

# ArtiCULan

## ArtiCULan Art, Time, Culture, Language

Education through the Arts in multilingual primary schools



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## PREFACE

ArtiCULan aims to help children grow through creative expression. This Erasmus+ KA2 project is based on interdisciplinary collaboration for multisensorial and multimodal activities combining visual arts, music, drama and movement. As we focus on arts education, cultural identity and qualitative interactions in our multilingual classrooms, learning outcomes are important both for wellbeing and for the key competences of the curriculum. Cooperative learning makes children and teachers more empathetic and responsive. They give meaning to their creation in warm solidarity.

The ArtiCULan ebook is the outcome of a three-year project collaboration between experts in practitioners, researchers from the University of Applied Sciences and Arts PXL (Belgium), the University of Porto (Portugal), the University of Las Palmas (Gran Canaria) and the University of Istanbul Cerrahpasa (Turkey). From September 2018 until August 2021 we co-created a framework for artistic projects and a common assessment tool to offer children in CLIL and refugee classes the opportunity to create art. Artistic workshops have been developed in a design based approach with local primary schools in the different participating countries.

In this manual you will find:

- ArtiCULan artistic framework
- ArtiCULan common assessment tool
- ArtiCULan artistic workshop

All eResources including the videos of our workshops are available on our website <https://www.articulan.eu/>.

We hope that you will enjoy the creative wanderings together with the children in your classroom!

The ArtiCULan team

# ArtiCULan

## ARTISTIC FRAMEWORK

### A practical guide for primary school teachers

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## 1. ArtiCULan: a short introduction

This artistic framework is created as a part of the Articular-project, an Erasmus + project involving a team with researchers from Belgium, Portugal, Gran Canaria and Turkey. ArtiCULan's overall goal is to develop interdisciplinary artistic workshops in multilingual and multicultural classrooms.

The artistic framework is developed as a toolkit to support and aid primary school teachers in the creation of their own workshops. It offers practical guidelines supported by tangible examples from the good practices of the international partners. The framework takes the creative process as the main incentive for a different kind of 'learning', embedded in sensory and personal experience and creation.

The artistic framework draws on individual and social imagination as a tool to foster a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes. This set covers a wide range of fields: from communication and collaboration skills, cultural and linguistic integration and exchange, to developing a creative and flexible way of thinking in which sensation and feeling are taken into account. The processes involved in the workshops may not be measurable, but they are observable. A set of key features is described in the next chapter, and the common assessment tool provides a more detailed template to observe and evaluate the processes involved in the artistic workshops. The artistic framework primarily focuses on the creative process itself, providing a well-equipped starter pack for the design of the workshops, and also a broader context that outlines its value in the present-day curriculum of elementary schools.

The artistic project ArtiCULan provides children of culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds a safe environment to explore creative expression and interaction. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child stipulates the importance of respect for the cultural identity of every child and his parents (art. 29) and their freedom of choice in language and culture also for minority groups (art. 30). The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal #4 on Quality Education includes on the validation of home languages for the purpose of learning and well-being. Within this perspective the European Union has set out the most comprehensive framework for the protection of minority languages in education.

Schools embracing their students' multilingualism and taking action to give space to these languages within the school community are called 'Language Friendly Schools' (Hurwitz & Kambel, 2020). They developed a language plan to become linguistically and culturally inclusive, welcoming students, parents and staff - often from diverse backgrounds - to share and acquire knowledge. In this ArtiCULan project we use artistic and cultural expression and practices as a starting point for our workshops to value cultural perspectives and culturally sensitive languages through learning processes reinforcing social cohesion (UNESCO, 2010). This is why we encourage teachers to apply a pedagogy of culturally responsive teaching focusing on the awareness, the responsibility, the beliefs, the openness of teachers to respect and validate cultural and linguistic diversity (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Özüdogru, 2018) when they explore the issues of multilingualism and multiculturalism.

This framework can and should be used as an open-end toolkit. Just as the children who are participating in the workshops are encouraged to grab hold on the starting point in their own way, teachers as well are invited to use this toolkit in an individual manner. It is important for teachers to discover their own emphasis, based on their personal passions and preferences.

Apart from the personal choices of the teachers, the characteristics of the group of children will additionally define the layout and course of your workshops. The nationalities and backgrounds of the children in most of the present-day classes are diverse, which enriches the interactions during the workshops. The workshops offer circumstances in which personal experiences and feelings are addressed, and spontaneous interactions originate. Even non-verbal communication and collaboration is made possible, which is especially valuable for refugee children.

## 2. Education through the Arts

### 2.1 RECIPE OR ROADMAP?

‘In education systems in which children and young people are reduced to test scores, in which their creativity is suppressed or only allowed when it yields the ‘right’ results, in which there is no interest in the voice of the student and no room for each student to discover and express his or her own unique identity, the arts do have an important role to fulfil.’ (trans. From Biesta 2020: 58).

Educationalist Gert Biesta states an important problem contemporary education is dealing with. It is often based on product-oriented systems that are directed towards achieving. Even in primary schools test scores and predetermined results set the tone, and art isn’t a fundamental part of the primary school curricula, like maths, spelling or science. Art is traditionally considered similar to the extracurricular ‘hobbies’ some of the children have, and not as a core subject of great importance. Some examples of art forms that are taught in primary schools are singing, handicrafts and so on. During these exercises and assignments, the teacher is proposing certain standards. In the traditional way of teaching art, a song should be sung beautifully and in tune for example, and a work of crochet should be made without mistakes. We can compare this approach with following a recipe for a cake. Children have to act in accordance with a recipe leading step by step to a predetermined final result (the ‘perfect’ cake). If the cake does not match the result the teacher has in mind, they can start again until the cake does match the example. This recipe-strategy is very product-oriented, and the process leading to this product follows a linear, one-way course. This approach can have its value in teaching technical artistic processes, but creativity is nonetheless relegated.

Moreover, this approach of arts in primary school education causes children –and teachers nonetheless– to believe that art is something set aside for the gifted, something that should be executed correctly, preferably by professional artists. This conception may lead to insecurity and the feeling of ‘not being good’ at something. This feeling is not only reserved for the children, teachers as well may recognize this self-doubt. Some of you may not have the best singing voice, or the steadiest hand for drawing, or the most expressive body language for theatre plays. However, as art historian and philosopher Herbert Read already stated in 1943 in his publication *Education through Art*, ‘there is no such thing as the ‘artistic’ type’ (Read, 1979: 308). Every individual has his or her own artistic attitude, developed by subjective experiences and temperament, and characterized by spontaneity and sensory expression.

The recipe-approach to art education in elementary schools is outdated and not in tune with contemporary art studies. In these studies (fed by social and cognitive sciences) the focus has shifted from the artwork itself to the discourse about art and the reactions the artwork provokes in the viewer/listener. The subjective meaning of artworks and the emotive and associative processes they awaken have become essential (Van Heusden, Rass & Tans, 2016).

Naturally, this shift influenced higher art education. Universal standards and technical skills made room for a focus on individual modes of expression and the creative processes leading to a work of art. Not only the result itself, but the ramified richness of the process, including personal concepts and imagination, are taken into account.



Art students are not following a recipe, they are navigating on a roadmap. Because of their different backgrounds and personalities, they start from different locations on this map, roaming and using side roads, mapping out their way and taking with them what appeals to them. They follow a non-linear course in which the qualities of this personal search eventually shape a work of art.

The importance of the creative process slowly passed on to primary school education, where ‘creative expression’-classes gave a new, highly necessary input to the primary school curricula. This ‘creative expression’ starts from a similar premise: the value of the inclusion of art in primary school education doesn’t reside in teaching arts and crafts driven by predetermined objectives and technical standards, but rather in using art and imagination as a motor for creating an attitude of openness, curiosity, self-awareness and confidence. This can only be obtained by focusing on the creative process itself, by offering the students a map on which they can roam freely, instead of a confining step-by-step recipe.

## 2.2 AESTHETICS AND ASSOCIATIONS

The process-oriented approach on primary school art education does not mean that ArtiCULan considers technical skills or aesthetics as unimportant or outdated. On the contrary. Technical artistic skills and practice are of major importance in more specialized art educational contexts, but they are not paramount in primary school art education. Aesthetics, however, are an important activator in our workshops. This project does not interpret aesthetics as imperatives based on cultural standards or standards regarding the execution of the artwork. We draw on aesthetics in its original meaning, derived from the Greek term ‘aesthesis’; sensory perception. This is an understanding of aesthetics that does not comprise mere formalism, but one that is rooted in sensory and emotive experience.

The fore mentioned Herbert Read describes aesthetic experience as a dialectical counterplay between perception and imagination (Read, 1979: 39). In context of the ArtiCULan workshops, this is a valuable definition, since it attributes an incentive energy to aesthetic experience; one that evokes imagination. The latter he describes as ‘the capacity to relate images one to another’ (Read, 1979: 44). This may seem a rather narrow definition, but it deals also with how these images are combined. Imagination is a very complex interplay between perception, feeling and memory; an associative and wandering activity, wild and irregular (Read, 1979).

The triggering capacities of aesthetic experience can be considered as an important activator for learning, since they offer ways of connecting things that are unrelated at first sight (Vecchi in McClure, Tarr, Marmé Thompson & Eckhoff, 2017: 156). This notion of learning sees meaning as relational, as a way of connecting (Johnson, 2007:10). This is a way of ‘learning’ that is not a passive recording, but a personal inquiry for meaning through imagination. In this take on learning, reflection and thought are embodied, rooted in sensation and experience (Johnson, 2007). These creative processes of meaning making lay the foundation of our ArtiCULan workshops. They don’t represent art as an extraordinary activity set aside for the gifted, because creative processes are embedded in everyone’s everyday life, even though we are mostly unaware of this.

