my art program because I know these subjects well. However, I have apprehensions about my own effectiveness in teaching art criticism to primary students. My professional art training did not cover how to teach art criticism to the primary grades. Instead, emphasis was placed on studio courses. Although, I was routinely and frequently exposed to studio critiques by art professors, the goals of these studio critiques differ in several important aspects from the goals of teaching art criticism (Barrett, 1988). Writing my thesis on art criticism will enable me to gain the knowledge, background, and experience in teaching art criticism which I currently lack.

Purpose of Research

The purpose of the research is to study, understand, and improve my pedagogy of art criticism in a grade two classroom, through implementation of Johansen's art criticism model and through action research. Concurrently, Johansen's art criticism model will be tested for its suitability in the context of primary teaching.

Research Questions

The general research questions which guided this study are:

1. What kinds of questions should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model?
2. What kinds of activities should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model?
3. How suitable is Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism?
4. How does my teaching impact on how grade two students respond to works of art?
5. How should art criticism relate to studio work?
6. How do grade two students relate to various styles of art in art criticism?

I recognize that the general research questions are stated in the first person which is legitimate in the case of action research. The general research questions are applicable to any elementary school teachers who are interested in conducting research on the implementation of an art criticism model within their art program. The findings of the study are applicable to teachers of primary grades who are concerned with how to guide primary students through Johansen's art criticism model. Since the study was conducted in a grade two classroom with no attempt to control the subjects or the setting, it is possible to consider these findings within other grade two classrooms.

As Merriam (1988) indicated, the generalizability of a case study is for readers to determine the findings which are of value to them and resonate with their own situation.

Pilot Study

The objectives of the pilot study was for me to experience the action research process and the process of guiding students through Johansen's art criticism model. A pilot study was conducted during the last two weeks of May and the first two weeks of June, with a grade two class of twenty-one students who had no experience in critiquing works of art. The study consisted of three art criticism lessons with the entire class and a fourth lesson conducted with eight students, one on one, which would provide insight into how individual students respond to works of art. Four girls and four boys were randomly chosen to reflect the class population.

Each week represented one full cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Each lesson was audiotaped and videotaped, enabling me to observe the process and make plans for the next cycle. I kept a diary of the lessons and of my reflections. After each lesson, students recorded their thoughts in their journals. All recordings were viewed by Rose Balan, a grade one teacher who took on the role of a critical colleague.

To have continuity between subjects, a theme on nature was developed for art criticism, language arts, and science. In each art criticism lesson, I guided the class through the different stages of Johansen's model by posing questions that reflected each stage. At the conclusion of each lesson I introduced the artist's name and provided background information on the artist.

The reproduction, Inchworm (1988), by Jan Thornhill, was selected for the first lesson because of its abundant details and colours. To capture students' interest and to help them focus on the significant aspects of the painting, the relevant elements of the painting were enlarged and reproduced (in mural size, 3m x 6m) in chalk on the chalkboard. The students were intrigued and excited by the mural. For this first lesson, students had difficulty expressing their initial impressions of the reproduction. They kept wanting to describe the reproduction instead. With guidance they were able to analyze, focus on meaning, express their viewpoint and judgement of the reproduction, and provide reasons to support their judgement. The students did not notice that the painting was painted on a slant, but they were thrilled by it when that was brought to their attention. The class provided a number of explanations for the slant of the painting. Here are some of their reasons: "the artist wanted to be different", "it is on a hill", "wind is blowing that way", "someone is

walking down the hill", and "we are looking through that person's eye". A student found a book illustrated by Thornhill in the library the next day. The book cover attracted her attention first, then she recognized the illustrator. I believed our art criticism lesson helped this student in recognizing Thornhill's style of illustration.

Georgia O'Keeffe's painting, Yellow Cactus Flowers (1929), was chosen for the second lesson because of its simplicity in subject matter and colour scheme. From students' recorded answers, most students described their initial impression of the reproduction by expressing their like or dislike of the work. Only three students expressed their first impression in these manner: "makes you want to smell it because it's so big", "it makes me feel warm because of the yellow colour", and "it makes me feel good because flowers make people feel happy".

Georgia O'Keeffe's painting, Cow's Skull with Calico Roses (1931), was selected because the students are acquainted with the motif (Merritt is a ranching community). For the third lesson, more students were able to progress past the stage of likes and dislikes to focus on the quality of the whole painting. Here are some examples of their first impression: "strong feeling", "scary because of the horns", "freedom because a bull is usually locked up but this way he is free", "sad because they killed this animal",

and "flowers give me a nice feeling". The class identified the colours of the painting by choosing chalk pastels which matched the colours the artist used. During this matching activity, a student realized that the colours are layered in the painting. In the interpretation stage, the students associated flowers with ceremony. Some associated flowers with the idea that people lay flowers on graves. One student decided that someone had killed the bull that killed the cowboy. This seemed to be a motif that was easy for these students to relate to because many of them came from ranches. I believed our art criticism lesson encouraged students to examine and explain why they think as they did on issues under discussion, something they normally would not have done on their own.

For the final lesson I guided eight students individually through the art criticism lesson by using Emily Carr's painting, Forest (1932). The students' initial impressions of the reproduction were: "spooky", "darkness", "beautiful because of the blue waterfall and the trees", "cool because the trees and leaves give shade", "shaky because it is all crooked", and "blurry and it looks a mess". Probing into their answers revealed that the students were referring to how the leaves were painted when they described the painting as "shaky" and a "mess". Students revealed their preferences when they answered the question, "Would you like to play in this forest?" James

saw it as a "fun place because there are no branches on the lower part of the tree trunks" which will enable him to see how far up he can go on the trunk if he takes a run for it. Daniel believed that "it is a good place for hide-and-seek". Sally decided that "the path will lead to a cave which will be fun to explore". Jane believed that she "would get lost there". Alex found it "too scary because there are faces in the trees". Paula decided it would not be fun because there is nothing she can enjoy there. Tom did not want to play there because his mom told him not to play alone. There is logic in the students' responses. For example, Tom visualized a black castle at the end of the path. The castle would be black because of the darkness of the night. Andy predicted a ranch would be at the end of the path because normally there are lots of trees around ranches. Jane decided that the path will lead out of the forest because there is a glimpse of light and she can't see any more trees where the light comes from. James decided to examine the reproduction upside down. He preferred the image upside down because it reminded him of the huge corridor with water pouring through it in the movie, Page Masters.

The findings from my pilot study of art criticism with grade two students indicated that the majority of them based their preference selection according to their likes and dislikes of subject matter and colour and on realism. For

instance, in regard to Georgia O'Keeffe's painting, Cow's Skull with Calico Roses (1931), 86% of the students based their likes or dislikes on subject content, colour or both. While the others based their preference on how realistic the painting was. This corresponds to the second developmental stage of children's responses to works of art, as identified by Parsons (1987).

The pilot study also showed how I should phrase the questions in order to guide the students through Johansen's art criticism model. The question, "What do you think of the painting?" is too general for most grade two students. Some students responded to the question, "How does this painting make you feel?" with the answer, "I don't feel anything". When I modified the questions to "What kinds of feeling are shown in the painting?" or "What does the painting make you think of?", the students' responses reflected Johansen's impression stage.

Art education literature suggests that children at the level of aesthetic realism are influenced by the degree of realism in the work. This is also reflected in one lesson of the pilot study where Emily Carr's painting, Forest (1932), was used. The majority of students had difficulty seeing the trees until the title was given. One student described Carr's painting as a "mess". Through dialogue it became clear that the student was referring to the style of

the work. From the student's perspective, "the colours are not in their places so it's a mess".

Significance of Study

As mentioned earlier, art education theorists and practitioners believe art criticism to be an important component of an art program. Engaging in art criticism provides young children with the opportunity to learn to see much more and to see with greater insight than they otherwise would (Eisner, 1988). Eisner indicated that we usually look to recognize, rather than to explore visually. As a result, our attention is usually focused on the visual form just long enough to accomplish practical tasks.

By engaging children in art criticism early in their education, children will come to view that art involves looking and discussing as well as doing. Art criticism then becomes a natural part of living rather than something tacked on to an education in high school. Through art criticism, young children develop both the attitudes and the skills required to analyse, appreciate, and understand art of others and to learn about the relationships of the arts to society and to the environment (Chapman, 1978).

Pedagogical art criticism through artworks selected from different periods, cultures, and styles develops not only young children's knowledge about art but also their critical thinking skills (Anderson, 1991). The development

of independent choices, based on children's own critical thinking skills, may be the most important goal of art criticism in general education (Anderson, 1991).

Participation in art criticism also improves young children's articulation (Stewig, 1994) since verbal interaction with works of art is central to art criticism in the primary grades. Speech develops through use in meaningful contexts (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993). Children learn to communicate by communicating. Art criticism discussions guided by the teacher help children clarify thoughts and express themselves.

In addition, art criticism enhances children's listening skills. If children can learn to be active listeners, they can internalize new ideas and thoughts and assimilate them with their own to form new thinking patterns (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993). Learning to listen is learning to understand and appreciate another's point of view and this expands children's perception of the world (Anderson, 1991).

While many educators agree that models of art criticism are desirable, many are in doubt about how to apply them to specific circumstances and whether any given model is appropriate for a given situation (Anderson, 1986). Therefore, the practical significance of this study will be

to discover the suitability of Johansen's art criticism model in guiding grade two students in art criticism.

In theoretical terms the significance of this study lies in broadening and deepening our understanding of art criticism in primary grades. Understanding how students respond to Johansen's art criticism model in examining works of art has the potential to inform and improve our practice as theorists, curriculum planners, and educators.

Organization of Thesis

This chapter has described the purpose of the study, its general focus, and its applicability. Chapter two provides an overview of literature on art criticism, art criticism models, and developmental abilities of children. Chapter three describes action research and the design of the study. The antecedents, reflections, and action cycles are presented in chapter four. Chapter five addresses the research question and presents a summary of major findings, implications, and suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Art Criticism

The discipline-based approach to curriculum development and pedagogy originated at the Woods Hole Conference in 1959 was defined for educators by Bruner in 1960, translated for art education by Barkan in 1965, and developed into curriculum materials by Eisner in 1968. In the 1960s and 1970s, efforts centered on the identification of key concepts and fundamental behavior that would foster an understanding of the nature of art (Chapman, 1978). Content and inquiry concepts were developed for each of the disciplines in the 1970s. Currently, discipline-based art education (DBAE) defines art more broadly by including art of other cultures, embracing "popular arts", acknowledging that art has social content as well as form, and recognizing contributions of feminist scholars (Greer, 1993).

Discipline-based art education (DBAE) consists of the disciplines of art production, art history, aesthetics, and art criticism. Each discipline has a structure consisting of distinctive concepts and methods (Greer, 1984). Activities and skills in a discipline-based curriculum are presented in sequence that lead to a developed understanding of art.

Art production engages students to draw upon their personal experiences for artistic expression, encourages

them to become their own critics, where they discuss the process and product of their effort (Eisner, 1984). Art history enables students to gain a knowledge of the art or artifact in its historical and cultural contexts (Eisner, 1984). The discipline of aesthetics helps students engage in philosophical inquiries into the nature of art and aesthetic experience (Risatti, 1987). The study of aesthetics deals with questions addressing perception, understanding, and appreciation of art, which in turn move or please viewers in ways that cannot be accounted for by studying its literal meaning (Greer, 1984). Art criticism develops visual skills, allows students to become more articulate about the visual characteristics of a work of art, and supports students as they acquire the skills needed to justify judgements made about an art work (Eisner, 1984). Each discipline has certain distinct features and functions, but each discipline also interconnects and overlaps with one another (Anderson, 1991). Activities and skills in a discipline-based curriculum are presented in sequential order. Properly implemented discipline-based instructions should engage students in the development of skills necessary for engaging in aesthetic, critical, and historical inquiry and art production (Dunnahoo, 1993).

There are many benefits to be derived from teaching art criticism. Within the realm of art itself, art criticism serves to increase the values and satisfaction one gets from

art (Risatti, 1987). It also provides opportunities for students to examine art work in detail and to articulate and record their thoughts. Art criticism can also help students understand visual images and their effects (Barrett, 1989; Haines, 1977), and develop their perceptual skills and their ability to analyse and evaluate images they encounter in their daily lives (Barrett, 1989).

The development of students' critical skills is an indirect outcome of teaching art criticism (Anderson, 1991). The importance of teaching critical skills like independent judgement and critical reflection has been debated in the literature (Anderson, 1991). However, the benefits of teaching art criticism are much more extensive in scope. One can learn about time, place, history, economics, and social relations from careful inspection of works of art (Feldman, 1973). Art criticism is an approach to understanding art in relationship to social values and ideologies, to power struggle, to class, gender, and ethnic issues (Garber, 1990). The process of art criticism also teaches one to take chances and cope with disagreement.

Models of Art Criticism

Art education literature provides a variety of art criticism models which attempt to define what art criticism is. In each case, art criticism is guided by an individual's perception, world views, and values (Anderson,

1988). Therefore, many different models of art criticism exist, each differing in complexity, labelling, beliefs, and theory. However, most art criticism models include, in some manner, the following basic components: description, interpretation, and evaluation (Anderson, 1993; Hamblen, 1984). Art criticism is a learned skill (Hamblen, 1986). In art criticism, one asks such questions as: What is shown in the work? How is it organized? What does it mean? How well is it done? In order to answer questions like these, the viewer must know how to look at, and know what to look for, in that work. The skills required to know how to look and what to look for are learned skills (Mittler, 1982). There is further evidence from D'Onofrio and Nodine (1981) and Wolf (1988) that intervention or training can enrich a person's ability to understand and appreciate style, technique, composition, and expression.

Art education literature provides a variety of art criticism models. The most often referred to is Feldman's (1971) model which consists of description, formal analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Feldman's model stresses the neutrality of the viewer during the stages of description and formal analysis in order to delay judgement of an art work until the final evaluation stage (Feldman, 1971). In the evaluation stage, viewers justify their opinions about a work of art and situate it in relation to similar works.

The stages of Smith's (1973) art criticism model are description, analysis and characterization, and interpretation. Unlike Feldman's model, there is no requirement for the viewer to be neutral towards the work of art, nor is there a separate stage for judgement. Smith (1973) believes there is no need for a separate judgement stage because judgement of the art work would have been implied during the other stages of art criticism. In the stage of analysis and characterization, the viewer examines the way elements are arranged in forms and patterns. This stage also involves the characterization of elements and relations. Characterization involves ascribing human qualities to nonhuman forms and non-human qualities to human forms (Smith, 1973).

Clements' (1979) art criticism model is different from Feldman's model and Smith's model in the sense that Clements applied the scientific inductive method to his criticism model. The three stages of Clements' model are analysis and characterization, hypothesis, and hypothesis testing. Characterization describes the qualities of elements. Human and other characteristics may be ascribed to inanimate things. Characterization is carried out through analogy, simile, and metaphor. Clements' rationale for characterization is that it acts as a connector between formal analysis and interpretation. Clements argued that it is not possible to have a subjective stage (interpretation)

that emerges from objective evidence (analysis). The hypothesis stage consists of a reasonable interpretation of the work of art. The hypothesis testing stage searches for confirmation of the interpretation in other aspects of the work of art. Unlike Feldman's and Smith's formats of art criticism, Clements' format is not concerned with judgement of the art work. Instead, it is based on the inductive method in science, which does not judge scientific importance. Therefore, an inductive method of art criticism should not judge aesthetic value.

Lankford's (1984) art criticism model consists of the following five components: receptiveness, orienting, bracketing, interpretive analysis, and synthesis. The first three components are subjective processes designed to prepare students for the art criticism experience (Lankford, 1984). In the receptive stage, the viewer adopts an unbiased attitude by abolishing any preconceptions of what a work of art is or what its significance may be. In the orienting procedure, the viewer considers the visual and spatial perimeters, and the physical conditions surrounding the art work that may affect the viewing of the work. The third component of Lankford's model is bracketing which is the viewer's commitment to concentrate on the qualities of the art work. In the stages of interpretive analysis, Lankford emphasizes feelings contributed by the descriptions. These differ from Smith's and Clements'

models which do not stress feelings in the analysis stage and Feldman's model which requires the viewer to be totally neutral. The last step, synthesis is a final interpretation of the importance of the work as a whole. Like Clements' non-judgemental model, Lankford's model minimizes the judgemental aspect of a work of art. However, Lankford's (1984) assumption is different from Clements' in that no interpretation is perfect and therefore, judgement, if given, must be done with caution.

Anderson's (1988) proposed model of art criticism for education consists of reaction, representation, formal characterization, personal interpretation, contextual examination, and synthesis. The first stage, reaction, is an evaluative response. The assumption is that one constantly interprets what is seen while seeing it. The next three stages are related to perceptual analysis, moving from simple to complex. In representation, attention is paid to the obvious subject matter, basic visual elements and obvious techniques. Formal analysis is the examination of relationships among forms, and between forms and thematic content. Formal characterization is characterizing the formal qualities subjectively through techniques like metaphor, simile, and anthropomorphism. Personal interpretation refers to the meaning projected to the viewer by the work of art which may or may not be that intended by the artist. In the personal interpretation process, one

needs to trust one's observation and intuition to make sense of a work of art. The 6th stage, contextual examination, is comprised of the who, what, where, when, why, and how surrounding the work. It is information gained about the work, rather than from it. The stage of contextual research is not found in the other models examined. Contextual research enables students to learn about the time, place, cultures, history, and social relations surrounding that work. It also helps students to further develop their personal interpretations of the art work and allows students to resolve their interpretations against the interpretations of the artist and art critics. The last stage is synthesis, which involves two operations: resolution and evaluation. Resolution is resolving the personal interpretations found in the contextual examination stage with the interpretation of the experts. Evaluation is to evaluate the experience of encountering the work. Anderson's stages move from finding what has gone into the work of art to what the individual gets out of it. The model moves from an intuitive, general and simple first response, which serves as a tentative hypothesis, to an in-depth response.

Johansen's (1982) art criticism model is based on Ingarden's analysis of art appreciation and Beardsley's discussion of art criticism. Johansen's model stresses natural human reactions as the foundation of structure. The process consists of three stages: impression, expression,

and commitment. In the impression stage, students describe their initial impressions of the work of art, similar to Anderson's (1988) first stage of response. The expression stage requires viewers to describe, analyse, interpret, and hypothesize the significance of the parts and relations of the work of art. The last stage, commitment, allows viewers to contemplate the work as a whole and give a judgement of the work's aesthetic value and justify that judgement. The judgement stage allows the initial impression to be changed or stay the same.

Many of these art criticism models may be appropriate for classroom practice. It would be a mistake to assume that there is one best way of criticizing art (Barrett, 1988). However, the decision to select one art criticism model might be determined by such factors as grade level, cultural background, or experience of a particular group of students or teachers.

Johansen's model will be used in this study because of its ease of applicability for primary students with no experience in art criticism. Instead of separating description, formal analysis, and interpretation into separated stages as others do, Johansen combined the three steps into one. This simplifies the process for primary students who would otherwise have difficulty categorizing their responses, when many statements cut across several categories (Clements, 1979).

