VISUAL STORYTELLING

The degree to which printmaking can capture and
communicate the essence of oral stories

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/ Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative action research project is to examine the degree to which printmaking may be used to capture and communicate the essence of oral stories collected from the local community. This research project, based on the new Junior Cycle Framework's short course, aims to:

- Investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print

- Examine students' process in developing one image to portray the essence of a story and

- Explore the influence of introducing an artist as inspiration for the project.

The research methodology design focused on the collection of data from questionnaires, focus groups, reflections, observations and participants' work. Through an in-depth inductive approach, the data retrieved during the course of the project was analysed. This established the following three core findings:

- Heuristic pedagogical strategies enabled interpretation and visualisation of oral stories

- Examination and appreciation of selected artists' work supported the development of visual literacy

- Visual literacy skills were enhanced and supported through visual investigation and making

In an effort to capture and communicate the essence of oral stories through print, it became evident that visual literacy skills were gradually developed. In order for that to occur, pedagogy interventions had to take place. The research found that pedagogical strategies guided the concept development through visual investigation, which demonstrated the participants' ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning of an oral story in the form of an image. The findings illustrate that each phase of the project contributed to the development of visual literacy of the class.

01 / Introduction

This research report looks at the degree to which printmaking may be used to capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. The participants prepared interviews and gathered oral stories from the local community with the intention of developing and crafting a lino print to represent the story, in one single image. The participants of this project were 2nd Year students from Colaiste Iosagain, Portarlington - a voluntary secondary school in the midlands with approximately 970 students. This class of 11 participating students were of mixed abilities.

The main objectives of this research project were as follows:

- To investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print

- To examine students' process in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story

- To explore the influence of introducing an artist as inspiration for the project

The project is based on the recently published Junior Cycle Framework's short course guidelines, outlined by the NCCA. It advocates the 8 key skills and 24 statements of learning as outlined in the short course document (Appendix 1: Short Course). The new Junior Cycle Framework acknowledges and encourages the communication with others as well as learning about local history, while creating and presenting artistic works and appreciating the process and skills involved (NCCA, 2015).

To gain further insight into the research topic, a literature review was conducted. The aim of this was to become informed on the most suitable procedure to conduct such a project by reviewing similar research projects and views of established theorists alike. Three main themes are established in the review and are discussed to give context to the report.

These main themes are as follows:

- Oral stories as a primary source for visual communication

- Digital story telling and visual literacy

- Development in the art class through visual investigation

The report looks at the research methodology design, for a qualitative action research report. It highlights the methods applied to clarify the question at hand, such as questionnaires, focus groups, reflections, observations and participants' work and establishes the purpose behind the choices. An inductive approach was undertaken to distinguish themes and the findings of the data collected during the course of the project.

The findings of this research report will contribute to the understanding of how primary sourced oral stories can be developed into imagery that captures the true essence of the story. It will provide a case-specific example of the ways in which teachers can engage with the local community as a primary source of inspiration for the classroom.

2 / Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This literature review offers an overview of the literature associated with using oral stories as a primary source of inspiration in the art room in order to develop concepts to capture their essence through printmaking. The term 'essence' refers to the unchangeable, intrinsic nature of something, without which it would not exist or be what it is. (Oxford Dictionary, 2017).

This review examines the literature accessible to determine the effectiveness and difficulties of the three main topic areas of the research:

- Oral stories as a primary source for visual communication

- Story telling and visual literacy

- Development through visual investigation

It aims to provide a review on similar case studies as well as key messages from journals with regards to undertaking and performing related projects in the classroom and comparable studies. This literature review will form the basis of the research that will be gathered in conjunction with the draft short course specification outlined by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA).

2.1.2 Relevance Of Research In Relation To The Irish Art Curriculum

While the literature gathered examines studies on concept development and the visual communication of oral stories, it also highlights the disparity in accessible literature regarding certain aspects of teaching art in Irish secondary level schools, highlighting a necessity for this research study. The development of concepts and imagination is greatly encouraged in primary and third level institutions, however the evidence that has been acquired for this review falls short of support for development of ideas from primary sources in regards to post-primary levels. The new Junior Cycle Framework emphasises the use of primary sources and the development of ideas:

> "Students should demonstrate the ability to sustain the development
> of ideas through experimentation/exploration of subject sources in a
> variety of circumstances" (NCCA, 2015, p. 26).

However, there is little evidence to support this new change in the curriculum. This research aims to create a platform to showcase the necessity for the development of ideas and the value of using oral stories as a primary source of inspiration.

2.1.2 Literature Reviewed

The material for this review was initially scoped between the years 1996 – 2016. At times when relevant sources could not be obtained, the year bracket was pushed to ten-year gaps until a pertinent source was found. Advanced search mechanisms were used to include books, journal articles, reviews etc. While there is an extensive body of research and theory in regards to visual communication and visual literacy, there is a paucity of relevant sources in relation to Irish post-primary education. Since graduating from Visual Communication, it is clear to see the lack of emphasis on the development a project and how students communicate to viewers in the previous Junior Certificate Curriculum. Skills in visual communication can offer students a systematic approach to the concept development of a project. As Bergstorm mentions, "whatever the medium and storytelling technique, the important thing is to get the audience involved in the story" (Bergstorm, 2009, p. 26).

Learning visual communication skills allows for this opportunity. With this in mind fields were left open to include studies from other education systems such as USA, UK and Australia.

Although this is not a contextual review of projects relating to the subject, some case studies share similar aspects of work gathered throughout the investigation. This will review the essence of projects taken place especially those of which include feedback from participants.

This review looks at the essentials of visually communicating a story. At first the use of oral stories as a primary source of inspiration is examined. The literature gathered focused on experiences with using oral stories in the classroom and for the authors' own personal research. Journal articles were the main focus of compiling literature for this aspect of the review in an effort to include experience from a first hand basis. The pedagogical relevance of storytelling is recognised through the readings, as well as examples of methods for visual investigation.