The ArtiCULan workshops don’t want to teach art, they want to **teach through art**. They don’t interpret art education as product-oriented plastic education, but as a non-linear **creative process**. Through aesthetics and associations, they induce modes of **meaning-making** and **artistic experiment**, but also of **self-reflection** and **self-expression**, of **social interaction**.

## 2.3 KEY FEATURES OF THE WORKSHOPS

The previous chapters already offer outlines for the ArtiCULan project. Because of the practice-oriented aim of this project you can find a summary of the key features for your workshops below.

### Cyclic

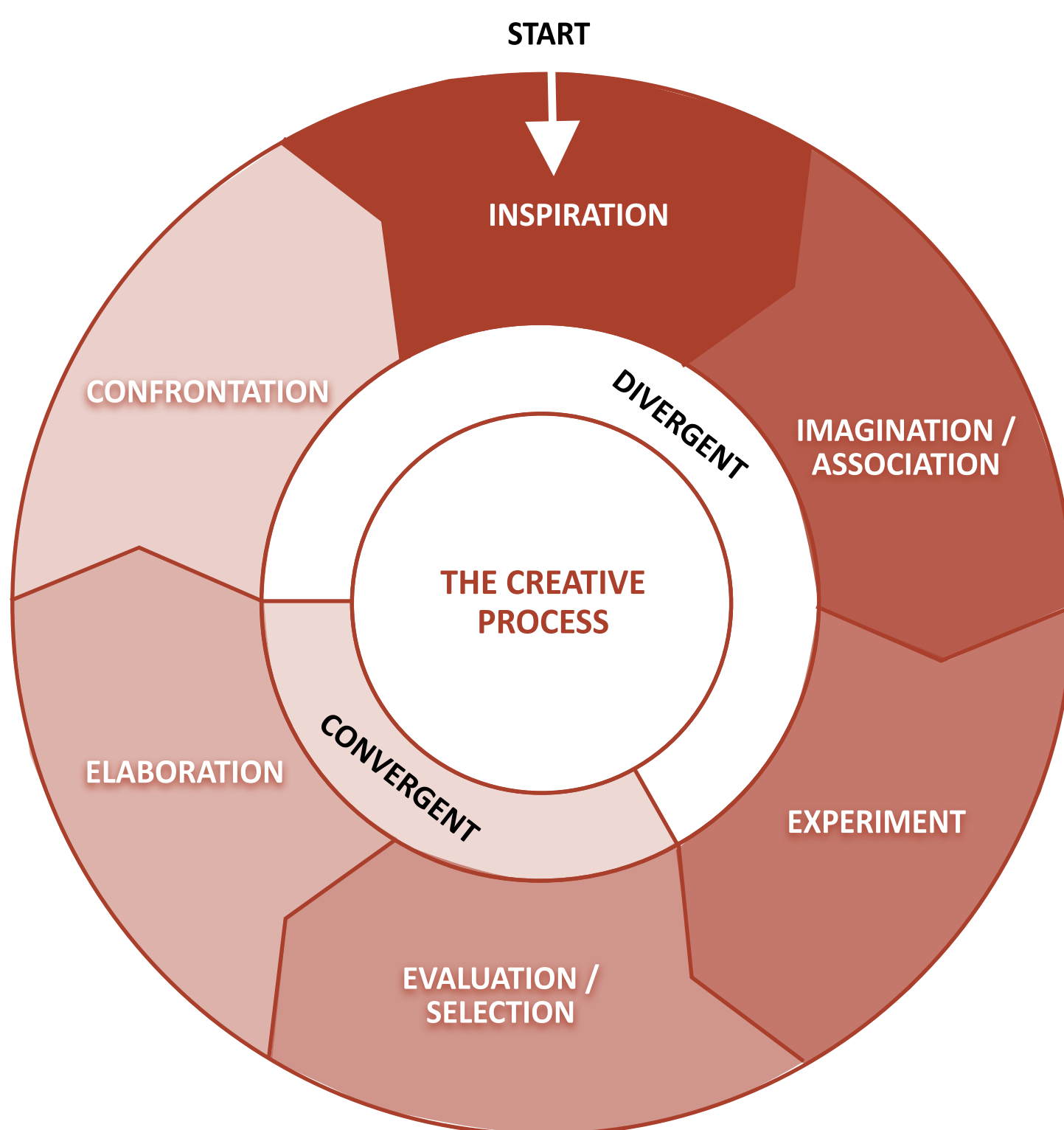


Figure 1: The ArtiCULan Creative Process

Every creative process is a cyclic movement, that we have casted in six different phases. Of course, these phases do not have strict boundaries, and the creative process is an organic process that moves in different directions, forward but often backwards or sideways as well. However, the somewhat artificial division in consecutive phases is necessary to provide a structure upon which creative classes can be based. Artists will jump freely between them, and teachers should also approach them as a dynamic and fluid medley. Creative processes are fluctuating: they don't have the same intensity the entire time. The level of involvement changes. While giving artistic workshops you will notice these changes, and you don't have to consider them as problematic. It is a characteristic of every creative process (Glăveanu & Beghetto, 2020).

Creative processes start with an inspiring sensory impression that addresses the imagination of the children. They will make associations and link the impressions to their memories and previous experiences. Several options, paths or possibilities unfold while using their imagination. Imagination never provides a singular path; it grows branches like a tree. The starting point of a creative process is thus a divergent movement. When they start experimenting after formulating ideas, the divergent movement continues the same way, since artistic experiment is always a process of trial and error, of tasting the different options, and of discovering how materials and media behave in different ways.



However, at a certain point, choices have to be made. The children take time to reflect upon their ideas and experiments and they choose on which path they will continue. They try to assemble the selected idea into a final result. This means the divergent movement is followed by a convergent one, in which they will be focused on creating an outcome.

When they finish this first attempt/result, however, this does not mean the creative process has come to an end. On the contrary, the children will reflect upon what they made, they will share their experiences, thoughts and opinions, and the works will become part of a broader understanding in which they evaluate their works against the initial ideas they had. The results of the different groups offer new perspectives on these ideas, widening their visions. In this sense, the results of this process lead to new questions, to a new inquiry, and may even lead to a new creative process. They are inspired again.

This is how professional artists are working. In their case the creative process is an ongoing – seemingly endless – mechanism that sustains itself. Professional artists are constantly questioning their results, confronting them with previous ideas and other, new and old impressions, which will lead them to adjust, recreate, and produce new works. Of course, in the ArtiCULan workshops, time sets limits on this possibly endless loop.

The creative process that forms the foundation of the workshops is thus a cyclic movement that goes from a divergent movement, to a convergent one, and always ends in another divergent phase, proposing openness rather than closure. This cyclic movement provides the foundation of the practical guidelines presented in chapter 3. Every phase which is briefly described here, will be elaborated on further in that chapter.

### Personal involvement

Creative processes require personal involvement. This is something that makes learning through creative processes radically different from ‘traditional’ learning. In traditional learning, children are addressed more passively, and the main aim is the transfer of knowledge. They can give answers, without having to delve into their own self. The ArtiCULan workshops address their feelings, personal associations, senses and body. They don’t aim at learning a predetermined set of knowledge; they invest in creating a very different kind of ‘knowledge’; knowledge that is subjective, rooted in imagination (see chapter 4.2). The Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS) are a useful aid to help children to be involved on a personal level. VTS enable intimate reflection on art, through making links with personal associations and memories in tactile dialogues on artworks (see 3.3).

Personal involvement during the workshops might be seen as self-evident. This is not the case. ‘With openness comes vulnerability’ says anthropologist Tim Ingold (Ingold, 2011: 14). By sharing their feelings, thoughts, memories and even ideas, children put themselves in a vulnerable position. It is very different from giving an answer to a ‘right or wrong’-question on a worksheet. If their result is wrong in such a test, they wouldn’t take it very personally. Telling how a piece of music makes them feel, or which memories come to their mind by seeing a painting, is much more daring. Children should never get the feeling of being judged. There is no right or wrong in this scenario. It is about what feels ‘right’ to them. To discover what feels right for you, or why exactly you intensely like something, is very difficult. To express it - verbally, artistically, or by any means at hand - is even more admirable, and always requires taking a vulnerable position. As a teacher, you should make the children see how opening themselves up and showing vulnerability is a very important tool to develop their self-esteem and confidence. When you take their input into account and validate their opinions, they feel empowered.



Of course, the workshops do not only require personal involvement from the children. You need to set the example to nurture their openness. You can't just 'instruct' them to be open. You need to create the right emotional climate, by sharing your own impressions, by taking them with you through your imagination, and by following them on their detours on their 'roadmaps' as well. As a teacher you should be relaxed, open-minded, attentive and flexible, willing to take different directions following your pupils' input, rather than 'pushing' the workshop to a certain direction you might have had in mind beforehand. This might not be very easy, because it means letting go control. It is very different from a traditional way of teaching with a linear structure. To feel more at ease, we are supporting the idea of co-teaching. Furthermore, the interaction between two or even more teachers can be stimulating for the children. Teachers can exemplify in a natural way possible (inter)actions, without having to give instructions to the children in a formal way. Apart from these benefits, co-teaching offers better circumstances to scaffold and guide the children. The Common Assessment Tool [<https://www.articulan.eu/products/>] developed for the ArtiCULan workshops, delves deeper into these interactions that arise during the workshops.

