# Painting teaching and artistic development of schoolchildren 

# Pintura, enseñanza y desarrollo artístico de escolares 

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#### Abstract

: The authors of the article consider the process of painting teaching as a type of artistic activity in connection with the artistic development of modern schoolchildren aged 12-16 years old. The emphasis is on the established art school traditions, in particular, based on the experience of outstanding Russian teachers-artists (K.P. Bryullov, A.G. Venetsianov, I.E. Repin, V.E. Savinsky, P.P. Chistyakov, V.S. Shcherbakov and others). The analysis of the definition of "painting" is presented and its distinctive features are given; the traditional painting teaching methods classified based on the experience transfer means (demonstrative-visual, verbal and mediated ones) are shown. The article reveals the sequence of painting teaching in accordance with age-related patterns of development of modern schoolchildren; the developed combinatorial technique implying a free choice of painting teaching methods based on a number of principles (pedagogical expediency, practical effectiveness, etc.) is presented; a model of analysis and assessment of students' academic works, created in the logic of the structural components of artistic activity (perception, image formation, idea, image creation process) is shown; criteria for students' artistic development in the process of painting teaching (the manifestation of creative individuality, an interest in lessons, knowledge of art, etc.) are suggested.


Keywords: Art education, teaching, development, creativity, artistic activity, painting, schoolchildren,

## RESUMEN:

Los autores del artículo consideran el proceso de la enseñanza de la pintura como un tipo de actividad artística en relación con el desarrollo artístico de los escolares modernos de entre 12 y 16 años. Se hace hincapié en las tradiciones establecidas de la escuela de arte, en particular, en base a la experiencia de destacados maestros-artistas rusos (K.P. Bryullov, A.G. Venetsianov, I.E. Repin, V.E. Savinsky, P.P. Chistyakov, V.S. Shcherbakov y otros). Se presenta el análisis de la definición de "pintura" y se dan sus características distintivas; se muestran los métodos de enseñanza de la pintura tradicional clasificados en función de los medios de transferencia de experiencia (demostrativa-visual, verbal y mediada). El artículo revela la secuencia de la enseñanza de la pintura de acuerdo con los patrones de desarrollo de los escolares modernos relacionados con la edad; se presenta la técnica combinatoria desarrollada que implica una elección libre de los métodos de enseñanza de la pintura basada en una serie de principios (conveniencia pedagógica, eficacia práctica, etc.); se muestra un modelo de análisis y evaluación de los trabajos académicos de los estudiantes, creado en la lógica de los componentes estructurales de la actividad artística (percepción, formación de imágenes, idea, proceso de creación de imágenes); Se sugieren criterios para el desarrollo artístico de los estudiantes en el proceso de la enseñanza de la pintura (la manifestación de la individualidad creativa, un interés en las lecciones, el conocimiento del arte,