2.2 Oral Stories As A Primary Source For Visual Communication

The literature gathered focuses on experiences with using oral stories in the classroom and for their own personal research. Journal articles were the main focus of compiling literature for this aspect of the review in an effort to include experience from a first hand basis.

2.2.1 Oral History As A Primary Source Of Inspiration

> Remembered experiences have little social utility except to those having the experiences. Recollection is, after all, private. For social value to occur... the recalled material needs to be treated imaginatively. That is, it needs to be more than a recollection; it needs to be something of an invention. (Eisner, 2002)

Eisner's declaration of language as art in his journal article, The Arts and the Creation (2003) is a suitable synopsis for this research. He comments on the importance of art transforming "brains into minds" (Eisner, 2002, p. 341) with the development possibilities that can be achieved through art education. This research focuses on the collection of local oral history and the progression of developing the story into an image, as Eisner suggests the aim is to re-invent the memory.

Oral History: An Inclusive Highway to the Past (Hudson, 2003) offers an insight into an American study on how the use of oral history in the classroom can change a student's perception on what history is. It is intriguing to see how oral history is utilised in other subject areas and how it engages students with their community through learning more about the area and documenting its' story in an alternative manner. The worthiness of this article stems from its substantial use of theorists throughout, such as Paulo Freire and his views on "practical ways in which oral history might transform learning in communities, schools and classrooms" (Hudson, 2003, p. 207). The journal invites us to consider how oral history may be used to encourage the dialogue to develop teachers' and students' "critical consciousness" (Hudson, 2003, p. 208). Through collecting stories, the hope is that the participants will become more active in preserving their community's history, similar to this study. When he speaks of ethics, words such as respect and reverence spring to mind. Connecting with the community is an integral part of this research project in order to further assist their engagement with the visual communication of their projects. Bergstorm expresses his belief how "the process [of visual communication] starts with choosing the right narration, which in turn is dependent on the strategy and analysis of the communication goal" (Bergstorm, 2009, p. 7). In this respect, the goal will be to successfully communicate a story gathered by someone in the community.

Natalia Fousekis (2005) explores her journey collecting oral history from a community and portrays them as a performance to enrich the information she gathered instead of allowing it to go unnoticed and forgotten in the archival storage at her institution. Similar to this research project, the preservation of memory and local history was found in the core of her motivation for the outcome of the project. In the midst of this journey, Fousekis embraces her new belief that:

"Historians must preserve memories, not just to inform and transform the way we view and write history, but also to remind us about the importance of individual lives and histories" (Fousekis, 2005, p. 168).

This viewpoint strikes a chord with this project, as the transformation of the oral stories is as important as the respect that is stimulated about the individuals who are sharing their stories. Speaking from personal experience as an oral history collector, Fousekis enriches the necessity of oral history in our lives. It is this personal experience that deepens the benefits of this research in regards to the value and worth of this project. Both of these resources have acknowledged the importance of community and preservation, something that needs to be encouraged from the very beginning of a project such as this, as Fousekis excellently promotes.

2.2.2 Disadvantages For Using Oral History as a Primary Source

While Sandy Polishuk (1998) addresses her experiences with the perils of legitimate renditions of the past from a particular interviewee, she makes the point for interviewees deliberately "misremembering" their tales in order to keep certain aspects of a story secret from the interviewer. Her experience was directly connected to creating an autobiography, as opposed to Fousekis creating a performance. Polishuk questions how can one tell the truth from exaggeration or fiction when interviewing. She highlights the perils of working with oral stories and the necessity to understand the clarity of information you seek. While in some circumstances, clarity and exact rendition of an event is necessary to collect in an interview, with this research project it is not entirely the focus. In Polishuk's situation of reporting, clarity of the story was essential for her to prove the validity of the story. Misremembering a fact in a story would make her report unreliable. While relevant, she has not persuaded the elimination of oral stories for the purpose of primary source material from this project. Instead, she highlights the importance of knowing what information you are looking for. For the participants to successfully visually communicate their primary source into art forms as Fousekis did, they will need to use their critical analysis skills to avoid unnecessary information when collecting their stories from the community.

Each of these literatures holds significance in the research being conducted. While Hudson refers to the benefits of including oral history in the classroom in regards

to the heuristic transformation of a student, both Fousekis and Polishuk offer insights into the resistance of participants to reveal information and stories. The students may not wish to participate whole-heartedly in the transformation and use of the oral stories post collection if it is a direct translation in the process of visually communicating through printmaking.

Taking this into account, artist Nadia Corridan is a prime example of an artist who with her style combats this fear. Her work requires its' audience to "create their own narrative" from her ambiguous paintings (Corridan, 2014). Corridan visually communicates the story of Hilda with only subtle representations. This style of visual communication may be the key to transforming a primary source such as oral stories. As William Blake claims, "a fool sees not the same tree that a wise man sees" (Blake, 1790). The ambiguity of the image will be an interesting and challenging task for participants. "Human perception is brilliantly selective... you can ignore almost anything you want" (Morgan & Welton, 1996). As with Corridan, this selective process with regards to Corridan, will be an essential process in the development of the project. Bergstorm states that, "in storytelling, there will often be a particular point, an element, an event, that lends itself better than others to dramatization" (Bergstorm, 2009, p. 22). Finding this particular point will be crucial to visually communicating the story to viewers.

The insight into these literatures and the advice given will have primary importance in the visual communication of the stories the participants choose to transform into a print. The reference towards teaching in Hudson's exploration (2003) is motivating for the inclusion of oral stories. He claims that:

> "Seldom are teachers challenged by the opportunity to think like
> historians about historical evidence and even less often are they asked
> to engage in collecting historical evidence." (Hudson, 2003, p. 211)

Similarly, it could be argued that art teachers are seldom challenged to think like artists. This research encourages students' awareness of the processes artists use to find inspiration through others for their work, while also encouraging the art teacher to do the same.

