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# A Definition of Art

Human art is, at best, a reflection of God's creation. It is a result of being *made in His image* — man has been given the ability to *create* with the creation. All creation is an integrated unity which man, for convenience, has divided into separate areas, or disciplines, for study. Our Lord is the Lord of science, mathematics, history and all other disciplines, including aesthetics. He is God of aesthetics — of colours, tones, shapes and perspective in infinite variety.

All creation shows God's eternal power and divine nature.<sup>6</sup> As the hills cry out the praises of God,<sup>7</sup> so too, man can praise and glorify our Lord as artisans and craftsmen working with the materials that God has created and provided.

David said of man,

*You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet.<sup>8</sup>*

So,

*...let the Christian artist look to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the renewal of his life in Christ, not only to acknowledge the source of the gift he has but also in order to have the love and freedom that will enable him to create the good and the beautiful himself.<sup>9</sup>*

*I will praise You, O Lord, with all my heart; I will tell of all Your wonders.<sup>10</sup>*

*Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.<sup>11</sup>*

6 Romans 1:20, Isaiah 6:3

7 Psalm 98:4–9

8 Psalm 8:6

9 *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*. H. R. Rookmaaker, Intersarsity Press, 1978, p. 244–245

10 Psalm 9:1

11 Philippians 4:8

12 *Art Needs No Justification*, H. R. Rookmaaker, Intersarsity Press, 1978, p. 34

13 Romans 14:23b

14 Romans 1:21–23, Exodus 34:17, Isaiah 37:19

15 Exodus 35:10

16 Op. Cit. Chapter 9

Such sentiments become motivation for art works. This does not mean that the works of a Christian artist will be weak, insipid or sentimental.

*The Christian's art must be Christian in a deep sense, showing the fruits of the Spirit in a positive mentality, and excitement for the greatness of the life we were given...<sup>12</sup>*

Art, like the rest of creation, will be as varied as there are individuals and individual ways of praise and worship to our Lord and Father.

*Art can be used to glorify God, or become idolatry. It can be used to portray evil and even to be a god in itself.<sup>13</sup>*

Art can be used as a means of worship to God, as in the Tabernacle that God instructed Moses to build<sup>14</sup>, with Bezalel and Aholiab in charge of the artistry. Solomon's Temple was also built '...for the Lord God'.<sup>15</sup> From a Christian point of view, therefore, our motives and attitudes need to be in unity with God's word.

Art is human representation of God's creation in both its physical and metaphysical realms. Let us commit our art works to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and worship Him, not our art.

For further reading see *Modern Art and the Death of a Culture*.<sup>16</sup>



# The Curriculum

This is a spiral curriculum, revisiting and broadening the concepts through the years. Each year level is divided into stages, or days, based on the account of creation in Genesis 1.

## DAY 1 Genesis 1:3–5 Light

- Light and dark, line
- Tonal Values
- Light is Colour — there are three primary colours Colours are symbolic; eg red/blood, life, redemption. Rainbow/God’s mercy covenant

## DAY 2 Genesis 1:6–8 Sky, water, heavens

- The use of space in composition
- Design (abstract and formal)
- Form, perspective, two and three dimensions

## DAY 3 Genesis 1:9–13 Oceans, Dry Land, Hills, Trees

- Inanimate representation
- Simple drawing, first elements in observation and drawing

## DAY 4 Genesis 1:14–19 Sun, Moon Seasons

- Communication of feelings
- Movement in lines
- Symbolism in the line
- Tonal symbolism
- Emotional effects of colours
- Colour symbolism

## DAY 5 Genesis 1:20–23 Fish, Birds

- Animate representation
- Progressive development of Day 3 activities, into more complicated forms: moving creatures in the sky and water

## DAY 6 Genesis 1:24–31 Other Animals, Man

- Animate representation
- Progressive development in learning to draw and paint animals and human beings

## DAY 7 Genesis 1:31

*God saw that all He created was very good.*

- Critiquing works of art
- Art appreciation and its history

Although each lesson teaches particular skills and understanding for the child, the following skills are common to all lessons:

- **Psycho-Motor coordination** — the refining of hand coordination through development and practice;
- **Creativity** — which flows from the Creator and is orderly, planned and pleasing;
- **Observation skills** — learning to actually ‘see’ what an object looks like (a most important discipline);
- **Perception** — the skill an artist develops to represent objects for the perception of others; and
- **Orderliness** — to reflect the order of God’s creation.