Another advantage of Johansen's model is that it immediately starts with impression: how students feel about the work of art. Other models, such as Feldman's model, requires the viewer to be neutral toward the work of art until the final evaluative stage. It would be difficult for grade two students without any art criticism background to experience a work of art without expressing any feelings. It is not possible to exclude judgement from aesthetic perception (Anderson, 1988; Dewey, 1958). According to research done by Ittleson, Proshansky, Rivlin, and Winkel (1947), making judgement about the nature and quality of a subject is natural to human instinct. A professional critic may be able to assess art works in an unemotional way, but it would be difficult for grade two students to be neutral and avoid using words like beautiful, funny, etc. that reveal feelings and preferences. Students often start with a judgemental statement about something they perceive for the first time; statements like, "I like it. It's so cool."

Another reason for choosing Johansen's art criticism model is because it does not include the characterization stage found in Smith's, Clement's, and Anderson's models. Characterization is usually achieved through the use of linguistic metaphors (Anderson, 1988) which are developed along an age-based progression (Winner, Rosenstie, & Gardner, 1976). Not until the ages of eight to ten (grades

three to five) are linguistic metaphors understood to describe psychological states (e.g., the guard had become a hard rock) or used in a cross-sensory manner (e.g. a loud colour) (Winner, Rosenstie, & Gardner, 1976). These findings indicate that some grade two students will have difficulty achieving the characterization stage, making it inappropriate to use an art criticism model that includes such a stage.

Pedagogical Implications of Johansen's Model

Johansen's art criticism model seems to be an appropriate model for guiding primary students through the art criticism process. However, there are no guidelines as to how the model should be implemented in a primary classroom, guidelines which take into account students' age, experience, and background. Johansen (1982) illustrates the use of his model through a sample dialogue between a high school student and an art teacher about a work of art. In the first stage of the dialogue (impression), the student was asked to focus attention on the art work and attempt to grasp and describe the pervasive quality of the art work as a whole. In stage two of the dialogue (expression), the student was asked to describe and interpret the visual elements, structural principles, figurative parts, and expressions of the work. In the final stage (commitment), the student was asked to attend to the work as a whole and

commit to either a positive or a negative judgment of its aesthetic value and provide support for that judgement.

According to Johansen, the teacher's role in the dialogue process is to make corrective questioning moves based on students' verbalized understanding.

Johansen's discussion included teacher-developed examples of summaries of the impression, expression, and commitment stages for the work, The Dream (Henri Rousseau, 1910). He also provided seven questions a teacher may use to guide the student through the process. These summaries, in conjunction with the provided questions are meant to be sufficient for a teacher to implement the model. However, this is not adequate; seven sample questions are not sufficient to illustrate the stages of the model. In addition, the questions are geared towards high school students; modifying them so that they are applicable to primary students may be difficult for teachers without an art education background.

In addition, the dialogue process was illustrated with one high school student but no indication was given as to how applicable it would be with an entire class, nor are there guidelines showing how to modify the model for use with primary students.

According to research (Parsons, 1977; Winner, 1982; Wolf, 1988) on the developmental stages of children's (preschool to adolescence) responses to works of art,

children are better able to recognize and appreciate an artist's point of view as they mature. In addition, their ability to logically justify their preferences for the work of art also improves as children mature. This correlation between age and capability indicates that teachers need to take into account the developmental stage of children when implementing an art criticism model.

Children and Developmental Abilities

During the 1987 Getty sponsored seminar on DBAE, Dennie Wolf presented findings from her Project Zero research project. Wolf (1988) contends that there is evidence from Project Zero to indicate that children around the age of four make little distinction between pictures and the reality they represent, and that children have a tendency to experience the subject matter of the work, rather than attending to the style, composition, or multiple meanings that an art work might convey. Wolf indicates that there is little difference between young children's responses to works of art, natural phenomena, or real life experiences. In addition, children at that age make little distinction between aesthetic and nonaesthetic objects. Wolf also indicates that without guidance, children may not pose reflective questions until the later elementary years.

Art criticism is a linguistic process consisting of some form of description, analysis, interpretation and,

often, judgement of an art work (Hamblen, 1986). Therefore, an examination of the developmental stages of children's (a) sensitivity to composition and style, (b) sensitivity to pictorial expression, (c) aesthetic preferences, and (d) aesthetic judgement will provide insight into the factors that influence a child's criticism of an art work and the level of art criticism which students at various age groups are capable. An examination of Parsons' aesthetic development theory and of cognition in relationship to art responses will also contribute to the understanding of how students respond to works of art.

Sensitivity to Composition and Style

Different aspects of a picture are perceived and understood at different ages and levels of experience (Winner, 1982). Children around the ages of three or four are so dominated by the subject matter of the work of art that its composition and style go entirely unnoticed (Wolf, 1988). Wolf holds that while children around ages four to seven may not spontaneously respond to works of art in a reflective manner, they are capable of naming and recognizing colors, shapes, and principles such as repetition and proportion. These kinds of terms and concepts serve as a foundation for the development of vocabulary and perceptual skills necessary for more advanced levels of art discussion. However, children as young as six

years old can classify works of art by style if the conflicting subject matter is removed (Hamblen, 1986). In addition, Kindler's (1990) study indicated that in exemplar sorting tasks, third graders' performance in perceiving the visual structure of nonrepresentational paintings is similar to that of college students' performance. These different findings are important to keep in mind when planning art criticism lessons for primary students.

Sensitivity to Pictorial Expression

Research into children's ability to perceive expressive qualities in works of art, especially in representational works in which what is expressed must compete with what is represented, has shown that children on their own do not notice such qualities until the middle years of childhood, and they do not spontaneously describe expressive qualities in works of art until preadolescence (Winner, 1982). However, Carothers' and Gardner's (1979) study found that children of grades four and six are able to produce and perceive certain fundamental aesthetic properties (e.g., line variation and expression) of drawings. Their findings also indicated that grade one students show a very small amount of sensitivity in their drawings to the ways in which a line can be varied or to the overall mood of a work. These findings are of importance to art criticism because sensitivity to pictorial expression is essential to

understanding the aesthetic qualities of paintings (Winner, 1982). These findings indicate that primary students may not spontaneously see aesthetic qualities in representational paintings and may not be ready to deal with aesthetic issues or rather they may not be able to elaborate on their observations.

Aesthetic Preferences

In order to determine the basis of aesthetic preferences, researchers have examined various characteristics of works of art that are preferred by individuals ranging in age from infancy to adulthood. Such studies reveal that most children of different ages have predictable and consistent aesthetic preferences (Winner, 1982). Winner's study on preferences indicates that children of ages four to eight base their preferences on color, representational content, or both, but from approximately age eight to adolescence, realism becomes a determining factor of preference.

Aesthetic Judgement

Since children's judgement is governed by their taste, children of ages four to eight often base their aesthetic judgement on whether or not they like the work of art (Winner, 1982). Between the ages of eight to adolescence, the degree of realism in a work of art becomes the dominant

criterion for aesthetic judgement (Winner, 1982). Usually, adolescents undergo certain changes that affect their judgement. Adolescents begin to see the difference between what they like and what is good (Wolf, 1988). They begin to show responsiveness to stylistic differences in the work of art. At this level, the criteria for judgement are dependent on the artist's intention, viewer's response, and style of the art work (Parsons, 1987).

Wolf emphasizes that only those students who have been taught aesthetic skills throughout high school reach the level of aesthetic understanding beyond the innate sense of like or dislike. There is evidence of this in comments made by some adults who judged paintings to be good because of their taste for realistic work. Hardiman and Zernich's (1982) study adds to the evidence that realism is an important dimension in shaping untrained viewers' judgement on works of art. Hardiman and Zernich (1982) found that the degree of realism was a greater influence than subject matter or color in shaping preference judgement of 360 subjects (with no art training) enrolled in grade level three, five, seven, nine, eleven, and college.

There is evidence from D'Onofrio and Nodine's (1981) study and from Wolf's (1988) work that intervention or training can enrich a person's ability to understand and appreciate style, technique, composition, and expression. Results from Koroscik's (1982) study indicated that students

with prior knowledge of visual arts process more information than those who lack such knowledge. These findings provide support for aesthetic appreciation and art criticism education being taught in schools.

Parsons' Aesthetic Development Theory

Parsons' (1987) aesthetic development theory identifies a sequence of five stages of aesthetic development. In stage one, favoritism, viewers take an instinctive pleasure in almost all paintings and are attracted to favorite colors. There is "freewheeling associative response to subject matter" (1987, p.21), especially to subjects that remind them of favorite things in their experience.

Parsons states that those at stage two, beauty and realism, focus on subject matter and maintain that the main purpose of a painting would be to represent something. Viewers at stage two base their judgement on beauty and degree of realism. Parsons identifies expressiveness as the dominant characteristic of stage 3 (expressiveness) understanding. Viewers at this stage have an awareness of creativity, originality, and feeling; and find the beauty of the subject, the realism of style, and the skill of the artist as irrelevant.

In stage four, style and form, viewers focus on what is achieved in the work itself -- the medium, style, and form. Viewers who are at this stage of understanding are aware of

that the interpretation of a painting is not just limited to what an individual experiences but to what is interpreted by a number of people. They also realize that there are historical and social issues that influence the creation of an artwork.

In the final stage, autonomy, judgement is the primary concern. Viewers repeatedly reexamine and revise their judgement of paintings as they question the criteria, concepts, and values with which society interprets works of art. Viewers recognize that aesthetic values change with time and that accepted views need to be reshaped to suit current ideologies and growth in personal experience.

Parsons maintains that his stages do not necessarily represent ages, although in general young children usually are at stage one or two understanding of artworks. Parsons states that in order to understand works of art at a stage four or five manner one must have had experience in examining a variety of works of art.

Cognition in Relationship to Art Responses

Verbal interaction with works of art play an important role in art criticism. Koroscik's and Blinn's (1983) investigation indicated that verbal responses to artwork improve retention of structural (e.g., shapes, textures, etc) and semantic (e.g., representational features, symbolism, etc) features of art. Viewers with prior

knowledge of art have similar information to art viewing experiences in the form of previously stored cognitions which enable them to process more information (Koroscik, 1984). The work of Koroscik, Osman, and DeSouza (1988) indicated that a viewer's culture influences the comprehension of artworks. In addition, visual art processing is influenced by the length of time the viewer has to respond to the work of art (Koroscik, 1982). All these conclusions suggest that students will most lightly encounter difficulty interpreting and responding to artworks for which they have no prior knowledge and will require the presentation of verbal information detailing the context (e.g., historical, social, etc) in which the artworks were created.

Summary

The intent of this chapter was to provide a review of literature detailing aspects of art criticism, describing different art criticism models, and summarizing children and their development abilities. The applicability of Johansen's art criticism model for primary grades was also discussed. One of the goals of art criticism is understanding works of art for the enjoyment and meanings they contain. It is important to teach students methods of art criticism which they can use to judge and respond to art. Such methods help students become independent art

consumers. However, art criticism is not a passive process, it takes conscious effort through the development of cognitive skills and practice. Research suggests that when conducting discussions about art, teachers need to be aware of factors like students' perceptual abilities, and a readiness to view and respond to works of art.

The intent of the next chapter is to provide an overview of the research setting, plan, design and context of the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Action Research

The methodology chosen for this study is action research. Action research originated from the work of social psychologist Kurt Lewin in the mid 1940s (Carr & Kemmis, 1983). Lewin's early action research work was designed to improve the quality of human relationships in institutions and communities (Evans, 1991). The concept of action research was extended to industrial training by Ronald Lippitt, a former student of Lewin's (McLean, 1995). Stephen Corey, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University, applied Lewin's and Lippitt's ideas to education and proposed ways that teachers could become researchers in their own classroom (McLean, 1991).

At a National Invitational Seminar on Action Research, held at Deakin University in May, 1981, participants at the seminar agreed on a definition of educational action research. Here is a slightly adapted form of the definition produced by participants at that seminar (Carr & Kemmis, 1983).

Educational action research is a term used to describe a family of activities in curriculum development, professional development, school improvement programs, and systems planning and policy development. These activities have in common the identification of

strategies of planned action which are implemented, and then systematically submitted to observation, reflection and change. Participants in the action being considered are integrally involved in all of these activities (p. 84).

Action research aims at improvement in three areas (Carr & Kemmis, 1983):

1. the improvement of a practice
2. the improvement of understanding practice by its practitioners, and
3. the improvement of the situation in which the practice takes place.

The rationale for action research is that (a) naturalistic settings are best studied and researched by those participants experiencing the problem; (b) behavior is influenced by the naturalistic surroundings in which it occurs; and (c) qualitative methodologies are perhaps best suited for researching naturalistic settings (McKernan, 1991).

Action research has been chosen for this research because it allows me to improve my own practical actions, not just interpret them. Action research is a systematically evolving, living process of changing both the researcher and the situations in which he/she acts (Kemmis & Henry, 1984). One advantage of action research is that it takes a teacher's concern and addresses it in the research;

studying it in the actual setting in which it arises. Another advantage is that action research has the potential to close the gap between educational theories and practice. Peterat (1992-93) summarized the potential of action research in this way: "Action research offers a framework for taking practice seriously, validating educational experience, and linking theory and practice dialectically" (p.65). Theory and practice are not viewed as separate issues in action research. They are two sides of the same thing, which is always in reflux, interplay, revision, and formation (Van Manen, 1990).

Action research recognizes the difficulty of detaching ourselves in order to be objective observers of education situations, and the difficulty of preventing our biases from influencing our subjective interpretations of our situations (Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Action research encompasses both subjectivity and objectivity in a dialectical manner in order to understand every aspect of the action research process.

Kemmis & McTaggart's (1982) action research model is used for this research. The model starts with a general idea which, through a stage of reconnaissance, leads to formulating a general plan, taking action, observing the process and the effect of the action, reflecting, and then either continuing with a second research cycle, or a

revising of the original plan. The spiral of action, observation, reflection, and planning continues.

Kemmis and McTaggart's model contains a reconnaissance stage which seeks to define the field of action. This stage helps me to decide where I might best exert an effect. The model also recognizes the need for action plans to be flexible. In a classroom setting, it is never possible to anticipate everything which needs to be done. The overlapping of reflection and action allow changes in plans of action. Reflection implies a looking back at what has been done, how it has been done; and evaluating or judging its effectiveness. The self-reflective spiral of Kemmis and McTaggart's model bridges the gap between retrospective understanding and prospective action. Activities which facilitate reflections include my recording of perceptions and events in a journal and discussions with the students and a colleague. This process of reflecting with a colleague provides me with another perspective on my effectiveness and through critical questions and dialogue facilitates more objective analysis and reflection.

Applicability

This research does not conform to a traditional view of generalizability in which external validity is established through a random sample selection from a well-defined population. Rather, this research uses a single class and a

single teacher in a naturalistic setting. Documenting of the context, participants, and activities involved in the study, should assist readers and especially primary art teachers, in determining the transferability of this study to other art education settings.

As with any qualitative research, there is a challenge to the researcher to remain objective. Action research addresses the concern of objectivity by including a reflective phase where the researcher critically reflects on every aspect of each cycle and by having a critical professional colleague view the data and the researcher's reflections to provide another perspective on each cycle of the study.

Research Setting and the Research Group

The study site is Merritt Central Elementary School with a student population of 400, in the city of Merritt (interior of British Columbia).

Participants in the study are the students of my grade two class, a heterogeneous group composed of twenty-one students (8 females and 13 males) ranging in age from six to eight years. One girl transferred out of the school half way through the study. None of the students had any prior, formal instruction in art criticism. Their kindergarten and grade one art lessons were taught by generalist teachers. The twenty-one students ranged widely in academic abilities.

Five of the students were nonreaders while another five students were reading below grade level. Four of the nonreaders were working on a grade one arithmetic program while an average reading ability student was on an excel arithmetic program. One of the students was on medication for hyperactivity and another had a speech impairment. According to the district psychologist, the average attention span of this class was about twenty minutes.

In addition, I focused on six students throughout the study in order to understand certain changes and experiences at an individual level. Two girls (Red Rose and Neome) and four boys (Greg, Peter, Philip, and Sammy) were randomly chosen to reflect the class population. Peter's academic skills and Neome's reading skill were above grade two level. Sammy was a nonreader with a speech impairment but his speech impairment did not hinder his desire to communicate verbally. Both Greg and Philip were reading below grade level. Philip was very vocal while Red Rose was shy, participating orally only in small group settings. Both Philip and Sammy wanted to be cowboys when they grew up. Neome, Philip, and Sammy lived on ranches.

This research was approved by the Ethics Committee of University of British Columbia, the superintendent of the Merritt School District, and the principal of Merritt Central Elementary School. Written consent for participating in the study had been obtained from parents

and students. Twenty-one out of twenty-two members of the class participated in this study. One parent did not consent to the inclusion of her child's data for the study. That child participated in all class activities since art criticism is part of the art curriculum. I used pseudonyms for the students' names when I describe them in writing, in order to protect the anonymity of the students. The pseudonyms were chosen by the students.

Teaching Plan

The curriculum objectives of the eight week study were focused on students learning to talk about works of art and acquiring knowledge about art.

Before the commencement of art criticism lessons in October, students were taught the concept of reflection and practiced reflecting on various events. This preparation helped students with their journal writing.

One art criticism lesson and one art production lesson were planned weekly for eight weeks. I developed a common theme for art criticism, art production, and language arts in order to make connections between subjects. Each art production lesson was conducted on the day after an art criticism lesson.

For this research, reproductions of artists' paintings were used since access to originals was not possible. I recognize that in using reproductions, one encounters the

distortion of scale, loss of detail, and texture, and the possibility of color misrepresentation. However, in a 1982 study, the Wilsons (cited in Stankiewicz, 1984) found that reproductions can be effective stimulants to aesthetic experience, and that students respond differently to reproductions which inadequately approximate the original work.

Timeline

After an acquaintance period in September, data gathering commenced during the first week of October and concluded eight weeks later at the end of November. There were eight art criticism lessons; one lesson per week on Mondays at approximately 10:45 - 11:45 (this includes student journal writing time). However, art criticism lessons five and six were three quarters of an hour to an hour longer than the rest of the lessons.

Research Plan

The class participated in one art criticism lesson weekly for eight weeks; except during week two when the lesson was repeated, with a lot of modifications the second time. More than one art criticism lesson a week would not have provided for personal/professional reflection time on the experience, nor would it have allowed me to reflect on the results in order to plan the actions for the next action

research cycle. Except for week two, each week represented one full cycle of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Two cycles occurred during week two because art criticism lesson two was revised and conducted again during that week. Each cycle evolved from the previous cycle. After each art criticism lesson, the grade two students dictated to the grade five students their responses to posed journal questions. The second graders were guided by set questions that dealt with the lesson, activities in the lesson, and their responses to the art work presented. Students were also able to dictate to the grade five students any other issues, thoughts, or questions related to art criticism. Most art criticism lessons and subsequent student journal recording time took approximately forty to sixty minutes. However, art criticism lesson five and its corresponding journal recording time was two hours, conducted in two days. Art criticism lesson six and its corresponding journal recording time was ninety minutes, conducted in two days. I guided the class through the different stages of the art criticism process by having the students respond to questions that reflect each stage. The specific use of questions to implement the stages of the art criticism model is based on research which indicates that questions, when properly formulated with specific attention to levels of thinking, can actively involve students in the learning process and promote independent critical inquiry.

Rose Balan (professional colleague) fulfilled the role of critical colleague by viewing videotapes, my diary, and students' journals of each session. Our discussions of all the data offered me an opportunity to check my perceptions and critically examine my assumptions.

Data for all six general research questions were collected during each art criticism lesson. To ensure all six general research questions were examined thoroughly, I decided to place more emphasis on specific questions during each art criticism lesson.

