

LOWENFELD'S STAGES OF ARTISTIC DEVELOPMENT



1. SCRIBBLE

(2 to 4 years)

The Scribble stage is made up of four sub-stages. (a) *Disordered* - uncontrolled markings that could be bold or light depending upon the personality of the child. At this age the child has little or no control over motor activity. (b) *Longitudinal* - controlled repetitions of motions. Demonstrates visually an awareness and enjoyment of kinesthetic movements. *Circular* - further exploring of controlled motions demonstrating the ability to do more complex forms. *Naming* - the child tells stories about the scribble. There is a change from a kinesthetic thinking in terms of motion to imaginative thinking in terms of pictures. This is one of the great occasions in the life of a human. It is the development of the ability to visualize in pictures.

2. PRESCHMATIC

(4 to 6 years)

The preschematic stage is announced by the appearance of circular images with lines which seem to suggest a human or animal figure. During this stage the schema (the visual idea) is developed. The drawings show what the child perceives as most important about the subject. There is little understanding of space - objects are placed in a haphazard way throughout the picture. The use of color is more emotional than logical.



3. SCHEMATIC

(7 to 9 years)

This stage is easily recognized by the demonstrated awareness of the concept of space. Objects in the drawing have a relationship to what is up and what is down. A definite base and sky line is apparent. Items in the drawing are all spatially related. Colors are reflected as they appear in nature. Shapes and objects are easily



definable. Exaggeration between figures (humans taller than a house, flowers bigger than humans, family members large and small) is often used to express strong feelings about a subject. Another technique sometimes used is called "folding over" this is demonstrated when objects are drawn perpendicular to the base line. Sometimes the objects appear to be drawn upside down. Another Phenomenon is called "X-ray". In an x-ray picture the subject is depicted as being seen from the inside as well as the outside.



4. DAWNING REALISM

(9 to 11 years)

Dawning realism is also known as the gang age. Group friendships of the same sex are most common. This is a period of self awareness to the point of being extremely self critical. The attempts at realism need to be looked at from the child's point of view. Realism is not meant to be real in the photographic sense rather than an experience with a particular object. In this regard this stage is the first time that the child becomes aware of a lack of ability to show objects the way they appear in the surrounding environment. The human is shown as girl, boy, woman, man clearly defined with a feeling for details often resulting in a "stiffness" of representation. Perspective is another characteristic of this stage. There is an awareness of the space between the base line and sky line. Overlapping of objects, types of point

perspective and use of small to large objects are evident in this stage. Objects no longer stand on a base line. Three dimensional effects are achieved along with shading and use of subtle color combinations. Because of an awareness of lack of ability drawings often appear less spontaneous than in previous stages.

THE PSEUDOREALISTIC STAGE

(11 to 13 years)

In the previous stages the process in making the visual art was of great importance. In this stage the product becomes most important to the child. This stage is marked by two psychological differences. In the first, called Visual, the individual's art work has the appearance of looking at a stage presentation. The work is inspired by visual stimuli. The second is based on subjective experiences. This type of Nonvisual individual's art work is based on subjective interpretations emphasizing emotional relationships to the external world as it relates to them. Visual types feel as spectators looking at their work from the outside. Nonvisually minded individuals feel involved in their work as it relates to them in a personal way. The visually minded child has a visual concept of how color changes under different external conditions. The nonvisually minded child sees color as a tool to be used to reflect emotional reaction to the subject at hand.



Note: *The above is a brief summary of the subject, for more information refer to the following book. With the exception of the illustrations all of the above content is from: CREATIVE AND MENTAL GROWTH, Viktor Lowenfeld, Macmillan Co., New York, 1947.*