This art curriculum will help take the mystery out of teaching art by giving the teacher a knowledge of art principles that can be understood by children at the various levels.

The curriculum does not exclude other activities the teacher may want to do in class in the area of arts or craft (a separate fun lesson with finger painting, for example).

The ‘Life Applications’ listed are suggestions to use, develop or change. The teacher may want to inter-relate truths from another lesson with the art lesson — remain open to God’s guidance and inspiration.

The curriculum has been carefully planned, enabling children to experience various media like pencils, crayons, paint, etc. An endeavour has been made to keep the list of materials as simple and practical as possible without inhibiting the children’s work.

# The Lesson

*According to Hebrew teachers and rabbis of all generations, the greatest art is not that of self-expression, but that of self control.<sup>27</sup>*

The author penned this sentence to explain why the Jewish people have not pursued the arts since the Tabernacle was built. But the truth for everyone is that the greatest art is the fruit of self-control.

Art is a discipline and art lessons are to be structured learning experiences, rather than undirected drawing or painting exercises, which by their very nature preclude any significant self-control.

More important than a finished piece of art work is the ongoing development of Christian character in the child. Nevertheless, one will find that the development of Christian character will result in superior art work.

Remember, the quality of the lesson, and the resultant art work, is not as dependent on the curriculum as it is on the quality of the teacher.

## Practics

It is suggested that 1–2 hours per week (either as one or two sessions) be allocated to art, typically in the afternoon. Be aware that some lessons may require less time, others more. This curriculum book contains 40 weekly lessons for a full year's work.

Allow children adequate time to complete their work — there is no rigid time frame to which the teacher must adhere.

In a class setting, go only as fast as the slowest child, whilst encouraging others to spend time on further exploration of principles they have learnt.

Do not feel pressured to finish a unit in one lesson. If the children are enjoying the lesson and they are working on an involved piece it can easily be put it away and taken up again later. Sometimes a child will not be able to do all the exercises presented whilst on other occasions he will have time to explore further ideas. Objects or ideas from earlier lessons can also be incorporated into the current lesson.



## Lesson Preparation Guidelines

- The teacher should plan *their own* programme. This curriculum is designed as a foundation and guide.
- Read and absorb this introductory section.
- This curriculum has been specifically designed to include many examples of children's art work. The examples will not only inspire children, but will also enable the teacher to see what other children of the same age have done. Often parents and teachers will expect children to produce works of art that are simply beyond them.

<sup>27</sup> *Jesus in Exodus*, Logos International, Michael Esses, 1977, p. 262

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Genesis 1:1–31



Genesis 1:1–5  
God created light.

# Line

## OBJECTIVE

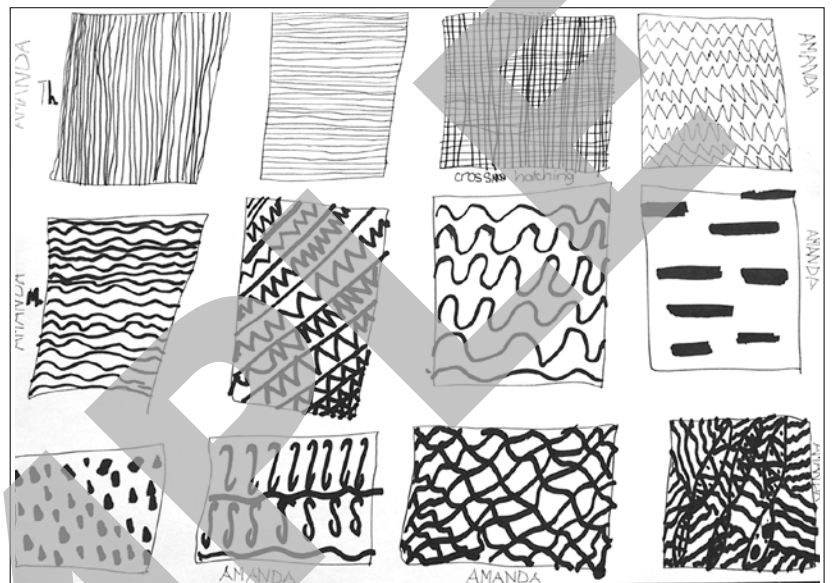
To introduce an understanding of the terms and reality of black and white.