The first cycle placed more emphasis on guiding research questions 1 and 5: What kinds of questions should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model? How should art criticism relate to studio work? Cycles two to four placed more emphasis on guiding research question 2: What kinds of activities should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model? The fifth cycle centered more on guiding research questions 2 and 5: What kinds of activities should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model? How should art criticism relate to studio work? The sixth cycle focused more on guiding research questions 3 and 4: How suitable is Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism? How does my teaching impact on how grade two students respond to works of art? Cycle seven concentrated more on guiding research question

3: How suitable is Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism? Cycles eight and nine centered more on guiding research question 6: How do grade two students relate to various styles of art in art criticism?

Data Gathering

Data collection is not an end in itself. Rather it is a means of documenting observations and mediating between the moments of action and reflection in the action research cycle. In addition, triangulation, the gathering of information from several different points of view (teacher/researcher's, professional colleague's, and students') were used to increase the validity of the study.

Data for this study derived from the analysis of classroom videotapes of eight art criticism lessons, three semi-structured interviews, students' journals, and a teacher's field diary.

I kept a chronological diary of experiences, personal reflections, feelings, interpretations, hunches, impressions, and reactions. Issues ranged from accounts of students during art criticism lessons to self-monitoring of teaching during art criticism lessons. The main focus of the diary was to help reflect on the research questions: How does my teaching impact on how grade two students respond to

works of art? How should art criticism relate to studio work?

Students' journals enabled me to enter their world and glimpse some of their thoughts and reactions. The second graders dictated to the grade five students their personal reflections, opinions, and reactions after each art criticism session. The main focus of journals was to provide insight into how young children understand and make sense of artworks and relate to various styles of art.

Video recordings of art criticism lessons enabled the professional colleague and myself to make observations of the implementation process. Observations included students actions and responses and different aspects of my teaching such as how I answer, approve, manage, guide, lecture, and especially question. Video recordings provided opportunities to review segments for verification or clarification of a situation, focus, and dependability checks. Videotaping "sees" more than what an observer's pair of eyes can perceive at a given moment. All video recordings were videotaped by the student teacher. Transcripts of video tapes provided an almost living record of the art criticism lessons and facilitated reflection and analysis of interactions and responses. The main focus of video recordings was to help answer the research questions: What kinds of questions and activities should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model?

How suitable is Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism?

Interviewing six students at the beginning, middle, and end of the research provided access to the perceptions, thoughts, attitude, and opinions which lie behind their interpretation of the lessons, and their impression of my teaching. The six students that were interviewed were chosen randomly. The interviews were guided by set questions but students were able to raise issues and questions as the interview progressed. Semi-structured interviews were audiotaped instead of videotaped. This was done so that less obvious recording equipment might encourage students to respond naturally during interview sessions. The main focus of the semi-structured interviews was to help answer question 4 : How does my teaching impact on how grade two students respond to works of art?

Audio recordings were used as backup for video recordings and during interviews with students. Data collected through video and audio tapes, interviews, researcher/teacher's diary, and students' journals were transcribed verbatim. The transcriptions were then analyzed for patterns and reported in detailed descriptive narration.

Critical, Professional Colleague

Involving another person in this research during the reflection cycle helped to decrease the likelihood of self-

deception by providing another perspective on the analysis of a problem, expanding the experience base upon which decisions could be drawn, and serving as a check against obstructions to productive self-reflection. Rose Balan was the professional colleague who assisted me. She is a grade one teacher with a special education concentration but no art background, and has eighteen years of teaching experience in the primary grades.

During the pilot study and this study of art criticism, I found Rose to be a capable critical, professional colleague. She was supportive while at the same time critical of the art criticism lessons. The credibility and dependability of my interpretations, reflections, and observations of the art criticism lessons were checked by her as an independent critic. Sometimes, Rose provided a different perspective and insight in the interpretation of data because her area of speciality is in special education while mine is in art education.

Summary

In summary, this study documents the implementation of Johansen's art criticism model within a grade two class. The goals of the implementation are to: (1) effectively guide students in talking about works of art, and (2) be responsive to the demands of the classroom.

The next chapter provides detailed descriptions of the context, participants, and activities involved in the implementation so that the reader may determine the implementation's applicability to their own situation and who may in turn modify the implementation as required.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CLASSROOM CASE STUDY

In this chapter, I strive to reveal my implementation of Johansen's art criticism model within my grade two class. The implementation was supported, evaluated, and improved by action research as a process of continuous planning, acting, reflecting, and modifying of lessons.

Cycle One

General Plan

My goal was to present a reproduction that would capture students' interest and contain enough details to demonstrate that it takes time and active effort to perceive a work of art in sufficient depth to gain meaning from it. Another goal of this first cycle was to introduce the class to the art criticism process. The third goal was to familiarize myself with the process of guiding second graders through art criticism. The fourth goal was to discover the kinds of questions I should use to guide second graders through Johansen's art criticism model (research question 1). The final goal was to demonstrate to the class the relationship between art criticism and art production (research question 5).

Norman Rockwell's painting, April Fool (1943), was chosen because of its numerous hidden details, which would

capture students' interest and help to demonstrate that it takes time to view an artwork in depth.

Objectives of Lesson One

Two of the objectives of this first lesson were for students to learn how to look more carefully and closely at a work of art in order to notice both obvious and more subtle qualities and to perceive, respond, and describe an artwork in depth (the first two stages of Johansen's model). Students would be encouraged to perceive, respond, and describe not only the two main characters in the artwork but also the details in the foreground and background. Noticing details in the foreground and background of Rockwell's illustration help contribute to a viewer's understanding of the image.

Another objective of this lesson was for students to learn the importance of taking time to look carefully and feel that it is rewarding and enjoyable to do so.

The final objective was for students to learn that art criticism and art production could be related to each other, and what is learned from art criticism could be applied to studio experience.

Action Step One: Art Criticism Lesson One

Majority of the students thought one and a half minutes would be sufficient time for looking at a work of art. That

one and a half minutes was determined by students' raising their hands when they had completed looking at the artwork. That amount of time was put to the test and then the four reproductions were put away. The students recalled their first impression of the reproduction and as many details as possible. They enjoyed this activity of recalling items and details. The class discussed why there was some disagreement regarding some of their recall of details, for example, discrepancies in their recall of colours and the type of animal (skunk vs raccoon, dog vs deer). The reproductions were brought out again to clear up the discrepancies and for them to examine for more details. The students refined their answers by looking carefully and responding to questions that reflected Johansen's model.

The students did not change their first impression of the reproduction. Their first impressions were: "I spy picture", "find animals", "queen's castle because it looks so fancy", "growing old because of the old couple", "funny", "gross out because she has a skunk on her lap", and "weird because of all the strange things that are in the house".

It was interesting for me to see how certain students focused more on details which had some relevance to their own lives. For example, Dan immediately noticed the plate of bacon and eggs, Diane focused on the money, and Philip on the checkerboard. During the expression stage, some students provided support for their responses. For example,

Lindon believed it was a raccoon that was on the woman's lap and not a skunk because "a raccoon has gray and white stripe across its face and a bushy tail", Red Rose thought "it is a skunk because it doesn't have a mask on its face".

Students had more items to identify, but because of time factor, we proceeded to students' interpretation of the image. Students interpreted the old woman's expression as confused and the old man's as happy. Pupils speculated on why the artist chose such an image to paint. Some of their speculations were: "to share with us things that are funny", "to have fun", "sharing nature with us", "let us know that we'll grow old too", "show the love of a family", and "to show how well he can paint".

The final stage of Johansen's model is judgement and seventeen of the nineteen students judged the painting to be well done because the artist "painted everything real", "made the painting funny", "painted animals in the picture", or "I like animals". The lesson was concluded with a summary of students' learning and biographical information about the artist and his work (see Lesson Plan One of Appendix 2).

The students were excited and looked forward to our studio lesson where they were to create a picture of hidden images.

Discussion with Critical Colleague

I discussed with Rose my concern with the time factor and how can I focus students' attention on the detail being examined. The lesson and students' journal recording time took longer than predicted. Rose and I felt that everything would quicken with increased experience in art criticism and journal writing. Rose suggested the use of a viewfinder to help students focus on the detail being examined. We decided that for the next cycle I would have the students sit in rows with the reproduction posted at the front instead of sitting in a circle with four reproductions spread evenly among them. This way, the video camera would capture more of the students' expression and prevent the students from hovering over the reproductions, blocking each others view.

Reflection

During lesson one, it was like teaching for the first time again, with so many things to be conscious of: the mechanics of video taping, the sequence of the art criticism lesson, questions which would reflect the stages of Johansen's art criticism model, classroom management, and time allotment for the lesson and for journal writing (which involved another class). With so many issues on my mind, I forgot to address formal analysis during the expression stage of Johansen's art criticism model.

Rose found the questions used in the lesson were suitable for the students. Cognitive memory, divergent, and evaluative questions were used to guide the second graders through the stages of Johansen's art criticism model. Since we did not analyse the illustration, convergent questions were not used during the expression stage.

Some of the students' interpretations of the illustration were quite literal. For example, one comment was: "to show the love of a family" because two people were spending time together. Another comment was: "to let us know that we'll grow old too" because the illustration showed two seniors. One student thought it was a "gross" picture and he did not like it because the woman had a skunk on her lap. This corresponds to Parsons' (1987) stage, beauty and realism, of aesthetic development. The skunk, a "smelly" animal did not conform to his idea of beauty. Even though this class had not had the benefit of any prior instruction in looking at art or in discussing it, they had by this time developed personal preferences and a concept of "beauty".

The students seemed most comfortable with describing components of the illustration. Rose and I believed that the continuation of art criticism lessons would enhance students' perceptual abilities and my pedagogy of art criticism. The implementation of Rose's idea of the viewfinder would help students focus on the detail being

discussed. At the end of the lesson, some students made remarks like "that was fun" and "will we do it again", which indicated their enjoyment of the lesson. Rockwell's illustration was a suitable image to use to capture interest. Some students searched for more details and hidden images during their "independent" time.

Rose and I were surprised at the students interest and curiosity of Rockwell. At the end of the lesson, I shared with the class biographical data about the artist and his artworks, for which Rose happened to have reproductions.

This first art criticism lesson was integrated with an art production lesson, where students created their own pictures of hidden images. I hoped to create a sense of connectedness within the students between responding to and creating art. This art lesson capitalized on what was of interest to students and their learning from art criticism.

Semi-structured Interview One

The first semi-structured interview was conducted after art criticism lesson one. We started the interview with the group reflecting on the question, "What do you think of looking and talking about paintings?" Greg found it "enjoyable". It was "interesting" for Neome and Peter. Sammy and Philip found it "easy to talk about the big things and hard to talk about the small things". Red Rose found it "not hard or easy" to talk about paintings.

When asked, "if the lesson was too long, just right or not long enough, they believed the length of the lesson was just right. The next question was: "Why do you think we talk about paintings?" Their answers were: "we are smart" (Peter), "to learn from paintings" (Red Rose), "learn how to draw" (Neome and Peter), and "to be an artist" (Philip). Red Rose added, "The longer we look, the more we see." Another interview question was: "If you were asked to talk about a painting, what would you talk about?" They answered, "the things that are in it", "the background", "the colour", and "the artist".

Suddenly, the group spotted the reproduction, The Visit (1989) by Stone Roberts, and wished to talk about it. The group decided on the direction of their talk in regard to the reproduction. They immediately started to name the items that were in the reproduction. From description of the reproduction they proceeded to their impression of the work. Sammy's first impression was "funny, because she wears sunglasses and has a head band like a man's; like she rides a motorbike". Red Rose found it "strange, because she has something on her finger nails and has a ring like -- like someone kissed her there". Red Rose was referring to the nail polish and the red colour of the ring.

Then Peter and Red Rose started to read into the reproduction. Peter believed that "the woman doesn't want people to know her and that's why she wore sunglasses and a

scarf". Red Rose assumed that "the two women are sisters because they have the same colour hair and skin". Peter thought that "the woman is visiting because of her sunglasses, coat, and car keys". Red Rose added, "This girl doesn't like the other girl, got mad, and stopped playing cards".

The group did not independently proceed to formal analysis or to the commitment stage. We concluded the semi-structured interview with a summary of our discussion:

Cycle Two

Revised Plan

One of the goals of cycle two was to familiarize the students and myself with the art criticism process, with an emphasis on formal analysis, which was not covered during lesson one. Concurrently, convergent questions would be checked for their suitability in analysing an artwork (research question 1). The second goal was to implement the detective game and check its effectiveness (research question 2). The detective game corresponds to all three stages of Johansen's art criticism model (Hollingsworth, 1987). Learning through games is not a new concept, it is consistent with primary education practices (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993). The notion of education being a holistic process, and hence the inclusion of games within education, was pioneered by Froebel (Payne, 1993).

The painting, Luke and Flowers (1987), by Stone Roberts was chosen because it is related to the theme, family and students can relate to the scene. Our language arts and social studies units were centered around the theme of family. My aim was to help students make connections across the curriculum and between the curriculum and their own experiences.

Objectives of Lesson Two

The first objective of the lesson was for students to learn to perceive, describe, analyse, interpret, and judge an artwork. Repeating this goal was needed, for the simple reason that few people ever learn anything fully the first time they are exposed to it. The second objective was for students to learn about the focal point of an artwork and its importance. The students would come to realize the strategy that was employed by Roberts to keep viewers' attention focused on the subject (dog). Another objective was for students to recognize that some artists paint what is familiar to them and express their personal perceptions in their work. This objective would be achieved through discussion of the artist and his work. Through this discussion, students would realize that the source of imagery for themselves and for the artist may sometimes be the same, from their own experience.

Action Step Two: Art Criticism Lesson Two

The class briefly reviewed that it takes time and active effort to perceive a work of art in sufficient depth to gain meaning from it. It was explained to the class that as detectives, their assignment was to: (a) get the general feel of the case (impression of the reproduction); (b) gather and search for clues; (c) examine and interpret those clues (expression stage); and (d) make judgement about the reproduction and provide evidence to support their judgement (commitment stage).

In the first lesson, students described their first impression of the reproduction, April Fool, with ease but with this reproduction, Luke and Flowers, students kept wanting to name or describe the details instead of giving their initial impression. I rephrased the question from: "What does the painting make you think of?" to "Think of some words that would describe the whole picture". Rephrasing had no impact on their train of thought. They were still concentrating on the details instead of the whole reproduction. Some of their responses were: "it's hungry", "he is happy because there is food", "no one fed him but he found something to eat", and "he is tearing the place down".

During the expression stage, I used a viewfinder to isolate the area being focused upon and used questions like the following to guide the pupils through Johansen's model: "How would you describe this scene to someone who is not

here?", "What does the dog look like?", "Has the dog been well looked after?", and "How do you know that?". Students were able to describe and name the details of the picture and they thought it was a Dalmation because of the spots.

A few of the students independently realized that light affects the tone of a colour. For instance, Tweena believed that the flower at the back of the vase was "pink and not yellow because there is not much light at the back and the flower is in the shadow" and Lindon explained that "the colour of the carpet is not the same all the way across because of the way the light is shining on the carpet".

After we identified the colours of the flowers and compared that to the colours of the tablecloth, the class realized that the artist used the same colour scheme for both areas. Students had difficulty seeing that the curved lines form a triangle and that our eyes follow this triangular path (the dog, flowers, vase, cup, drape of the tablecloth, fallen plate, and back to the dog). This concept was too advanced for the class.

When asked, "Is it possible for someone to have a red coloured wall in their house?", most students thought it was not likely. Some of their explanations for the artist's decision were: "so it will not look like the same house", "to give it a different look", and "to make the house lighter". The class provided the following reasons as to why the artist chose to paint such an image: "to make it

look funny", "to show he is a bad dog", "the artist feels good about his dog so he did a painting of it", and "if his dog is missing he would have a picture of his dog".

When we came to the commitment stage, twenty of the twenty-one students liked the reproduction and found the artist had done a good job because it had their favorite colour or subject, it was realistic or the amount of details it had. Only one student disliked the reproduction and judged the work as poor because of the falling items. The lesson was concluded with a summary of the artist and his work (see Lesson Plan Two of Appendix 2).

Discussion with Critical Colleague

At the beginning of the lesson the students were excited with their detective badge and the game but they found it hard to stay focused when we were analyzing the composition. During the second half of the lesson, too many of the same students spoke and too many students failed to contribute to the discussion. This inattentiveness did not occur during the first lesson.

Rose and I decided that the lesson was too long for this group of students to sit in one position and concentrate on a reproduction for three quarters of an hour, especially when a number of the students had difficulty paying attention for long periods of time. I was trying to accomplish too much for one lesson. We considered the idea

of dividing the lesson into two parts or using some strategies to keep them involved (such as the acquisition of points). We also thought of some questions that would help students focus on specific issues. For example, "Was the artist serious or playful when he painted the tablecloth like a picnic tablecloth?", "Why do you think so?", "How do you think the artist felt about the dog?", "What do you think the artist is trying to show about the dog?", and "When might something like this happen?".

Reflection

I was pleased to find some students noticed, and were able to articulate, the effect light had on colours. The students seemed to be at either stage one, favoritism, or stage two, beauty and realism, of Parsons' (1987) aesthetic development. Students were surprised to discover the parallel between the artist's and their source of artistic imagery. For some students, this generated a feeling of being an artist.

Rose and I could not understand why the class had difficulty expressing their impression of the artwork but had no difficulty during lesson one. Rose believed the way I phrased the questions during the impression stage was fine. Convergent questions corresponded to the analytic part of the art criticism model.

The strategy that was used to help students notice the colour scheme of the artwork was effective but the way I dealt with the focal point of the artwork was too advanced for the students. It required modification, as did my implementation of the detective game.

After discussion with my critical colleague, I asked myself how I could present group tasks that (1) provided a high level of motivation; (2) were intellectually challenging; and (3) had a sense of purpose? I started to think about how I motivate and keep students focused on the lesson in other subjects and considered implementing those strategies in art criticism.

Cycle Three

Revised Plan

After discussing and reflecting on lesson two, I decided to modify my implementation of the detective game and tested it for its effectiveness the next day. The modifications were: (a) the class was divided into five detective teams instead of the whole class working together; (b) each team tried to surpass the number of details that I found, which gave students a purpose for the search; (c) each team recorded the details on chart papers; (d) a check was placed beside each detail that was used for making an interpretation; and (e) students passed judgement of the artwork by voting, using ballots.

Modification was also made to the strategy used to help students understand the main focus area of the painting. The modifications were: (a) a triangle was drawn through the main elements of the painting; (b) each detective team was to list the items that formed the triangle; and (c) discussion of the importance of a focal point in an artwork. Students' understanding of the focal point would assist them in realizing why the items in Stone's painting were organized in that manner.

Action Step Three: Modification of Lesson Two

The reproduction, Luke and Flowers (1987), was used again for cycle three. Students brainstormed on how detectives speak and conduct themselves. They practised speaking and behaving like detectives. In their five detective teams, pupils discussed and recorded their overall impression of the artwork. These impressions were shared with the rest of the class before proceeding to the expression stage of Johansen's model where each detective team identified and recorded details that were in the reproduction. After fifteen minutes of searching and recording details, the detective teams gathered together to compare answers and to discuss what enhanced or hindered their team work. A star was awarded to the team with the most details identified.

To help students locate the main focus of the painting, a triangle was drawn through the main elements. Each detective team was to identify the items which made up the triangle (the dog, flowers, vase, cup, drape of the tablecloth, fallen plate, and back to the dog). We discussed how these items helped to keep our focus on the subject of the painting.