## 1. Introduction

The existing system of art education in Russia in the interrelation and interaction of general (formal) and additional (informal) education has significant resources for the identification, support and harmonious development of children, including those motivated for the artistic activity. Painting or, more precisely, teaching children to paint, occupies a special place in the most diverse artistic activity, which is attractive in all respects. First of all, this is due to the fact that systematic studies of this kind of artistic activity contribute to the development of general and special abilities of students, the formation of their creative individuality, the formation of artistic perception and imagination, activity, independence, observation and, in general, enrichment, expansion of the artistic outlook of growing children.
In order to have a clear pedagogical view of the subject of teaching, a comprehensive and unambiguous definition of painting is needed. In addition, in the conditions of the existing variety of artistic phenomena particular to contemporary culture, this seems rather difficult. In general, painting is understood as a kind of fine art, which is created by means of special materials and tools. Painting refers to the spatial art forms, it is two-dimensional (Vipper 2004, pp. 14-15). As a rule, the painting materials include pastel, watercolor, gouache, tempera and oil (Vipper 2004, pp. 195-201). However, this list of painting materials can be supplemented with acrylic paints and paints similar in properties to the oil ones
(Skorodumova 2012, pp. 96-107). Although, works made by pastel, watercolor and gouache are also often referred to graphics (Vipper 2004, pp. 195-197; Zaitsev 1986, p. 118).
Painting is divided into monumental - executed on the wall - and easel painting - "an independent work of painting, free from all decorative functions and performed on an easel or a panel" (Vipper 2004, p. 200). This article contains the study of teaching easel painting to schoolchildren, while the surface, on which an image is applied, is called a basis. Canvas, cardboard, paper, etc. can serve as a basis.
This is precisely why, when considering theoretical and practical issues of teaching painting to children, we will consider the most distinctive, in our opinion, features that distinguish painting from other forms of fine art:
painting as a work of art is an image painted by means of coloring materials, in which color appears as the main expressive means;
painting as an artistic activity (for example, "engage in painting") means the creation of such an image.
In this logic, a work of painting is a result of the embodiment of an idea and an image, a result of perception and use of artistic materials. Painting teaching is regarded primarily as a process of developing the abilities of schoolchildren to perceive and create works of painting.
At the same time, the art school traditions developed over decades, represented by the experience of outstanding Russian teachers-artists (K.P. Bryullov, A.G. Venetsianov, I.E. Repin, V.E. Savinsky, P.P. Chistyakov, V.S. Shcherbakov and others) can be a basis for teaching painting to schoolchildren. However, the classical methods of painting teaching reflect the artistic culture of their time with its typical ideas of painting (classicism, realism, romanticism, impressionism, etc.). It cannot be said that this fully corresponds to the specifics of modern culture, which is characterized by the equal artistic value of the directions of painting of different eras. In this regard, the problem of determining the features of painting teaching for the preservation and transfer of different traditions in the context of modern artistic culture is actualized.
As a result of the analysis of the works devoted to the history of art education in Russia, it has been established that the number of different methods of painting teaching increased along with the increase in the number of educational institutions (Alekseeva 1982; Winner 1958; Grabar 1951; Grenberg 1982; Korovin 2013; Moleva 1991; Moleva \& Belyutin 1953;

Moleva \& Belyutin 1956). At least, since the second third of the nineteenth century many teachers (if not everyone) had their own method of painting teaching. The traditional methods of painting teaching are classified based on the methods of experience transfer: demonstrative-visual, verbal and mediated ones. The teaching methods (unless they were chosen randomly) were chosen based on development goals, ideas of what the result of achieving these goals should be and effectiveness of using these methods.
The development goals and the ideas of what the result of achieving these goals should be were different and varied even within the framework of one educational institution. This often led to contradictions and disputes between teachers. However, the actual effectiveness of the method of painting teaching can be determined only by correlating the goals, for the achievement of which this method was used, with the actual result of development in terms of the abilities to create and perceive works of painting. Considering that in the context of modern artistic culture the experience of different traditions has a comparable value, different traditional methods of painting teaching should also have a comparable value.

To include the traditional experience in the process of painting teaching it is not enough to act within the framework of one tradition, while denying the others. It is necessary to treat different traditions with respect and pragmatism, since "it is fair and highly useful to establish the equality of traditions" (Feyerabend 1986, p. 470). The need for modern students to understand that painting can be different is also obvious. In this case, schoolchildren could perceive different types of painting adequately to the author's idea, create works of painting of different styles and genres, had the generalized ideas of the way their works would presumably be perceived by modern viewers, and why in this way.
Instead of canonizing the form and content of painting, in our opinion, it is necessary to show a student what and how to express by means of painting. Therefore, it is pedagogically advisable to provide the one, who will create works of painting, i.e. their author (a student), with an opportunity to decide what sense painting should bring and what it should be like. The artistic development of schoolchildren should be appropriately considered as a priority and a key anticipated result of such teaching in conditions of interrelation and interaction of general (formal) and additional (informal) art education.

## 2. Materials And Methods

The materials of conducted pilot-experimental research included the artistic-creative works of schoolchildren of different institutions at different periods of study time, performed during several years (2011-2017) in the process of painting teaching.
The experiment was conducted at a number of institutions, including the Moscow State Budgetary Educational Institution "Secondary School No. 1188 with Advanced Study of Fine Arts", the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution "Secondary School No. 600" of the Russian Academy of Education, in the Moscow Non-state Educational Institution "The Secondary General Education School "Stolichny-KIT", as well as during plein air organized by the International Union of Creative Youth in the Kaluga region.
In total 76 students aged 12-16 years old, teachers-artists of the above-mentioned institutions and leading specialists of the Federal State Budgetary Scientific Institution "Institute of Art Education and Cultural Studies of the Russian Academy of Education" took part in the experimental work. The small number of schoolchildren engaged in pilotexperimental research is explained by the generally known complexity of painting teaching, as well as by the obvious need for special abilities and motivation for these lessons in growing children.
The amount of study time for painting teaching.
In the system of general (formal) art education with the in-depth study of fine art, 4 academic hours per week ( 1 hour $=45$ minutes), or 2 academic hours per week are at students' choices ( 1 hour $=45$ minutes).
In the system of additional (informal) art education, there are 3 academic hours once a week ( 1 hour $=60$ minutes).