When children are asked about personal associations, uncomfortable subjects may arise too, such as poverty, parental arguments, fear, and in the context of refugee children even real danger and traumas. You should apply a 'pedagogy of listening'. Listening, not just to words, since listening is not something you only do with your ears. You need your eyes to see how they use gestures, expressions, to see how they interact with each other, and you need respect and genuine interest in learning more about the children (McClure, 2017:159). As a teacher you need to be responsive, rather than trying to push the course of the class into a specific direction. The fact that there is no fixed 'product' to be made, gives you the freedom to do this.

### Unpredictable

The highly personal aspect of creative processes makes them inevitably unpredictable. You can never guess someone's emotions, predict their reactions or notice how everyone is feeling. Each individual has a different character, different memories, different experiences, or even a different cultural background. On top of that, children are even more spontaneous and direct than adults. You can't predict or control their reactions.

What's more, a creative process has its own, non-linear course. Ideas are being adjusted while working all the time. A creative process does not show a straight line from an initial idea to the final result, because it is based on trial and error, experiment, rethinking what you did, adjusting, trying again, be inspired again, on and on. As stated before, creative processes are divergent: many paths present themselves, many ideas, media, techniques, approaches need to be put into practice before you make a choice. Even in the next convergent phase, it is still possible to come back on decisions, return to the start and rethink the initial idea. This aspect of constantly revisiting previous actions and ideas, is important to keep in mind while reading chapter 3. In that chapter the different phases of the creative process are analysed separately.

They are presented as a logical sequence, but in reality, it often happens that you return to a previous phase before you go to the next. A creative process is an organic, fluid movement that is constantly returning and running ahead to the previous and following phases, as we already mentioned in the chapter 'cyclic'. The different features are closely interwoven and enforce each other.

The constant interaction between reflection and creation makes the course of a creative process constantly shift. The initial idea will modify completely or it might just get some just slight alterations: but it is certain that one will never produce the result they imagined at the start. There is serendipity at work in all creative processes. The fact that they are unpredictable is a strength.

### Process-oriented

As stated in the chapter Education Through the Arts, the goal is not to create a predetermined result. Even though the children are working towards a result in most of the workshops, the result itself is not the main aim of the workshops. It is merely a stepstone to new inspiration. The cyclic nature of the workshops already suggests that there is no real end, merely a new start. The aim is to nurture new artistic processes and creative interactions: the process itself is the goal.

This process is not a result-driven, rational inquiry, but a versatile and complex interplay of different aspects, such as decision making and problem solving, expressing personal feelings and opinions, associative thinking, creative expression, risk taking, experimenting with materials, ... The focus can slightly differ in the different workshops: every creative process always activates a wide scope of factors, but depending on the content, every workshop can have its own focal points. In all of them, the exchange between exploration and expression is a main attribute, interwoven in a group context.

Educationalist Gert Biesta refutes the product-oriented approach in education as follows:

‘Instead of asking what education produces, we must ask ourselves what education means. And instead of asking what education makes, we must ask ourselves what education makes possible.’ (transl. from Biesta, 2020: 57) This is a valuable attitude to adopt in teaching any subject.

### Interdisciplinarity

Every form of art is based on sensory (‘aesthetic’) experience, and many artworks address several senses. Contemporary art is often deliberately combining media to incite a multisensorial physical experience. But this is not an attribute exclusive to contemporary art. Many historical artworks have the same quality. When you look at an artwork of Paul Klee for example, you will be visually aroused, but the way he is arranging his lines has a rhythmic character that appeals to your ears and body, almost like a graphic transcription of music; a music score.

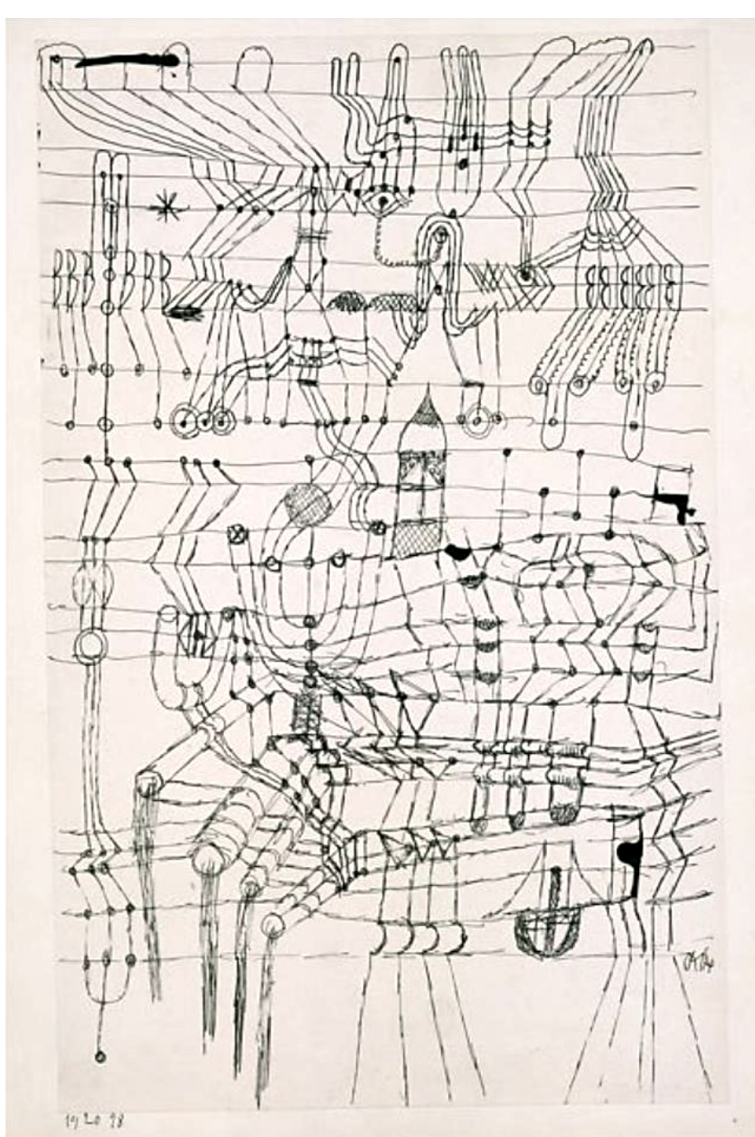


Figure 2: Paul Klee, *Drawing Knotted in the Manner of a Net*, 1920



Klee is also writing about the 'sonority' of colours (Klee, 1957: 287), and in his abstract paintings you can see how the arrangements of coloured shapes create a melodic composition. His work is a good example of the synesthetic qualities of art. In native Aboriginal art you can see the same characteristics.