Next, the class proceeded onto the commitment stage. In their detective teams, students voted on the question: "Was the artist playful or serious when he painted the wall red and the tablecloth like a picnic tablecloth?" After the ballots were counted they provided reasons to support their decision. Back in their teams, the pupils considered the following questions: "How do you think the artist felt about the dog?", "What do you think the artist is trying to show about the dog?" The final activity was for the students to vote on their judgement of the quality of the artwork (good or poor). After the ballots were counted students provided reasons to support their decisions. A check was placed beside each detail that was used to support the decision.

Reflection

I was pleased with the result of the modifications of lesson two. The students participated fully and were focused on the lesson. Before the lesson, I was sceptical in having the class work in groups because of their lack of

experience in working in groups of more than two. I believed that group activity was successful in this case because (a) each team had a mature student who acted as a leader; (b) each group activity was short in duration; (c) they had only one task to conduct during each group work; and (d) each activity was timed to help each group focus on the task.

This lesson moved at a faster pace. Each activity was kept short and lively. There was active involvement on the part of the students. They were serious in their role-play as detectives and in helping to make their detective team a success. From the students' facial expression, they seemed to understand the focal point of a painting as the center of interest and its importance. The class was thrilled in the use of ballots during the commitment stage. Ballot counting provided a lot of excitement. From our discussion, students realized that there was no right or wrong answer in how they voted. The importance was the criteria that were used to make their judgement.

Cycle Four

Revised Plan

The goals of cycle four were to analyse the applicability of the game, "I Spy", and the colour matching task and maintain students' attention and involvement throughout the lesson. The game, "I Spy", would be a fun

way to engage students in noticing and describing (expression stage of Johansen's model) details and subtle qualities in the artwork. The colour matching task (a "hands-on" activity) would focus students' attention on the different colour tones (expression stage: analysis) in the artwork. These two activities would provide opportunities for student active involvement.

The reproduction, Cow's Skull with Calico Roses (1931), by Georgia O'Keeffe was chosen for this lesson, partly to see if this class would notice the symbolism of the skull and flowers (death and life connection). There is the possibility of students becoming more conscious of their interpretations of the things they perceive if they have opportunities to explore the symbolism in and connotations of visual forms. Chapman (1978) indicated that perceptual response is influenced by how symbolic meaning is interpreted in visual form. The painting was also chosen because (a) the subject matter was familiar to students; (b) they could relate it to their own experiences; and (c) the different colour tones in the artwork. I wanted to introduce the concept of tone so my art criticism lesson would relate to the student teacher's studio painting lesson.

Objectives of Lesson Three

One of the objectives of this lesson was to encourage second graders to notice and describe details and subtle qualities in an artwork. The game, "I Spy", would help students to notice and describe details and subtle qualities of the skull, flowers, and background of O'Keeffe's painting. Another objective was for the second graders to explore the concept of colour tone in an artwork. The colour matching activity would help students to notice the different colour tones (expression stage of the model) of the skull and background of the painting. The third objective was to help students discover that visual symbols could communicate ideas. As in the case of O'Keeffe's painting, the skull might represent death while the flowers represent life. The final objective was for students to show tolerance for each other's ideas. The students would come to realize that not everyone would have the same symbolism for the skull and flowers.

Action Step Four: Art Criticism Lesson Three

I started the third lesson by asking students to look at the whole picture and then think of a word to describe it. One student described it as "weird, because of the crack in the skull" and another pupil used the word, "beautiful, because of the flowers". Then they immediately wanted to name items that were in the reproduction so I

decided to proceed to the expression stage and introduced the game, "I Spy" (see Lesson Plan Three of Appendix 2), which is an activity that helps students focus on the items and colours of the reproduction.

In the expression stage, students debated whether it was a bull or cow skull. Some believed it was a bull skull because of the horns. One student directed our attention to the position of the horns. He believed it was a "cow skull because the horns are on either side of the skull instead of the front". To help students analyse the ways that the parts relate to one another they were asked, "Which item is the boss of the picture?" (students' response: "the skull because it's the biggest"), "Where are its helpers?" (students' response: "the flowers because they are beside the skull and are smaller"), "Why do you think that?", and "Why do you think the artist placed a black stripe behind the skull and the flowers?" (students' responses were: "the opening of a tent because some tents are whitish in colour", "the opening of a door and it is dark inside", "to make the skull stand out more", and "so we can look at the skull").

Next, students chose paint samples to match with colours in the reproduction. The aims of this activity were to show the class that the artist used more than one tone of each colour and to physically involve the pupils in an activity. The pupils were impressed with the technique of colour layering, which was demonstrated by layering coloured

cellophane sheets. The students were then asked, "Are the colours quiet or noisy?" They chose "quiet because quiet colours go with the skull" and "the background colours go with the bone colour". The students decided it would not be the same if the flowers were painted red or pink. They concluded that the artist made the right colour choice for the flowers because "the colours match the skull".

Next, we proceeded to interpret the image. The pupils provided the following responses to the questions, "What do you think the skull and the flowers mean?" and "Why do you think that?": "nothing because it's a painting", "sadness because of the dead bull", "falling because the animal is dead", "happy because of the flowers", "feelings -- sad feeling because of the skull", "animals like to eat flowers because a flower is under the mouth of the skull", "not to kill or hurt animals when you get older", "going to a pow-wow", and "death because of the bones".

From interpretation of the image we proceeded onto the commitment stage. Two students disliked the painting because of the lack of bright colours or the dislike of flowers. The student who disliked the flowers also judged the artist to have done an inadequate painting because of "the hole in the skull". The other seventeen pupils liked the painting because of the following reasons: "has my favorite colour", "the skull", and "has flowers". Some of their reasons for judging it to be well painted were:

"that's what flowers and skulls look like", "the artist didn't scribble", "there are horns", "because of the skull", "because of the colours", and "the roses made it look nice". The lesson was concluded with a summary of the artist and her work (see Lesson Plan Three of Appendix 2).

Discussion with Critical Colleague

Rose and I agreed that my questions were more focused and at the students' level than in the previous lesson. The timing of each subsection of the lesson was appropriate to the attention span of the class. The flow of the lesson was at a faster pace which kept students interested. The video recordings of students' facial expressions and body language indicated that they were enjoying the lesson. Rose felt that "I Spy" worked well as a first endeavor. I believe that the "I Spy" game would have been more effective if I had used a reproduction that contained more items. We believe that the students would get better at providing clues as they could practice more.

This group of second graders did not notice the symbolism of the skull and flowers. Rose and I believed that they still learned much through this examination.

Reflection

Most students had difficulty providing their first impression of the reproduction at the beginning of the

lesson but during journal recording time (after the lesson) they had no difficulty providing their impression of the art work. I wondered if the pupils had difficulty articulating their initial impression of the artwork if their impression was neutral.

During the students' debate (occurred accidentally), they were thinking and searching for evidence to indicate if it was a cow or bull skull. This type of experience helped to enhance students' perceptual skills. During the debate and throughout the lesson, students listened to each other's justifications and there was acceptance of each other's idea, even though they did not always agree.

The students were amazed at their discovery of the skull's different tones of beige. I was pleasantly surprised by a student's insight of how the "black colour made the skull stand out more". One student found vivid colour still an important consideration on preference choice.

The class was able to understand simple linguistic metaphors used in a cross-sensory manner. For instance, they decided the light colours were "quiet" instead of "noisy". They had no difficulty identifying the "boss" of the picture or the "helpers" and were able to provide justifications for their choices.

A few of the students associated sadness or death with the skull and happiness with the flowers, but the death and

life connection eluded them. After our art criticism lesson, some students began to bring cow skulls, horns, and teeth to share with the class.

The game, "I Spy" and the colour matching activity corresponded to Johansen's expression stage of the model and were appropriate for this age group.

Cycle Five

Revised Plan

The findings from this cycle would add to the information gathered for research questions 2 and 5. The goals of this cycle were to (a) familiarize the students with the art criticism process with an emphasis on the first impression of the artwork (first stage of the model); (b) connect art criticism with art production; (c) analyse the effectiveness of students working in small groups; and (d) check for the effectiveness of activities like "be a character" and "be a movement" (expression stage of the model). My aim was to encourage students' responsive looking of the artwork and personal identification with the character in the artwork to strengthen their appreciation of the action and mood of the artwork. To help students understand how a line can convey the feeling of action, students mimicked the lines of the painting with their bodies.

The painting, Scream (1893), by Edvard Munch was chosen because of its expressive qualities.

Objectives of Lesson Four

The first objective of this lesson was for the students to express their first impression of the painting, Scream. The next objective was for the students to recognize that some paintings have expressive qualities. The second graders would come to realize that the expressive qualities in an artwork may not always conform to their ideal of beauty, as in the case of Munch's painting, Scream. The third objective was for the students to relate the process of responding to art with the process of making art through creating an artwork in the style of Munch's Scream (utilizing lines to create an image). After our study of Munch's painting, students would learn to apply their knowledge gained from the art criticism lesson to creating an artwork.

Action Step Five: Art Criticism Lesson Four

The lesson began with a brief review of what could be classified as our initial impressions of paintings. Students recorded and shared their initial impression of the reproduction at their seat instead of at the carpet area. This was done to reduce the amount of time students had to sit in one spot. When students looked at the reproduction,

a number of their gestures and facial expressions resembled the subject's gesture and expression. Some of their first impressions were: "funny because the water is red", "fire on the other side of the hill because the sky is red", "a ghost", "scary - like a skeleton", "sad because someone died", and "like it because it is colourful".

For the expression stage, students moved to the carpet area and were placed in five groups of four. A recorder (an able speller) was assigned for each group. Tweena, who was a recorder took it upon herself to ensure everyone in her group had a turn. During sharing time, we discussed how some of them helped to enhance the functioning of the group. A point was given for each detail identified. We applauded the team with the most points. The same procedure was used for identification of colours.

To help students notice the movement of the sky and water and how lines could be seen as active they were asked to improvise the movements by using their arms. They also worked in co-operative groups to be a "movement" that was in the reproduction. The pupils described the water movement as "wavy", "moving up and down", "have sharp corners", and "softly". Some thought the sky is reddish in colour because there is a "fire", "a sunrise", or "sunset". Philip indicated that he saw a whale in the sky ("the blue colour is the eye"). Some pupils perceived the peach coloured area

as "sand", "like a beach", or "an island because it's surround by water".

To help students achieve a feeling for the main character, they were asked to assume the facial expression and pose as the main character in the reproduction. Pupils associated the main character with words like "sad," "mad," "scared," "lost because he can't find his house," and "yelling for help because he saw a bear or cougar". The two people in the background were interpreted as "normal", "friendly strangers", or as "cowboys because of the cowboy hats".

Next, we proceeded to the commitment stage. Four of the nineteen pupils decided that the artist did not do a good job painting it. Their reasons were: (Greg) "I don't like it", (Dan) "the colour are not in their places", (Jeff) "it's all squiggly", and (Travis) "the legs are ugly". Lisa, who thought the artist did a good job painting it because "it's colourful", disliked the painting because "it's sad". Greg and Jeff disliked the painting because "it's not evenly painted" and "out of focus". The rest (16 students) liked the painting because "of the different things", "blue is my favorite colour", "the different colours", "like the water", "a man is screaming", "it's scary", and "looks real". Fifteen students thought the artist did a good job painting it because "of the action", "I like it", "the different colours", "looks real", "he

coloured nicely", and "it's neat". The lesson was concluded with a summary of the artist and his work.

During journal recording time students were asked, "What do you think of the title, The Scream?" Some of the pupils comments were: "like it", "suits the painting", "strange", "weird because the guy looks weird", "good because he did a good painting", and "it's the only one he can think of".

Their responses to the question, "Would you want to hang this painting in your house?" were: "yes, because it is nice" (seven responses), "I like green so I like it", "no, it makes me dizzy", "no, it's a mean painting", "no, my mom won't like it", and "it's too ugly".

Another journal question was: "If the artist was here in our classroom, what would you ask him?" Some of the students responses were: "Why did you paint the face like that?", "Where did you get your idea?", "Why are there only dark colours?", "How did you get it wiggly?", and "How long did you take to paint it?".

Discussion with Critical Colleague

Rose and I decided that the co-operative groups and the collection of points worked well. We thought of some additional questions: "Is there anything about the two characters that is scary?", "Do the wavy lines help to make this seem like a nightmare? Why? How?", "Have you ever seen

a movie use wavy pictures to show a dream?", "What are some ways dreams are shown in movies?", "What do you do when you are really scared?", and "What is the name of the sound you might make when you are scared? (e.g. a scream)".

Reflection

I felt more at ease with guiding second graders through the art criticism process and in developing activities which would enhance the lesson. The activities used in the lesson were effective in fostering students' interpretation and understanding of the expressive qualities of the image. They also began to have an awareness of how a line could contain motion. Some students were drawing lines in variations of thickness, direction, and position during their "independent" time. A few students created abstract pictures using only lines.

With the implementation of co-operative groups, students were becoming active learners. Group work allowed more student thinking and verbalization of observations and concepts.

Some students had a unique way of expressing themselves. Some of them expressed their dislike of the unrealistic depiction of the image in the follow manner: "it makes me dizzy", "not evenly painted", "out of focus", and "it's squiggly". For a few students, photographic depiction of the subject was still a main consideration in personal

preferences. One student decided that the artist did a poor job on the painting because "the legs were made ugly". He assumed that the artist did not have the technical ability to make the legs look realistic.

Two of the students perceived the painting as "sad" because "someone was dying". One of them explained, "When a person is dying -- the mouth is open and the eyes are closed." Some of the pupils decided the subject was a girl while others thought it was a boy. Their justifications were: "girls scream and the person was screaming", "the person did not look nice so it had to be a boy", and "the person did not have colourful clothes on -- so it had to be a boy". These justifications seemed to echo stereotyped views.

A number of the students used facial expressions and gestures to express their first impression of the artwork. They also had no difficulty articulating their impression of the work. I was not sure if this was due to the expressive qualities of the artwork.

Students' journal answers revealed their acknowledgement of the artist's viewpoint. For instance, some students wondered about the source of his image, the reasons for such an image, and how he achieved certain techniques (e.g., the "wiggly lines").

An art production lesson was conducted in relationship to the art criticism lesson. There was the possibility of

more insight to be gained in their perceiving and creating experiences if the interrelationship of the two was demonstrated. Through the use of chalk pastels, students created pictures following the style of Munch's Scream (Munch used coloured lines to create his image).

Cycle Six

Revised Plan

The goals of this cycle were to (a) analyse the effectiveness of dividing the art criticism lesson into two parts (over two days); (b) help students understand that colours can contribute to the mood of a painting (e.g., the light colours added to the serenity of the painting); (c) reflect on the impact of my teaching on second graders' responses to art (research question 4); and (d) reflect on the suitability of Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism (research question 3).

The painting, Christina's World (1948), was chosen because it (a) is related to the language arts' and social studies' theme, friends; (b) expresses mood; (c) is realistic; and (d) is possible to find such a scene in Merritt.

Objectives of Lesson Five

An objective of the lesson was for students to realize that colours could contribute to the mood of a painting. In

the case of the painting, Christina's World, students would come to see that the colours added to the serenity portrayed in the artwork. The next objective was for the students to realize that the painting, Christina's World, reflected the artist's experience and feelings. The final objective was for students to realize that textures could be found in paintings and how textures contributed to the realism of Wyeth's painting. The lesson stemmed from my belief that students need basic art concepts (e.g., texture, colour, etc) for understanding art. The basic art concepts would help direct students' attention to the important features in the artwork.

Action Step Six: Part One of Art Criticism Lesson Five

I began the lesson by asking the class to think about one of their friends, what is special about this friend, and what do they like to do together. The class was informed that the subject of the painting was a friend of the artist. Some of their first impressions were: "sad because she injured herself", "scared", "hurt", "lonely", "far away", "bored", "beautiful", and "poor because of her old clothes".

Next, we moved to the expression stage which was conducted at the carpet area. We briefly reviewed how well they worked in groups during the last lesson and introduced the word, "encourager". The class summarized the role of an encourager as someone who "thanks people for their ideas",

"gives each person a turn", and "makes people feel good about being in the group". The class was divided into four groups and each group was to list details found in the reproduction. A recorder (an able speller) was assigned to each group and each group was to assign their own encourager. They were given ten minutes to accomplish the task. They were absorbed in searching for minute details like "shade" and "dark shadows". During sharing time, a point was given for each detail identified. The same procedure was used for colour identification.

The next task was for each student within the group, in approximately five minutes, to choose a paint chip to match a section of the hill. The aim of this task was to help students notice that the hill was painted with more than one colour. Only one group accomplished the task within five minutes. The class discussed the process that group took to enable them to complete the task within the time limit.

The aim of the next activity was to help students see that the colours added to the mood of the painting. We compared the colours of this painting to the colours of Georgia O'Keeffe's Red Hill (1927). Students had difficulty comprehending how the pale and muted tones added to the bleak look in Christina's World. They reasoned that "everything was dried up because the owner didn't water the grass" and "the gray sky" was the result of "air pollution".

The final activity of this first part of the lesson was for students to compare the clear, gray sky to the textural details of the golden-brown grass and the word, "texture", was introduced. The first part of the lesson was concluded with a summary of key points and what we would do in the next part of the lesson.

Part Two of Art Criticism Lesson Five

The next part of the lesson began with a review of part one and a discussion of different approaches in attaining a group decision. Before the pupils gathered in their groups to discuss how old Christina was and the rationales for that decision, we brainstormed the following clues to help identify Christina's age: "her size", "colour of hair", "size of her shoes", and "look for wrinkles". Ages thirteen, sixteen, twenty-one, and twenty-four were their predictions. Tweena reasoned that "she looked small so we think she is young". Jerrie added, "My mom is small but she is wide". At this point, background information about Christina, the painting, and Andrew Wyeth was provided (see Lesson Plan Five of Appendix 2).

To give students a glimpse of Christina's world, they were asked to think about how Christina got back to the house. Jeff replied, "Crawl, drag her body." Students were asked to look at Christina's arms and think how strong they might be. They agreed that Christina's arms were weak.

Students assembled in their groups again to "think of some words that would describe how Christina might feel as she pulled her body up the hill". Their responses were:

"terrible", "scared because if she can't get back she'll go hungry", "sad", and "mad". Mack added that it is possible for "her to hurt herself while she's dragging her body".

The last group activity was for each group to decide on "how long might Christina take to get to the house" and "how long might it take them to walk that distance". The groups decided that Christina would take "three hours", "one and a half hour", "one hour", and "half an hour". They would take "three hours" or "one hour". At that point, I realized that the students did not have a sense of time and revised the lesson. I asked students to compare their arms with Christina's. Jeff volunteered to demonstrate how Christina might have had to pull herself toward the house with her arms. This was compared to my walking. The class concluded that it would be significantly longer and harder for Christina to reach the house.

The class was asked, "Why do you think Andrew Wyeth painted so much of the hill?" Their responses were: "to look like a ranch", "to make it look like the hill", "so the house will look far away", and "so the house looked like it's in the back". When asked, "Why do you think Wyeth chose that title for his painting?" Tweena immediately

answered, "She has a different world than our's because her legs aren't strong."

Seventeen of the twenty students liked the painting because of the following reasons: "looks real", "looks peaceful", "like the background", "like the yellow grass", and "has my favorite colour". Three students (Greg, Jeff, & Lindon) did not like the painting because "I do", "it has not much colour", and "it shows sorrow".