We emphasize that painting teaching in general (formal) and additional (informal) art education did not exclude one or the other, but it was an obligatory and necessary condition for giving lessons (classes).
The targeted pedagogical observation, by means of which the artistic development of children was studied in the process of painting teaching, was determined as the main method of this research.

The focus was on the following aspects:

- special opportunities for the successful formation of students' artistic perception as
"culture of vision" and creative imagination;
- a variety of conditions and individual specificity of the manifestation of students' motivation for painting;
- mastery of new techniques and features of work with various materials for the embodiment of artistic ideas;
- distinctive features of the creative individuality of schoolchildren, which were evident in the performance of practical tasks;
- conditions and nuances of the emergence of the need to acquire knowledge of fine art in general, its outstanding representatives, world art masterpieces, etc.

The practical tasks of various degrees of complexity (19 tasks in total) were developed as the methodological support for this research. Below is an example of one of the practical tasks with methodological explanations and comments.
Task: To depict several bright faceted objects on a monochrome background contrasting with the objects under natural light, by modeling the main surfaces of the shapes of objects (light, half-shadow, shadow or light and shadow), expressing major color-tonal relations and the nature of lighting.
Methodical explanations. The time for performance is 5 hours (1 academic hour $=45$ minutes).

The work should be performed in a thickset way (a method of paint application - densely, compactly, covering the underlying layer completely) upon the conventional colored transparent undercoat (for example, red objects are painted with transparent red paint, while green objects are painted with green paint, etc.).
Several light faceted objects on a dark background contrasting with the objects in color and tone may be used as a composition. As for the shapes of objects, they should be chosen so that they can be drawn with two or three contrasting tonal spots (light, half-shadow, shadow) and the boundaries of lighted and shaded areas (the main surfaces of the shape) can be clearly seen. Origami figures made of colored paper or children's toys may be also used for this. A variety of objects should be chosen by color, while avoiding blue and orange objects. Major illuminated, half-shadow and shadow surfaces, as well as the background can be drawn by color spots close in tone but different in color. The objects should be densely arranged.
Methodical comments. When performing this task, students learn, among other things, the patterns of changing the color of objects under the influence of cold natural lighting. In the work it is necessary to follow the sequence of actions: from the brightest and simplest in the selection of color.

Basic artistic knowledge, skills and abilities (techniques), at the development of which the practical task is aimed, are as follows: to see regularity (sameness), symmetry, coincidence, tangency and compositional balance; to see and express proportional, tonal and color relations (if there are no other tasks, sameness, symmetry, coincidence and tangency should be avoided in the composition. In addition, the space of the picture plane should be smoothly filled so that the objects be neither too "close" to one another nor too "free"); to learn how to work with the palette, to work technologically competently; to learn the techniques of working with liquidly diluted paint and compact thickset painting and to express major color-tonal relations and the nature of lighting.

Moreover, the following should be explained and demonstrated to students: the sequence of work; a principle of working with the palette, materials and tools; a principle of applying paint on the basis and a principle of working with tonal and color relations; dependence of the object color change on the light source; the appearance of the effect of simultaneous color contrast and the importance of compliance with the technology.
Upon the task completion it is necessary to demonstrate (show) a number of works to students and explain their plot, painting features, the specifics of the embodiment of artistic images by the author of the painting, etc. The examples of works of art for the presentation can be as follows: works by a contemporary American artist Kathleen Rafield; Iandscape "Hay Harvest" by I. Levitan (1860-1900); "Shooting" (1905) by S. Ivanov (1864-1910); "Still life (Red and Yellow)" by A. Gorky (1904-1948); "Women Laying Asphalt" (1961) by A. Nenartovich (1915-1988); "The Club will be Ready by Autumn" (1961) and "Roosters" (1961) by the Russian artist V. Popkov (1932-1974).