## ACTIVITY

Teach the child the words **black** and **white**. Show examples of black and white, eg. a newspaper, with black print on white. Ask if they can find or think of other examples.

Introduce the idea of line by drawing a line on a piece of paper and talk about where black or white lines are used, eg. road marking, to make letters, to draw, etc.

1. Have the child divide his page as shown and draw lines freehand. Begin with vertical parallel lines, then horizontal, and move on to variations as shown above.
2. Take simple objects, such as an onion, tomato, cup, vase, etc. and draw as a line exercise similar to those shown.
3. As time allows, have the child draw a zebra using the line technique.



## LIFE APPLICATION

Read Genesis 1:1–5 together and help the child to realise that God created the night and day, and thus black and white.

Give thanks to the Father that He is Lord of the night and day.

## MATERIALS

Sheets of white paper in A3 or A4 size

Soft pencils — HB to 2B  
or crayons  
or felt marker

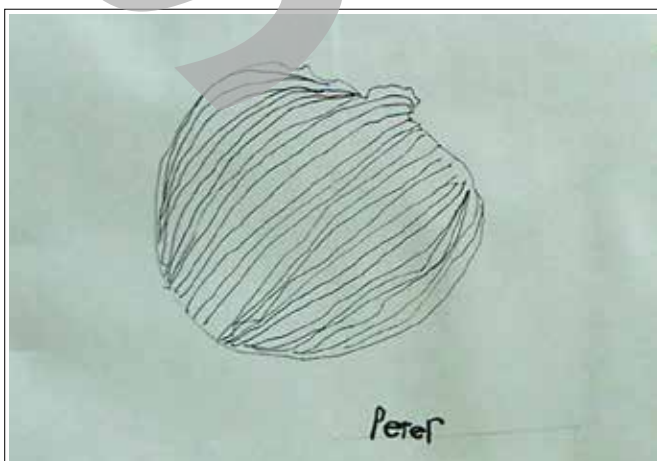
### AIDS

Black paper

White crayon

Blackboards and chalk

Onion, tomato, cup or vase, etc



Genesis 1:1–5  
God created light.

# Tone



## OBJECTIVE

To learn that grey is a combination of black and white and utilise that understanding in creating pictures.

## ACTIVITY

Learn the word **grey**. Show and talk about examples of grey — clouds, hair, etc.

Pour small amounts of black and white paint onto a palette and demonstrate how grey is made with black and white. To give the child practice in mixing grey, create shading from black to grey to white as shown at the left. Always begin with white and add sparing amounts of black.

With crayons or chalk, have the child draw a picture of an older person who has grey hair (maybe one of his grandparents).

Then have him mix his own grey with black and white paints, and complete the picture in tones of grey.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Read Proverbs 16:31: ‘Grey hair is a crown of splendour’.

Give thanks to the Lord for our grandparents, for the wisdom and love they have to share.

## MATERIALS

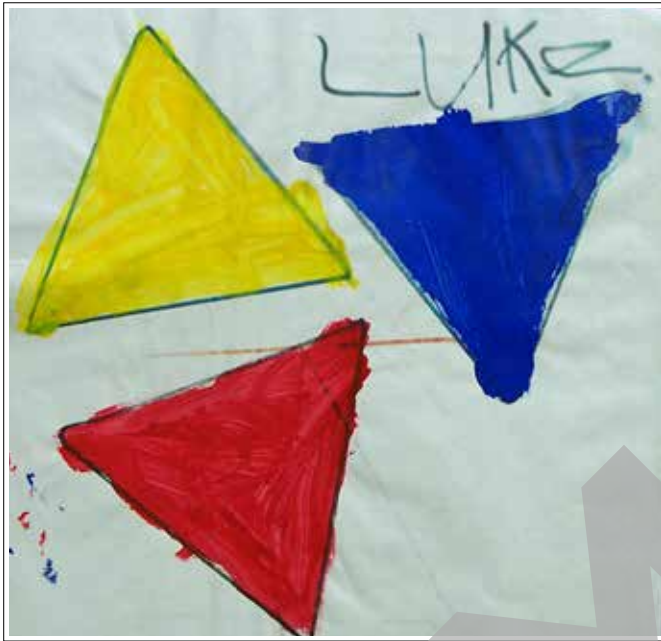
Large sheets of white paper  
Brushes — No. 8  
Paint — Black and White only  
Paint palette, saucers or lids