Figure 3: Paul Klee, *Ancient Harmony*, 1925

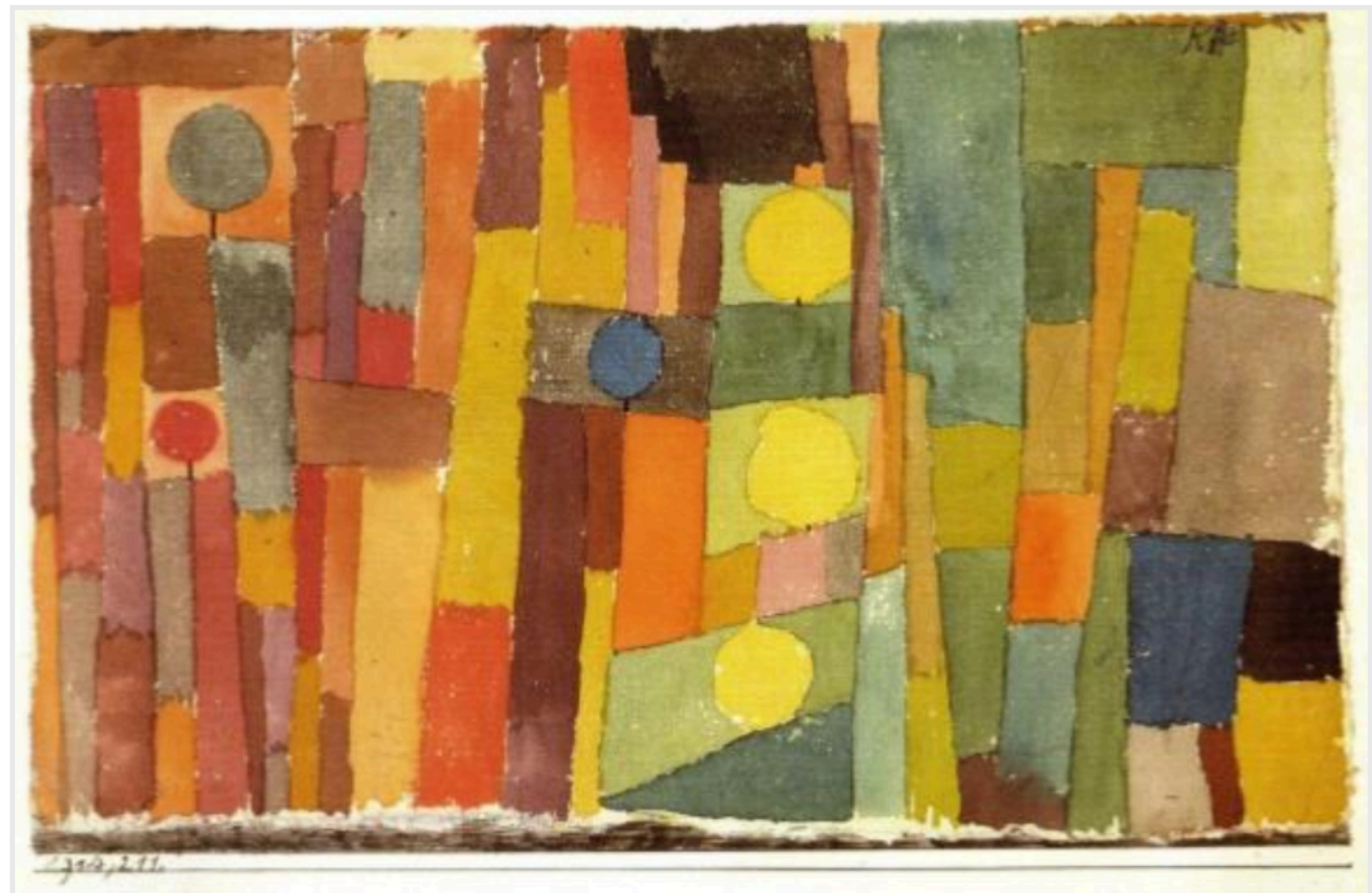


Figure 4: Paul Klee, *In the Style of Kairouan*, 1914

The same thing happens in other artistic domains. Often, when listening to a piece of music, you want to start moving. Aesthetic experience involves your entire body, and rarely addresses you only on a visual or auditive level. And when it does, your imagination activates your other senses through a process of association.

The multisensorial dimension is not only at work in the experience of artworks, but also in the creation. You need your hands, eyes, ears,... to touch, shape, express, to make. Even in the simple act of drawing a circle your hands and eyes are in a dialogue. To make children aware of these interactions between the senses and develop them creates a strong base for a different kind of learning (see 2.2 and 4.2).

It is clear that in every creative process sensory experience plays a key role, and it is not a case of separate domains with each their own focus. Aesthetic experience involves the whole body. From this point of view, the ArtiCULan workshops address different artistic domains, such as drama, visual arts, music, dance,... and deliberately look for links between different disciplines and media. The borders between the artistic domains disappear. Even though you can focus on a specific discipline when you create a workshop, you should always engage different senses.



### Group assessment

The creative process in the workshops is a group process, which means that individual creative processes intermingle to facilitate an even richer experience and understanding, leading to cooperative and collaborative learning.

The complex and powerful interactions of a shared creative process have additional goals, or rather consequences, than an individually experienced creative process. In the individual creative process, the main focus involves individual experience and expression. When a creative process becomes a shared experience, other objectives are coming on board. The children listen to stories and feelings of others, they exchange ideas and solve problems together. They need to be attentive to others, they need to be aware of each other's work tempo, qualities and difficulties. Consequently, they will learn empathy and openness. This won't always happen without struggle. Having to deal with fellow pupils that have different opinions or artistic approaches can be frustrating. But this 'resistance'; these discussions, are valuable too, since they help the children questioning themselves.

The fact that they need to express themselves constantly to each other while working, makes them understand more consciously what they are doing and feeling as well. In other words, next to openness, empathy, communication and collaboration skills, creative group processes also offer a more profound understanding of their own creative process. The meta-perspective provided by group assessment is valuable to discover and develop sensory, flexible modes of thinking (see chapter 4).

We can conclude that the context of working on a common artistic project provides a rich scope of learning possibilities. This group assessment is a primary asset of the ArtiCULan workshops. In the Common Assessment Tool you can find the wider scope of (inter)actions at work during the workshops.

### 3. Artistic Workshops: a roadmap with practical guidelines and examples

#### 3.1 CONDITIONS

Before explaining the different phases of the ArtiCULan workshops, it is important to specify the conditions that are necessary to create the best circumstances for the workshops to take place.

We already gave guidelines regarding the attitude of the teacher in the chapter ‘personal involvement’, but also the environment in which the workshops take place is of major importance to create a safe and inviting climate. An encouraging emotional climate is not only dependent on the behaviour of the teacher, but also on the organisation of the classroom. Often it takes just small changes to set the right mood, like creating an open space by putting aside the benches, or changing the light. However, dealing with aesthetic experience, the workshops can also benefit from the aesthetic qualities of the space and materials (McClure, 2017: 156; Read, 1979: 215). The materials you are offering to the children, as well as the classroom itself, should invite discovery and interaction. As we already mentioned in chapter 2, aesthetic experience has a triggering capacity, encouraging exploration and imagination. For this reason, the aesthetic qualities of the workshop space can influence the children into kinesthetic exploration (McClure, 2017: 156). Another important aspect to take into account is the classroom’s ability to reflect the diversity of its members, and this requirement equally goes up for the materials you select (McClure, 2017: 157 and Chalmers, 1996).

In most of the cases the workshops will take place in the classroom itself, but we definitely encourage trying different environments. For example, nature and outside locations offer very stimulating circumstances for creative processes as well. Of course, this is not always possible, and the classroom itself can provide a good setting too, with some alterations according to the previously stated guidelines.

Apart from these environmental conditions, there are other aspects to the practical organization of the workshops that are paramount. One of them is giving the children the necessary time to fully engage in a creative process. They need to be working at a pace that feels comfortable for them and should never get the impression of being rushed, or having to quickly ‘finish’ something. Time pressure can impede certain goals of the workshop. As stated before, it is not about finishing a work, but about the process itself and all the interactions and dynamics induced by this process. Therefore, it is necessary to provide the children with a suitable and large enough environment, and unhurried time (McClure, 2017: 158).

Another important aspect is the necessity of regularly organizing the workshops. Repetition is very important for the children to get used to this approach. Every time they will feel more comfortable in their interactions with each other and with the teacher, more at ease in their interactions with different media and forms of expression. If the workshops are organized only rarely, the children won’t benefit from it. Developing skills in different artistic domains, learning to trust on their intuition, articulating their feelings, communication and collaborations skills, are not accomplished with just one workshop. These are skills gained through regular practice. For this reason, the workshops should not be treated as an ‘extra’ activity that can be carried out if there is some time left. They need to become part of the regular school routine to be effective.

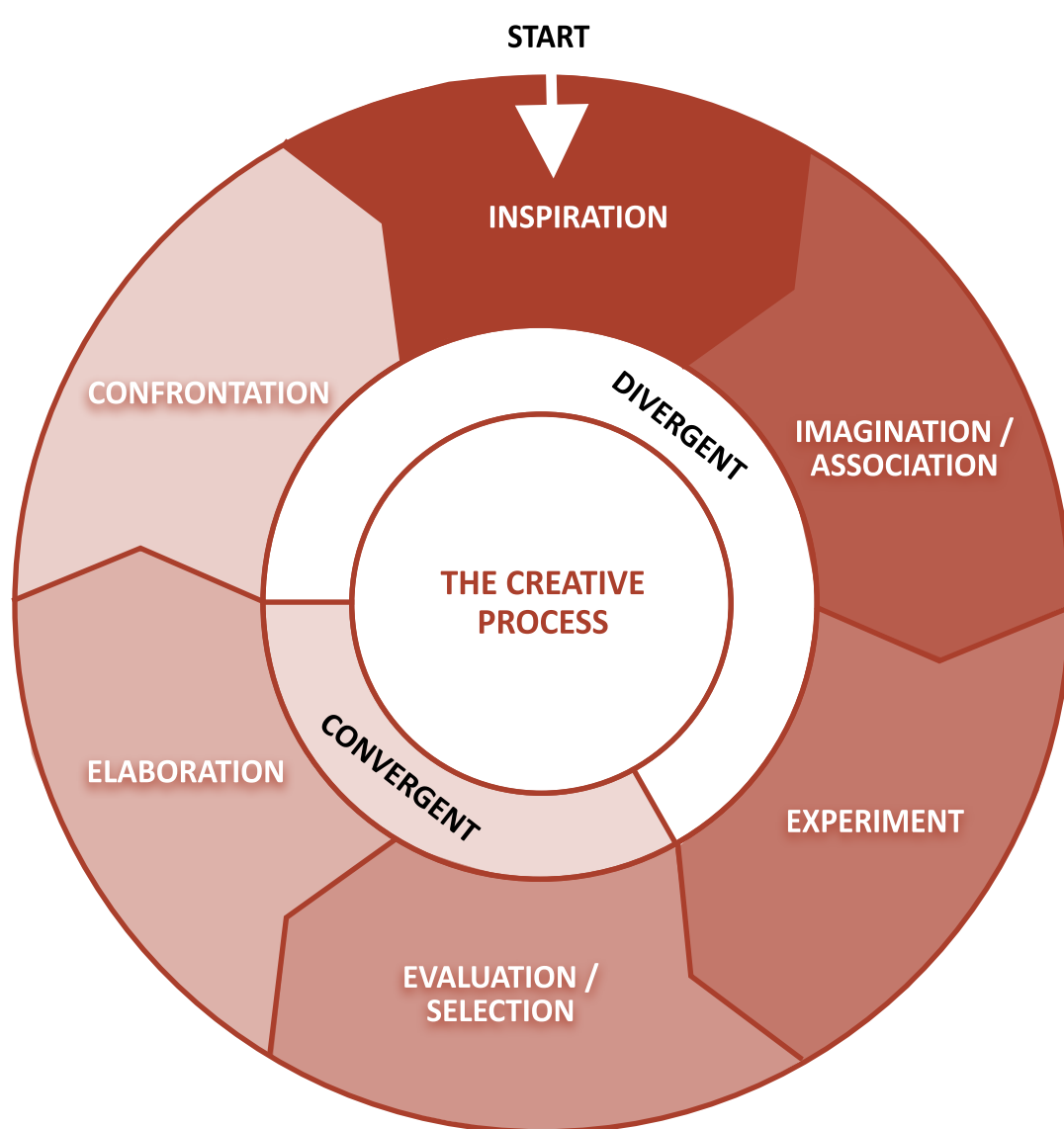


Figure 1: The ArtiCULan Creative Process

### 3.2 PHASE 1. INSPIRATION

The starting point of the workshops needs to provoke inspiration. Inspiration can take many shapes and forms, and is a highly individual sensation. In the context of the ArtiCULan workshops, sensory impressions have proven a valuable source to inspire the children: they evoke curiosity and eventually powerful interaction.