2.3 Story Telling And Visual Literacy

The storytelling perspective is crucial in determining how a story is received, steering both text and picture composition.
(Bergstorm, 2009, p. 26)

Compared to the previous literature reviewed, the article, Learning Through Narratives: The Impact Of Digital Storytelling On Intergenerational Relationships (Flottemesch, 2013) lends its voice to the pedagogical relevance of oral stories. It recognises how digital storytelling "provides meaning to learning through the use of a variety of learning styles, such as auditory, visual and kinaesthetic skills" (Flottemesch, 2013, p. 54). Flottemesch (2013) highlights the contribution oral stories can lend to a classroom with regards to differentiating between multiple learning styles. She offers insight in to how "the process of organizing, scripting, capturing audio/visual, and editing can stimulate discussions and dialogues that go way beyond the subject and issues that make it into the final product" (Flottemesch, 2013, p. 59), which in this case will be capturing a story through printmaking. This notion of stimulating discussions further than the final product is intriguing as it helps to develop stronger visual literacy skills. Opening the dialogue through digital story telling, as Flottemesch suggests, will benefit the heuristic development of the student through the progression of their visual literacy skills.
In support of Flottemesch, Mary Ann Stankiewicz declares:

"Our students need an art education that goes beyond drawing and painting, beyond technique or formal analysis, toward functional visual literacies." (Stankiewicz, 2003, p. 322)

With this in mind, this project should enhance and develop visual literacy skills that go further than the final product and embed multidisciplinary skills.
Visual literacy can be defined as the ability to interpret, negotiate, and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image (Seel, 2011). Interpretation, in this case, refers to the ability to explain the meaning of the story gathered by the students. Negotiation in terms of visual literacy refers to the act of solving a problem such as finding a suitable image, which represents their story. To make

meaning of this image refers to the active engagement and process of making sense and therefore, understanding the purpose of their chosen image to tell their story (Seel, 2011, p. 1809). Gloria Schultz Eastman identifies visual literacy as "the ability to read a visual image, using skills that are somewhat similar to those used to read and comprehend a printed text" (Schultz Eastman, 2015). She also suggests that as teachers, "we must help students become aware that a visual message is a construction." (Schultz Eastman, 2015). Eastman's suggestion of "construction" will be necessary in the pedagogical strategies chosen for this project. These strategies will help scaffold their learning to prepare them for the next step in their visual literacy skills, required for the development of their project as they interpret and negotiate their stories in order to make meaning and transform them from oral stories to a visual image.

2.4 Development Through Visual Investigation

The following relates to literature focusing on the creative abilities of students and the literature available that supports students' development with conceptual ideas for projects. The most suitable literature and studies were undertaken in USA. While their education system differs from Ireland, it is their approach to using concept based learning as a development process for both the student and project in hand that offers advice for this research project.

2.4.1 Student Sketchbooks

Engaging Imagination (James & Brookfield, 2014), explores the idea of developing a student through the use of their pre-existing imagination and development of their schoolwork (James & Brookfield, 2014, p. 44). The literature shares examples of ways to progress students' concept development and techniques for building confidence in the student through discussions and self-reflections (James & Brookfield, 2014, p. 221), both will be essential to this project. James and Brookfield emphasize the use of sketchbooks and look books to encourage understandings of

concepts and to "create maps or diagrams to show connections between different elements of content" (James & Brookfield, 2014, p. 80). For this, it is important to demonstrate and show examples of sketchbooks from artists and designers to ensure that the participants have the understanding that James and Brookfield discuss so that one can progress with their concept development. The sketchbooks will be proof of the visual investigation of their stories that they undertake and show their journey throughout the course of the project.

2.4.2 Concept Based Learning

The advice James and Brookfield offer throughout the literature is hugely influential in comparison to other literatures, which focused mainly on the effectiveness of idea-based learning but not necessarily from the students' perspective. Similar to James and Brookfield, Margaret A Walker (2014) examines taking the theory of concept-based learning in the art room. The interesting factor of this article is Walker's realisation how students leaving high school have a lack of "understanding of art as a reflexive, expressive, or problem-solving process or a tool for communication and understanding" (Walker, 2014, p. 288). They do not see it as a tool for developing an idea, or using it as a means of self-expression or communication with other people. This research project follows through this very process of development of an idea realisation. After this reading, the methods in which they will problem solve during the course of the project will be essential for their development in a heuristic sentiment, and not solely for the purpose of the art room.

This journal focused on teacher observations and the findings that were established during the research unlike James and Brookfield, it does not give insight into the thoughts and opinions of the students who participate in the study. Both studies overlap with their recognition for student interaction, however both offer it in a different manner, which gives both article journals significance in different aspects for this research, which is important to uphold for this research project.

2.5 Conclusion:

The theoretical construct overlays a common theme across each of the readings highlighting a pedagogical importance that a research of this nature has the possibility of acknowledging and contributing to future learning for teachers.

There is an evident gap in the literature compiled for this research, especially in terms of visual literacy, which was very surprising. The lack of accessible studies undertaken of this nature in Ireland or the United Kingdom is also astounding, something that this research will hopefully begin to rectify. A study from Brooklyn by Deborah Mutnick, Inscribing the World: An Oral History Project in Brooklyn (2007) excellently acknowledges the pedagogy emphasis, which needs to remain the focus of research in some respects. Mutnick claims that a project of this nature can be "inflected to emphasize research methods that question and document every day life" enhancing literacy skills of transcribing, translating and rendering oral speech into written language or in this case, an art form (Mutnick, 2007).