## 3. Results

1. Based on the results of the conducted theoretical and pilot-experimental research, a concept of the "national art school tradition" has been defined - this is the experience of creating and perceiving works of fine art, which is historically established in Russia, as well as the established fine art teaching methods that preserve and transfer the experience of generations. In addition, the traditional experience of creating and perceiving works of painting is characterized in the historical evolution by the following features: reliance on the classical heritage, content-richness, performing skills, beauty, realism, recording of impressions and emotions and objectlessness (abstractness of expression forms).
2. The sequence of painting teaching based on age-related patterns of development of schoolchildren aged 12-16 years old has been determined:

- from realism to abstractness;
- from the external beauty of an image to the content-richness;
- from rationality to emotionality.

The sequence of tasks and the requirements for their performance are constructed so that, regardless of the level of artistic development at this stage of teaching, a student should create a finished work with the features of a full-fledged work of art after completion of each task.
3. A combinatorial technique implying a free choice of methods of painting teaching has been developed. This technique is based on a number of principles:

- correspondence of expressive means to the artistic-imaginative idea, when the painting technique and technology teaching is directly dependent on artistic-imaginative ideas;
- pedagogical expediency implies that the method chosen should correspond to the expected artistic development results determined jointly by a teacher and a student;
- practical effectiveness involves choosing one method from the existing variety of different methods of the implementation of teaching objectives and tasks in order to achieve better results in the shortest possible time. Guided by this principle, it is necessary to take into account the level of training and creative individuality of each student.

4. Based on structural components of the artistic activity - perception, image formation, idea and image creation process - a model of the analysis and assessment of students' academic works has been developed (Scheme 1).

Scheme 1
Model of the analysis and assessment of academic works

5. The criteria for the artistic development of schoolchildren in the process of painting teaching have been developed (Scheme 2):

Scheme 2
The criteria for students' artistic development


It should be specially noted that for the conducted research, focus on achieving specific, certain and/or required learning outcomes is not so extremely important as the continuity of the artistic development of growing children. The following illustrative examples are among the results of this research:
Out of the total number of schoolchildren participating in the pilot-experimental research, $21 \%$ of children chose "Painting" and "Fine Art" in general as a future professional activity. It means that after graduating from the general education school these grownup students
continue successfully to learn painting in various secondary and higher vocational education institutions. Thus, $46 \%$ of schoolchildren did not associate their choices of the future profession with fine art, but, having the developed "culture of vision" they visited art exhibitions and art galleries in their free time, painted periodically, were interested in various issues of contemporary art, etc. Most of them were children, who chose 2 hours a week for the mastery of painting when studying in the system of general (formal) art education. Wherein $33 \%$ of students made their professional choices in favor of future professions related to art in general in one way or another ("Art Expert", "Designer", etc.).

## 4. Discussion

During the research, the group work with children was mainly performed, the activity of micro-groups and individual work, if necessary, were not excluded.
The conducted theoretical research, including in relation to the artistic perception, has led to the conclusion that growing children, at least starting from adolescence, see things in the same way rather than differently, but interpret them in different ways, in their own way. Any perceived work of painting, as well as any image, is informative and potentially expressive. It is established that three components are involved in the perception of works of painting: emotional reaction, emotional preference and "impartial" judgment. The ratio of these components and the significance of each of them for the viewer determine his/her assessment of the work. The emotional reaction and emotional preference are subjective; therefore they cannot be reliable criteria for assessing different works of painting. The "impartial" judgment includes the recognition of the depicted objects and their meanings (semantics). Since artists' ideas may be different, the most optimal method for assessing a work of painting is to determine the conformity of an image to the author's idea.
The content of teaching is based on the understanding of painting as a form of fine art, in which color is the main expressive means. In contrast with classical programs, the vector of students' development is redirected from the canonization of the form and content of painting to understanding of the personal nature of painting and to its expressive possibilities. The learning outcome involves, first of all, a student's awareness of the fact that the form and content of a work of art depend solely on the author's personal choice. In a broader sense, the learning outcome presupposes a certain level of students' artistic development (based on the selected criteria), where the expression of creative individuality, including creative imagination, is a priority in the creation and perception of works of painting.
A student will be given an opportunity to choose the form and content of works of painting upon learning outcomes. The experience of Russian teachers-artists has shown that in adolescence (12-16 years old) painting teaching must primarily have a realistic orientation. A genre of still life in painting is the most convenient in the creation of the necessary conditions for the artistic development and can be a universal model of work on the artistic image in painting.
During the entire period of study, the schoolchildren learned necessary special terms:
painting - a form of fine art, in which color is the main expressive means;
tangency (in the composition) - tangency of the boundaries of the depicted objects;
coloration - a predominant color or color combination in an image, the color structure of an image;
composition - the mutual arrangement and organization of the depicted objects in relation to each other and with respect to the whole image;
sameness/regularity (in the composition) - depiction of two different objects, which are the same in shape and color, the arrangement of objects at the same distance from each other;
symmetry (in the composition) - division of the composition into equal parts (for example, the arrangement of the boundary between the vertical and horizontal surfaces of the bedside table, on which there are objects, exactly in the middle of the composition), as well as the coincidence of the axes or boundaries of the depicted objects with the axes or boundaries of
the perspective plane (for example, depiction of a vase exactly in the middle of the canvas); coincidence (in the composition) - the coincidence of the axes or boundaries of the depicted objects (for example, when the vertical axes of objects in a still-life painting coincide or when one object seems to be a continuation of another object);
tone - lightness of color;
tonal relations - the difference in the way one color is lighter or darker than the other;
tonality - the general tone of a work (light, dark);
texture - a relief formed by a paint layer;
color - visible color of an object, surface, light source, etc., what is usually called "red", "green", "dark red", "pink", etc.;
color relations - the difference in colors, for example, how much one color is redder than the other or how much one color is colder than the other.