Sensory impressions are incentives for inspiration. They can even be small and insignificant at first sight, like seeing an apple falling from a tree. This led Newton to invent his law of gravitation. The best formula to get inspired is being attentive.

You can consider inspiration as an invitation through aesthetic experience (see 2.2) or a provocation, often through interactions with materials or through bodily participation. Inspiration might lead to ideas in the next phase. Inspiration is a positive stimulus that can work on different levels, not only mental, but also bodily and emotional.

Of course, in our workshops we also encourage taking the introduction of (an) artwork(s) as an incentive. Children should already be exposed to art at a young age (Kisida, 2017). As a teacher, you are free to choose any work of art you like. It can be a piece of music, a sculpture, painting, a dance or theatre scene, ... It can be a week old or prehistoric, as long as you can relate to it, and make it 'alive' for them. We stimulate using both artworks from the canon, as well as unknown and even local works of art. The latter makes it possible to maybe even invite an artist to the classroom. You can take your pupils with you on the streets, too. We promote letting the children discover their environment from a different point of view, and using community resources. You can have them experience graffiti art, local museums, statues, buildings, and local (his)stories. Lastly, it is important to mention once again the importance of representing different cultures in the materials you choose. Western art (history) is not the only one. Indian and Persian miniatures, Arabic music, Japanese woodcuts, native American ceramics, the list with options is endlessly rich. You can make choices according to the cultural backgrounds of the children in your class.

Another option to inspire the children other than the introduction of artwork(s) is immediate provocation through materials and media (clay, fibers, but also non-substantial 'materials' such as body-expression, voice, sound, ...).



Versatile and functional-free materials (e.g., a box, sticks of different sizes) can be a good starting point, as they invite children to explore in many different ways. When you do this, make sure they feel comfortable to choose materials they like, and let them feel there is no single or 'right' way to use a material, several approaches are possible.

Whatever materials or media you choose to inspire them, is essential to invite children to interact with and physically explore the chosen artwork(s) or material(s). Feeling, listening, touching and using media and materials makes these materials and artworks animate. The interplay between aesthetically experiencing a work of art (or material) and interacting with it is the main objective of this phase. The children need to discover that aesthetic experience is not a matter of mere observation, but an invitation. It is not a one-way monologue in which the artwork 'speaks' to a passive subject. They need to find out that experiencing art is always a dialogue. This notion is essential to understand ArtiCULan's premise that the creation of knowledge (and subsequently education as well) are not a form of passive reception but processes that require active and personal – even physical – involvement (see chapter 4.2).

During this phase the attitude of the teacher plays a crucial role in order to create a warm emotional climate. By showing enthusiasm and (physical) engagement you invite the children to the same level of active involvement. Even in just showing an artwork in a book or on a screen, you need to make the artwork alive, by vividly talking about the aspects of the artwork that affected you, on a sensory and maybe even emotional level.

## EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:

### 1. Listen to our story

*In this workshop, the starting point is the music and the adults (teachers) themselves. They are moving and dancing, and inviting the children to join in. This example shows how immediate interaction (body expression, sound) can provoke the children. It is not always necessary to introduce an artwork at the beginning of the workshop.*

### 2. Kandinsky

*In this workshop, the provocation is carried out through the presentation of a picture of the painter and with the use of body expression and games with the word Kandinsky and associated movement.*

*Information about the painter is narrated by the adult, always associated with body movement, allowing children to express different emotions. This is a good example of letting the children experience art, not as a one-way monologue but as a dialogue, requiring even physical involvement.*

### 3. Ângelo de Sousa

*In this workshop children are invited to explore the painter's work through movement, using the body in space. Subsequently, they are invited to carry out a group activity with the aim of promoting not only the possibility of the child to aesthetically experience the work of the painter but also to interact with it - children performed body movements inspired by the chosen image (artist's work). This is a good example of using this phase to create a multidisciplinary experience.*

### 4. Flood and Flight

*The children close their eyes to listen more intensely. It can be a valuable approach to 'turn off' certain senses to activate the others. Closing their eyes makes them also curious and excited: it sets the right mood. Children focus on listening comprehension by listening to an English rap song by Alex Cottenham. They are expressing what they think they heard, and they feel proud when they understood. Language acquisition becomes part of an active dialogue on a piece of music in a natural way. They make associations with their personal experiences. While the children are listening, there are physical interactions between children, bonding. One girl is braiding another girl's hair for example. This wouldn't happen in a 'normal' classroom context, but in here it is not disturbing, on the contrary. It has a positive effect on the atmosphere: everyone feels relaxed and is nonetheless attentive.*

### 5. Flood and Flight

*The teacher is using her body in an expressive way to give instructions. Her enthusiasm sets an example for the students. The children have to imagine they are water: a different kind of inspiration, through immediate body-expression. The teacher is adding more detail to their imagination step by step thanks to Total Physical Response Storytelling: 'we run into animals in the water' and so on. Their imagination is taking them further and further while they are using their body. It is a shared experience: they support each other's bodily movement and involvement.*

Culturally responsive teachers need to be aware that everyone's thinking, acting and being is influenced by language, culture and social status. This means that the teacher is aware of his own cultural perspective and encourages the exchange of views. He has to integrate culture in teaching, as culture is responsible for framing our thinking (Coyle, 2009). He needs to know about cultural identity and personal background of the children (Premier & Parr, 2019) and builds upon various cultural experiences children live with to improve students' understanding of the meaning and use of cultures (Elliott, 1990). The main goal of this approach is to encourage the development of insights into one's self and the relationship of one's self to one's culture (Elliott, 1990).

### 3.3 PHASE 2. ASSOCIATION/IMAGINATION

Phase 1 and phase 2 are closely entangled. The incentive energy of aesthetic experience (phase 1) awakens the imagination (see phase 2) and instigates ideas. You can stimulate this process in the following way.

To make an artwork or an object alive and enforce the wandering flight of their imagination, means to look for connections with their environments. You can do this by involving local artists or artworks, but it is also important to take their own experiences and memories into account: to address the children on a personal level. To do this, you can apply Visual Thinking Strategies. This means asking questions, such as:

- 'Have you ever heard a sound like this before? Where?'
- 'Where do you see this sound in your drawing?'
- 'Does this abstract shape remind you of something? Can you tell me about it?'

After that, you are paraphrasing their input, making the other children reflect on it. You are not directing the conversation, but stewarding, open for ambiguity. You can ask more questions and allow the children to question each other, opening a dialogue. During this phase, it becomes even more important to stimulate group interaction and bonding between the children. To be able to work together in the next phase, they need to communicate and share their ideas earlier on. When the children give different answers and share their personal stories, you can look for connections and articulate the links between them. You should also actively affirm their varied input and explicit the value of having different ideas and stories, to create an open, empathic atmosphere, but also with an eye on multicultural integration. A multitude of associations evokes a multitude of approaches and possibilities in the next stage.

Visual Thinking Strategies help them to trust their own observations and they awaken collaborative interactions. VTS are based on observation and verbal participation, as a starting point that helps talking about an artwork without fear. They incite a process of personal associations. Sensory impressions (phase 1) and personal memories and associations (phase 2) act as the main incentives for artistic creation (the next phases).



### EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:

#### 1. Listen to our story

*Children seek relationships with their environment considering their own previous experiences through the challenge posed in the workshop - assigning sounds to their proper names using musical objects. Subsequently, they are invited to do it again with the musical instrument that they elaborated.*

*After this, they are invited to do it again with the musical instrument they created with the challenge of showing all the sounds that the instrument allows.*

*The children are addressed on a personal level.*

#### 2. Ângelo de Sousa

*Through adult guidance, it was possible to stimulate interaction between the group of children. The children communicated and shared ideas about the activity. The teachers steward these interactions. The children are making associations and trying out different options after their own experience. The children are carried away according to their feelings with total freedom.*

#### 3. Flood and Flight

*The teacher asks about the pupils' associations when they hear the word 'flood'. The children give different input. 'What happens when there is a lot of water, when water starts floating, do you know a word for this? What would you do? How would you react?': these are some of the questions the teacher asks to start the dialogue. The teacher is repeating their input: 'I hear this', 'I hear that'. This is reinforcing the children's engagement.*

*The teacher asks about the pupils' associations when they observe paintings, e.g. Hokusai. This fragment consists of an active dialogue on artwork using VTS. You can see also language acquisition in a very natural way: the teacher is correcting the children's mistakes just by repeating them instead of by making a remark about it. This creates rich interactions, because the teacher uses open questions out of curiosity and responds to the pupils' input.*

Culturally responsive teachers are responsible to respect linguistic diversity in the classroom. They integrate values, experiences and beliefs from the children's life into challenging and meaningful tasks to build knowledge together. In order to develop sensitivity and understanding, it is important that teachers provide suitable opportunities and stimuli to encourage children to naturally think, feel and express themselves (Immordino-Yang, Darling-Hammond & Krone, 2018). In addition, refugee children need extra support and trust, because some activities may trigger traumatic memories (Premier & Parr, 2019).

