

Sensing Form: Using Feel to Manipulate Clay with Linda Green

By [Linda Green](#)

This resource is based on a CPD (Continual Professional Development) session led by [Linda Green](#) as part of the Somerset Primary Art Conference organised by [SPAEDA](#) at [Hestercombe](#). Primary school teachers were taken on a sensory journey exploring sight, feel and memory.

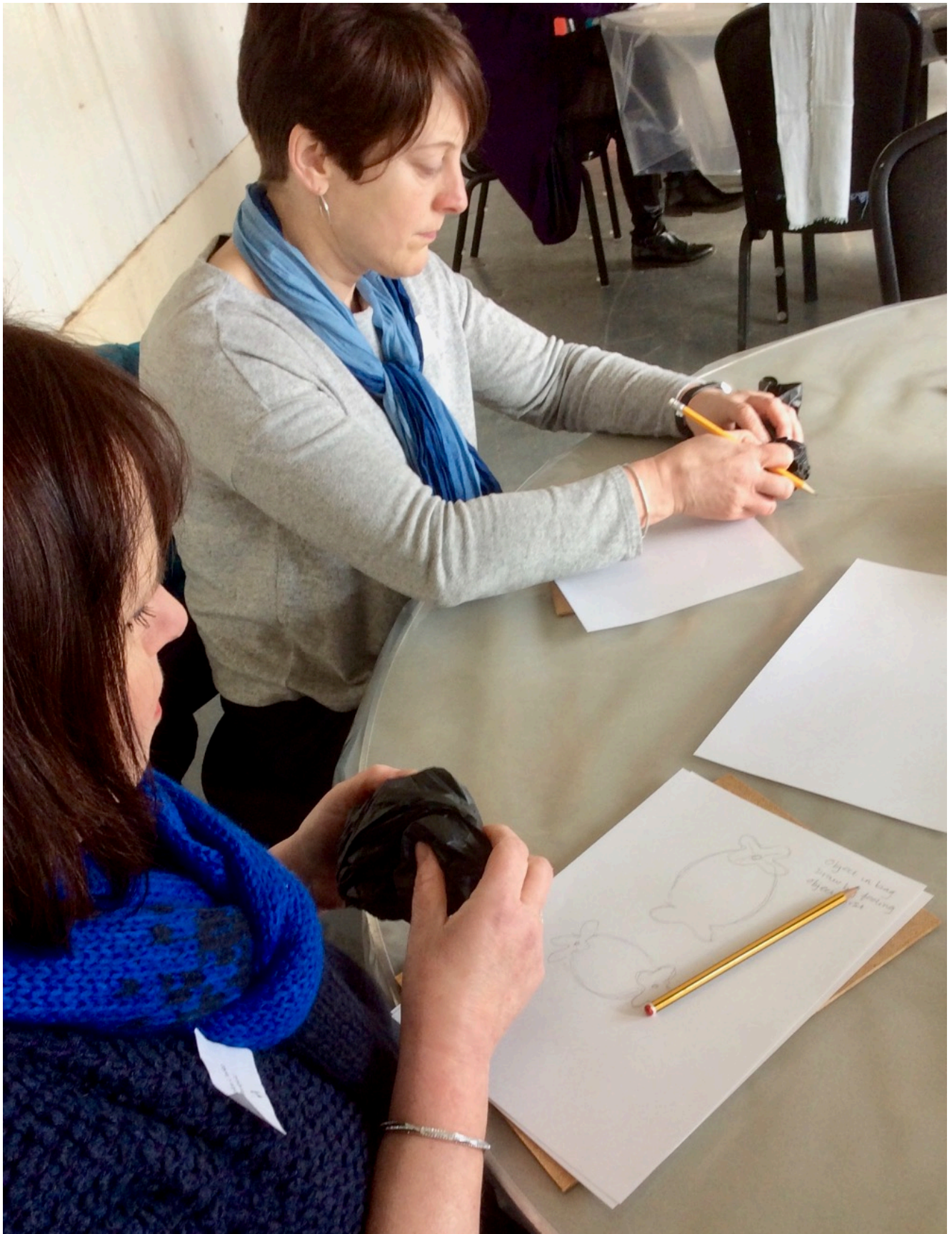
Linda Green is a retired Art teacher of thirty years and it is with great pleasure that AccessArt is able to share this very special workshop session with its readers.

Tuning in to the Senses

Drawing with Feel

To start, objects were hidden in plastic bags which participants were asked to draw using their sense of touch.





Drawing with Sight

Teachers were then asked to take their object out of its bag and explore drawing it by sight, or 'looking.'







Comparing drawings: those drawn with feel and those with sight

On completion of two drawings, one through touch only, and the second, more conventionally through close looking, participants were asked to reflect on the tasks and their sensory awareness, both visual and tactile.

A print out of [Merit Oppenheim's 'Fur Teacup'](#) was shown to teachers, challenging expectations of an object's function. Imagine drinking hot tea through fur!

Making Sculpture Blind

Teachers were then blindfolded and given a lump of clay which they manipulated from the memory of the object that they'd just drawn.



After drawing a rabbit through sight and touch a teacher goes on to create it through memory, using only touch



Making a clay star fish in the blind

Whilst working teachers were asked to consider how these activities could applied back in their classrooms?

Or how the choice of objects, e.g. shells, bones and natural forms, vintage toys, kitchenalia or unusual objects, could be a starting point leading to subsequent projects, themed areas of learning or discussion?