Greg, Jeff, and Jerrie did not believe that Wyeth had done a good job in painting it because "it is so", "not much stuff in it", and "of the wrecked house". The rest of the class considered that Wyeth did a good job painting it because "it looks real", "the yellow grass", "has all different things in it", "even did the dog house", "the colours", "like the painting", "looks nice", and "it probably took a long time to paint".

The class proceeded to answer questions in their journal. One of the questions was: "What do you think Christina looked like?" Some of their responses were: "blue eyes and black hair", "ugly and green eyes", "like she's old", "looked wrinkled up", "young and pretty", "like a girl", "like my cousin", and "looked like me".

Another journal question was: "Why do you think the artist painted Christina's dress a light pink colour?" Some of their reasons were: "it's her favorite colour", "she looks nice in it", "she is dark headed", "so she will look

like a flower", "most girls like pink", "so she stands out", "suits the picture", "the artist likes pink", and "he wanted it to look old".

The third journal question was: "How would you describe this painting?" A number of the students used the word "nice" because of the colour or something that they liked in the painting. A few described what Christina was doing and one pupil used the word "peaceful because there seem to be only one thing alive".

Discussion with Critical Colleague

I was concerned over the length of the lesson (one hour and forty-five minutes). The lesson was divided into two parts and conducted over two days. My intention was for each part of the lesson to be approximately thirty minutes in length, which would help to sustain students' concentration. Rose and I found that the students were focused throughout the lesson; despite the length. Rose suggested that one way to shorten the lesson would be to quickly go over the detail section or leave it out for this particular lesson since my focus was on how colours affect the mood. I voiced my concern of how it would change Johansen's model and the effect it might have on the students' perceptual skills.

Rose and I found that the class had adjusted to group work very well; they organized and reorganized very quickly

and efficiently. Rose suggested that one way to involve different pupils as "recorders" was to have someone be the "official speller" to help with the spelling of words.

Rose agreed that it was more effective to demonstrate how difficult it would have been and how much longer it would have taken Christina to reach the house than to ask students to predict the time that Christina would take.

Rose offered the following questions: "What feelings does Christina have as she starts up the hill?", "How do you think she might feel when she gets to the top?", and "Why doesn't she just give up and call for help?".

Reflection

I felt this lesson is where everything came together for me. I now realize that I had the methodology to teach primary students art criticism all long. It was a matter of integrating my knowledge of early childhood pedagogy with art criticism. My earlier lessons were teacher oriented which did not provide many opportunities for students to be physically involved. This caused low student interest in art criticism. With new knowledge gained from each lesson taught, I believed students benefited from my lessons. I was able to incorporate basic art concepts into the lessons to enrich students' experiences with the artworks. With combinations of individual work, co-operative groups, and whole class activities, students showed much more

involvement and their interactions lasting longer than just participating in whole class activities.

Johansen's art criticism model seemed to be suitable for guiding primary students through art criticism. Implementation of Johansen's model seemed to be effective if early childhood education practices were utilized.

The class was able to continue with the lesson despite the one day interruption. During the lesson, some students seemed to more visually sensitive to fine details than previous lessons. Instead of just naming items they were describing shadows, fine details of the house, the movement of the weed, and the position of Christina's legs which caused them to think Christina was hurt.

Students had difficulty comprehending how colours could add to the mood of the painting. They interpreted the images literally. They viewed the "gray sky" as the result of "air pollution" and the "dried up" look was due to the lack of water.

I did not expect the class to be so moved by Christina's inability to walk. Some of the students kept reminding the grade five students (recorders for the grade two students) that it was a "very, very sad picture". I was pleasantly surprised by Louise's ability to sense the peacefulness of the painting and by Lindon's ability to separate his preference from his judgement of the artwork. He disliked the painting because of the sorrow he felt for

Christina but he admired the painter's skill in creating a work so realistic.

Semi-structured Interview Two

Semi-structured interview two was conducted after art criticism lesson five. We started the interview with the question, "What do you think of looking and talking about paintings?" Students' responses were: "nice" (Greg), "fun" (Neome and Red Rose), "interesting" (Peter), and "neat" (Philip). The next question was: "Is it easy, O.K., or hard to talk about paintings?" Except for Red Rose who found it to be O.K., the rest of the group found it to be easy because they "had to talk about it a lot". The last question was: "Why do you think we talk about paintings?" Philip answered, "We can learn about them and we can see things better". Neome decided that "it is because we are smart".

For part two of the semi-structured interview, the group talked about Emily Carr's painting, Forest (1932). the group's impressions of the reproduction were: "like it because of the tunnel" (Philip), "the centre looks like an ice-cream cone" (Greg), "nice because of the roof of the cave" (Neome), "interesting because of the tunnel" (Peter), and "cool because of the trees" (Red Rose).

The group started the expression stage by identifying the details and colours that were in the reproduction.

Then, they launched into a discussion about the path. Some of their comments were: "it would be steep going down because it's dark there and there is the edge" (Philip), "maybe it's a park with a path" (Greg), and "the artist made the path by leaving an empty space and putting crowded trees on either side" (Red Rose). When asked, "Where do you think the path will lead to?", their responses were: "will lead to more trees" (Philip), "to a bear in a cave" (Sammy), and "up a mountain" (Peter). The group believed that they would hear "the winding blowing through the trees", "bear noises", "birds", "owls", and "mice" if they were in the forest. Red Rose and Sammy found that forest to be scary because "there might be a bear". The rest of the group had a different outlook toward that forest. Philip "would make a hide-out in the cave". Neome "would go into the tunnel". Greg "would climb to the blue colour area". The group concentrated on the trees for the next while. They found the trees to be "real and not real". Greg believed that the artist made the trees look "unreal so the trees will look funny" and Philip thought that "it's because the artist wanted the painting to look better".

We proceeded to their opinion of the title, Forest. Neome found the title to be suitable but the rest of the group wanted to change it to: "The Cave" (Philip), "The Dangerous Forest" (Sammy), "The Deadly Cave" (Greg), and "The Tree Tunnel" (Red Rose).

Except for Red Rose who did not like the painting because of the scribbles (referring to the unrealistic depiction of the trees), the rest of the group did. Their reasons were "the different colours" (Neome and Peter), "a monster seems to be coming out" (Sammy), and "the cave" (Philip).

Red Rose judged the artist to have done an inadequate job painting it because of the "scribbles". The rest of the group judged the artist to have done well in painting it because "the artist did the trees well (Peter), "like the big tree trunks" (Greg), and "it has a cave" (Neome).

The final interview question was: "Why do you think the artist did a painting of the forest?" The group decided that the artist "liked to go into the forest".

Cycle Seven

Revised Plan

One of the goals of this cycle was to analyse the effectiveness of omitting the descriptive activity in the expression stage. Omitting the descriptive activity meant modification to Johansen's model. I was curious to see if that would hinder students' perception of the artwork. The findings would add to the information collected as to how suitable is Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary education. Another goal was to introduce students to how light changes the colour and mood of a scene. I

believed that primary students would appreciate and understand an artwork more if they were taught some of the basic painting techniques and colour theories. In the previous lesson, students did not understand how colours can contribute to the mood of a painting. Vincent Van Gogh's paintings, The Bedroom at Arles and The Artist's Bedroom at Arles, were chosen because they illustrate how changes in light and colour can make a difference in how we feel.

Objectives of Lesson Six

One of the objectives of this lesson was for students to understand how light changes the colour and mood of the bedroom portrayed in the two paintings by Van Gogh. The other objective was to introduce the concept of warm and cool colours to the students. The students would learn to identify the warm and cool colours that were depicted in Van Gogh's two paintings. This might help students to understand the influence of personal associations on symbolic connotations of colour. For instance, warm colours remind us of warm things, such as the sun and fire. Cool colours remind us of cool things, such as ice and shade.

Action Step Seven: Part One of Art Criticism Lesson Six

I introduced the lesson by asking the class to think about their bedroom. "What does your bedroom look like with sunlight shining through the window?" "What does your room

look like in the evening with the light off?" Louise explained that "her carpet is dark in colour in the evening and lighter in colour during the day". I explained that Vincent Van Gogh, an artist, painted several paintings of his bedroom and each painting showed the same room but in different colours.

The first reproduction, The Bedroom of Arles, was presented and students' initial impressions were: "nice", "I like it because of the bright blanket", "bright", and "looks a little scary because the floor is scratched and the walls are cracked". Their impressions of the second reproduction, The Artist's Bedroom at Arles, were almost the same as their impressions of the first reproduction. A few of the pupils used the word "brighter" instead of "bright".

The class moved onto the carpet area to continue with the lesson. To demonstrate how colours look different in various amounts of light, the students were to look through their viewfinder, which was made with their hands, at a section of the classroom and to observe the colour change as the lights were turned on and off several times. The class discussed the difference in colour and the mood of the classroom in relation to the amount of light in the room.

The next activity was for the students to work in groups to compare the difference in colour of the two reproductions. Each group received a worksheet (see Lesson Plan Six of Appendix 2) to help them focus on nine specific

items. A recorder and a speller were assigned to each group. This first part of the lesson was concluded with a summary of key points and the presentation of our agenda for the second part of the lesson.

Part Two of Art Criticism Lesson Six

We started on the second part of the lesson with an introduction to warm and colours. A colour wheel and several reproductions that contain cool or warm colours were used to help students understand that the warmth or coldness of a colour refers to an emotive response to a colour. Mack commented that "a person out in the cold for a very long time will look blue". It was pointed out that when someone turns blue, it is a physical response to the temperature. It just so happens that blue is also considered a cool colour. Students applied their knowledge of warm and cool colours to Van Gogh's paintings. In small groups, students identified the cool colours in reproduction number one, The Bedroom at Arles, and discussed how the cool colours affect the mood of the bedroom. For reproduction number two, The Artist's Bedroom at Arles, the group identified the warm colours and discussed how the warm colours affected the mood of the bedroom.

Students proceeded to learn how the warmth of a colour could be changed by mixing a warm or cool colour into it. I demonstrated this by adding red to brown paint and adding

blue to brown paint. Students gasped as they observed the colour change. They were amazed at how easily a colour can be changed to a warmer or cooler colour. They proceeded to identify the different brown colours that were in the reproductions.

We completed the expression stage by deciding if the reproductions showed an expensive bedroom or not. Pupils decided it was an inexpensive bedroom because the "walls and floor were scratched and no waterbed".

A third reproduction of Van Gogh's bedroom was presented and students were asked, "Why do you think Van Gogh did so many paintings of his bedroom?" Tweena believed that "Van Gogh wanted to show his room in the morning, afternoon, and evening". Other responses were: "to show the differences", "he liked his bedroom", and "to sell them". Background information about Van Gogh was provided at this point.

Eighteen of the twenty students liked Van Gogh's paintings because of the colours and the same reason caused Jeff and Tweena to dislike the paintings. Jeff and Greg judged Van Gogh to have done an unsatisfactory job in creating the paintings. Jeff based his judgement on his dislike of the paintings and Greg based it on his dislike of the "crooked" arrangement of pictures on the wall. The rest of the class (18 students) judged the artist to have done well in creating the paintings. A majority based their

judgement on colours, while a few students based their judgement on their liking of the paintings or on the realism of the paintings.

Discussion with Critical Colleague

Rose and I believed that the students learned a great deal about colour in this lesson. Rose found that the omission of the descriptive activity in the expression stage did not seem to hinder students' ability to articulate the other stages of the art criticism process. However, I believe that including a descriptive activity would have a greater chance of strengthening the students' perception of the artwork because they would have had to spend more time viewing the work.

Reflection

During journal recording, only about half of the students were able to identify the warm and cool colours. However, they had no difficulty classifying artworks by warm or cool colours. The class quickly realized how light affected our classroom and were able to relate this phenomenon to their personal experiences. For instance, they explained the appearance of their room during the day and at night.

In the colour comparison activity, students were differentiating between different colour tones. Some

students combined words to make subtle distinctions (e.g., dark brown, reddish brown). A few students were concerned that they did not know the names of some of the colours they identified. Students found it fun to match clothing colours or patterns as they waited to go out of the classroom. This brief form of exercise reinforced students' learning.

Rose commended that there was no obvious evidence to indicate students' responses to artworks were affected by the modification of Johansen's model. I found it was difficult to tell by just observing students' behaviors and responses. However, I believed Johansen's model should not be modified. Usually, second graders have not fully developed their perceptual skill, they still need opportunities to foster their perceptual capacity. Omitting the descriptive part of Johansen's model would defeat the purpose of enhancing students' perceptual ability.

Cycle Eight

Revised Plan

Patterns began to emerge from the students' responses to the artwork presented. So far, students had been viewing paintings with varying degrees of realism. I began to wonder how second graders would respond to artwork that was not realistic in style. I decided to devote cycles eight and nine to discover how students respond to abstract expressionism and optical art. This would help to answer

research question 6: How do grade two students relate to various styles of art in art criticism? Introducing students to other styles of art is a way to broaden their knowledge of the art world.

The goal of this cycle was to analyse how grade two students respond to abstract expressionism. Clyfford Still's work, Painting, 1944 (1944), was chosen because it is an example of abstract expressionism.

Objectives of Lesson Seven

One of the objectives of the lesson was to introduce students to abstract expressionism. Through studying Still's painting and combining their knowledge from previous art criticism lessons, students would be able to differentiate between realistic art and abstract expressionism. Another objective was to introduce students to the concepts of primary colours and neutral colours. The students would learn to identify the three primary colours and the two neutral colours in Still's painting. Colour understanding was included in this lesson because I felt students would have a greater appreciation of Still's abstract expressionism if they could gain a better understanding of how personal associations and cultural traditions influence the symbolic connotations of colour. For instance, some people associate the colour red with blood. Some cultures wear black clothing to attend funeral

services while it is cream colour for another culture. The students would also examine their own symbolic connotations of the colour black (most of Still's painting was done in black).

Action Step Eight: Art Criticism Lesson Seven

The lesson began with an explanation that the reproduction was very different from other reproductions we had seen or talked about. Students were amazed at the actual size of the painting when it was measured out. I also stressed that the artist, Still, applied the colours very thickly which did not show up in the reproduction.

We proceeded to the pupils' initial impressions, some of which were: "scary because it looks like blood dripping", "cool because the yellow line looks like lightning", "nice colours", "pretty, like a tree outside -- the red part is the branch", "awesome, red is the house", "yellow and white lightning", "just lines", and "weird -- not many colours".

The class moved to the carpet area to identify the colours (red, yellow, blue, black, and white) in the reproduction. Still's painting consisted of primary and neutral colours. With the use of a colour wheel and colour chart I introduced the concepts of primary and neutral colours. The class discussed the symbolic connotations of colour and related it to personal and cultural associations.

Next, we proceeded to group work. In their five groups, students discussed and recorded their responses to the question, "What do you think of a painting with so much black?" Their responses were: "looks like it's dark outside", "cool because it has red and yellow in the black", and "scary". We continued with the second question, "Can you find any part of the painting that seem to be moving?" The group replied, "Yes, the red part and the lightning (yellow colour)." The third question was: "What is the white colour doing?" Their answers were: "dripping", "making the letter i", "sitting on the red line", and "icicle".

The next section of the lesson dealt with understanding how abstract expressionism is different from abstract art and other styles of art that we had been looking at and talking about. Reproductions of abstract art and abstract expressionism were shown. During viewing, students kept searching for something they could add a label to (example, "pig's leg", "floor", "door").

The final section of the lesson was the commitment stage. There is evidence of change when students' initial impressions were compared to that of their final impressions. Ten of the nineteen students' final impressions were: "scary", "weird", "not nice", or "sad"; while only five students felt that way at the initial of the lesson.

Ten students liked the painting because of: "the lightning", "the blood dripping", "looks scary", and "has my favorite colour". The rest of the class (9 students) disliked the painting because "it doesn't look like a real picture", "nothing looks hard", "looks like the artist had a paint fight", "not much colour", "too much black", and "just wiggly lines".

Except for Dan, the other eight students who did not care for the painting and Red Rose found Still to have done an inadequate job in creating it, and their reasons for their judgement were: "doesn't have my favorite colour", "too much black", "just lines", "doesn't look like anything", "messy", and "I don't like it". Ten students thought that Still did a good job in painting it and their explanations were: "like the different colours", "like the painting", "looks like lightning", and "looks like blood dripping".

During journal writing, students were asked, "What title would you give to this painting?" They answered, "Dark Night", "Scary Night", "Blackism", "Land of Lightning", "The Bleeding Finger", "Burning Flame", "Death", "Ugly", and "lines".

Another journal question was, "Do you want a painting like this hanging in your home?" Eight students wanted such a painting because "it has my best colours", "matches my room", and "like to see scary stuff everyday". The other

eleven students preferred not to have such a painting because "it's not colourful", "I don't like it", "just line", "it's scary", and "looks weird".

Students were also asked, "How hard do you think it is to paint a painting like this?" Five students thought it would be hard because "it would take a while to paint it" and "the squiggly lines would be hard to do". Fourteen students believed the it would not be hard because "it has only three colours", "just crooked lines", and "there is nothing to it".

Discussion with Critical Colleague

During our discussion, Rose commented that the lesson went well, timing was good, each section moved along smoothly, and maintained students' interest. Rose also found the choice of subject matter appropriate because it allowed the teaching of abstract expressionism and primary colours. A number of the students did not like this particular work, but they were able to sense and articulate different feelings that this particular work evokes. Students were able to understand the idea of expressionism, and learn about this art form.

Reflection

I was surprised that quite a number of the students were able to sense the expressive quality of this artwork.

They associated unpleasantness (e.g., scare, gloom, tragedy) with the painting. The students main criteria for judging this artwork were related to the effort of the artist, the skill involved, and the lack of realism and colour. It was interesting to note that the students' justifications for their dislike of the Painting, 1944 were similar to some comments made by some adults when the same artwork was shown to them.

Nearly half of the students disliked this painting. However, if students study only what they like, their interests and appreciations would not be expanded but would merely be reinforced. This lesson led students to explore their reactions to some of the visual elements of abstract expressionism and to discuss unfamiliar topics. For instance, they reflected on (a) why some of them described the painting as "weird", "bad", "spooky", and "death"; (b) the amount of black in the painting; (c) the intentions of the artist; and (d) their criteria for what would constitute a good painting.

Cycle Nine

Revised Plan

The goal of this final cycle was to analyse how grade two students respond to optical art and to an artwork that was black and white. The findings from this cycle would add to the information gathered for research question 6: How do

grade two students relate to various styles of art in art criticism. Spyros Horemis' Plate 49 (1970) was chosen because it is an example of optical art.

Objective of Lesson Eight

The objective of this lesson was to introduce students to optical art. This lesson, with the previous lessons, would help students to identify optical art, abstract expressionism, and realistic art. Students would also come to realize a work of art could be in black and white only.

Action Step Nine: Art Criticism Lesson Eight

I introduced the class to the lesson by explaining that this reproduction was different from other reproductions we had seen or talked about and this style of art is called optical art.

Some of the pupils initial impressions were: "pretty -- I like black and white", "like a warp tube", "tornado", "a maze", and "it's turning".

The class moved to the carpet area to commence the expression stage. In their five groups, students identified the colours and shapes that were in the reproduction. Then, they moved back as a class to share their responses and to answer the next three questions. "What happens to the shapes as they get closer to the centre of the painting?" The class responded, "Smaller." "Is there movement in the

painting?" "Yes", was their answer. "What kind of movement is there?" Some of their answers were: "spiral", "like a hurricane", and "a tornado".