03 / Research Methodology

This section outlines the research methods implemented to gather data in order to establish outcomes of the research question:

To what degree can printmaking capture and communicate the essence of oral stories?

It looks at the research methodology design, both action and qualitative research, and the methods applied to investigate the question at hand such as:

- Questionnaires,

- Focus groups,

- Reflections,

- Observations and

- Participants' work.

It highlights the ethical procedures conducted in adherence with LIT Ethics Policy as well as determining limitations of the process of data collection during the study.

3.1 Qualitative Action Research

Action research is a self-reflective process conducted to improve ones practice. It is a systematic investigation into your own behaviour, and the reasons for that behaviour (McNiff, 2002). It was chosen for the primary methodology of this project for its flexibility and its focus on the development of practice. Through daily reflections, ideas were revised and strategies were formulated to address problem areas. This spiral approach, as recognised by Kurt Lewin, (Thomas, 2013) allows for the continual refinement of thinking through self-reflections. With this in mind, the report shows an investigation into the pedagogy, which influenced the outcome

of the project with the help of the reviews on each class and students' work. It highlights the process taken to achieve a better understanding of teaching visual communication through the use of oral stories.

Qualitative research is exploratory research used to gain an understanding behind opinions and motivations (Wilson, 2012). It uses literature to help understand theoretical perspectives, which in turn contribute to the data collection (Boeije, 2014). In this case, qualitative research was conducted on a semi-structured basis and acquired a multi-layered understanding from the participants as they engaged with the development of the project. Questionnaires were distributed to gather opinions of the methods used in class, which were elaborated on during focus groups. The participants' work during class also contributed to the qualitative research.

Using both action research and qualitative research methods was an appropriate approach to this project as it allows for a triangulation of findings and outcomes. Analysing the data collected from these methods will showcase information from multiple platforms, strengthening the report findings overall.

3.2 Participants

The participants were a second year group of eleven students. The class was chosen at the recommendation of their teacher due to their mixed ability levels. Each participant had the opportunity to opt-out for the research study. The participants' agreed that their work could be photographed and analysed daily. They understood that class discussions would be recorded for the purpose of the study. Students were given questionnaires to complete during class on a bi-weekly basis. Participants were chosen at random to discuss the project in focus groups of three. These were usually in correlation with the questionnaires. This allowed for students to elaborate on their answers.

3.3 Methods

The methods used were in relation to developing a qualitative action report. With the uncertainty of the outcome of the project, it was necessary to approach the research with multiple methods of data collection so that a broad spectrum of views could be analysed to ensure accuracy in the potential findings and outcomes. With this in mind, the chosen methods were:

- Self Reflections and Observation Notes

- Questionnaires

- Focus Group

- Class Discussions

- Student Work and Post Lesson Evaluations

3.3.1 Self Reflections and Observation Notes

Keeping a record of self-reflections and observations was appropriate for this research inquiry as it offers insights in to the day-to-day progress of the project. It complemented the data gathered from other sources. Daily self post-lesson reflections and class observation were used to demonstrate the thinking process and evaluation of each class. These reflections and observation notes critique the pedagogy implemented during class with regard to students' responses and the work they produce during class. They act as evidence of revising strategies and formulating new plans for the next lesson.

3.3.2 Questionnaires

While determining students' progress throughout the project, both qualitative and quantitative questions were used in the questionnaires distributed (See Appendix 2-5: Questionnaires 1-4). The purpose of qualitative questionnaires was to highlight students' response to strategies used during the project and reflections on the lessons, as Wilson (2012) suggests, open questions can generate rich and candid data. Quantitative questions were used to distinguish students' understanding and engagement of the project, using predetermined responses, which proved to be easy to code and analyse as advised by Wilson (Wilson, 2012, p. 106). Questionnaires were distributed on a bi-weekly basis. These questionnaires were a maximum of six questions in total. The short amount of questions on each questionnaire accommodated the tight schedule the students had to complete the project. Questionnaires remained anonymous throughout the course of the project.

3.3.3 Focus Group

Focus groups reveal the beliefs, attitudes, experiences and feelings of participants (Wilson, 2012). These were prepared in conjunction with the questionnaires. They allowed the opportunity for students to elaborate on responses revealing their experiences with strategies, which were helpful in the development of their project. The participants of these focus groups were selected at random during the class after questionnaires were completed.

3.3.4 Class Discussions

Class discussions helped to reveal opinions and understandings of the topic for that class. Class discussions captured significant moments of the project, which assisted in determining the degree to which printmaking can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. Certain class discussions are selected for recording. These class discussions were also evident in post-lesson observation notes, enriching the data collection. Class discussions were prompted through selected questioning, which were recorded digitally or written.

3.3.5 Student Work and Post Lesson Evaluations

Student work was a prominent source of evidence of the development of their progress with regards to capturing and communicating the essence of their stories. Post lesson evaluations tracked their progress and demonstrated evidence of formative feedback during the project, which assisted in students' development. Evidence from the evaluations was also evident in post-lesson observation notes. They highlighted the work achieved through the tasks given to students each lesson. Students were encouraged to record their thoughts about their work as they progressed through written annotations.

3.4 Reliability And Validity

By combining qualitative and action research methodologies, this study offers a triangulation of data sources. If only quantitative research methods were used, there would be uncertainty concerning the development of visual literacy skills in determining the degree to which printmaking can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. Therefore, the qualitative data and action research methodologies are used to do an in-depth investigation on the matter. Triangulation of data ensures hat the findings are valid and reliable. As Wilson declares, the triangulation of sources "protect the study against threats to internal validity of findings due to exposure to the biases inherent in any one source" (Wilson, 2012, p. 156).