## AIDS

Photos of grandparents or grey clouds

Genesis 1:1–5  
God created light.

# Colour



## LIFE APPLICATION

The 3 primary colours remind us of God being three, but one.

Offer a prayer of thanks that we can know our God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

## MATERIALS

A3 cartridge paper

Red, blue and yellow crayons or paints

Brush

## OBJECTIVE

To learn about and use the 3 main (primary) colours.

## ACTIVITY

Teach the words **Red**, **Blue** and **Yellow**.

Show samples and discuss these three main (primary) colours.

Draw three triangles on a page (see sample) and have the child colour each with a different primary colour. Write the names under each colour.

Have the child make a picture using the primary colours. For example, use the sun (yellow), a red hen (red) and water (blue).

Choose whether you prefer the child to use paint or crayon for these exercises.



Genesis 1:20–23

God created the birds and the fish.

# Fish Representation

## OBJECTIVE

To observe and represent the shape of fish.

## ACTIVITY

Find some real fish (even at the fish shop!) or pictures of fish, and explore their shapes and designs by making some sketches.

Have the child make a drawing of a fish using the full area of a sheet of A3 cartridge paper. When child has finished the outline in pencil have him draw over it with a felt pen.

Take a second sheet, back it to the first, then cut out both sheets together, following the outline drawn.

The child then plans the design of the fish (which may vary from front to back sheet) and completes with felt pens or crayons.

Crumple the excess paper from the cut out to put inside the fish. Staple about half way around the edge with the two fish back to back. Stuff the crumpled paper inside and finish stapling around the fish.

Attach a string to the centre of the back of the fish and hang from a hook for display.

If time allows the child may make several fish.

Hint: Before cutting out the fish, staple the sheets together in 3 or 4 points. Check to see that the designs are made on the correct sides of the fish.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Tell the story of Jonah, reminding the child of the lessons Jonah learned from his experience with a big fish.

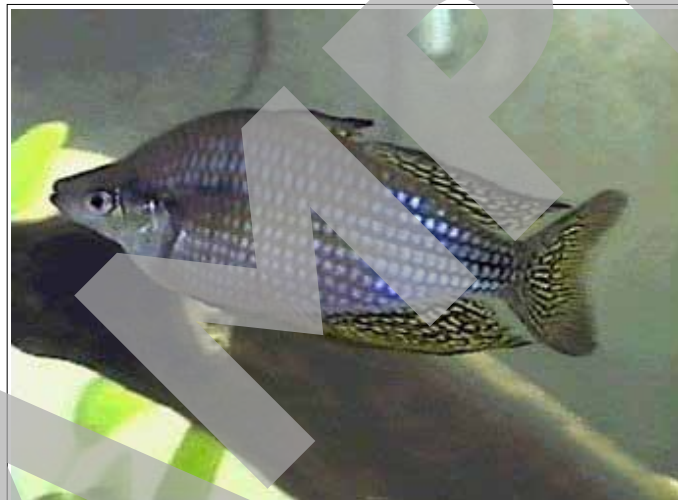
Thank God for creating such an amazing and beautiful array of fish.

## MATERIALS

- A3 cartridge paper
- Scissors
- Felt pens or crayons
- Stapler

## AIDS

- Pictures of fish



bedmarstropicalfish.com





Genesis 1:20–23

God created the birds and the fish.

# Bird Representation



## OBJECTIVE

To observe and represent the shape of birds.



