Sketchbooks in Primary Schools – Curriculum Planning

This page contains resources and guidance to help teachers introduce and develop sketchbooks in primary schools.

AccessArt has a long history of working with sketchbooks in schools, and a wealth of information for teachers about developing sketchbooks in primary schools.

In summary AccessArt advocates:

- **That sketchbooks should be owned by the pupils**, and should placed at the centre of pupils' creativity. As such sketchbooks should develop personalities (a class of 30 sketchbooks should not look alike).

- **Sketchbooks should be used to gather, collect, experiment and reflect.** Sketchbooks should be a place of discovery.

- **Teachers should not be afraid if sketchbooks seem chaotic** - adult sketchbooks are often chaotic. Sketchbooks are a place to put unresolved ideas into the world, which can be assimilated later. Sketchbooks are
rarely linear.

- **Sketchbook content should be treated with respect.** Teachers should not mark directly in the book. Teachers should use one to one or small group discussion to help articulate sketchbook content.

- **Sketchbooks should equate to momentum.** Pupils should be discouraged from working in a single sketchbook which lasts a year or even longer. Instead sketchbooks should be filled with momentum and enthusiasm.

The new **National Curriculum for Art & Design (Primary)** (September 2014) states that:

- Pupils in Key Stage 2 should be taught: "to create sketch books to record their observations and use them to review and revisit ideas." **AccessArt advocates sketchbooks should be introduced in Key Stage 1 and that their use should be rigorous and become embedded.**

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The resources below are accessible to **AccessArt members**. Please consider **joining AccessArt** (£42 for a single user, £96 for a multiuser membership. AccessArt is a UK Charity and all membership fees are used to develop further resources.

**AccessArt Resources to Support Sketchbooks**

AccessArt is an evolving collection of resources and further resources are being added over time. Please **register with AccessArt** to receive updates.

**Sketchbooks: on the Road to Recover**
From its beginning, AccessArt has promoted sketchbooks as a potential place for learning and personal discovery. We have a rich collection of AccessArt posts made in collaboration with artists and teachers, sharing personal sketchbook journeys as well as ambitious projects across whole schools and communities. This collection attempts to piece together some of the sketchbook wisdom collected by AccessArt over the years.

Explore all the AccessArt Sketchbooks

Resources to help introduce sketchbooks in school, develop sketchbook skills, embed sketchbook use, and examples of sketchbooks of artists, designers, illustrators etc.