### 3.4 PHASE 3. EXPERIMENT

Instructions should be brought in an inviting rather than a demanding way. It is important to encourage multiple angles of approach and make them feel that they are not working toward a fixed result. You can foster this in the following ways:

- Leave them choices. This means offering them options: let them choose between several materials or means of expression. Some will feel more comfortable with drawing, others with making music or expressing themselves physically. Letting them choose their mode of artistic expression affirms their individual strength and influences the group dynamics.

It is not necessary to show examples of final results. If you do so, show several results instead of one, to make a wide range of options visible. Children should never interpret the results you show as an 'example' that they have to try to copy. They should start their experiments with an open-end mindset.

It is important to keep in mind that this phase is experimental. The aim is to get to know a material or form of expression in a more intense and personal way. The objective is thus exploring rather than producing an aesthetic result. A design emerges gradually: through experiment and trial and error the expressive qualities of a material are discovered and applied.

The children will help and stimulate each other. Additionally, you should provide guidance and assist the children in their explorations (verbally and physically). This means helping them out when they run into a practical or conceptual problem, but also confirming their ideas and actions. They have the capability to solve problems by themselves; you should help them growing aware of this power. The teacher acts as a guide supporting their ideas, providing different angles and encouraging their experiments. Of course, you might have your own ideas on how experiments can evolve in certain directions, and it is challenging to scaffold the children without pointing out the directions coming to your mind. It is very important that the children take the lead themselves and that they enjoy this phase of experimenting with materials and ideas. Some of them, however, may feel less secure and will even hesitate to start. Give them time to look at the others – every child is allowed to work at its own pace.

### **EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:**

#### 1. Listen to our story

*The adults encourage different approaches to the activity of this workshop, making it possible to develop different and unique music instruments. The children feel free to explore the materials independently.*

*The children in this activity are mutually supportive and the adult gives guidance, expanding and elaborating the child's ideas, either physically or verbally. Some children manage to solve the problems on their own and the adult acts merely as a guide, encouraging their experiments. Guidelines are given to the pupils, but they leave them options to choose. At all times the pupils decide what to do. They can explore freely.*

#### 2. Cesar Manrique

*Based on the observations made along the VTS-session, the teacher suggests that they should move as if they were playing with the wind. There is a strong physical involvement in this multidisciplinary approach. The teacher points out several tips about how the pupils should let themselves feel like the wind. The children feel that they are just playing. This mindset is good to let the creativity flow.*

*The students are rehearsing and feeling according to the teacher's suggestions. They explore the possibilities of their body.*

#### 3. Kandinsky

*Portuguese children are invited to discover the forms represented in a painting of Wassily Kandinsky in space, thus seeking to 'interpret' the painting and making their representation through drawing.*

*The role of the adult is to promote children's engagement through the model he/she plays in giving life to the work, either through body movement or by graphic recording encouraging children to follow the adult.*

#### 4. Flood and Flight

*The creation of the flooded city shows a very divergent approach between the pupils, although they had the same guidelines: creating houses to make a city. One child is not building a traditional western 'house'. It is obvious that he has a very different idea of the concept 'house', than another child in the back who is making a house with a pointy roof and typical windows (which she is cutting with scissors). Yet another child in the foreground is experimenting with materials and shapes, without having a traditional house in his mind that he wants to build. He is working really independently and is very occupied by his work. A child in the back is more dependent and asks feedback from the teacher on several occasions. Not only in their creations, but also in their pedagogical needs, the pupils are very different. To see and empower these differences is one of the tasks of the teacher.*



### 5. Flood and Flight

*Teachers are showing the drama and movement activity through bodily expression and interaction: they are making waves together. It is a nice way of instructing, and proves the value of co-teaching. However, two pupils are having a very different approach on this activity. They are not trying to make waves, but playing and challenging each other physically. It becomes like a play in which they try each other out. They think it is exciting and it shows a strong connection between the two of them. This fragment shows how children can have their own take on the suggested activities. If this doesn't necessarily fit within the workshop's thematic context, this doesn't mean it can't be valuable.*

### 6. HomeHeart

*Children listen to sounds of the belly and the heart of their friend. They try to reproduce this sound and explore movements that match this sound. The teacher gives impulses by encouraging them to introduce different body parts into the movement. The children reflect upon the difference between the sounds and movements. They talk about the variation in sound and movement for the belly versus the repetitive sound for the heart.*

Culturally responsive teachers set high expectations for everyone and believe that the school shares the responsibility for giving students greater opportunities in society. Schools can facilitate this process by challenging children to use their full potential and achieve deep learning (Meyer et al., 2015). The teacher chooses stimulating activities that encourage connection and involvement and strengthen the positive classroom climate (Cadima, Verschueren, Leal & Guides, 2016). The activities build on what children already know and can do. The teacher asks open-ended questions to provoke interaction and rethink ideas.

When the teacher in multilingual classes focuses on active self-directed learning in interaction with their peers, children feel the need to communicate in a common language (Kuyumcu, 2012). During the workshop children have multiple opportunities to share what they know. Rich input of various domains of arts education ensures a high degree of ownership of both the

creative and linguistic process (Meyer, Coyle, Halbach, Schuck & Ting, 2015; Reekmans, Nauwelaerts & Roden, 2017). Collaborating on a common goal and giving children autonomy to discuss and listen to each other, generates more self-confidence to solve complex problems (Farokhi & Hashemi, 2012; Meyer et al., 2015). The teacher provides support doing peer teaching and motivating students to share ideas and work together (Premier & Parr, 2019).

### 3.5 PHASE 4. EVALUATION/SELECTION

After a phase of divergent approaches, while experimenting with ideas and materials (individually or in smaller groups), it is important to make room for a moment of reflection with the entire group. Children will reflect on their ideas and approach whilst the process is continuing, so they still have the opportunity to adjust decisions or even choose different directions as they are inspired by the work of others. Articulating their choices and actions inevitably creates awareness of the creative process they are experiencing. This phase thus stimulates their metacognitive knowledge, not only by helping them to reflect on their particular ideas but also in a broader sense, by giving them the opportunity to look at their creative process from a distance.

As a teacher you should assist them in questioning themselves and each other.

You are in the position to ask questions as well. By asking questions this evaluation phase becomes a phase of self-evaluation. You have to assist them in becoming aware of certain qualities and -if necessary- maybe risks. You don't have to evaluate them.

Here are some ideas:

- You can ask about the starting point, about what inspired them most.
- It is also important to talk about which choices are made (regarding materials,...) and why they are made.
- You can also ask which of the shared ideas have been chosen, and which ideas have been/are being replaced? Who is responsible for which part, and how are the different parts merging together? Letting them think about these questions improves their social skills and also induces metacognitive knowledge.
- It can be good to inform if certain difficulties or unexpected things occurred, and how are they dealing with them.
- You should definitely ask if the children are happy with their results. (Yes, for what reason? No, why? Which part of your work you like best?)
- Lastly, you can ask what the next steps are. (What are you going to do next? Who will take care of what? Which materials do you need for this?)

This phase of evaluation and selection certainly doesn't have to be an exclusively verbal one. It is important that the children touch, feel, listen to the work of others. When they are telling something about their work, they should do it in a tangibly way, not only by explaining verbally but by showing what they mean.

Phase 4 is the phase in which the divergent movement becomes a convergent one. A multitude of approaches is discussed and deliberated, and choices are made regarding the further elaboration of the artistic work.



**EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:****1. Listen to our story**

*In the centre of the room are different materials accessible to all children. The large group has now organized itself into six small groups. Each child, interacting with peers and the adult, builds their musical instrument and experiences the sounds they produce. Children reformulate and develop their instruments while sharing questions, suggestions with their peers.*

In the context of multilingual classes, non-verbal communication is even more paramount.

To stimulate interaction, culturally responsive teachers apply the technique of scaffolding. Responsive teachers look for different ways of asking open, authentic questions to show interest out of pure curiosity (Willemsen, 2020). Children are encouraged to use the artistic languages of the workshop to demonstrate their understanding in different ways (Meyer et al., 2015). By appealing to multiple learning styles and converting new information into mental images, students can better remember what they have learned (Marzano, 2011). Expressing ideas and choices in the school language thanks to idea exchange in a spontaneous discussion is highly suitable for practicing language in a meaningful context (Nightingale & Safont, 2019). When language is used as a communication tool, young learners are more intrinsically motivated to learn to speak it (Pladevall-Ballester, 2018). For reflection on creative process, a certain basic knowledge of the language of instruction must have been acquired (Meyer et al., 2015). Reflection on various concepts, materials and images is only possible, when children have acquired the meaning of the words.

### 3.6 PHASE 5. ELABORATION

After a moment of reflection, the logical next step in a creative process is to adjust and elaborate the artistic work further. Some children will even want to make a fresh start with the insights they gathered during the previous phase. This is totally okay.