## ACTIVITY

Observe birds in your local area, discussing size, shape, activity, colour, etc. Have the child do some drawings of birds (he will find it difficult as live birds tend to move). In addition, have some pictures of birds to examine and discuss or use as an alternative subject.

Have the child draw a bird in pencil on a sheet of paper (coloured paper would be preferable). Make sure the drawing comfortably fills the page.

Discuss how bird feathers appear to us like small overlapping shapes, illustrating with small pieces of paper.

Use sheets of bright coloured paper from which to cut small, elongated pieces (like feathers) ready to glue onto the drawing of the bird. Check to see the cut pieces are a suitable size.

Outline the drawing of the bird with black crayon or felt pen, and then glue on the pieces of coloured paper to complete the bird. Give careful instructions on gluing and sticking, as this project could become very messy.



## LIFE APPLICATION

Genesis 1:21 tells us that God created many different kinds of birds.

Thank God for the huge variety of birds that have different shapes, colours, sizes, beaks, wings, heads and legs.



## MATERIALS

Coloured paper  
Scissors  
Backing paper or board (white or coloured)  
Felt pen or crayon  
Glue

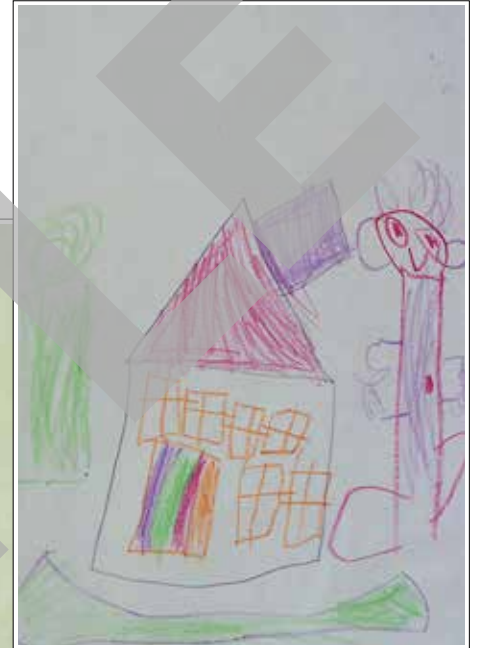
## AIDS

Pictures of birds

Genesis 1:28–31

God created the world for man to subdue, work and care for.

# Architecture



## OBJECTIVE

To begin to develop an appreciation of architecture.

## ACTIVITY

Architecture deals with the planning and construction of buildings. Discuss buildings with the child — houses, churches, office buildings, halls, etc.

Spend time exploring the child's house — the organisation of the rooms, how many rooms, doors and windows. Then from the exterior explore the walls, windows, doors and roof, etc.

Have the child draw a picture of the front view of his house which can then be painted (the drawing, not the house!). Don't expect the drawing to be an architectural masterpiece as that is not the goal of the exercise.

In a classroom setting the children could find a suitable school building to explore.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Consider all the benefits we have in living in a house, with a kitchen, lounge, bedrooms, etc.

Thank the Lord for giving us materials to build homes to protect us from the cold, the rain, the sun and the wind.

## MATERIALS

Paper  
Pencils  
Paint and brushes

## AIDS

Pictures of buildings

Genesis 1:28–31

God created the world for man to subdue, work and care for.

# Landscape Design

## OBJECTIVE

To introduce the child to the design of gardens.

## ACTIVITY

Take a walk around local streets, exploring how man has used God's creation of plants to keep beautiful gardens.

Upon returning discuss what you have seen and the different ways in which people have organised the components of gardens (trees, bushes, flowers, borders, paths, lawns, etc.) to enhance the beauty of God's creation.

Have the child take a backing board and chair outside and draw a part of the garden. It usually works best to draw with pencil only when outside, and then go inside to complete the drawing with coloured pencils, crayons or paints.



## LIFE APPLICATION

God has given us His creation to enjoy. Man is able, through organising a garden, to enhance the beauty of God's creation.

Thank God for the beauty of plants and their wonderful variety and colour.

## MATERIALS

Cartridge paper  
Sketch paper  
Pencil  
Coloured pencils, crayons or paints

### AIDS

Backing board (Hardboard is ideal)  
Stool