Back in their groups, students discussed how they thought the artist created the movement in the painting. Some of their ideas were: "the triangles go from large to small", "lines going around and around", and "the spiral was made from squares". Using black and white squares I demonstrated how the illusion was achieved. I then presented the class with an explanation of optical art and other examples of this style.

We continued with the lesson by proceeding to the commitment stage. Pupils' final impressions of the painting were: "cool -- it's going around and around", "happy -- reminds me of a zebra", "looks like steps going down and down", and "dizziness". Only two students disliked the painting because "it was black and white" and "disliked the falling into the centre". The rest of the class (16 students) liked the painting because "it looked like zebra colours going into each other", "black and white are my favorite colours", "like a tornado", "like you are falling into a warp tube", and "shaped like a spiral".

The same two students who disliked the painting also judged the painting not to have been well painted. They based their judgement on the lack of colour in the painting or on the dislike of it. The rest of the pupils (16)

believed the painting was well painted because: "of the shapes", "looks like a whirlpool", "dizzy", "looks like a tornado", "like a spiral", "it's black and white", "looks nice", and "looks hard".

During journal writing, students were asked, "How hard do you think it is to create a painting like this?" Five pupils thought it was easy because of "just two colours" and "only squares and lines". Thirteen students thought it was hard to "make lines so straight", "make it swirl", "has lots of shapes", "hard to be neat", and "he got it so small".

Another journal question was: "If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it?" Some of their responses were: "Wiggly Lines", "A Maze", "Tornado", "Lines - Black and White", "Eye Spy (makes you dizzy)", "Earthquake (looks like a big hole)", and "Curvest Lines".

Discussion with Critical Colleague

Rose found that the art criticism lesson was an effective way to expose students to another style of art and to introduce them to terminologies like optical art, primary colour, and neutral colour.

Rose believed that I had accomplished the goals of my study. She noticed the progression of my pedagogy with each art criticism lesson taught.

Reflection

The students were intrigued by the effect of the optical painting. One student had a general idea as to how the spiral effect was created. A number of the students believed that it was easy to paint geometric shapes. In contrast, a few of them thought making lines so straight would be difficult. Some students speculated that a "special ruler" was used to achieve the precision of the image. A pupil noted that his dad was able to paint a straight border on his bedroom wall by the use of tapes.

The lack of colour did not prevent students from liking the artwork. At that time, it did not occur to me to ask for students' preference: realistic paintings or optical paintings. I had been unable to locate a study on children's preference of optical art in relationship to other styles of art.

The process of making explicit my art criticism lessons and reflections and offering them for scrutiny by others was both unsettling and liberating. It was an important step in my personal and professional development. I became more open with other staff members as to what I did inside my classroom. I had changed my practice in response to what I learned from the action research cycles.

Semi-structured Interview Three

The final semi-structured interview was conducted after the last art criticism lesson. The interview began with the question, "Which reproduction did you like to talk about the most of all the ones we had done?" The students' favorite were: "Forest, because of the tunnel" (Greg), "April Fool's Day, because of the hidden things" (Neome), "Cow's Skull with Calico Roses, because of the skull" (Philip and Red Rose), "Painting, 1944, because it looks like bleeding dripping and the lightning" (Peter), and "Luke and Flowers, because it's funny -- like he's eating supper" (Sammy).

The question, "Did any of you talk to anyone about how we talk about pictures?" was asked to find out if art criticism extended beyond the classroom. Neome told her mom and sisters "that we talk about lots of things in art, it's fun, and sometimes we go with Miss Wong in a small group". Philip told his parents and brother that "it was hard to talk, listen, and think at the beginning but later it was easy". Sammy used a Mickey Mouse book to "find stuff in the pictures and talked to Mom about the stuff".

We proceeded to the next question, "Why do you think we talk about pictures?" Their responses were: "so we can learn more" (Neome), "so you know what to do if you are an artist" (Philip), and "so you know more when you go to a gallery" (Red Rose).

The group was presented with six reproductions and the majority of them preferred to discuss Marc Chagall's I and the Village (1911). The other five choices were: Will Barnet's Waiting (1975), Paul Klee's Senecio (Head of a Man, 1922), Pierre Auguste Renoir's A Girl with a Watering Can (1876), and Carol Riley's Madame Devere's Radishes (1992).

The group giggled and laughed when the reproduction of I and the Village was first presented to them. They associated the image with words like "funny and April Fool". Philip added that "it looks like a meteor crashed and made that hole" (referred to the red half circle). The group decided on the direction of their talk in regard to the reproduction.

Next, the group identified details that were in the reproduction. Philip wanted to play the "I Spy" game with the colours. After the game, Philip pointed out that "some things go in a circle". Red Rose added, "Like a nightmare, everything going around." The group agreed that the artist's purpose of this painting was "to make us happy and to make us laugh". Neome believed that the image was about "funniest" and Peter thought it was about "man and goat". The rest of the group had difficulty interpreting the image. At this point, background information about the artist and the painting was provided. Then, Philip asked, "Why do you think the artist painted the man green?" Neome responded,

"He felt like it." Peter suggested that "he dyed his face". Philip decided, "It's Halloween make-up."

Their final impression of the reproduction was still "funny". The group liked the reproduction and believed that Chagall had done a good job painting it. We concluded the interview with a summary of key concepts covered in the art criticism lessons, journal questions, and semi-structured interviews.

Reflection on the Focused Group

The group I focused on did not independently proceed to formal analysis nor to the commitment stage during our first interview session. However, by the final interview session, they addressed all of the stages of Johansen's art criticism model. In addition, by the final interview session they automatically provided justifications for their responses.

During the first art criticism lesson, all of the group except for Red Rose thought Rockwell's illustration was funny. Red Rose described her reaction to the work as "gross" because the animals would make the house "stinky".

In lesson three, Peter, Philip, and Red Rose associated the skull with sadness because it meant the animal died. Sammy associated the painting with happiness because of the flowers. Neome applied literal meaning to the image (e.g., "animals like to eat flowers because there is a flower close

to the skull"). Greg did not see any symbolism in the work because it was "just a painting".

During lesson four, Red Rose decided that the title, Scream was a bad title because "bad people were screaming". Red Rose's comment rested on the assumption that a title would have the same qualities as the subject of the painting. Neome, Philip, and Sammy decided the title was just right for the painting. Peter thought it was a "funny" title because the word, "scream is not a name but a sound". Greg thought the title was "funny because it was".

Both girls believed that the title, Christina's World was suitable for the painting because the painting portrayed Christina's surroundings. Peter, Greg, and Sammy decided that it was a "funny" title. The three boys did not comprehend the relationship between the title and the interpretation of the image. They viewed the painting as a picture of a girl, a huge field, and a house. Philip thought it was a "good name".

The whole group liked Van Gogh's paintings and their justifications were based on colour. Neome and Peter had no difficulty identifying the warm and cool colours.

During our study of the abstract expressionism painting, Philip found the red line appealing and wanted to call the painting, "Red House". Philip did not sense the unpleasantness of the painting. He perceived the painting in terms of basic colours. He would hang the painting in

his house because it contained his "best colours". Philip thought it would be hard to create a painting with just lines and Sammy thought it would take awhile to produce such an image. The other four students decided it would be easy to paint the image because it lacked colour and detail.

Greg did not like the optical painting because of the falling sensation but the rest of the group liked the painting. Sammy surprised me with his similes. For instance, "it is like zebra colours going through each other" and "it's like a train going around and around". Sammy and Philip thought it would be easy to create such a painting because it had "only two colours".

At the beginning of the study, Greg preferred just to listen to others' point of view rather than to articulate his own thoughts. During the final session, Greg almost participated as much as the others. Early in the study, his justifications for preference selection and judgement were quite dogmatic. For instance, "I don't like it because it is so". His judgement of a painting were often based on personal preferences. At the end of the study, Greg had moved very close to stage 2, beauty and realism, of Parsons' (1987) aesthetic development. Greg began to base his criteria on colour, subject, and realism.

During class, Red Rose was a very quiet, hardly ever joining in our discussions. Here, in a small group setting, she had been vocal. Her responses became more insightful as

the study progressed. During our last art criticism, she thought Chagall's I and Village was "like a nightmare, everything going around". Early in the study, Red Rose often used words like "nice" and "good" to justify her preferences. Her justifications changed about halfway through the study. Later, her justifications reflected stage 2, beauty and realism, of Parsons' aesthetic development.

Neome, Peter, Sammy, and Philip reflected stage 2 of Parsons' aesthetic development throughout the study. They were able to distinguish aspects of the subject that were relevant to them. For the first part of the study, their justifications were based on colour, subject matter, and realism. Later on in the study, their justifications began to be based also on the amount of detail, the manual skill involved, and the amount of time they thought the artist took. These four students were able to distinguish between judgement and preference.

By the end of the study, all six students found that it was easy to participate in art criticism. They perceived some benefits to art criticism. Art criticism discussions taught the group to value the opinions of others. They developed social skills by listening while others spoke and by learning tolerance for other points of view.

The conclusion of this study is not the end of art criticism in my class. It will continue through the rest of

the year, continuing to build on the experiences and knowledge gained from guiding second graders through critical dialogue about works of art and from analyzing of data. Data analyzed and insights gained from this study are discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The intent of this research was to study, understand, and improve my pedagogy of art criticism within my grade two classroom, through implementation of Johansen's art criticism model and through action research. Concurrently, Johansen's art criticism model was tested for its suitability in the context of primary teaching.

The study was conducted using Kemmis and McTaggart's (1982) action research model. The study involved my own grade two class for an eight week duration, which covered eight art criticism lessons and three semi-structured interviews. The second graders in this study had not been previously exposed to any art criticism experiences. Videotaping of art criticism lessons provided the primary data. Secondary data were obtained in the form of student journals, semi-structured interviews, and my own field diary. A critical, professional colleague was involved in the study to critique all data and to provide a different view point on the analysis of the data. Reflection and discussion with Rose, my critical, professional colleague during the study, helped to define the direction of the research. The study was preplanned but detailed ongoing planning continued for the duration of the study in order to respond to the study's findings and students' needs.

Summary of Major Findings

Findings Related to Research Question One

This study was guided by six general research questions. The first one was: "What kinds of questions should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model?"

The second graders were guided through the art criticism process using four types of questions that reflected the three stages of Johansen's art criticism model. The four types of questions are cognitive memory, convergent, divergent, and evaluative (Taunton, 1983).

Cognitive memory questions are useful for the first stage, impression, of Johansen's model. These questions deal with initial impression or holistic description of the artwork. For example, "What would it be like if you were in the reproduction?" and "What does the painting make you think of?"

Cognitive memory, convergent, and divergent questions are suitable for the second stage, expression, of Johansen's model. Cognitive memory questions are effective in describing components and qualities of an artwork (e.g., "How would you describe the painting to someone who cannot see it?", "What do you see in this painting?") Convergent questions are workable in comparing and organizing specific formal properties (e.g., "How would you play with that line on the playground?", "Which part of the painting has

movement?"). Divergent questions are useful in exploring the meanings of an artwork (e.g., "If you were to give this reproduction a title, what would you call it?", "Why doesn't she just give up and ask for help?").

Evaluative questions are effective in the commitment stage of the model. They are questions that deal with matters of judgement, value, and choice. For example, "Do you like or dislike this painting?", "Would you want to hang this painting in your house?", and "Do you think the artist did or did not do a good job painting it?"

Art criticism questions also correspond to Bloom's taxonomy. Johansen's art criticism model is similar to Bloom's taxonomy in that they start with factual information and proceed through to increasingly more complex application of information and finally to an evaluation (Hamblen, 1984). McDaniel's (1979) descriptions of the six levels of the taxonomy help to illustrate how questions for each level of the taxonomy can be applied to Johansen's model. McDaniel explained level one, knowledge, as the lowest level of learning and relies primarily on recall and memory. Level two, comprehension, requires the ability to explain something that has been heard. Level three, application, requires the use of information in a specific situation. Level four, analysis, requires the ability to take apart information in order to make assumptions. Level five, synthesis, requires the ability to reassemble components

into new patterns. Level six, evaluation, is where judgements are made.

Levels one and two of the taxonomy correspond to the impression and description sections of Johansen's model (cognitive memory questions are useful here). Convergent questions are useful for levels three and four of the taxonomy since they correspond to the analysis section of Johansen's model. Level five, synthesis, is similar to the interpretation section of Johansen's model (divergent questions are effective for here). Evaluative questions are suitable for the final level of the taxonomy and for the last stage of Johansen's model.

From the second graders' reactions and responses to questions posed during this study, I found that questions need to complement the students' developmental stages of perceptual and intellectual abilities in order to enhance students' comprehension of posed questions. Sample questions at their level of understanding are: "Which item is the boss of the painting?", "Where are its helpers?", "What is the white line doing?", and "Why do you think the artist used wavy lines for the sky and water?"

The second graders' ability to concentrate and focus on the art criticism lesson increased when I posed questions that were more focused. For instance, the question, "What do you think the artist wanted to share with us?" was not specific enough for some second graders. It was more

effective to ask, "What do you think the artist is trying to show about the dog?", "How do you think the artist feels about the dog?", and "Was the artist serious or playful when he painted the tablecloth like a picnic tablecloth?"

Findings Related to Research Question Two

The second general research question was: "What kinds of activities should I use to guide a grade two class through Johansen's art criticism model?" With grade two students I found that it is more effective to approach dialogue about art in the form of visual/verbal "games", which focus on perceptual tasks in a non-threatening way. Teaching through a game approach is not new in education. It is a strategy which has been utilized in the pedagogy of primary students and supported by the B.C. Ministry of Education (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993). Learning through games is part of a child's natural process of learning and development (Stone, 1995). The students enjoyed the following games which reflected the various stages of Johansen's art criticism model: "I Spy", "Be a Colour", "Be a Movement", "Be a Character", "Match a Colour", and "Detectives".

The game, "I Spy", is where a student looks through a telescope (rolled paper tube, about three centimeters in diameter) and describes that section well enough for others to name the image or identify the correct section of the

artwork. The activity of "Be a Colour", "Be a Movement", or "Be a Character" is where students take on the role of a colour, a movement, or a character that is in the artwork. "Match a Colour" is where students choose paint samples that match the colours of the artwork.

My implementation of Hollingsworth's (1987) idea that art criticism is like a detective game (see Lesson Plan Two of Appendix 2) was not effective during art criticism lesson two. After discussion with critical, professional colleagues, my implementation of the detective game was modified and tested. The modifications are: (a) the class was divided into five detective teams instead of the whole class working together; (b) each team tried to surpass the number of details that were found by the teacher, which gave students a purpose for the search; (c) a check was placed beside each detail that was used for making an interpretation; and (d) students passed judgement of the reproduction by voting, using ballots. With these modifications, students participated fully during the lesson and were focused on the topic.

Findings Related to Research Question Three

The third research question addressed the suitability of Johansen's art criticism model in the context of primary art criticism. Johansen (1982) illustrated the use of his model through a sample dialogue between a high school

student and an art teacher about a painting. Application of Johansen's art criticism model through dialogue, as illustrated in Johansen's discussion, was found to be unsuitable for second graders. During that lesson, students were restless and had difficulty concentrating on the lesson because they were not physically active and the questioning strategy was not geared to their level of learning. Primary grade generalist teachers who have little or no experience in the visual arts or whose art content knowledge is limited will need guidance in implementing Johansen's art criticism model. Johansen's (1982) discussion did not provide guidelines for implementing the model within a primary classroom, guidelines which take into account students' and teachers' experience and background in the arts.

Johansen's art criticism model cannot be taken as a teaching prescription in the primary grades but only as a guide. I have found that second graders enjoy and are capable of criticizing works of art if they are guided through the stages of Johansen's art criticism model with questions and activities geared to their level of learning. Questions and activities that are game-like will sustain second graders' attention and help them focus on the art criticism process. Providing young children with opportunities to learn curriculum content through game-like activity is emphasized in the B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document (1993). The Primary Document maintains

that for young children, learning involves whole-body activities and active participation.

After lesson five, a professional colleague suggested the idea of sometimes deleting the descriptive part of Johansen's model if description of the components is not the main focus of the lesson. To test this idea, description of the artwork was not dealt with during lesson six. There is indication from the study that second graders need to spend time on every stage of Johansen's art criticism model. I believe the quality of the students' responses would have been improved if the opportunity was provided for them to describe basic characteristics of the artwork. The quality of our responses to visual form depends on our ability to perceive (Chapman, 1978). Second graders are not professional critics, therefore, they need opportunities to develop skills in perceiving. During lesson six, two students independently took time to identify some of the details that were in the painting during their group work. A number of the students had voiced their enjoyment of making an inventory of everything in the painting.

Findings Related to Research Question Four

The fourth research question which guided this study was: "How does my teaching impact on how grade two students respond to works of art?" Evidence of pupil behaviors and their responses gained through viewing of video tapes of art

criticism lessons played a major part in the evaluation stage. Rose (critical, professional colleague) and I found that my ability to guide the class dialogue and phrase questions appropriately to the second graders' level of understanding improved with each art criticism lesson. Guiding second graders through the art criticism process necessitated the utilization of questioning strategies which are appropriate for primary school age students. When questions appeared to be "playful", students found talking about works of art to be fun and easy (example: "Which item is the boss?", "Are the colours fighting or friendly?").

In order to motivate students and to ensure their first art criticism experience was a positive one. I used Norman Rockwell's illustration, April Fool, for the introductory lesson. Rockwell's illustration resembles an "I spy" picture (hidden images incorporated into artwork) which students are familiar with and enjoy the search of hidden images. Students found their first art criticism lesson to be a fun learning experience.

While guiding students through the three stages of Johansen's model I found it necessary to have clearly in my mind the ongoing classroom discussion and the goals of the lesson in order to pose appropriate questions to achieve those goals. During lessons and journal writing, students were asked to go beyond merely stating their opinions to also include reasons for their responses.

The second graders initially did not seem to have any interest in the formal analysis of a painting but that changed when I presented content in accordance with students' stage of development. For instance, the demonstrations of color layering using cellophanes and changing a shade of colour by adding a cooler or warmer colour. The lessons were also enhanced by providing students with experiences that included both "hands on" and "minds on" activities. For instance, students used paint samples to match colours in the reproduction. This strategy is consistent with early childhood education practices. Children's manipulation of objects is critical to their development of logical thinking during the concrete operational stage (ages 7-10) (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993).

The act of systematic reflection of art criticism lessons and my discussions with Rose resulted in adjustments to the way I orchestrated the learning environment. For instance, group work was incorporated into the lessons after art criticism lesson two, thus providing more opportunities for student participation and for some students to take on the leadership role. Focusing on a lesson for forty-five minutes in one position was too difficult for second graders to sustain. This was resolved by (1) switching from small group activities to whole class activities and vice versa; (2) conducting the impression stage of the art criticism

model at another section of the classroom; and (3) incorporating learning "game" activities (example: "I Spy", "Be a Character")

Findings Related to Research Question Five

The fifth research question addressed was: "How should art criticism relate to studio work?" Discussion about art in the classroom may function as an activity in itself or as an adjacent to studio activities. During the course of this study, opportunities were taken to relate art criticism to studio experiences, creating a sense of connectedness in the minds of students between perceiving and making art. It helps students to see that what is perceived is also made and that both are parts of the communicative nature of art. It is also possible for more insight to be gained in art criticism and studio experiences when the interrelationship of the two is demonstrated.