3.5 Ethics

In preparation for this study, the most recent LIT Ethics Policy for Researchers was consulted. Participant information sheets and parent/guardian information sheets were constructed to inform each participant and their guardians of the purpose of the research project (see Appendix 6: Ethic Forms). Alongside this, participant informed consent forms and parent/guardian informed consent forms, which included a statement detailing the right of the participant to withdraw, were distributed to each potential participant and guardian for purpose of consent to perform the study. Information collected is not shared with persons other than the researcher and the researcher's supervisor. No identifying information of participants is used in the study. Anonymity of information and data gathered has been maintained for the duration of the study. Individual participant responses and / or participant art works are not linked with the participant's identity and pseudonyms are used where necessary. Research data is stored securely and responsibly with assigned security codes / password to computerised records. Research data will be destroyed / deleted responsibly on expiry of seven years, coherent with the LIT Ethics Policy for Researchers.

3.6 Limitations

Limitations of this study initially centre on the small number of participating students. This restricts the amount of qualitative and quantitative research data that can be retrieved and as a result, the findings may only be relevant for the students' who participated in this study. Questionnaires can provide qualitative as well as quantitative data, however they are limited in terms of the richness of qualitative data that perhaps focus groups can provide. In an effort to combat this limitation, open questions are used for elaboration on questions. Time constraints of the project were an issue due to the short amount of class time in relation to the data required for the study and the work that needs to be completed in each class. A systematic approach gathering data was essential.

4 / Findings

4.1 Data Analysis

As a method of analysing the data collected during the course of the project, an inductive approach was implemented. To achieve this, there were three stages put in place:

- Inputting and condensing data collection into a spread sheet format

- Establishing themes and links between data sources

- Interpreting themes and triangulating data Developing a method to triangulate the data collection

Each source of data was inputted into separate excel sheets, outlining details in columns to assist the next step of establishing themes and links between the different sources. For this, the research question was revisited and objectives of the initial research outcomes re-established. With this and the data inputted on excel sheets, a range of themes was discovered, for example: influence, creative concept, engagement etc. As a means of cross-referencing to ensure and support a triangulation of data, a colour-coded scheme was applied to each theme across the different data sources. This allowed for refinement of the original themes, which will be discussed in the following section.

4.2 Findings

This section identifies the main findings of the research. Visual literacy became a reoccurring theme throughout the analytical process in relation to the creative process and development of the project. Visual literacy is the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from information presented in the form of an image. As Norbet M. Seel suggests, "'Learning as meaning making" is an expression emphasizing the fact that in any situation of learning, people are actively engaged in making sense of the situation, drawing on their history of similar situations and on available cultural resources.'" (Seel, 2011)

With this in mind, there were three main segments of the project, which helped cultivate this learning experience:

- Heuristic pedagogical strategies enabled interpretation and visualisation of oral stories

- Examination and appreciation of selected artists' work supported the development of visual literacy

- Visual literacy skills were enhanced and supported through visual investigation and making

4.2.1 Heuristic Pedagogical Strategies Enabled Interpretation And Visualisation Of Oral Stories

This segment explores the pedagogical strategies implemented to assist students in the initial development of their visual literacy skills. Students were presented with the task of interviewing and gathering oral stories from the community to be used as a primary source in their lino-printing project. In preparation for their interview, students prepared and refined questions to ensure they gathered relevant information, which would be helpful for the development of their project. As a means of interpreting the stories gathered, class discussions were focused

on the descriptive details to help them visualise. When difficulties arose with the initial visualisation of their stories, artist sketchbooks were used as a strategy to enhance students' ability to interpret their story through drawing. This segment focuses on the strengths of the strategies implemented to improve students' visual literacy from the beginning of the project.