In the performance of practical tasks, students learn various painting technologies and techniques. The educational process is accompanied by students' acquaintance with the works of painting (originals and reproductions) made by professional artists. Moreover, the works of painting for review are selected according to the stylistic similarity of the artists' works and students' academic works, as well as on the principle of the correspondence of tasks solved in the works, the tasks of painting teaching at this stage. It is shown that it is advisable to start learning by depicting the visible reality from nature. In the process of development, it is necessary to set for students the tasks that allow them to express their creative, individual characteristics and emotions, subjective feelings, to work with abstract concepts and associations.
In the performance of each practical task, a student should be oriented toward the performance of the work having the qualities of a full-fledged work of art. This allows maintaining and stimulating the interest, the steady motivation for the artistic activity, the need to communicate with fine art and gaining knowledge about it (outstanding artists, world art masterpieces, etc.). Successful transfer of experience requires the direct contact of a teacher with a student, understanding of the objectives, for which the activity is performed, as well as the appropriate conditions for painting teaching.

## 5. Conclusion

1. The national art school traditions representing historically established Russian experience of creation and perception of works of art, as well as the established fine art teaching methods that preserve and transfer the experience of generations, are the basis for teaching painting to schoolchildren aged $12-16$ years old in the conditions of pluralism of contemporary art culture.
2. A combinatorial technique of teaching painting to teenagers is a mechanism for preserving the national art school traditions covering the period from the eighteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century, it allows developing the abilities to create and perceive works of painting of different styles and genres, motivates students to perceive and create works of artistic creativity.
3. The model of analysis and assessment of academic works, based on the agreement of the author's and the viewer's positions, seems to be the most optimal for assessing schoolchildren's academic works and incorporating the experience of different traditions of the national art school in the process of teaching the artistic activity to children; its application contributes to the formation and development of skills of perception and analysis of works of painting of different styles and genres.
4. The proposed criteria for the artistic development of students aged 12-16 years old allow both establishing the initial level of education and tracing the dynamics of the expression of creative individuality in the perception and creation of academic works, revealing the level of formation of special skills and abilities, as well as the motivation for painting classes and an increase in the level of knowledge in the sphere of fine art.
5. The specificity of painting teaching in the context of the interaction of general (formal) and additional (informal) art education, which ensures a flexible combination of various forms, methods and nuances of pedagogical work, supports interest in painting classes, stimulates students to acquire knowledge of outstanding artists and fine art masterpieces.
6. Teaching painting to schoolchildren aged 12-16 years old can be considered the basis for their further continuous artistic development both for the purpose of receiving vocational education in this sphere and for forming young people's interest in the full artistic life of modern society.
7. The prospects of this research are related to the study of the effectiveness of applying the developed combinatorial technique in the process of abstract painting teaching after mastering the basics of realistic painting. The further creative and professional life of schoolchildren, who took part in pilot- experimental activities, may be a separate direction of work.

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