


TEACHERS'
ASSEMBLY:

ROCK • PAPER •
SCISSORS

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DRAWING ROOM

29.04.21
4:30-6pm

TEACHERS' RESOURCE: DRAWING THE ABSTRACT Reflections from ROCK PAPER SCISSORS in-school project, 2021

This resource is from our third ROCK PAPER SCISSORS teachers' assembly with artists Rita Evans and Halima Akhtar.



In-School Project, with Halima Akhtar,
2021. © Drawing Room

Over a period of 10 weeks, both artists delivered the ROCK PAPER SCISSORS in-school project to KS2 pupils at Charlotte Sharman Primary School. Sessions began during lockdown and were delivered for the first part online via zoom, later transitioning working in person with the children. The project encourages close collaboration between artist and teacher, bringing practice and knowledge of the classroom and studio together, exploring the potential of a creative pedagogy in schools.

In this resource Rita and Halima share their diverse approaches and methods to working with the abstract as a creative tool to encourage collaboration, confidence, curiosity and exploration. The resource is devised for teachers working with KS1 and KS2 pupils however activities can be adapted and used with a variety of age groups and settings.



In-School Project, with Rita Evans,
2021. © Drawing Room

HALIMA AKHTAR

These drawing activities are designed to encourage new and curious approaches to creative thinking and making. The children will explore ways to find inspiration in their surrounding environments looking at objects and spaces and will consider how they can use drawing as a tool to transform and reimagine.

Focusing on ideas of movement these activities respond to a visual or experience that the children use as a jumping off point, that can then be developed through their own choices and perspectives. Working with the abstract in this way celebrates the idea of interpretation – allowing everyone's perspectives to be of value and importance whilst sharing how they look or feel to us as individuals.

Both activities are seeds of ideas that can be expanded and developed into further projects or repeated in new ways with opportunities for collaboration.

ACTIVITY 1:

TRANSFORMING SHAPES



WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- A variety of drawing tools (soft materials like pencil or chalk will allow them to explore changes from light to dark)
- Paper
- Larger rolls or sheets of paper can be used for the children to scale up or explore how the pathways of their shape journeys might overlap when working together in groups

The drawings in the chain might have changed in other ways as they were repeated. Discuss as a group how we could use our imagination to change these objects in different ways...

HOW

- Ask the children to focus on an object or something they can see in the space around them that they are drawn to.

- Have them draw the outline of this shape on one side of their page.
- Ask them to repeat the same shape next to the original drawing
- Challenge the children to create a drawing chain that moves the shape to the opposite side of the page (almost like footsteps).

The drawings in the chain might have changed in other ways as they were repeated. Discuss as a group how we could use our imagination to change these objects in different ways.

Can we shrink a drawing down and make it smaller? What is the smallest we could make it?

Could we stretch the shape out and make it longer/wider/bigger?

If it is a solid can we change our marks to make it look like its melting?

If we start with bold lines can we make them softer and softer so the drawing almost disappears?

Allow the children to keep drawing explore using these ideas, picking out different shapes and using different materials.

COLLABORATE:

The children can each create an initial drawing and swap with a partner who will chose how to transform their drawing in a new way.

ACTIVITY 2:

A JOURNEY THROUGH YOUR IMAGINATION



WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

- A variety of drawing materials,
- Blank flashcards
- Paper

HOW

- Give each child two small flashcards, ask them to write an **action** or **movement word** on one e.g running, skipping, tip toeing, dancing...
- And **part of a journey** on the other e.g down a staircase, up a hill, around the corner, through the mud...
- Make two separate decks of cards (more ideas will emerge as the activity is repeated so feel free to keep adding to these).
- To warm them up, choose a card and ask the children what this movement may look like as a mark on paper.
- Ask them to gesture the movement with their finger in the air, as if they had an imaginary pencil on the end of their finger.
- Prompt them to describe the marks, creating a vocabulary of ways to translate the actions into marks e.g squiggly lines, straight sharp marks, zig zag, short and quick, bold etc.
- To start the activity, ask the children to put their pen on their paper, close their eyes and imagine taking the line on the journey you are going to describe.
- Pull cards from the deck and call out the prompts – some actions might be very quick and others drawn out for longer.