4.2.1.1 Preparation for Oral Story Collection

As a strategy, the class prepared questionnaires for their interview. The aim of this was to assist them in gathering descriptive, intriguing stories. Groups of two and three worked together to create mind maps on the types of answers they were looking for and proceeded to frame their questionnaires around this. Below in fig 4.1, we can see the refinement from a group mind map to specific questions that one would use to discover specific answers. Students demonstrated written literacy skills by selecting open-ended questions and presenting them in a strategic order, which would assist them in gathering stories. The emphasis on creating a well-ordered layout of their questionnaires was to ensure the student could navigate easily through their interview by asking specific questions. This task required them to develop their visual literacy skills as they interpreted the questions they believed would allow them to gather descriptive interesting stories for their project. For example, figure 4.2 demonstrates a student's ability to include both open and closed questions in her interview. The evidence below demonstrates recognition for the different kinds of questions, gradually developing their interpretation visual skills as they recognised hierarchy and clarity for their questions.
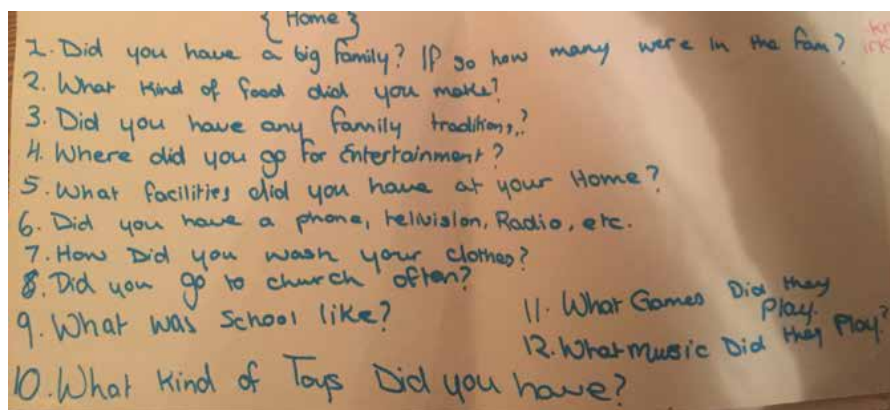
Fig. 4.1: Group Work to discover useful questions
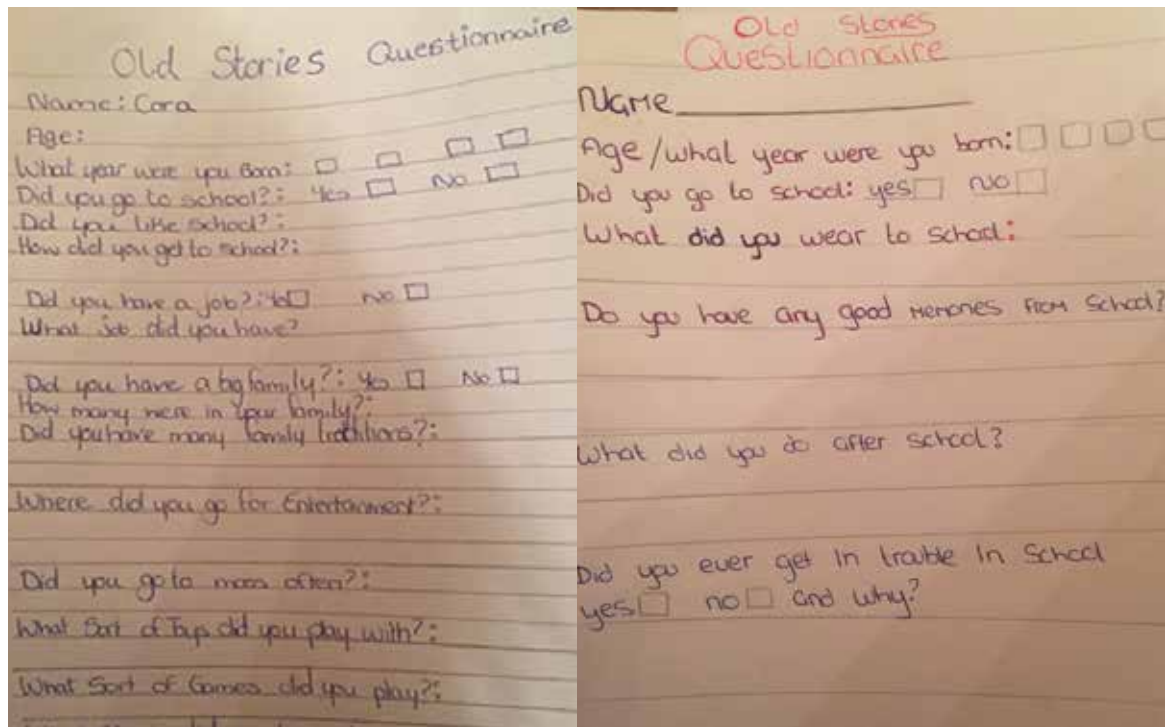
Fig. 4.2: *Selected and Refined Questionnaire Examples*

" She would hang around with her friends after school…they would all go to a farm near where they lived and jump on the hay bales in their school clothes. They would stay out there nearly all night until it would get dark" *Fig. 4.3: Example of Student Story*

4.2.1.2 Discussions Encouraging The Interpretation Of Oral Stories

Class discussion was a re-occurring element of each lesson plan as a means of improving their oral literacy skills (fig 4.4). These discussions were prompted by carefully selected questioning strategies. Direct and closed questions were used to stimulate initial details of the story, e.g. who did you interview? When and where did the story take place? Tell us, what was the story about? As the students answered the questions, they were encouraged to elaborate on details of their stories e.g. what was the atmosphere like, do you think? What was around the lake? If they didn't say, what do you think it would look like?

Evidence from observation notes highlighted the value in preparing these questions prior to class as being beneficial in the students' understanding of the project. As the reflection and the focus group extracts suggest, exploring the possible visual outcomes of their oral stories through discussion, allowed for students to becoming more receptive to their peers' interpretations of stories, which supported them to negotiate the interpretations of their own stories.

Literacy and Numeracy

Oral Literacy:

Students will discuss their story to the class focusing on the main features of their story they want to portray

Fig. 4.4 Extract from Lesson Plan_09 highlighting the effort to include oral literacy in class

"I feel the questions that were prepared helped the students to bring about stronger ideas for their project."
-Observation 4.1

"I like going up because you get to see everyone else's and you get different ideas of what to do on your picture."
-Focus group 4.1

"While they are a quiet class, I feel like my questioning is encouraging them to give more opinions towards their work and others leading to longer discussions and more in depth discussions too, which I feel has been an important aspect of this project in terms of their development."
-Reflection 4.1

Figure 4.5 highlights that 63% of students stated that one-to-one discussions with the teacher were the most beneficial in developing their final piece. These one-to-one discussions focused on the interpretation of the story completed thus far and to stimulate methods of negotiation for their piece. As a strategy, when a re-occurring problem presented itself, the whole class was addressed to the matter as to ensure that each student benefited from these discussions. The evidence below suggests the reasons for the students preferred method of one-to-one

discussions. Some found they lacked confidence in showing the class their work while others valued learning from their peers as a way to further interpret and make meaning from their own stories.