Because of the open dialogue that just took place, the children will be aware that they themselves made the decisions leading to the final result. This step makes them more explicitly aware of their independence and therefore the elaboration phase boosts their confidence. The main difference between phase 3, is that this time the artistic creation is more goal-oriented. The children are working towards a result they have imagined during the previous phase. Now, they already know how a material behaves. They are experienced and will use this experience to accomplish the result they imagined together. This means they are creating on a much more conscious and deliberate level than during phase 3.

The fact that this time the children have a plan in mind, doesn't mean that everything will go exactly according to this plan. As a teacher, you should be aware that every step in a creative process, even the final ones, can take unexpected turns. It often happens that certain artistic materials declare their own will in the last step of artistic creation and that the result turns out quite differently than foreseen. Sometimes this can be something the children will receive with joy, however, on other occasions the children can perceive this as 'failure'. When this situation occurs, the teacher should avoid this perception and help them see the unexpected turns as something positive. They should slowly develop a different mindset, less focuses on a specific result, but rather on exploring and experimenting with an open attitude. This mindset will emerge gradually over time if this approach is repeated.

During this elaboration phase, you will assist children in organizing themselves. They will again divide certain tasks between the group members and set goals for each of them. You should make sure that tasks are divided equally and that each of them feels comfortable in his or her role.

Apart from the fact that their confidence benefits from this phase, the elaboration phase is also an important step to reach phase 6 in which the presentation of their works will lead to another divergent movement.



### EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:

#### 1. Listen to our story

*In the centre of the room are different materials accessible to all children. The large group has now organized itself into six small groups. Each child, interacting with peers and the adult, builds their musical instrument and experiences the sounds they produce. Children reformulate and develop their instruments while sharing questions, suggestions with their peers. The children are working towards the result they have in their mind. They are experienced and will use this experience to accomplish this result.*

#### 2. Flood and Flight

*They are working really independently in the elaboration phase and some try to make the best out of it, but frustration is arising when some of the children lose their focus. Children are blaming each other: ‘they made everything wet!’ for example. Some children make decisions without talking about them first. This leads to some difficulties and they keep discussing: ‘why are you doing this?!’*

*In these situations, it is important to guide the dialogue and help them come to an agreement, rather than to tell them yourself what to do. These discussions are valuable. Difficulties and opposition are important in learning the children to question each other but themselves and what they are doing as well.*

#### 3. Flood and Flight

*Children and teacher make a slam together using associations they have with the word ‘flood’. During this activity, the association phase and the elaboration phase of the Artistic Framework are closely entangled.*

*[01:08:00-01:09:10]: They are rhyming words based on a brainstorm.*

*[01:14:00-01:14:30]: Than making the first sentences together, on the rhythm.*

*[01:20:00]: They are singing the intro.*

*[01:22:00-01:23:00]: They are making the following rhyme:*

*‘mensen op de grond’: people on the ground*

*‘mensen lopen rond’: people walk around*

*‘anderen op de grond’: others on the ground*

*‘allen op de grond’: all on the ground*

*The teacher writes the text of the slam on the whiteboard. In the meantime, she is asking the students ‘do you write it like this?’. They rap and are continue searching for new sentences together, guided by the teacher: ‘we need a new part after ‘tsunami’’. They are very enthusiastic (‘yes!’) and highly engaged. Two pupils start holding hands spontaneously. They enjoy creating together, and feel happy and proud when the results are arising. This is one of the advantages of working more goal-oriented towards a result.*

*When a boy is quite unhappy because not all his ideas are chosen. The teacher, Katrien, is responsive to this, and his friend brings him a tissue. This is an example of a responsive teacher*

### 3.7 PHASE 6. CONFRONTATION

The last phase is once again a moment of exchange, in which the results the children created allow an opportunity to an open-end dialogue. You can organize this moment as you like, depending on the type of work that is created. A small exhibition, performances, a little show with festivities, ... You should take your time for the organization of this confrontation, but you don't have to organize it as a grand exhibit. A small activity within the context of the class is also fine. Don't feel hesitant to just ask the children how they see this moment themselves - maybe they are very proud to show their works to external guests. It can boost their confidence to organize a 'grand exhibition'; with many guests, invitations, a speech, and so on, but this is not a necessity. A big event like this is not the main goal of the workshops and it can contradict the fact that the workshops are not product-oriented. Inviting external guests can complicate the spontaneous dialogue you are working towards. You should be aware of this and make sure that the children feel comfortable with the way the final event is organized. Only if the children are satisfied with what they did (this doesn't mean the work is finished or 'perfect'), you can consider organizing a grand exhibit.

Some difficulties might occur during this last phase. Maybe some of the groups are not finished yet, and there might be not enough time to let them finish as they want. If it is really impossible within the time provided during that day, you should give them some time on the next possible occasion to continue and finish the work as they want.

After discovering each other's work, the children will probably notice that each group applied a different approach. The teacher can help to articulate the differences and similarities between the groups, and make sure the children understand the qualities and value of each different idea. You can do this once again by asking questions about the works, their feelings, opinions and the process they experienced. In multicultural classrooms, it is once more important to identify similarities between works from children from different cultural backgrounds.

Presenting their works is an important and challenging phase in the process, not just an extra moment to finalize or 'seal' the workshop. Presenting their works generates affirmation, approval, and forms a crucial joint in ensuring the creative processes and development will continue. The fact that fellow pupils and teachers take time to listen to, look at and feel their works and talk about it, creates a strong motivation for the children to continue.

Another important aspect of this phase is to make the children understand the value of the different ideas and modes of expression. The workshops want to stimulate a sense of curiosity and awaken an open mind that appreciates diversity. The children need to discover the power of pluralism and of things 'other' than what they're used to.

In today's society, this 'otherness' is not always perceived as something valuable. There are many examples in today's media which awaken fear for things 'foreign'. Fear for people with a different skin color, religion, or even social background. Children are very sensible for these sensations, and education has a crucial role to play in this respect.

In refugee classes, or other classes with children from different cultural backgrounds, this aspect is even more striking. The artistic workshops give opportunity to bring cultures closer together, with their focus on sensory and artistic interactions.



The children have the opportunity to discover other cultures through their fellow pupil's individual voices, and are thus avoiding stereotypes. The workshops will even benefit from richer interpretations of the artworks when the children have different cultural backgrounds.

Although this phase is the final phase of the workshops, it shouldn't be seen as an ending. Sharing the results and discoveries gives input to a new start. The creative process experienced within a workshop thus ends where it began: with new sensory impressions and stories, each provoking new associations, feelings and memories and ideas – and last but not least – with inflaming new artistic (inter)actions.

### **EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:**

#### 1. Listen to our story

*The children are reunited in a large group. The group is now coordinated by the adult who takes on the role of conductor. Each child, with his musical instrument, will reproduce his sound sequence and integrate it in a final performance of the orchestra (a group of children) - guided by the (adult). This is recorded so that the group can hear it.*

#### 2. Ângelo de Sousa

*Children are invited to choose their favorite blade (illustration from one of the artist's works) and to represent it to their colleagues. Over several minutes, the children, in pairs, share with their colleagues the body representation they created for the work represented on the selected slide.*

#### 3. Balaban: Wassily Kandinsky

*Each child already has his binoculars and is invited to observe what he sees around him. Identifying as geometric shapes of the room and nominate them in Portuguese and in English. This is a clear example of how the creation of work can lead to new input, it shouldn't be seen as an ending.*

#### 4. Flood and Flight

*The children reflect on their creative process guided by the teachers. They express what they liked and what was a challenge, like getting the right angle to position a building.*

*They show interest in the work of the singer-songwriter Lunace; one of their teachers. Together they listen on Spotify to one of the songs she wrote and show their appreciation.*

#### 5. HomeHeart

*Children build a house for their friend with open materials like cotton fabric, string, different chapes in white, .... Children need to become aware of their friends' thoughts and feelings to make sure their friends will feel happy and safe in his house. They present the house to their friend and explain the choices they made to make their friend happy. They improvise moves in the house based on movements shared by people who live at the city square where they do their workshop.*

### 3.8 PHASE 7. EVALUATION OF THE WORKSHOPS

As made clear in the previous chapters, the results of the workshops are not - and should not be - measurable in a traditional way, like languages or grammar. The process-oriented and highly personal approach makes it irrelevant and even harmful to evaluate the final result produced in the workshops.

Creative processes don't reveal a 'right' or 'wrong' result but they can reveal a level of involvement. The workshops are not measurable, but they are observable. The common assessment tool offers guidance in observing the processes active during the workshops.

#### EXAMPLES FROM OUR GOOD PRACTICES:

##### 1. Listen to our story

*The group meets again around a blanket and announces the end of the activity. The adult invites children to share what they felt and what they learned about the construction of instruments, such as the characteristics of sounds and the functioning of an orchestra. In teamwork children communicate easily about their ideas and choices for the process. They reflect better when they interact in small groups.*

##### 2. Ângelo de Sousa

*The children in a large group, comment on what they felt and what they observed during their representation and the representations of their peers. Children talk to each other and adult interventions are punctual.*

##### 3. Balaban: Wassily Kandinsky

*In a large group, sitting in a circle, the adult asks the children what they learned about colors and geometric shapes.*

##### 4. HomeHeart

*Each activity ends with a reflection on the creative process. What was your favourite movement for the belly or the heart? Which movement of your friend surprised you? Did you like your new house? Did your friend like his new house? Did the people who live at the city square share a movement with you? Which moment of the workshop would you like to explore again? What was valuable to you? Why?*



## 4. Value

### 4.1 INDIVIDUALITY AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION

It has already been made clear that the aim of these workshops is not to create an artistic product, but in inducing modes of self-expression and self-reflection, of social interaction and of artistic experiment. In this chapter we want to summarize the value of this ‘learning through art’ on different levels and place it in a broader context.