The tea strainer challenges the individual when considering convex and concave structures



From blind drawing to making in the blind - A 1940's potato slicer triggered a discussion about homes and living in that decade



Teachers are asked to reflect on how they are working: tactile, through touch, intuitively from memory and familiarity, and to reflect on how they may be able to apply this task back in their own classroom settings

Most remarkable about this challenge, was that once the blindfold was removed, the memory made clay models revealed, resembled greatly the actual objects they were meant to represent.



Finished star fish made in clay blind-folded



Revealed! A 1940's potato slicer - An interesting and unusual shape, unfamiliar and with a specific function and purpose.



An air freshener! The electrical plug in air freshener posed difficulties, but could be used as a starting point for design problem solving when tasked with designing something for a non sighted person.



The pulley and chain, a fascinating object



A collapsible toy: challenging and difficult, yet very familiar



A vintage toy car with it's aerodynamic shape...

Thanks

Many thanks to [Linda Green](#) for sharing her ideas and teaching with AccessArt.

Thank you to the teachers who attended the workshop at Hestercombe for sharing their work and processes with AccessArt.

Linda Green would also like to thank [SPAEDA](#), Alice Crane and Sara Dudman for their support and guidance.



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Making Sculptural “Wild Things” (Session 2 & 3)

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Pathway: Drawing and Making Inspired by Maurice Sendak



[This resource is featured in the 'Drawing and Making Inspired by Maurice Sendak' pathway](#)

talking points: maurice sendak



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Making Sculptural “Wild

Things” (Session 1)

This resource forms part of a series which enable primary-aged children to explore drawing and making inspired by Maurice Sendak’s “Where the Wild Things Are”.

To Construct...

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Year 3 Roald Dahl & Quentin Blake Homework

A year three homework brief to 'make or draw a Roald Dahl character inspired by Quentin Blake.'

To Colour...

As part of Sensory Spaces: An Autism Friendly Project, artist, Sarah Evelyn Marsh ran two sessions exploring the theme of colour. What does colour smell like? What does colour feel like?

One Material: Sea Sculptures from Plastic Bottles

Exploring the Sculptural Possibilities of Plastic Milk Bottles

Magnets and Forces

Secondary school students are likely to study properties of magnets in their science classes, but in this workshop, artist Melissa Pierce Murray, encourages teenagers to explore playful and aesthetic responses to magnets, rather than analytic and quantifiable ones. Using artistic and scientific approaches together aid in developing curiosity and imagination.

Two and Four Legged Creatures

Two and Four Legged Creatures with oil based clay over a simple wire armature to make delicate, extended structures. A one hour, artist led session with Melissa Murray.

Making a “To Scale” Gallery

This resource shares the process by which 6 twelve year old children created a shared architectural model working in foamboard, working alongside Paula Briggs. The model was based upon an existing house, which was measured and scaled down.

Installing Artwork in “To Scale” Gallery

Draw, Paint, Build, Make: Gallery Project

Sensory Spaces: An Autism-Friendly Project

To Connect



At the beginning of the project it was important to take time getting used to each other, the learning space and the surrounding environment. Below is a list of considerations you may find helpful to use in your own learning spaces. Be aware of the daily sounds, smells and other textures of life in your learning space; a constant humming noise or flickering light may be stressful for a child with autism. Allow time for everyone to feel their way in the space; connections may be made through the use of different senses and body parts.

To Conceal



During the six week project, the group explored different themes and actions, some of these were displayed through learning schemas. In week 2 we experimented with different ways to conceal ourselves and objects; schemas such as enveloping and enclosure were exhibited by the group.

To Colour



Two of the sessions explored the theme of colour. The first was rather abstract, I asked questions such as; What does colour smell like? What does colour feel like?

For a child on the autistic spectrum, a question like this may be confusing, some autistic people think and understand literally. So instead of directing these questions at the children, I answered and speculated on them myself. These abstract questions became vehicles for the workshops documented below.

To Construct



In my final post on the project, I want to reflect on the theme of To Construct... looking at the different ways we constructed during the project. Please remember this is a personal and artistic reflection, based on the ideas I presented and the (emotional and physical) reactions and responses of the children and their families, who inspired changes and the development of the project as we experienced it.

To Conceal....

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The Winter Tree Challenge: A Combined Sculpture & Drawing Project!

This post shares an hour long session at the AccessArt Art Lab, in which the young teenagers (12 and 13 years) worked on two projects simultaneously: a shared winter forest drawing in charcoal, and a sculpture challenge to make a winter tree. The time and material constraints resulted in an energetic and inventive session. By Paula Briggs

Sculptures with Personality, Inspired by Anglo Saxon Houses

This resource shares a 3 hour session with Year 6 children from Barton Church of England Primary School. Children were studying the Anglo Saxons and we thought it would be a good opportunity to explore making skills.

Led by Paula Briggs, children to “make sculptures inspired by” an Anglo Saxon Village.

To Connect...

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Making a Lyre Inspired by the Ancient Greeks

Here, Portia, aged ten and in year five, shows, step by step, how she approached a creative homework to learn more about the Ancient Greeks.

Sculpture Project Inspired by

Egyptian Wall Painting

This resource shares a project which explored mould making, casting and painting in the creation of a sculpture inspired by Egyptian wallpainting, in particular Nebamun hunting in the marshes, Nebamun's tomb-chapel, which can be seen in the British Museum, London

The project can be adapted for use in KS 2 and 3, and can be used to accompany a study of Egyptian Art / Hieroglyphics.