Two art criticism lessons were taught in conjunction to studio activities. The first interrelated studio was taught after discussion of Rockwell's illustration, April Fool. Students were stimulated by the discussion and took great delight in creating their own picture of hidden images. Students were guided in making art in the style of Munch's Scream (Munch used coloured lines to create Scream) after our art criticism lesson of his work. Second graders used chalk pastels to create coloured lines in their picture.

Findings Related to Research Question Six

The final research question was: "How do grade two students relate to various styles of art in art criticism?" The artworks chosen for this study ranged from abstract expressionism to realism and to optical art.

The responses of the second graders in this study were analysed with respect to Parsons' (1987) second stage of aesthetic development, beauty and realism. At the second stage, the viewer's attention focuses on the subject matter; the basic purpose of a painting is to represent something. The viewer considers the subject matter to be aesthetically noteworthy either when it conforms to conventional concepts of beauty or when it is realistically portrayed (Parsons, 1987). The artwork's degree of realism was a strong influence in shaping preference responses of the second graders. Nine of them disliked Still's Painting, 1944 (abstract expressionism) while the number of students disliking the other paintings (ranged from "photographic" realism to "low" realism and to optical art) studied were either two or three.

In an effort to understand how second graders justify their preference selections and judgement of artworks, their comments were placed into categories. The categorization system was not pre-established but evolved as comments were analysed.

The three students who disliked Munch's Scream based their preference on the degree of realism, which they considered to be insufficient, and on the tragic appearance of the main character. Preference selections for second graders were also based on representational content, colour, or both. In art criticism lesson three, twelve of the nineteen students based their preference selection of O'Keeffe's Cow's Skull with Calico Roses on representation content and five of the students based it on colour. In art criticism lesson six, seventeen of the twenty students based their preference on colour when presented with Van Gogh's paintings. Thirteen of the eighteen students liked the optical painting because of its subject matter. The other three liked it because it was done in black and white.

The second graders found the subject, optical illusion very appealing even though the image was not realistic nor done in colour. Educational literature indicated that untrained art viewers prefer realism in art (Cupchik & Gebotys, 1988; Hardiman & Zernich, 1982; Ramsey, 1982). However, these studies did not include optical painting as a preference choice. It is possible for some second graders to be more receptive to styles of art other than realism, due to having opportunities in art criticism. Day (1975) reported that his high school students did not like or accept optical paintings as works of art. The high school students' art program was consisted mainly of art production

with little attention to art criticism or art history. Their attitude and understanding of optical art changed after their study of it.

Two students mentioned that the optical painting was like falling into a warp tube. Chapman (1978) stated that motion is an important consideration in primary children's preferences. Six students liked it because it looked like a spiral or a tornado. It is difficult to tell if the students liked it because of the subject, spiral or the sensation of a spiral.

As each art criticism lesson progressed (except for lesson eight), more second graders offered Parsons' (1987) stage two reasons for their aesthetic judgement; perhaps as a result of having more opportunities to view and discuss works of art. For example, the percentage of students offering stage two judgement for art criticism (a) lesson three was 63%; (b) lesson four was 74%; (c) lesson five was 80%; (d) lesson six was 80%; (e) lesson seven was 84%; and (f) lesson eight was 78%.

At stage two of aesthetic judgement, the primary criteria are: (a) the amount of time and effort it took; (b) the manual skill involved; (c) the amount of detail; and (d) the degree of realism achieved (Parsons, Johnston, & Durham, 1978). Examples from second graders of this study are: "looks hard", "looks real", "took a long time", "how he painted the sunlight to hit the grass", and "even did the

dog house". The rest of the second graders' justifications for their aesthetic judgement were characteristic of stage one, where a good painting is based on personal preferences. Judgements of stage one are often idiosyncratic or dogmatic, or both. Students sometimes could not distinguish preference from judgement (Parsons, Johnston, & Durham, 1978). Examples of stage one judgement from second graders of this study are: "I don't like it", "because she did a good job", "it's nice", "because I like water", and "because it is".

Comments made by the second graders of this study also reflect Parsons and Blocker's (1993) discussion on how most elementary students do not spontaneously perceive expressive properties in representational artworks, but instead they interpret expressiveness of artworks in terms of facial expressions, gestures, events, and activities illustrated in the artworks. Examples of this from the study are: "the old woman is confused because she has a confused look", "the dog is happy because there is food", "no one fed him but he found something to eat", "the girl doesn't like the other girl -- got mad and stopped playing cards", "bad because people are screaming", and "sad because she has to drag her body". Only on one occasion during the study did a student note the expressive quality of a painting. A student commented that she liked Wyeth's Christina's World because "it's peaceful".

Eight of the nineteen second graders spontaneously perceived some of the expressive qualities that are in Still's Painting, 1944, which was painted in the style of abstract expressionism. Unlike a representational work, there is no realistic components in nonrepresentational work to distract the viewer's attention from the expressive qualities (Winner, 1982). Some of the second graders spontaneously described the sensation from Still's work as "scary", "sad", "blood dripping", and "lightning". At the end of the art criticism lesson, a student described it as "death".

Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to study, understand, and improve my pedagogy of art criticism in a grade two classroom, through implementation of Johansen's art criticism model. Concurrently, Johansen's art criticism model was tested for its suitability in the context of primary teaching.

With appropriate implementation of Johansen's 3-stage model, second graders are able to describe what is seen, note obvious relationships, make attempts at interpretations, and provide opinions with justifications. The first stage of the model is impression, in which the viewer's impression of the overall quality of the artwork is formed. The second stage, expression, entails (a) the

inventory of all the literal qualities visible in the work; (b) determining the relationships among the qualities found; and (c) focusing on ideas, feelings, or moods conveyed by the work. The third stage, commitment, entails the judgement of the overall expression of the artwork.

Any implementation of Johansen's 3-stage model needs to be sensitive to the students' stage of development. In this chapter I have identified practical implementation strategies, such as "game-like" and "hands-on" activities which had been effective within my grade two class during the course of study.

Educational literature has extensively documented the value of "game-like" and "hands-on" activities for children in their early years of education (Berk, 1994; Payne, 1993). The use of games and hands-on materials enable children to progress along the developmental sequence from the sensorimotor intelligence of infancy to preoperational thought in the preschool years to the concrete operational thinking exhibited by primary children (Stone, 1995). Chapman (1978) has included game-like activities in her book, Approaches to Art Education and Payne (1993) has advocated the teaching of art history appreciation to primary students through modified everyday games and playthings.

Through implementation of Johansen's art criticism model, and action research I have gained a new understanding

of pedagogy for integrating art criticism into the primary curriculum. The findings of this study have modified and reshaped my knowledge of (a) art criticism as a subject; (b) how second graders respond to works of art; and (c) practical, appropriate strategies for implementation of Johansen's art criticism model within a primary class. With art criticism integrated into my art program, it now is a disciplined-based art education program with all four components: art production, art history, aesthetics, and art criticism.

Working within the framework of action research and Johansen's art criticism model has heightened my awareness and increased my knowledge of my own teaching and students. The data produced a valuable and practical source of information. Rigorous recording helped me to understand what was happening and how it had happened. This became very apparent when working with the second graders through the art criticism processes. Seeing how effective they were in their co-operative groups changed my perception of second graders' management ability and stimulated a change in my teaching style.

I discovered that I do not need to be in control of every moment of the students' learning. I took on the role of a facilitator, guiding them along in their exploration of learning. The students and I explored and investigated the paintings in a mood of discovery using Johansen's art

criticism model as a guide. Through this exploration and discovery method, students asked more questions and had more opportunities to share their thoughts and discoveries with classmates. This joint (students and mine) exploration of learning was carried into our science units.

This type of co-operative learning is supported by the B.C. Ministry of Education (B.C. Primary Program Foundation Document, 1993). With assistance, in collaborative and supportive situations, a child is capable of much more than working alone. Vygotsky's concept of the "zone of proximal development" refers to how children are able to stretch beyond their individual capabilities toward more mature cognitive functioning when they learn together and with guidance from an adult (Berk, 1994).

Art criticism lessons not only had an impact on my teaching style but also provided insights about this group of second graders. Second graders usually do not make comments like the following at the beginning of the school year: "The black stripe made the skull stand out" (lesson three), "The painting made me feel peaceful" (lesson five), and a student named the abstract expressionism painting, "Death" (lesson seven). It is possible that art criticism lessons helped some students to be more insightful.

I believe that art criticism lessons also benefited the students by acquainting them with works of some well-known artists and illustrators. For instance, about two weeks

after our class discussion of Munch's Scream, some students arrived at school very excited because they saw the same image on the refrigerator of the T.V. show, Rosanne. A number of months after our discussion of Rockwell's work, a student told me of a picture by Rockwell hanging in the medical clinic.

There is also indication that art criticism lessons helped some students to be more receptive to other styles of art besides realism. For our final interview session, the group I focused on chose to discuss I and the Village by Chagall (1911) over realistic paintings like Renoir's A Girl with a Watering Can (1876) and Riley's Madame Devere's Radishes (1992).

Other evidence from this study echoed education literature that art criticism can increase students' visual awareness. An incident of this was when students identified only objects during art criticism lesson one but by the fifth lesson, quite a number of them noticed the shadows and textures in the artwork and by lesson six some were differentiating between different colour tones. Green was no longer just green but "puky green", "yellowish-green", and "olive green".

This study compelled me to be more critically aware of the need to use top quality reproductions and the benefits of exposing students to originals. I believed that the study would have been enhanced if I had access to original

artworks instead of reproductions. Since our school district does not possess any original artworks, a field trip to our local art studio and gallery was planned. I was surprised to discover not one student had ever been inside that gallery before our field trip. My assumption was that parents would have taken their children there, since it is located downtown and admittance is free.

This study also changed my attitude toward my involvement with other staff members. Before, I thought it was enough that my practice reflected the discipline-based approach to art education and I was indifferent to staff members' belief that art means "rote" (procedure oriented) activities. Since the study, I realized that discipline-based art education needs to extend beyond my classroom. I begin to ponder how to assist generalist teachers perceive art as a subject worthy of learning about and spending time preparing for, as in the case of a language arts or arithmetic lesson.

My study also had an impact on Rose. She came to view the importance of primary students participating in dialogues about art. During the year, I was asked twice to guide her students through the art criticism process. Our participation in the study had encouraged us to be more open in our communication with each other.

On the whole, I have grown more as a teacher as the result of the study. I also exchanged the security of my

classroom for challenges outside of my class by attending conferences and teacher support groups and seeking ways to spread the discipline-based approach to art education. I will say that I feel good about what had happened and so do the students.

Recommendations

Practice

One recommendation is for teachers to be taught action research as part of their teacher training or professional inservices. Knowing the action research approach would enable teachers to be researchers in their own classroom, and would encourage them to take responsibility for their own personal and professional growth. Action research is not easy to conduct while teaching full time. It is time consuming, but the knowledge and insight gained from the effort makes it worthwhile.

A second recommendation is for teachers to apply early childhood strategies when guiding primary students through Johansen's art criticism model. Findings from this study indicate that Johansen's art criticism model is suitable for primary students if the model is implemented through strategies relating to games and "hands-on" activities. It is also important for teachers to pose questions that are at the students' level of understanding when guiding primary students through Johansen's art criticism model.

Another recommendation is the development of art criticism curriculum materials in the form of a kit which includes teaching manual, lesson plans, and audio-visual resources. These materials need to be made available to generalist teachers, who lack the time to search for such resources outside of class or who lack the confidence or the desire to teach art criticism. Since the majority of elementary teachers have little or no experience in the visual arts, their content knowledge is limited. The combination of teachers' lack of art background with the lack of art resources encourages teachers to choose an art program consisting of procedure oriented projects which are easy to teach and easy to manage rather than a discipline-based art education program (Bresler, 1993). The resource teaching kit may help to bridge the existing gap between theory and practice in the primary grades by encouraging generalist teachers to attempt something unfamiliar and gain practice, which in turn may motivate them to ask questions and consider how else they can improve in the pedagogy of art education.

There is also a need for the implementation of plural art criticism approaches in elementary art education. Pluralism is a way to prevent the responding to works of art through only one approach. Johansen's art criticism model can be classified as a formalist approach to art criticism and one cannot assume that this one approach is suitable for

all goals. Art criticism can include or exclude certain ideas, values, or beliefs depending on how it is approached. Pluralism strives for a reconstructed art criticism program that embraces a variety of values and practices drawn from different beliefs and views of art criticism approaches. I propose the use of multiple approaches to guide the art criticism process, the appropriate approach depending upon the character of the artwork being studied.

Theory and Research

Before the implementation of plural art criticism approaches in elementary art education, there is a need to establish a more firm theoretical and research foundation that embraces multi-cultural and feminist approaches to art criticism in elementary schools. Multi-cultural and feminist art criticism models geared toward elementary education need to be developed and researched beyond the theoretical realm. Research into how these models may be appropriately implemented in primary grades will also need to be conducted. Information in these areas will need to be assessed in terms of development over time. Art criticism which has the potential to help students create and derive meaning from visual art, is in need of a firm theoretical and research foundation that embraces multiple world views and functions of art.

Reflection

I now know that I will continue to be a teacher/researcher. My classroom is an appropriate place for formulating inquiries and making discoveries about teaching and learning. Working with the action research approach has heightened my awareness and increased my knowledge of my teaching and the classroom; resulting in the improvement of my practice. As Stenhouse (1975) indicated the improvement of pedagogy is a process of development which cannot be "achieved by a change of heart but ... by a gradual elimination of failings through the systematic study of one's own teaching" (p.39).

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APPENDIX 1

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW ONE

Questions

- 1) What do you think of looking and talking about paintings?
- 2) Was it easy or hard to talk about the paintings?
- 3) What made it easy or made it hard?
- 4) Why do you think we talk about paintings?
- 5) If you were asked to talk about a painting, what would you talk about?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW TWO**Questions**

- 1) What do you think of looking and talking about paintings?
- 2) Was it easy or hard to talk about paintings?
- 3) What made it hard or easy?
- 4) What does the painting make you think of?
- 5) Name items, details, and colours that are in the picture.
- 6) Where are the largest trees?
- 7) What do you think this dark area is?
- 8) How did the artist show a path through the trees?
- 9) Where do you think the path will lead?
- 8) If you were in this forest, what kinds of sound would you hear? Why?
- 9) If you were in this forest, what would you be doing?
- 10) Would you want to play in this forest?
- 11) Do the trees look real?
- 12) Do the trees look strong or fragile?
- 13) What name would you give to this painting?
- 14) Why do you think the artist did a painting of the forest?
- 15) Do you like or dislike the painting? Why?
- 16) Did the artist do or did not do a good job painting it?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW THREE**Questions**

- 1) Which reproduction did you like to talk about the most of all the ones we had done?
- 2) Did any of you talk to anyone about how we talk about paintings?
- 3) Why do you think we talk about paintings?

APPENDIX 2**LESSON PLAN ONE AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS****Goals**

The goals of this activity are: (1) for the students to realize that it takes time and active effort to perceive a work of art in sufficient depth to gain meaning from it, and (2) to familiarize the students with the art criticism process.

Objectives

1. (skill) Students will learn how to look more carefully and closely at a work of art in order to notice both obvious and more subtle qualities.
2. (skill) Students will learn how to perceive, respond, and describe a work of art in depth.
3. (attitude) Students will value the importance of taking time to look carefully and feel that it is rewarding and enjoyable to do so.

Materials

Painting - artist: Norman Rockwell
 - title: April Fool
 - date: 1943
 - medium: oil

The painting was chosen because it (a) is related to the theme, family; (b) expresses feelings; (c) has plenty of details; and (d) is an illustration.

other works by Rockwell
journal question sheets

Setting

Students will form a circle at the carpet area.

Activities

Ask the students how long they think they might spend, on average, looking at a painting. Record their responses and discuss the factors they believe affect the amount of time they spend looking.

Explain that research indicates that the average time that adults spend looking at a painting in the galleries is about thirty seconds. Are thirty seconds ample time to spend with a painting? Why, or why not?

Display four copies of the illustration in front of the students. Have the students look at the illustration for a

minute and think about the feeling, color, and what is in the painting.

After one minute put the reproductions out of sight. Using their memories, the students attempt to express their general impression of the illustration and describe as much as they can remember about the illustration. Record their responses on cards.

Questions to guide the class.

1. (impression) What do you think of the illustration? or What does the painting make you think of?
2. (expression) Name the things that are in the painting?

Without looking at the image, the students share and question their responses. Does everyone have the same recollections?

Have the students look again at the reproductions and refine their responses by using careful looking and responding to questions that reflected Johansen's model.

Questions that reflected the model.

1. Impression Stage

Do we want to change or add any more feeling words that would tell about the illustration?

2. Expression Stage

Name the things that are in the reproduction.

What do the people look like?

How are they dressed?

What are they doing?

How do you think the people are feeling?

Identify the colors that are in the painting.

Where do you see the most light (dark) areas?

If you can get inside this painting, where would you be and what would you be doing?

If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it? Why?

Why do you think the artist painted this picture?

3. Commitment Stage

Do you like the painting or you don't care for it? Why?

How well is the painting done? Why?

Conclusion

At the end of the lesson: (a) ask the students to consider how much longer they spent looking at the painting the second time and the difference the extra time made in their perceptions and reactions; (b) provide the students with information about the painting and the artist; (c) show other work by Rockwell.

Background Information

Norman Rockwell was an American illustrator. He created this illustration for an April Fool's day magazine cover. Rockwell received letters from people who identified 80 to 120 "errors".

Journal Writing

Students from a grade 5 class will be coming in to help the grade 2 students record their reflections. Journal writing questions will be on the board and discussed with the class.

1. What interested you most about this painting?
2. If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it? Why?
3. If the artist was here in our classroom, what would you ask the artist about this painting?
4. What is your reaction to this painting?
5. I learned...
6. The part of the lesson that stands out in my mind is...
7. This painting reminds me of...

LESSON PLAN TWO AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goals

1. To familiarize the students with the art criticism process, with emphasis on analysis.
2. To apply the detective game (Hollingsworth, 1987) and check for its effectiveness.

Objectives

1. The students will learn to perceive, describe, and analyse a work of art in depth.
2. Students will also learn to interpret and make judgements about a work of art.
3. The students will recognize that some artists paint what is familiar to them and express their personal perceptions.

Materials

Painting - artist: Stone Roberts
 - title: Luke and Flowers
 - date: 1987
 - medium: oil on canvas, 32 x 30"

The painting was chosen because (a) it is related to the theme, family; (b) it is a scene which students can relate to; (c) of its composition.

detective badges - to help with their role play
 viewfinder
 journal question sheets
 other works by Roberts

Setting

Students will form rows at the carpet area.

Activities

Discuss the following at the beginning of the lesson:

- (1) Review - that it takes time and active effort to perceive a work of art in sufficient depth to gain meaning from it
- (2) As detectives, their assignment is to: (a) get the general feel of the case (impression of the reproduction); (b) gather and search for clues, examine, and interpret those clues (expression stage); and (c) make a judgement about the painting and provide evidence to support their judgement (commitment stage).

Questions that reflect the art criticism model.

1. Impression Stage

Detectives, what do you think of this reproduction or what kinds of feeling does this artwork make you think of?

2. Expression Stage

(Use viewfinder where it is applicable to help students focus on certain parts of the painting.)

