HOW TO MAKE "LEARNING OF ART" MORE MEANINGFUL FROM THE CHILD'S VIEW-POINT.

LEARNING ART SHOULD BE 'HAPPY' AS WELL AS "SATISFYING" EXPERIENCE FOR THE CHILD. IF ONE GOES BACK TO ONE'S OWN CHILDHOOD AND RECOLLECTS THE FEELING OF PRIDE ONE IS POSSESSED WITH WHEN YOU FIRST DREW SOMETHING THAT WAS MEANINGFUL TO YOU - YOU WILL UNDERSTAND THAT FOR EVERY CHILD WHAT HE DRAW IS VERY IMPORTANT. IT IS RATHER UNIQUE FOR 'HIM' BECAUSE IT IS HIS. THIS FEELING HAS TO BE CHERISHED AND ENHANCED BY EVERY ART TEACHER.

I'LL READ OUT A SMALL POEM OF "A LITTLE BOY" WRITTEN BY AN ANONYMOUS POET.

ONE MORNING,
WHEN THE LITTLE BOY HAD BEEN IN SCHOOL A WHILE, THE TEACHER SAID,
"TODAY WE ARE GOING TO MAKE A PICTURE". HE LIKED TO MAKE PICTURES HE COULD MAKE ALL KINDS.......

...... AND HE TOOK OUT HIS BOX OF CRAYONS AND Began TO DRAW. BUT THE TEACHER SAID, "WAIT, IT IS NOT TIME TO BEGIN". AND SHE WAITED TILL EVERY ONE LOOKED READY. ...... THE TEACHER SAID, "WAIT, AND I SHOW YOU HOW". AND SHE DREW A FLOWER ON THE BLACK BOARD- "HERE" SAID THE TEACHER, "NOW YOU MAY BEGIN".

...... HE JUST TURNED HIS PAPER OVER, AND MADE A FLOWER LIKE THE TEACHER'S. IT WAS RED, WITH A GREEN STEM.

........ AND PRETTY SOON, THE LITTLE BOY LEARNED TO WAIT, AND TO
This is what I want to be

To be an astronaut is my goal.
I'll work hard to explore the universe as black as coal.
I'll help scientists discover more about stars
And be the first one to land on Mars.
When I grow up
I am going to be an
actress, all glamour
and splendor on
the American and British
stage and screen.
I shall be like Marilyn
Monroe and Greta
and attract men
by the galore.
Oh me! oh my!
AND TO MAKE THING JUST LIKE THE TEACHER'S, AND PRETTY SOON.
HE DIDN'T MAKE THINGS OF HIS OWN ANY MORE.
(AND THE BOY WENT TO ANOTHER DIFFERENT SCHOOL AND A DIFFERENT
TEACHER, WHO ALSO SAID THEY WOULD MAKE PICTURES).
 .......... AND HE WAITED FOR THE TEACHER TO TELL HIM WHAT TO DO.
 (AND EVEN THOUGH HE WAS NOW GIVEN THE CHOICE TO MAKE WHAT HE 
WANTED, THE WAY HE HAD WANTED AND COLOUR IT AS HE PLEASED...)
 .......... HE BEGAN TO DRAW A FLOWER. IT WAS RED, WITH GREEN STEM.

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO THE CHILD IN THIS POEM WILL HAPPEN
TO MOST OF OUR STUDENTS IF WE ARE NOT CAREFUL. IF WE HAVE TO MAKE
ARTISTS OF OUR STUDENTS-THEY SHOULD NOT LOOSE THEIR
CREATIVITY,ORIGINALITY, ABILITY TO THINK INDEPENDANTLY AND ABILITY
TO EXPRESS FEARLESSLY AND CONFIDANTLY.