"I don't like it because you can see how good everyone else's is compared to yours. It makes you feel like yours is really bad. It is daunting. It does help because you get to see others work but it is hard"
-Focus group 4.2

"I like it because you get to see everyone's work all together"
-Focus group 4.3
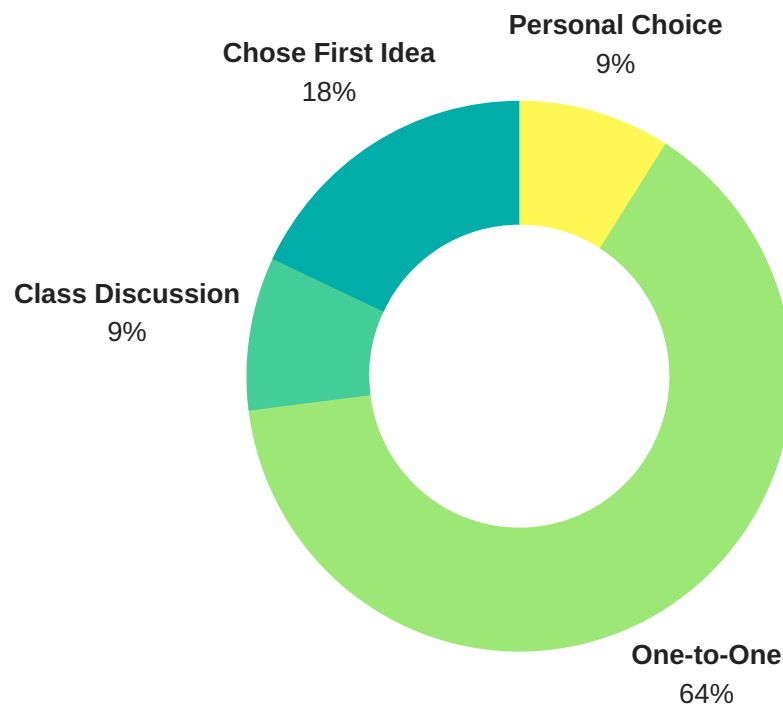
Fig. 4.5: *Info-graphic illustrating how students selected their final idea*

4.2.1.3 The Introduction of Artist Sketchbooks

As it was a pedagogical strategy to work alongside an artist's artistic process, it was decided that introducing artist sketchbooks would be a suitable method of encouraging the interpretation of students' stories. This allowed them to see examples of the creative process in visually interpreting a problem, such as a story, which would later assist them in negotiating the most interesting aspect to investigate, (see fig 4.6). The manner of layout and method of drawing influenced the students' initial method of interpretation by filling their page with multiple images of their story. They were encouraged to draw what they believed captured a moment in their story. In observational notes, the pedagogical strategy is recognised. Here, it is noted the reason for including artists' sketchbooks were to highlight the freedom for imperfection at this interpretation stage.
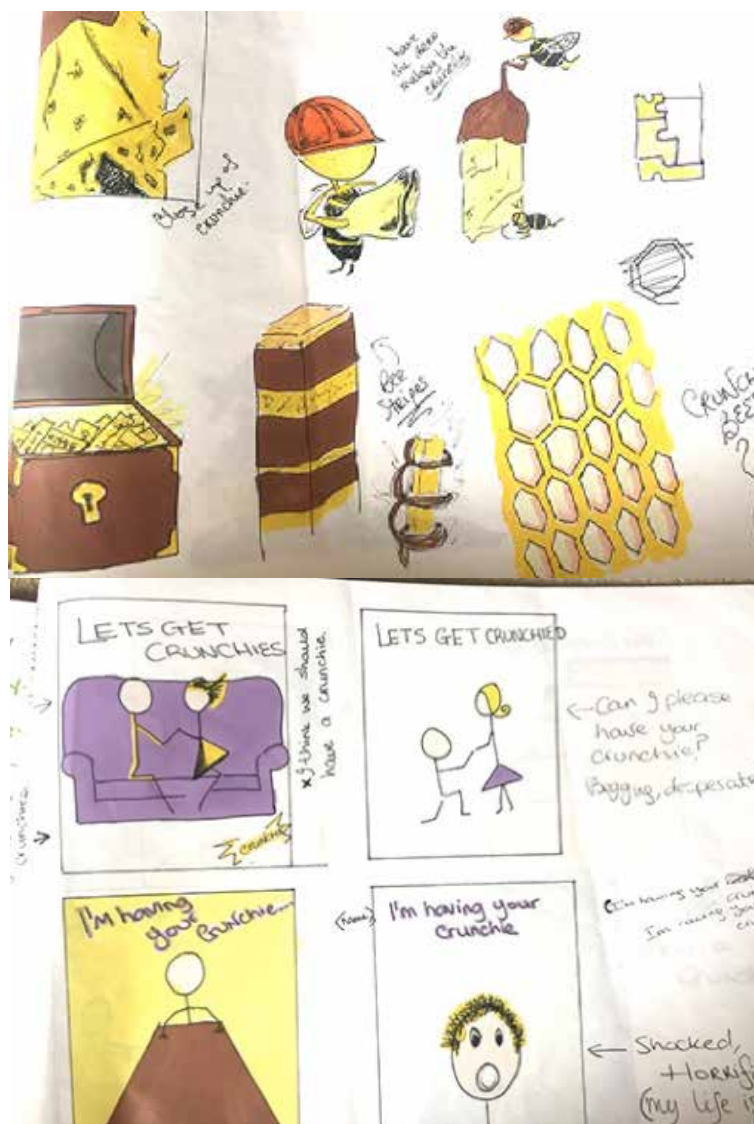
Fig 4.6 Examples of artist concept sketchbooks used to encourage multiple drawings from their stories

"The planning was focused around getting students initial ideas out on to paper whatever way they are most comfortable drawing. With the sketchbooks I used as examples, I wanted to show students how sketchbooks are used for ideas and do not need to be perfect. I think this worked well in my plan as students became engaged with the prospect of not having to have everything perfect."
-Observation 4.2