Detectives, let's start gathering our evidence.

How would you describe this scene to someone who is not here?

What does the dog look like?

Has this dog been well looked after? How do you know that?

Who can show us what the dog is doing?

What is the dog doing?

What do you think the dog is concentrating on?

How can you tell?

What else do you see in this painting?

Name the main color of this painting?

Do you think this red color wall is real or did the artist just painted it red in his painting and the real wall is not red? What made you think that?

What other colors do we see?

Help students to see the following:

(a) that the tablecloth has the same colors as the flowers and vase.

(b) how the light affect the tone of the carpet

Is the carpet smooth or there is texture to it? What makes you think that?

What kind of lines do you see?

Where can you find curved lines?

Help students to see where the curved lines are concentrated. The curved lines form a triangle (dog, flowers, vase, cup, drape of the tablecloth, fallen plate, and back to the dog). Help students to see that the artist wanted our eyes to be attracted to that area of the painting. Which is the most important part of the painting?

If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it?

Can this really happen?

Why do you think the artist painted this picture? What do you think the artist wanted to share with us? Think about all the clues that we have gathered.

3. Commitment Stage

What are your thoughts or feelings about this painting?

What made you think that?

Do you like this painting or you don't care for it? Why?

How well is the painting done? Why?

Background Information

Stone Roberts was born in 1951 (44 years old). He was commissioned by the owners to paint Luke. Stone was Luke's dog-sitter. In 1989, Stone painted the painting called, The Visit (share that painting with the class).

Journal Writing

Miss Scott's class will be coming to help with journal writing.

Journal Writing Questions

1. What do you think of the painting? Why?
2. Is there anything about this painting that stands out in your mind? If yes, what is it?
3. If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it? Why?
4. If the artist were here in our classroom, what would you ask him or tell him?
5. What do you think of the detective game?
6. What did you remember from the lesson?

LESSON PLAN THREE AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goals

The goals of this activity are (1) to encourage grade 2 students to look and talk about art through guided discussion; (2) to analyse the applicability of the game, "I Spy" for the expression stage of art criticism; (3) to analyse the applicability of the color matching task; and (4) to help students find personal meaning in the artwork and relate that artwork to their world or experiences.

Objectives

1. Students will discover that visual symbols can communicate ideas.
2. Students will learn to show tolerance for each other's ideas.

Materials

Painting - artist: Georgia O'Keeffe
 - title: Cow's Skull with Calico Roses
 - date: 1931
 - medium: oil on canvas; 91.2 x 61 cm

This painting was chosen because of the symbolic images and the different tones.

telescope (for game, "I Spy")
 color samples (for matching task)
 journal question sheets
 other works by O'Keeffe

Setting

Students will form rows at the carpet area.

Activities

Questions that reflect Johansen's art criticism model.

1. Impression Stage

Look at the whole picture. What do you think of the picture?

2. Expression Stage

Play game, "I Spy". Select one student to look through the telescope (rolled paper tube about 3cm in diameter). Ask the student to describe the section well enough for others to be able to name the image or point to the correct section.

Help the students analyse the ways that the parts relate to one another or fit together.

Which item is the boss of the painting? What makes you think that? (that is the focal point)

Who are its helpers? What makes you think that?

Have students choose paint samples that match the colors of the painting.

Help students to see how colors can be layered (use colored cellophanes).

Are the colors quiet or noisy? What makes you think that? Look at the colors. What do the colors remind you of? Why do you think the artist chose these colors to do her painting?

Help students to see the symbolism that some people have for skulls and flowers. Invite the students to speculate on possible interpretations of the artwork.

What does this painting make you think of?
What do you think this painting is saying to you?
Would the painting give you the same meaning if it was done in bright colors like red and orange?
Why do you think the artist wanted to paint a picture like this?

3. Commitment Stage

What do you think of the painting? Why?
Do you like or dislike the painting? Why?
How well is the painting done? What makes you think that?

Background Information

Georgia O'Keeffe, an American artist died at the age of 98 (1989). She is best known for her paintings of flowers. Beginning in 1934, O'Keeffe travelled to New Mexico each summer for fifteen summers. In 1949, she settled permanently in New Mexico (37 years).

Show location of New Mexico and its landscape. Share other works by O'Keeffe and her photograph.

Journal Questions

1. What do you think of the painting? Why?
2. Do you like or dislike the painting? Why?
3. Do you think the artist did a good job or not? Why?
4. What do you think this painting is telling you? Why?

5. What do you think of the "I Spy" game?
6. What do you think of the activity where you matched the paint samples to the colors of the painting?

LESSON PLAN FOUR AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goals

The goals of this lesson are to familiarize the students with the art criticism process, with emphasis on the first impression of the artwork, and to analyse the effectiveness of students working in small groups

Objectives

1. The students will express their first impression, analyse, and interpret a work of art.
2. The students will recognize that some paintings have expressive qualities.

Materials

Painting - artist: Edvard Munch (1863 - 1944)
- title: The Scream
- date: 1893
- medium: oil on canvas, 90 x 43 cm

This painting is chosen because of its expressive qualities and the subject relates to the Halloween theme.

papers and pencils (for recording their answers)
journal question sheets

Activities

At the desk area

1. Impression Stage

Briefly review our lesson on first impression of a painting.

Ask students to record their first impression of the painting on a piece of paper.

Sharing of their thoughts.

At the carpet area.

2. Expression Stage

Divide the class into five groups. One student of each group is the recorder. Students are to identify as many items as they can find in the painting.

Share their answers and see which team has the most items recorded.

Do the same for recording of colors.

Name the color that had been used a lot?

Why do you think the artist used that color so many times?

Why do you think the artist painted the sky with so much red?

Ask students to use their arms to show the movement of the sky and water.

Why do you think the artist used wavy lines for the sky and water?

Ask some students to strike the pose of the main character (focal point).

What kind of an expression do you think the character is showing us?

How do you think this character is feeling?

Can you think of some reasons as to why this character is feeling this way?

What do you think the main character will do next?

What do you think of the two people in the background?

3. Commitment Stage

Students go back to their desk and again record their impression of the painting. Students will be able to change their mind or add to their first impression of the painting.

At the carpet area.

Can what we see in this painting be real? (nightmare)

Why do you think someone would want to paint such a painting?

Do you like or dislike this painting? Why?

Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting? Why?

Background Information

Edvard Munch (1863 - 1944), a Norwegian who went to Paris in 1889. Through his art, Munch began to express his innermost feelings and desires. The expressive qualities of his paintings made him a founder of the style known as Expressionism, in which emotive distortions and exaggerated colors are used to achieve maximum expressiveness.

Munch is the main character of The Scream. He was strolling on ahead his two friends. He was tired and ill. Munch looked across the narrow bay and saw the sun was setting and the clouds were colored red, like blood. He felt as through a scream went through nature. He thought he heard a scream.

Journal Questions

1. How would you describe this painting? Why?

2. Do you like or dislike this painting? Why?

3. Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting? Why?
4. What do you think of the title, The Scream? Why?
5. If the artist was here in our classroom, what would you ask him?
6. Would you want to hang this painting in your house? Why?

LESSON PLAN FIVE AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goals

The goals of this lesson are to analyse the effectiveness of dividing the art criticism lesson into two parts and to help students understand that colors can contribute to the mood of a painting.

Objectives

1. The students will learn to work co-operatively in small groups.
2. The students will realize that (a) colors can contribute to the mood of a painting; (b) a painting can reflect an artist's experiences and feelings; and (c) texture can be found in paintings.

Materials

Painting - artist: Andrew Wyeth
 - title: Christina's World
 - date: 1948
 - medium: tempera; 82 x 121 cm
 - location: The Museum of Modern Art, New York

This painting was chosen because it (a) is related to the theme, friends; (b) expresses mood; (c) is realistic; and (d) is possible to find such a scene in Merritt.

papers and pencils (for recording responses)
 four bags of color chips
 journal question sheets

Activities

Part One of Lesson

At the desk area.

1. Impression Stage

Ask students to think about one of their friends.
 What is special about this friend?
 What do you like to do together?

Explain that the subject of the painting was a friend of the artist.

Ask students to look at the painting as a whole and record their first impression (e.g., mood).

Sharing of their responses.

Carpet area.

2. Expression Stage

Discuss - how well they worked in small groups during the

last lesson

- the role of an encourager (e.g., what Tweena did)

Divide the class into four groups. Assign a recorder for each group. Each group decides who is the encourager. Students are to identify as many items and details as they can find in the painting. They have about ten minutes to take care of the task. Explain what ten minutes look like on the clock.

Share their answers and see which team has the most responses.

Do the same for recording of colors. They have about ten minutes to take care of the task.

In their small groups, each student chooses a paint chip to match a section of the hill (about five minutes for the task).

Sharing of their choices.

Help students to see that the colors added to the mood of the painting. Compare the colors of this painting to the colors of Georgia O'Keeffe's Red Hill (1927).

Have the students compare the clear, gray sky to the textural details of the golden-brown grass.

Summarize what we have done so far and what we will do in the next lesson.

Part Two of Lesson

Briefly review what was covered in the last lesson.

Divide the class into four groups.

- Discuss - reasons for being a good listener
- the different ways to come to a group decision
 - what clues to use to decide on Christina's age
 - the signal that will represent the end of group discussion
 - the role of a reporter

Each group has about five minutes to discuss how old Christina was and the reasons for that decision.

Sharing of responses and reasons.

Remind the class that a few of them thought Christina was hurt.

Provide background information about Christina.

Imagine that you are Christina. You have to make your way to the house by pulling yourself with your arms. Take a look at Christina's arms. How strong do you think they are?

Think of some words to describe how Christina might feel as she drags her body up that hill.

How long might it take Christina to get to the house? How long might it take to walk that distance? (Revised to: Who will take longer to get to the house, you walking there or Christina dragging herself there?)

Why do you think Andrew Wyeth painted so much of the hill?

2. Commitment Stage

What do you think the title, Christina's World means?

What do you think of this painting? Why?

Do you like or dislike this painting? Why?

Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting? Why?

Background Information

Andrew Wyeth was born in Pennsylvania in 1917 (78 years old). He had little formal schooling in the arts and studied art with his father, who was a well-known book illustrator and mural painter.

Wyeth lived in Maine. He painted the people and places he knew there. One day he visited a family named Olson and became friends with them. The idea for Christina's World came to Wyeth on day when he looked out of an upper-story window of the farmhouse and saw Christina out in the field pulling herself toward the house with her arms.

Christina is often thought to be a young girl because of her frail body. She was fifty years old at the time of this painting. Christina could not walk across the field because a disease had taken away the strength in her legs.

In 1949, Christina's World was sold to The Museum of Modern Art in New York. Wyeth continued to paint Christina until 1967. She died in January of 1968.

Journal Questions

1. How would you describe this painting? Why?
2. What do you think of the title, Christina's World? Why?
3. What do you think Christina looked like?
4. Do you like or dislike this painting? Why?

5. Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting? Why?

6. Why do you think the artist painted Christina's dress a light pink color?

LESSON PLAN SIX AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goals

The goals of this lesson are to analyse the effectiveness of leaving out the descriptive activity in the expression stage and to introduce students to how light changes the color and mood of a scene.

Objectives

1. The students will understand how light changes the color and mood of a scene.
2. The students will be able to name warm and cool colors.

Materials

Paintings - artist: Vincent Van Gogh (1853 - 1890)
 - titles: The Bedroom at Arles, The Artist's Bedroom at Arles
 - dates: 1888 - 89, 1889
 - medium - oil on canvas, 74 x 91 cm, 72 x 91 cm
 - locations: The Art Institute of Chicago, Illinois; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam

The paintings were chosen because they illustrate how changes in light and color can make a difference in how we feel. In the previous lesson, the students did not understand how colors can contribute to the mood of a painting.

worksheets (for recording their impressions)
 worksheets (to guide them in analyzing the paintings)
 journal question sheets
 other works by Van Gogh

Activities

Part One of Lesson

At the desk area.

1. Impression Stage

Ask the class to think about their bedroom. What does your room look like with sunlight shining through the window? What does your room look like in the evening with the light off?

Explain that Vincent Van Gogh painted several paintings of his bedroom. Each painting shows the same room but painted in different colours.

Ask the students to record their first impression for picture number one (The Bedroom at Arles, 1888-89), then for picture number two (The Artist's Bedroom at Arles, 1889). Share their responses.

At the carpet area.
2. Expression Stage

Demonstrate how colors look different in various amount of light --- lights on and off in classroom. Ask students to make a viewfinder with their hands. Look through the hole of their viewfinder at one section of the classroom and observe the color change as the lights go on and off several times. Discuss the difference in color and the mood or feeling of the classroom.

In groups, the students will compare the difference in color of the two paintings. Each group will receive a worksheet to guide them. Assign someone in each group to be the recorder and someone else to help the recorder with the spelling and guide the group. They have about eight minutes to do the task.

Sharing of responses.

Summarize what we have covered so far and what we will do in the next lesson.

Part Two of Lesson

At the carpet area.

Discussion of warm and cool colors. Use color wheel and reproductions that contain cool or warm colors.

In small groups.

Ask the students to look at picture number one. Help them to identify the cool colors and how the cool colors affect the mood of the bedroom.

Ask the students to look at picture number two. Help them to identify the warm colors and how the warm colors affect the mood of the bedroom.

Demonstrate how a neutral color (brown) can be changed by adding warm or cool colors to it (e.g., warm brown). Have the students notice the different brown colors that are in the paintings.

Ask and discuss the following question:
Do the paintings show an expensive bedroom? Explain. Share some of the background information.

3. Commitment Stage

Of the two bedrooms, which one do you prefer? Why?

Why do you think Van Gogh did so many paintings of his bedroom?

Do you like or dislike Van Gogh's paintings of his bedroom?
Why?

Do you think the artist did or did not do a good job in
painting those paintings? Why?

Ask the students to record their impressions of the
paintings. Sharing of responses. See if they have changed
their mind or not.

Background Information

Vincent Van Gogh was born in Holland. He was a preacher in
a poor coal mining village for a short period of time before
he became an artist. While Van Gogh was a preacher he tried
to help the people around him. Eventually, he gave away all
his belongings to those in need.

Van Gogh's artistic career lasted about ten years and ended
when he committed suicide at the age of thirty-seven after
long periods of depression and mental illness. This post-
Impressionist artist made about eight hundred paintings and
nearly as many drawings.

Journal Questions

1. Name three cool colors.
2. Name three warm colors.
3. Would you like to have a painting of your bedroom?
Explain.
4. Of the two paintings, which one do you prefer? Explain.
5. Why do you think the artist did so many paintings of his
bedroom?
6. Do you like or dislike the paintings? Explain.
7. Do you think the artist did or did not do a good job
painting them? Explain.

Sample Worksheet

Sample of worksheet used in guiding the students in
analysing the colours of Van Gogh's two paintings.

Painting Number One

(1) wall _____

(2) floor _____

Painting Number Two

(1) wall _____

(2) floor _____

- | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| (3) bed _____ | (3) bed _____ |
| (4) chair by door _____ | (4) chair by door _____ |
| (5) chair by bed _____ | (5) chair by bed _____ |
| (6) pillows _____ | (6) pillows _____ |
| (7) blanket _____ | (7) pillows _____ |
| (8) table _____ | (8) table _____ |
| (9) towel _____ | (9) towel _____ |

LESSON PLAN SEVEN AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goal

The goal of this lesson is to analyse how grade two students respond to abstract expressionism.

Objectives

The objectives of this lesson are to introduce students to abstract expressionism, primary colors, and neutral colors.

Materials

Reproduction - artist: Clyfford Still
 - title: Painting, 1944
 - date: 1944
 - medium: oil on canvas, h264.5 x w221.4 cm
 - location: Museum of Modern Art, New York

This reproduction was chosen because it is an example of abstract expressionism.

papers and pencils (for recording their responses)
 color wheel
 journal question sheets

Activities

At the desk area.

1. Impression Stage

Explain to the class that this reproduction is very different from other reproductions we have seen or talked about. This type of painting is called abstract expressionism.

It does not show up very well here; but the artist, Still applied the colors very thickly and with different textural surfaces. Point out the actual size of the painting.

Have the students record their first impression of the reproduction. Share their responses.

At the carpet area.

2. Expression Stage

Ask the students to name the colors that are in the reproduction.

Explain that red, blue, and yellow are primary colors and the function of primary colors (use color wheel).
 Explain that black and white are neutral colors and the function of neutral colors (use sample to illustrate shade and tint).

Ask students to be a colour that is in the reproduction.

In five small groups.

Have the groups discuss and record their responses to the following questions (assign recorders).

Sharing of responses after each question.

What do you think of a painting with so much black?

Explain.

Can you find any part of the painting that seems to be moving?

Think of some words to describe the red line.

What is the yellow line doing?

What is the white line doing?

Explain how abstract expressionism is different from the other styles of art that we have been looking at and talking about.

What title would you give this painting? Explain.

3. Commitment Stage

Do you like or dislike this painting? Explain.

Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting? Explain.

Do you think it is hard or easy to do a painting like this? Explain.

Background Information

Abstract expressionism is a movement in American painting that developed in New York in the 1940s. Most abstract expressionists were energetic painters. They used large canvases and applied paint rapidly with force, sometimes using large brushes, sometimes dripping or throwing painting directly onto the canvas. This expressive method of painting was often considered as important as the painting itself.

Journal Questions

1. Do you like or dislike this painting? Explain.

2. Do you think the artist did or did not do a good job painting it? Explain.

3. Do you want a painting like this hanging in your home? Explain?

4. What title would you give this painting? Explain.

5. Do you think it is hard or easy to paint a painting like this? Explain.

LESSON PLAN EIGHT AND JOURNAL QUESTIONS

Goal

The goal of this lesson is to analyse how grade two students respond to optical art.

Objective

The objective of this lesson is to introduce students to optical art.

Materials

reproduction - artist: Spyros Horemis
 - title: Plate 49
 - date: 1970
 - medium: pen and paint

This reproduction was chosen because it is an example of optical art.

papers and pencils (for recording their responses)
 journal question sheets

Activities

At the desk area.

1. Impression Stage

Explain to the class that this reproduction is very different from other reproductions we have seen or talked about. This type of painting is called optical art.

Have the students record their first impression of the reproduction. Share their responses.

At the carpet area.

2. Expression Stage

Arrange students in five groups. Assign a recorder for each group. Have each group identify the colors and shapes that are in the painting. Sharing of responses.

Ask the class the following:

What happened to the shapes as they get closer to the centre of the painting?

Is there movement in the painting?

What kind of movement is there?

Ask some students to be that movement.

In groups, the students discuss how they think the artist created the movement in the painting?

Demonstrate how the artist achieved the illusion.
Explain optical art and show other samples.

3. Commitment Stage

Do you like or dislike this painting? Why?

Do you think the artist did or did not do a good painting?
Explain.

How hard do you think it is to create this painting?
Explain.

Background Information

Op art is short for optical art. Op art is a movement in abstract art that developed in the 1960s. Op art is based on the idea that the artist can persuade the viewer to see visual illusions by creating optical effects. The forms and colors cause an optical illusion of movement. Some optical images appear to shimmer and pulsate.

Journal Questions

1. What is your final impression of the painting? Why?

2. Do you like or dislike this painting? Explain.

3. Do you think the artist did or did not do a good job painting it? Explain.

4. How hard do you think it is to create a painting like this? Explain.

5. If you were to give this painting a title, what would you call it? Explain.