HENCE THE TEACHER SHOULD CHOOSE TOPICS THAT ARE
MEANINGFUL TO THE CHILD. ONE SUCH EXPERIMENT WAS TRIED BY ME IN
CLASSROOM. WHEN THE CHILDREN COME TO FIFTH STANDARD (AGE GROUP 9-
10 YR. OLD) I SPOKE TO THEM AND ASKED THEM WHAT EACH ONE WISHED TO
BECOME IN THEIR LATER LIVES AND WHETHER THEY ARE AWARE OF WHAT
THEIR DIFFICULTIES WOULD BE AND HOW THEY WILL WORK HARD TO ACHIEVE
THE GOAL THAT THEY HAD IN FRONT OF THEM.

THEN THEY WERE ASKED TO WRITE FIVE TO SIX LINES OF
POETRY OR PROSE ON THE FOLLOWING TOPIC -" THIS IS WHAT I WANT TO
BE". THE POEMS WERE COLLECTED BY ME AND THEN THEY WERE ASKED TO
GIVE A VISUAL PICTURE OF THEIR POEM AND THE RESULTS WERE JUST
FABULOUS. ONE CHILD WANTED TO BE A STAGE ACTRESS, ANOTHER A
MY WOES

Tring Tring rang the phone one day
Your mother broke her leg when she
fell on the hay.
Oh no! Oh god without her I can't stay.

A tear trickled down my eye
I was astonished when mom
said hi!
Thank god you're alright
because my pocket money is
with you, right?
My nose, my nose, my nose,
I was punished and I had to lick my nose.

I loved to wield a paintbrush,
And suddenly loved a lipstick.

I tried to smell a rose,
It magically turned out to be a cockroach.

I made a paper mouse,
Later on I stabbed something my hand because from the ceiling had fallen a stone.

My nose, my nose, my nose,
For all these things I was punished and I had to lick my nose.
I want to be a Math's Teacher and I will help my society by educating them very well.
I want to be a doctor of the eyes. After being a doctor I will open a clinic and treat people. Without eyesight I will give them light.
"GV'NHC" A THIRD CHILD WISHED TO BE A "VET" (VETERINARY DOCTOR) AND YET ANOTHER WANTED TO BECOME A LAWYER, A DRESS DESIGNER, AN ARTIST, A MATHS TEACHER WHO WOULD GIVE LOTS OF HOME WORK TO HER STUDENTS AND YET ANOTHER WANTED TO BE AN AIR HOSTESS.

VISUAL -I

THE EXPRESSION OF ONE'S INNER SELF IS THE ESSENCE OF LEARNING ART. ONE SHOULD BE TRAINED TO DO THE SOUL SEARCHING AND COME UP WITH THE VISUALS OF ONE'S OWN THOUGHTS. TWO SUCH ASSIGNMENTS WERE GIVEN TO VIII STD. CHILDREN TO REPRESENT THE FEELINGS WHICH THEY EXPERIENCED AFTER READING A NOVEL OF THEIR CHOICE OR TO REPRESENT THE FEELING WHICH WERE EXPERIENCED AFTER LISTING TO A PIECE OF MUSIC IN COLOUR ON ANY PAPER. AND YOU'LL BE SURPRISED TO NOTE THAT EVERY PAPER HAD A DIFFERENT VISUAL-EACH BETTER THAN THE OTHER.

VISUAL -II (A) (B)

EACH AND EVERY INDIVIDUAL THINKS AND VISUALISES DIFFERENTLY AND THE POTENTIAL OF ONE CHILD DIFFERS FROM ONE ANOTHER, SO THERE IS NEED TO BOOST THEIR CONFIDENCE ALL THE TIME. HENCE ASSIGNMENTS, WHERE THE DESIRED ACCIDENTAL RESULTS OF EXPERIMENTAL WORK CAN BE ACHIEVED, SHOULD TO BE GIVEN TO ALL THE CHILDREN SO THAT EVEN THE WEAKEST CHILD CAN GET THE BEST RESULTS AND THERE IS NO FEAR OF THIS WEAKER CHILD SUFFERING FROM INFERIORITY COMPLEX OR THE BEST CHILD SUFFERING FROM SUPERIORITY COMPLEX. HERE I HAD GIVEN THE FIFTH AND THE SIXTH GRADERS TO WORK IN "WET-PAINTING" TECHNIQUE. THE CHILDREN WERE ASKED TO PUT OR SPLASH COLOURS ON WET PAPERS AS
The day I was Embarrassed

