

# What Are Sketchbooks & What Can They Offer Us?

Sketchbooks offer learners of all ages a wide range of opportunities!



## Opportunity No. 1 Be Journeyful!

When we move too quickly towards a preconceived outcome (a painting, sculpture, drawing etc) we deprive ourselves of an exciting journey. Sketchbooks provide us with the opportunity to develop our journeying skills (exploration, testing, reflecting, understanding), which in turn offers us the potential of arriving at an exciting end result, alongside greater understanding and development of skills.

Sketchbooks provide the space for children to

play, explore, try, and wonder. They also provide a safe space in which to fail, struggle and get lost, all of which bring growth in vital skills. When used well, sketchbooks allow children to go on their own journeys, and make their own choices about what and how they explore, and so build confidence.

## Opportunity No. 2 Own Your Own Experience

Sketchbooks are holders for our own experience. More importantly, they hold our experience at a time when we don't yet know where we are going, making them a very powerful tool for our wellbeing and growth.

The world filters down through each of us, through our senses. Sometimes this is pleasurable, sometimes this is overwhelming. Sometimes boring, sometimes exciting. The sketchbook provides an opportunity for us to hold our experience, whatever that experience is.

As we start to externalise our experience through our sketchbooks, in all its disconnected glory, we begin to centre ourselves and tune in. As we tune in, we begin to see potential and look for opportunities. So a sketchbook becomes a place full of tiny seeds, some of which get revisited and nurtured into larger ideas.

Sketchbooks provide an opportunity for learners to experience what it feels like to take control of our own learning; to feel a sense of ownership,

pride and motivation.

### Opportunity No. 3 Take Risks In A Safe Space

A sketchbook should be a safe place in which to take creative risks, without fear of judgement. Sketchbooks are places where it is ok not to know the answer. Nothing has to be resolved in a sketchbook, and so conversely, things can be resolved. Sketchbooks should be places in which mistakes can occur, and revelations made. Breakthroughs can be made through repetitive practice, or spontaneous leaps. Sketchbooks are safe spaces in which you can make connections between disparate elements, by daring to put them together.

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