

3 Sharing "Children Art Education" with the Parents

Due to my job assignment, I often have the chance of meeting people from different sectors of Art Education and have come to perceive some common phenomena. The few questions listed below are the points that the parents would like to ask concerning Children Art Education.

Q. My child does not know anything and I don't know if he/she is talented or not. Do you think he/she is able to learn to draw?

A. First of all, don't just bear in mind that children know nothing. All children are sensitive and fragile. They need positive encouragement. Once they have the interest to get in touch with something, usually they can quite well make it. As a matter of fact, this is true for adults also. Children are similar to a brand new computer, possessing great capacity for memory and potential. At this stage, any message from the outside world influences them easily. They will record in file any happy or unhappy learning experience and this is very different from the reducing memory function of the adults. Therefore, we have to be tactful and avoid transmitting too many negative messages to children affecting their character and personality development. Most young children like to draw, to form clay moulding and to make creations. We should not just comment on their imperfect performance but try to discover the best of it. Don't be stingy with praises and the little kids will find confidence in doing as well as doing it even better. Therefore, there will never be "unable" or "unsuitable" for any child. Only through an experience of dismay or a shocking criticism that he/she is deterred from learning.

Q. Is it advantageous to a child who is associated with Art?

A. People often neglect that Art is Culture and Creation is a fact of the life experience. Art is a rich cultural resource embracing the material, the spiritual and the culture sector. It is advantageous to be associated with Art. The reasons are

- 1) In the ongoing process and investigation of the piece of work, the topic speculation, the choice and application of the matter and materials, all help to nurture creative thinking;
- 2) Art Creation is a self organization and self manifestation at a certain stage and from this exercise, a child can well show his/her feeling to release emotion and ease off pressure;
- 3) Art Creation holds no standard answers nor does it need any memorization, but is profitable to a child's self demonstration, nourishing confidence and performance;
- 4) Art covers over a range of multi-culture and is helpful to widen a child's intellectual scope;
- 5) Undergoing the artistic cultivation of sincerity, goodness and beauty, the child's spirituality will have its accomplishment, helpful to the full development of his/her personality, nurturing fine appreciation of beauty. This is profitable to balance the psycho and physical growth of the little one.

Q. My child likes to draw, but can never draw well. All the outlines of the objects are out of their normal shapes. What shall we do?

A. Is it so important to draw an exact picture of an object? Not even Picasso's masterpieces look like the real models. In the fullness of a vigorous stage of life, a child, being frank and charming, is possessing the capacity of demonstrating his/her dynamic force with a creation appearing to be unconstrained, full of sentiments and imagination. This ability is well esteemed by all artists who even wish to be young again to return to the original naturalistic era. How can we, parents, not grasp this golden period and allow our child to display his/her innate ability? To tell the truth, should we adults, who are so rigid and weak in imaginative power, demand our kid to draw and copy an exact picture, conformable to the routine appearance?

It is great that children love to draw and it is something to be encouraged. When they are not in the ability to make a verbal show of their innermost feelings, drawing which is like writing, is the best tool to manifest their own profound self.



Q. Should a child learn some technique first before drawing?

A. Don't worry. A child before nine is a bit too early to be practising realistic drawing. "Pulling the shoot to help it grow" is only limiting the young one's imagination and nip his/her learning interest in the bud. In the course of teaching, it is better to hint at a point, to enlighten the young learner. Instead of telling him/her what to do, we may well put to them some questions to allow them to decide, e.g. "Who?", "Where?", "What to do?", "How to do?". Is it not more marvellous to let the child experience, discover and create? Moreover, the ideas of the grown-ups may not be always correct. Right?

When a child is nine, he/she is entering a realistic drawing stage. At this time, his/her imaginative power begins to weaken. To back it up, we can guide them to observe. In the procedure of observation, there will be new stimulation, new experience, new sentiments and new discovery. On the other hand, parallel guidance has to be given during the period of technical learning to lead the child to observe, to create, to enrich his/her life experience and its content. It is because the creative potential, with its maintenance and development, will never come by itself.

Technique is utilized to assist, to disclose the hidden content and may hold an important but not the most important position. Everybody may have his/her peculiarity and the teacher's teaching may not be suitable for all the students. The most vital element is to guide the child to observe, to experience, to discover how to develop his/her own uniqueness. It is never too late to learn the technique, and fifty years old is still not too late. The most essential provision is interest, creativity and connotation.

Q. How should we parents help our child?

A. Don't burden a child with the past unhappy experience and never be disrespectful to the little one. Give him/her encouragement and positive information. Enrich his/her life by hinting, questioning, offering him/her active experience to help to discover more. Lay for the child a foundation of SELF EDUCATION so that one day, he/she may polish and cultivate himself/herself with the art of sincerity, goodness and beauty to manifest his/her creativity. This not only benefits the child's whole life, but also adds blessing to the society. Is it not a great gift for the next generation?

long Qiao
Art Education Promotion, The Macau Museum of Art
Excerpted from: "Perfect Parents", September, 2003

教育文摘

出版：教育暨青年局 / 统筹：苏朝晖 / 编委：陈宝云 关启佳 / 技术支持：冯万雄 蔚凤君 / 葡文翻译：Susana Maria Dias Zamith Silva / 英文翻译：何刘一星 / 设计：创致意念 / 印刷：鸿兴柯式印刷有限公司 / 数量：五仟份

Educação e Nós

Edição: Direcção dos Serviços de Educação e Juventude / Director: Sou Chio Fai / Conselho de Redacção: Chan Pou Wan e Kwan Kai Kai / Assidência técnica: Fong Man Hung e Wai Fong Kwan / Tradução para Língua Portuguesa: Susana Maria Dias Zamith Silva / Tradução para Língua Inglesa: Maria Ho / Design: Conde Group / Impressão: Tipografia Macau Hung Heng Ltda. / Tiragem: 5,000

Educational Digest

Edit: Education and Youth Affairs Bureau / Director: Sou Chio Fai / Editing Committee: Chan Pou Wan, Kwan Kai Kai / Technical Assistance: Fong Man Hung, Wai Fong Kwan / Translator (Portuguese): Susana Maria Dias Zamith Silva / Translator (English): Maria Ho / Design: Conde Group / Printing: Tipografia Macau Hung Heng Ltda. / Print Run: 5,000