Once my father's business friends and family had gone for dinner to a restaurant, we had ordered chicken. I was trying to break the chicken with a fork. This was the first time I was using a fork. I succeeded in breaking the chicken but the piece I wanted flew across the table and landed on my father's friend.
THEY PLEASED. THE PAPERS WERE DRIED. IN ONE CLASS THE STUDENTS WERE ASKED TO DRAW PICTURES OF FESTIVALS LIKE HOLI, DIWALI, GULABASHAMAMI, ETC. IN THE OTHER DIVISION THE CHILDREN WERE ASKED TO SEARCH FOR THE TERMS OF TREES, STREAMS, BLOSSOMS ETC. AND BOTH THE RESULTS WERE JUST FABULOUS.

CHILDREN ARE BASICALLY VERY SENSITIVE AND THEY GET HURT BY EVEN SMALLEST THINGS. SOME TIMES THEY ARE SHY, AT OTHER TIMES THEY ARE EMBARRASSED. IF THESE EMOTIONS ARE NOT DEALT WITHIN THE EARLY STAGE THE CHILD WILL NOT GROW UP TO BE A BALANCED PERSON.

HERE I AM SUGGESTING TWO ASSIGNMENTS-1. ON BEING EMBARRASSED AND 2. DISTORTION.

YOU MAY BEGIN THE FIRST ONE BY QUESTIONING-(SMALL QUERIES).

1. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY "EMBARRASSED".

2. WHEN YOU SAY- "IT WAS SO EMBARRASING" OR "I DIED OF SHAME" WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN?

3. HOW DOES YOUR EMBARRASSED SHOW? (HERE YOU MAY EVEN ENCOURAGE THE CHILD TO ACT)

4. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING YOU MAY CONSIDER "EMBARRASSED"?
   A) WHILE, ON THE SWIMMING POOL IN THE PARTY DRESS YOU SLIP YOUR FOOT AND FALL INTO THE WATER.
   B) AT THE PARTY SOME ONE IS WEARING A DRESS EXACTLY LIKE YOURS.
   C) ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL YOU SPILL A BOTTLE OF INK ON YOUR-
THE RESULTS OF AN EXAMINATION ARE ON THE NOTICE BOARD WITH YOUR NAME ON THE BOTTOM OF THE LIST WITH THE LEAST MARKS.

2) IN A CROWDED DEPARTMENTAL STORE YOU DASH AGAINST THE STAND KNOCKING OVER A PILE OF LINES.

3) WHEN GUESTS ARE AT HOME YOU HAPPEN TO DROP A GLASS ACCIDENTALLY AND YOUR FATHER OR MOTHER SCOLDS YOU IN FRONT OF THE OUTSIDERS.

DRAW ANY OF THE SITUATIONS IN WHICH YOU WERE EMBARRASSED THE MOST. HERE FREEDOM SHOULD BE GIVEN TO CHILDREN TO DEVIATE AND DRAW ANY OTHER SITUATION NOT MENTIONED IN THE ABOVE LIST.