Creative processes always start with individual perception and imagination. The interactions and the questions the teacher(s) ask to the children, require that they personally relate to the material that is provided. They are creating meaning, not just by looking, feeling, and experimenting, but also by having to express what they see, feel, or think to their fellow pupils. Creative processes help them develop critical thinking (Kisida, 2018: 198) and learn them inexplicitly how to develop their own opinions, through dialogue and collaboration with others. In this sense, the ArtiCULan workshops contribute to the individual growth of the children, since they can’t just take the teacher’s words or someone else’s approach or beliefs for granted. They are approached on a personal level and need to think and conceptualize independently.

Apart from assets like critical thinking and personal and social meaning-making, the children are also discovering their own talents and their vulnerabilities. We want to stress this last aspect, because it may seem less important in a competency-based educational system. In encouraging emotional climate provided by these workshops, we want children to feel comfortable to express emotions, and even doubt or fear. The connection between artistic activity and emotional regulation (Kisida, 2017: 2) is a subtle but valuable aspect the workshops want to address. While making teams and dividing tasks, by collaborating, the children find out both their own and each other’s strengths and ‘weaknesses’. They find out that they complement each other. The focus is not on competition or individual achieving, but on cooperation and enforcing their individual uniqueness, which leads in the long run to self-acceptance.

But as Herbert Read states: ‘uniqueness has no practical value in isolation. One of the most certain lessons of modern psychology and of recent historical experiences, is that education must be a process, not only of individuation, but also of integration, which is the reconciliation of individual uniqueness with social unity’ (Read, 1979: 9). This social integration is also one of the main assets of our workshops: everything depends on dialogue and interaction, even discovering their ‘individual uniqueness’. Personal expression leads to several different outcomes, but, and this is one of our main focal points; it should also lead to the insight that these outcomes are equally valuable. Throughout the workshops the children experience other children’s feelings and beliefs. By collaborating they discover the power and benefits of pluralistic classrooms. In this sense, the ArtiCULan workshops lead to an open and tolerant attitude.

This aspect is in particular important in the multicultural environments of today’s schools. In his book ‘Celebrating pluralism: Art, Education and Cultural Diversity’, F. Graeme Chalmers, professor emeritus of Art Education, claims that art education has an essential role to play in addressing fact that we are dealing with an extremely diverse society, leading to rich multicultural interactions, but also to the problems that Chalmers names. Too easily, cultures are presented as radically different. The simplistic generalisation of cultures that Edward Said criticized already in the seventies (Said, 1978) facilitates polarisation, and today we are still being confronted with stereotypical imagery and headlines in media. News media mostly report on other cultures with stories of war, refugees, dictatorships, religious extremism, and so on. This focus, maybe unwillingly, facilitates the prejudice Chalmers wants to address through art education.

The arts have been an example of cross-cultural interactions for centuries. Music, interior design, fashion, and even painting account of a history of rich cross-cultural exchange. As we stated in chapter 2.2, creating and experiencing art is based on aesthetics: a matter of the senses. Our senses don't take geographical or cultural boundaries into account, they are easily seduced and triggered by unfamiliar input, and art history shows how this input finds a place in the own modes of artistic expression. We can illustrate this by a contemporary example closer to us: the food we cook and the restaurants we visit also show our sensory openness towards other cultures. Hence our workshops, with aesthetical/sensory experience as a foundation, make a perfect background for the exploration of other cultures with an open and curious attitude.

The sensory and artistic interactions are very powerful tools for cross-cultural understanding and to create pluralistic classrooms. In the ArtiCULan workshops, many modes of communication are put into practice, also non-verbal ones. This can accommodate another aspect of integration: language acquisition. In a multilingual classroom teachers take time for sensory experiences to get the message across. They demonstrate out loud the goal of a meaningful task within a clearly defined framework (Hooft, Gobyn & Van den Branden, 2018). Teachers give motor actions in team-teaching to stimulate the thinking process and language comprehension (Sullivan, 2018). They use visuals linked to the context of the artistic workshop and repeat key words for language comprehension (Premier & Parr, 2019). Thanks to a multimodal approach in team-teaching and cooperative learning in small groups, the pupils approach the creative process from multiple perspectives. This also opens up possibilities for verbal and non-verbal exchange of ideas thanks to the artistic languages of the different artistic domains. By having highly proficient pupils cooperate with less proficient pupils, they can together give meaning to the process applying direct strategies - such as memory, cognitive and compensation strategies – and indirect strategies – such as metacognitive, affective and social strategies. The extent to which teachers sustain a culturally responsive approach predicts how successful a learner becomes.

Teachers who apply a pedagogy of culturally responsive teaching are able to embrace differences and use the child's identity as an input for learning, are convinced of the added value of culturally responsive education and feel competent to interact with multilingual children and parents.

Language acquisition is one part of a general multicultural attitude the workshops want to stimulate: an attitude to expose oneself to the unfamiliar with confidence, to be receptive to things that are foreign or strange at first sight. Language acquisition is one means to this end, next to the sensory receptiveness for gestures, tastes, sounds, and so on.

The workshops show how art can be a tool to foster multicultural integration on different levels.



## 4.2 A DIFFERENT KIND OF KNOWLEDGE

The National Art Education Association sees art education as a fundamental tool to develop the necessary ‘visual literacy’ in an increasingly visual age (NAEA, 2016). This is just one aspect that validates (visual) art education. Their 1977 statement about the importance of art education (in general) delves even deeper. There are two aspects in their summary ArtiCULan wants to subscribe in particular: the importance of art education as a source of human understanding, and art education as a means to develop creative and flexible forms of thinking. The first aspect has been elaborated on in the previous chapter. Here, we would like to delve into the second. Elliott Eisner, former professor of Art and Education, and one of the authors of this statement, wrote: ‘with the arts, children learn to see’ (NAEA, 2016: 5). Learning to see goes much further than perceiving with your eyes. Learning to see means educating the senses, ‘upon which consciousness, and ultimately intelligence and judgment of the human individual, are based (Read, 1979: 9).

The values of art education can be far-reaching, as we already mentioned in the chapter ‘Education through the Arts’, where we introduced a different way of learning – an embodied learning, rooted in sensation and experience (see Johnson, 2007). Learning is still too often a passive activity, detached from feeling. ArtiCULan wants children to relate to study material on a personal level. We believe it is necessary to incite processes of association and imagination, to avoid detached learning. We want to create a way of learning in which feeling and sensation shape conceptualization and reflection. In learning through creative processes, through dialogue and interactions, the subjects become alive. They can be appropriated. Teaching should be an invitation, invoking new associations and further explorations.

However, in today’s educational system, which is often still about fragmentation of knowledge, without building bridges between academic/school knowledge with children’s lives or teaching without going into a greater depth - the kind of in-depth that turns information into knowledge, this sensory knowledge seems harder to defend. We find allies in philosophers, art historians and educationalists. The eighteenth-century philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau already introduced the term ‘raison sensitive’, as a necessary addition to the term ‘raison intellectuelle’. Art – education through the senses – can integrate value into a world of facts (Read, 1979: 215).

Another advocate of this kind of knowledge is anthropologist Tim Ingold. He pleads for knowing to be reconnected with being, and for thought to be reconnected with life (Ingold, 2011: 75). He pleads for active, physical – and personal – inquiries for meaning and knowledge.

This is closely connected to the ‘embodied meaning’ philosopher Mark Johnson promotes. They both see physical involvement and active experience as primordial in learning. Our focus on sensory experience and the importance of the creative process is partially grounded in their theories.

Allied insights are put forward by educationalist Gert Biesta. First of all, he warns for a mere expressivist take on art education, in which the focus on expression does not always comprise enough attention for what is expressed (Biesta, 2020: 58-59). He refuses to see art as a means to an end that has to prove useful (Biesta, 2020: 55-56). Instead, he prefers to see the value of art education in facilitating a dialogue, with others and with the world. Through art we realise our own existence more intensely, but we also recognize the existence of others, and experience what our actions means for others and for the world around us. (Biesta, 2020)

According to the premises of the forementioned theorists, ‘knowing’ something does not mean being able to reproduce or correctly execute something. In their footsteps, ArtiCULan believes that the creation of knowledge requires active and personal – even physical – involvement. Knowledge is stocked in mind and body, with an integration of our perceptive senses, feelings, consciousness and imagination.

From this perspective ArtiCULan hopes to make clear that art education and creative processes are not something to be dealt with as one or two extra hours in the elementary school's curricula. We see, following the National Art Education Association's statement, art education as a source of human understanding, and as a means of developing creative and flexible forms of thinking (NAEA, 2016). Art education introduces a method of learning and development, an attitude, an approach to perceiving and dealing with the world around you. The attitude stimulated by creative processes does not merely awaken interest in art, it provides a way of approaching life in general. Creative processes are an essential tool for learning to be open for coincidence and even failure, to be open for spontaneous (re)actions and for what is unpredictable, for diversity, for taking risks, for looking from different perspectives, for trusting your senses and your intuition, for establishing personal and collective inquiries for meaning: for creating a different kind of knowledge.

Creative processes are paramount in teaching any subject in the curriculum.



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## IMAGES

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