- Alternate between the two sets of card to make different combinations eg. skipping around the corner, dancing down the stairs, running through the mud etc.

Through this activity the children will be able to create their own vocabulary of marks and drawing techniques in an intuitive and personal way. By drawing with their eyes closed the activity has an exciting moment of reveal whilst giving the children a chance to loosen up and challenge what they think a drawing is meant to look like.

COLLABORATE :

Assign each child an action/movement card from the deck. Using this prompt have them draw a line that starts at one edge of the page and travels across to another. In an open space the children can find different ways to join their drawings to one another to keep the lines connected and create a communal map of a larger journey.



RITA EVANS

Recipe for Abstraction and Collaboration:

I create systems, structures and games, to open a space that allows free improvisation and listening as a group to take place. This results in sensitive, collectively generated live compositions across different mediums that includes drawing, movement, sculpture and sound. The activity suggestions, like my practice, are open to chance encounters and emergent group dynamics through a shared exploration of materials. In this recipe, the children gradually build up sensitivity to one another to be able to make abstract audiovisual compositions together.

The warm up activities support the process of exploring the abstract and encourage listening skills, whilst building a vocabulary and confidence for the main activity. The main activity translates abstract sounds into gestural marks in a rhythmic game format, creating a visual and collaborative map of their live musical event. This map can be used as a stimulus for discussion and reflection, exploring sounds, abstract marks and collaborative working.

WARM-UP 1:

HOW MANY DIFFERENT SOUNDS?



WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

— x1 found object or material for making sound (suggestions that work well: a metal cup, piece of textured wood, polystyrene, paper, corrugated cardboard).

HOW:

- Children sit in a circle facing inwards.
- Going around the circle, one child at a time says their name, followed by “ and this is my sound”.
- The child makes their own unique sound on the surface of the found object or material.
- It helps if you introduce yourself with a sound as an example for the children first.
- The objective is for the group to find as many different sounds as possible using one material. Emphasise the different ways they have found the sounds as we go around the circle to encourage more variety to keep building.
- After each child makes their individual sound, ask the whole group of children to give adjectives that describe that sound. This group activity encourages listening between peers and opens abstract explorations as they tune into the found object's details and what different sound textures and rhythms they can create.

WARM-UP 2:

SOUND SHAPES (DRAWN IN THE AIR)



WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

— Just yourselves

HOW:

- Children sit in a circle facing inwards.
- Going around the circle, one child at a time says their name, followed by “and this is my Sound Shape”.
- The child makes their own unique sound and its corresponding shape in the Air using their finger. (Option to use their whole body to make the shape)
- After each child makes their sound shape, the whole group repeats this all together.

This gets the group to pay attention and listen to one another, sensitising them to quieter sounds and variations. It also helps each child feel really heard, especially for the quieter children's shapes, which become 'amplified' by the whole group.

MAIN EVENT:

CYCLICAL SOUND MAKING & COLLECTIVE DRAWING



WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

— Different colour felt tip pens
— 2 large sheets of paper
— Percussive 'shaky' instrument
— 1 found object for making sound (suggestions that work well: a metal cup, piece of textured wood, polystyrene, paper).

HOW:

- Children sit in a circle facing inwards.
- Ask them to recap the warm-ups (emphasising the different sounds, the quiet sounds and their Sound shapes) now ask them to draw using pens in response to sounds.)
- In the centre of the circle put 2 large sheets of paper with pens or pencils scattered about.
- Choose 3 children to begin.
- 1 of these children plays their sound on the found object.
- Simultaneously, the 2 other children approach 1 of the 2 sheets of paper each and draw what they hear using rhythmic gestures.
- The children then come back to the circle and 3 more children are chosen.
- They keep going around the circle, and the game ends when the pages are completely filled or the time runs out.
- Gather around the drawings and ask them what they see/hear in them, what the drawings remind them of and how they felt about the process.
- In a step further, ask some of the children to choose a mark or section of the drawing and make a vocal sound that describes what they see and the whole group to repeat that sound together.

Drawn letters on the title page designed by
young artists in Year 5 and 6 at Charlotte
Sharman Primary School.

Supported by:



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