

# Rethinking our Approach to Assessment & Progression in Primary School

By [Paula Briggs](#)

The words "assessment" and "progression" have become very loaded in recent times, and there is increasing pressure on teachers to treat art like other curriculum areas. The reality is art is a unique subject and if we are to truly enable creativity in schools then we need to rethink our approach to assessment and progression.

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**Collaboratively**

# Discovering Common Ground

By Dr Judy Thomas

*This response was written after  
the first meeting of  
the [Creative Pedagogy & Pathways  
Group](#)*

**Bakhtin (1984) promoted  
pedagogies that  
facilitate dialogic  
engagement; his  
'Chronotype' theory  
suggests time and space**

**is inherent in narrative.**

**Our narrative, and that of our learners, has shifted dramatically over the past year; we have embraced new virtual spaces that present us fresh opportunities. The online environment scaffolds contemporary possibilities for connection and dialogue in ways previously not considered. Virtual adaptation has enabled us**

**to come together and  
create new freedoms to  
positively learn from one  
another. This unites a  
divergent multiplicity,  
where we can actively,  
more fluently, share  
dialogue, in ways  
previously not so  
accessible. We can  
exchange ideas and create  
new, beneficial learning  
spaces that help us  
collaboratively discover  
common ground and**

**navigate challenges.**

**We are stronger together and the promise of this dialogue is exciting. By applying online, dialogic approaches to learning, we can cross boundaries through beneficial zones of potentiality. The overwhelming excuses for being insular no longer exist; we can cross-sectors to collectively explore creative spaces to reflect, question,**

**challenge, develop,  
innovate, and inspire.  
This dialogue can  
stimulate change and  
positively create wider  
access to art and future  
creativity.**

**Bakhtin, M (1981) *The Dialogic  
Imagination* in Ehre,  
Milton. *Poetics Today*, vol. 5,  
no. 1, 1984, pp. 172–177. *JSTOR*,  
[www.jstor.org/stable/1772435](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1772435).  
(Accessed 16 May 2021).**

**Cohen, Tom. “The Ideology of  
Dialogue: The Bakhtin/De Man  
(Dis)Connection.” *Cultural  
Critique*, no. 33, 1996, pp.**

41–86. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/1354387](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1354387). Accessed 16 May 2021.

Oxford Reference (2021) “*Chronotope*” Available at: <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095611483> (Accessed 16 May 2021).

Rule, P (2011) *Bakhtin and Freire: Dialogue, dialectic and boundary learning, Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 43:9, 924-942, DOI: [10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00606.x](https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2009.00606.x) (Accessed 16 May 2021).

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# Reciprocal Relationships

By Professor Samantha Broadhead

*This response was written after the first meeting of the [Creative Pedagogy & Pathways Group](#)*

**“I think it is really important that those who believe in equitable**



**access to the arts should work together. However, people from different sectors, institutions and organisations are working in art-silos. We need to lift our heads out of our own silo and talk to others who are trying to do the same thing.**

**I totally agree that differences in language, experience and context are elements that can impede conversations**

carrying on. I worry that we are sometimes talking to ourselves and not taking enough time to listen to and ask questions of others.

I would be interested in having a conversation with someone teaching art in a school and finding out what we have in common and how we could act together. This would need to be a reciprocal relationship. Maybe we

**need some one-to-one or small group meetings to build this understanding. I have to say that I feel personally excluded from a lot of larger discussions because they tend to focus on school curricula, when we could also be asking: how does this work in adult and community education? Or how does this work in further education or HE? How does community arts**

**contribute to the debate?**

**Maybe a way forward is to start facilitating cross-sector sessions which are about finding commonalities, asking questions and looking outwards? Then we may understand each other's values, priorities, hopes and fears. I can imagine how all the interested arts groups could work together to the benefit of everyone, but I think**

**it needs graft and  
attention and persistence  
and leadership.”**

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**Plain English  
and a Realistic  
Connection  
Between**

# **Classrooms and Pedagogical Discussion**

**By Clare Boreham**

**“I feel that what happens  
up high in government and  
Ofsted can become very  
mistranslated on the  
ground by SLTs and  
subjects leads trying to  
make sense of what  
they’re supposed to be**

doing and how. I've noticed recently that few young teachers have a great deal of confidence in Art themselves and schools try to use the same pedagogical approaches as in other subjects. In practise, I've sometimes felt Art is closer to PE at times. I also feel that what some people in academia think is happening on the chalk face, may not be

**the case everywhere.**

**This is why I personally think the visual, easily accessible 'projects' AccessArt has, mostly devised by artists, work so very well in schools. It's not bogged down with learning intentions and success criteria. Or a formulaic pedagogy.**

**During the discussion, I was glad to hear passionate plea made that**



ordinary teachers are involved in this group; this is very important. Some language used by academics can also quite abstract. If we are going to have any impact anywhere, on the chalk face, plain english needs to be used. (I'm aware though, that when I talk about ASD, it's also sometimes very abstract to the uninitiated! So it's easily done.)

**I think one of the issues with the current curriculum is there is so little guidance for Art. Which was a wonderful open ended opportunity, but I feel subconsciously meant it seemed less important in some schools, besides the very packed history curriculum for example, and non specialist Art leads weren't sure what to do. I have an Art degree and**

**had taught for more than 10 years and I struggled!**

**Initially I was asked to come up with art units that helped to deliver the enormous amount of history and geography, as apparently many schools were taking that approach. I had to spend time researching my gut feeling that this was wasn't the right approach for all units. I feel like I've had to say 'No'**

**an awful lot over the last few years. And spend a lot of time solving the conundrum of what could be happening instead. This is still ongoing!**

**A little while ago I saw a question in a forum; "I've been asked to do a unit on proportion for Y3 linked to Charlotte's Web..." I feel some Art curriculum leaders have to spend a lot of time doing mental gymnastics.**

**And I think about the children on the other end; how much engagement is a top down formulaic topic actually going to have? A happy child will learn...**

**My husband is an architect and sometimes teaches second years at the local University. He's noticed a gradual decline in creative innovation and confidence in the last few years. In**

**terms of creative industries, they're very much an important one to think about. Practical critical thinking and confident creativity is an incredibly valuable skill that we do risk losing workout risk taking, innovative, evolving approaches to Art Education."**

**Any opinions expressed in this communication are personal and do not necessarily represent the position of Benton Dene School in any way**

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# Be Consistent