

A Child's Drawing Analysis Research Paper

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Analyzing children's work is one of the most effective ways to learn about students and their skill levels. This is one of the best ways for teachers to gain insight into their student's work and their ability to perform effectively in the classroom. Analyzing children's work is something that is extremely helpful in all subjects, but specifically in art. Being able to interpret a child's piece of artwork is useful because it shows the child's creativity. Not only does it give insight into their creativity, but it also shows their skill level. If a child is drawing at a first grade level but is in fourth grade, then that aids the teacher in helping with planning and development for that child. In this paper, I will analyze a child's piece of artwork and use various sources to further describe the piece.

When first viewing this particular child's piece of artwork, I was very perplexed and intrigued by how unique and creative it was. The thing that I enjoy most about this piece is that it is up for interpretation and there is not a set explanation for what is occurring. The first thing that came to my mind when I saw this drawing was music. I immediately thought of this because of the music notes in the corner of the drawing. Music notes is what is associated with music and listening to music so I was able to recognize it extremely easy. I was wondering why this child in particular would put music notes in this piece however. It appeared that the rest of the drawing centered on a sport of some sort and not so much music. I concluded that music is played at various sporting events and that must be what the case is here. The context of the drawing is what led me to believe that the music is being played at a sporting game. According to Bang (2000), "We see shapes in context, and our reactions to them depend in large part on that context" (p. 8). What Bang is saying is that we interpret things based on what is surrounding them. If I saw the music notes alone and not in the context of a sporting event, I would analyze and interpret it very differently. At very many sporting events, music is played to get the players

and audience excited about the game. After noticing the music notes, I then focused my attention to the background of the piece. It appeared that it is centered in some sort of gymnasium. I derived this from the circles on the floor, which look like a half court line. There is only one sport that I believe uses lines like those and that is basketball. I'm assuming that the child who drew this picture was a fan of basketball and was trying to depict a game. The part of the picture that struck me as odd was the two square nets at the top and bottom of the page. I was confused when I viewed these because I know basketball nets to be circular and in no way square. This led me to further think on the picture and reevaluate my idea of it. I considered the option that the two squares were nets and that the sport being depicted could be soccer. This would mean that the child thought that there were multiple circles in the center of a soccer field. From my knowledge of soccer however, there is only one circle in the center of the field and not multiple. Another reasoning that further made me think it was basketball was the ball represented in the picture. If soccer were the sport being depicted in this drawing, there would be multiple shapes on the ball. However, the ball appears to look like a basketball ball but it lacking the line across the center of it. It resembled more of a tennis ball. However, the boy in the picture did not have a racquet so I dismissed the notion that it was a tennis match. When I looked at the ball closer, I realized that it very much resembled a basketball with the two lines on it. If the ball would have been in a picture by itself, I would've believed it to be a tennis ball but because of the context and the rest of the drawing, it makes sense for it to be a basketball. Another main aspect of the picture is the three children playing the sport. The one on the outside of the court appears to be throwing the ball into his teammates. The marks on the ball show me that it is in motion and is not just sitting on the floor. The two players inside the court could also be guarding the boy throwing in the ball and preventing him from getting it down the court. This is what I believe the

child is representing. The way that the two boys inside the court have their hands up really demonstrate to me that they are trying to prevent the ball from making it into the court. This could most definitely represent a memory that the artist has from one of their basketball games. The boys also have numbers on their back, which shows that they are engaging in a basketball game even if it is only a pick up game of three players. Like I stated earlier, this image is up for so many different interpretations because it has so many different elements in it. However, I believe that this child is at the schematic stage because it focuses on form concept. According to Kellogg (1970), schematic drawing is a “bold, direct, flat representation” (p. 49). It is clear in this picture that it is a flat representation of a basketball game because it appears to be viewed from above. I believe this child is at the schematic stage because the different events in the picture relate to each other clearly. According to Erickson, M., & Young, B. (1996), “In a schematic drawing, the artist has consciously arranged the spatial relationships” (p. 41). The spatial relationships are clearly seen in this piece through the area of the court and the players who are in the middle of the game. Each aspect of this piece relates to one another and there are no random parts of it. As a whole though, this picture most definitely demonstrates amazing fine motor skills and work from a child who knows how to represent objects. This is what defines and characterizes the schematic stage.

Analyzing a child's piece of work shows me the areas that I, as a teacher, need to improve and build on. Through viewing this particular piece of work, I gained insight as to how a children's brain analyzes and interprets events. What makes each student unique is how he or she depicts certain events that they see. Each child learns differently so that requires each child to be taught uniquely. In my classroom, I want to ensure that my children are given freedom but are encouraged to use their creativity and right side of their brain. Creativity is what makes

children's work unique but that requires that both sides of the brain be used in order to ensure that. According to Pink (2005), "Leading a healthy, happy, successful life depends on both hemispheres of your brain" (p. 26). Because of this, I need to make sure that I, as a teacher, foster both the creative and logical sides of my students. In order to do this, I need to first fully understand how my students think and the best way to do that is through analyzing their work.

### References

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