JUST AS THE ADULTS UNDERGO A LOT OF TENSIONS THE CHILDREN ALSO HAVE TENSIONS, ANGER, FEARS, FRUSTRATION, HUMILIATION, ENVY OR MANY MORE EMOTIONS KEEP ON PILING UP IN A CHILD'S MIND. THESE PENT UP EMOTIONS SHOULD BE MADE TO COME OUT OF THE CHILD'S SYSTEM. THIS I TRIED TO ACHIEVE THROUGH "DISTORTION". I HAD TAUGHT MY SIXTH GRADERS HOW TO DO THE PORTRAITS. THEY WERE AWARE OF THEIR FEATURES AND FACE CUTS ETC. I GAVE THEM AN IDEA AS TO HOW ONE COULD DISTORT THE FACES TO GET THE FACIAL EXPRESSION OF ANGER. I GOT SOME CHILDREN TO ACT OUT VARIOUS EXPRESSIONS FOR THE
CHILDREN TO OBSERVE THE MUSCLE MOVEMENT AND THEN I TOLD THEM TO DRAW AND COLOUR WITH CRAYONS IN ANY SUITABLE COLOURS. THE RESULTS WERE VERY PROFESSIONAL. THE CHILDREN HAD LEARNED TO USE DISTORTION IN A MEANINGFUL WAY. VISUAL IV.

THE CHILD SHOULD NEVER FEEL DEJECTED OR REJECTED. SHE SHOULD NOT FEEL "I AM NO GOOD". SO ASSIGNMENTS LIKE PRINTMAKING GRAPHICS SHOULD BE GIVEN TO THE CHILDREN. PRINTMAKING IN ANY FORM GIVES A GREAT JOY TO THE CHILD. MAINLY BECAUSE THERE IS THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE, OF SEEING WHAT YOU HAVE NEVER DREAMT OF. CHILDREN CAN BE ENCOURAGED TO WORK ON ANY PAPER, ANY MEDIA AND WITH WHATEVER MATERIAL AVAILABLE a) GLASS PRINTS, b) TEMPERA, c) ITCHING, OR CRYLIN COLOURS SPREAD ON MAGAZINE PAPER OR CALENDER PICTURES, d) GRAPHIC SUNS OR e) GANESH FORMS MADE OUT OF GEOMETRICAL FORMS OR LABORATORY APPARATUS ARE A FEW OF THE THINGS TRIED OUT BY ME IN THE CLASS ROOM.

ASSIGNMENTS WHICH WILL MAKE THE CHILD THINK SHOULD ALSO BE GIVEN. CHILDREN ARE NATURALLY ATTRACTED AND ARE AWARE OF NATURE AND ITS RICH ARRARY OF COLOURS. BRING THEM MORE NEARER TO NATURE BY MAKING THEM IDENTIFY WITH NATURE.

I SHOWED THEM TWO PICTURES- ONE OF A BABY BIRD WITH AN OPEN BEAK AND ANOTHER WITH A MOTHER AND A BABY BIRD.

QUESTIONS PUT TO THE CHILDREN.
1. WHAT DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU LOOK AT THIS PICTURE ? IS IT BEAUTIFUL ?
OLYMPICS - WEIGHT-LIFTING CHAMPIONSHIP

2 1 3
2. What is the bird trying to say? What do you think he must be feeling? Why?

3. Do you think he has any problems? What are the problems faced by all young ones?

4. Can you think of a suitable line coming out of the baby birds mind?

5. Do you have pets? Do you know how to rear animals or birds?

6. Do you think they should be enclosed or let free?

7. Is it good to keep them in zoo or a "safari"?

8. Can you name some of the good and the bad points?

9. Draw a picture about a visit to the zoo or a bird garden.

Visual VI

Sometimes the children are in a rebellious mood. No matter what you have decided for them they just do not want to do what you want them to do. In such situations the art teacher should be flexible and resourceful. Once I had planned to do "Ganesh Chaturthi" festival with the children. And children just didn't want to do so. I said O.K. Let's do Ganesh Chaturthi in some other way. Imagine yourself to be Lord Ganesh and tell me how he must be feeling in the following situations.

1. When the hall is overcrowded.

2. People are singing Arti very loudly.

3. The music is very loud.

4. He is tempted to have the 'Prasadam' before the Arti is over.

5. When people take him for immersion and he does not feel like it.
6. He feels like taking revenge on the devotees.
7. He feels like running in Olympics. Draw cartoons in canicature style in only black and white. The results were wonderful.

Visual VII

Another class once came down furious about the overburden of the other subjects homework and test "Miss, lets have a free period." After finding out the reason I gave them lot of magazine and newspaper to tear, and asked them to paste it on paper with glue. Some tube colours were given to squeeze and rollers given to roll out the paint evenly. The results were fabulous. The anger was turned into joy. Brushes were given and black colour to paint any forms of birds, animal or human figures. And a creative-composition took birth. Visual VIII

Children should be exposed to good art in a meaningful way. Topic- 'What a wonderful world I live in.' Paintings of Pieter Bruegel is shown. Knowledge given - He was a Belgian artist who lived from 1535 - 1569. Because at that time there was no television and very few books, paintings are important as records of the life of the times. Bruegel's paintings are often filled with interesting detail. They give us a picture of the remarkable world very different from ours.

1. Let's find out today in what way is its different? Discuss the painting.
2. Make a list of games which you consider ought to be included in a modern version of the painting.
3. How would you restructure this picture with modern games which you play today?

4. What feeling is derived by playing games - "happiness".

5. How can you create the mood of happiness?

6. Do you think the artist is successful in creating the mood?

7. Which colours according to you should be used to create happy and gay mood. Visual IX

A similar assignment was taken in the 8th grade by me by exposing the children to various miniature paintings of India - Bundi, Pahadi, Mughul etc. and were asked to draw a modern version of the miniatures and the results were quite satisfying. Visual X

Children were exposed to "Warli" paintings of Maharashtra and asked to draw their activities in school in the folk art style, on brown paper or tinted paper, and the results were fabulous. Visual XI.

Displaying the children's work is very encouraging and meaningful to the child. He gains a lot of confidence thereby. The teacher should encourage and appreciate whenever he finds anything small worth appreciating, that boosts the child and motivates him to do even better work. A teacher should never humiliate any child. If a child comes with incomplete work I never say go back and complete but I show the class the picture and ask, is this picture complete? The children give their suggestions and because the suggestions are coming from their peers they are accepted immediately.
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IN HIGHER CLASSES I TRAIN THE CHILDREN TO POINT OUT THEIR OWN FAULTS IN THE PICTURES. THIS WAY THE CHILD EVEN LEARNS TO LOOK OBJECTIVELY AT ONE'S OWN SELF.

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF AN ART TEACHER IS THE GREATEST, WHERE THE EDUCATION OF THE STUDENT COMMUNITY IS CONCERNED. BECAUSE ONLY IF WE ARE ABLE TO KINDLE THE LOVE FOR ART IN EVERY INDIVIDUAL, THE FUTURE OF THIS COUNTRY IS BRIGHT.

IF WE OBSERVE VERY CLOSELY THERE ARE MANY WHO ARE SCIENCE GRADUATES BUT ONLY A FEW INVENTORS. THERE ARE MANY MATHEMATICIANS BUT ONLY FEW WHO CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE RESEARCH. WHY IS IT? ITS BECAUSE THESE FEW HAVE NOT LOST THEIR CREATIVITY ON THE WAY IN THEIR JOURNEY FROM THE YOUTH TO THE ADULTHOOD.

ACCORDING TO ME EVERY PERSON SHOULD BE AN ARTIST FIRST AND THEN A LAWYER OR A MATHEMATICIAN OR A DOCTOR. THEN THE CITIES IN THIS WORLD WILL NOT BE CONCRETE JUNGLES AND THE RURAL INDIA WILL NOT HAVE BARE MOUNTAINS. THE WORLD WILL BE SUCH A LOVELY PLACE TO LIVE IN. WE WILL HAVE TIME TO PAUSE AND APPRECIATE THE BLUE SKY, THE CLEARITY OF THE RIVER RUNNING BY, THE BEAUTY IN SIMPLE THINGS, THE HORIZONS FOR OUR LEARNING WILL BE WIDER AND WIDER IF ALL OF US ARE AESTHETICALLY INCLINED.