This freedom of drawing can be seen by their initial drawings. The multitude of images reflects the influence the sketchbooks had. As seen from the examples below, this strategy of presenting an artist sketchbook allowed students to excel at their initial interpretation of their stories. Figure 4.7, demonstrates the progression of interpretation before and after the introduction of the artists sketchbooks. It highlights how the sketchbooks helped stimulate development in their visual interpretation skills, regardless of their artistic skill level. As seen in figures 4.8, this student made a connection with his prior experiences and knowledge of pre existing connotations such as the simple outline of a bush to signify his character hiding behind a bush. This demonstrates the student's ability to interpret what he visualised in the story. A similar example can be seen in figure 4.9, where the student is linking her experience and knowledge of a dog to help shape her story in multiple visual interpretations.
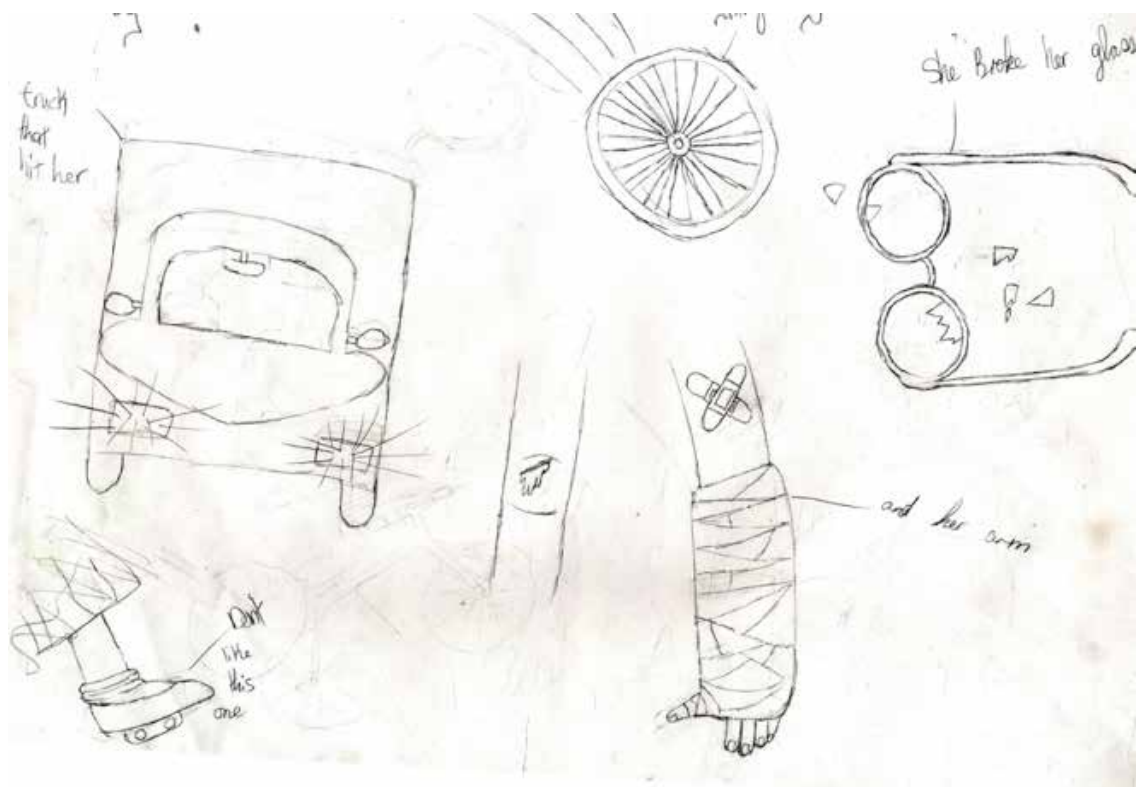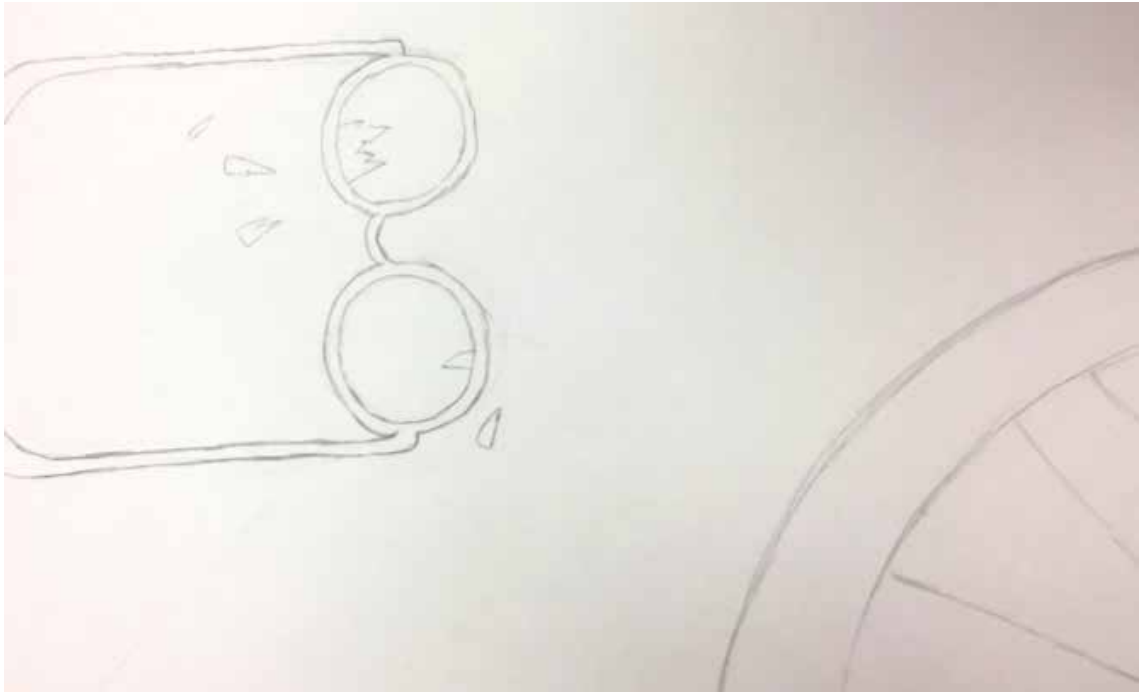
Fig. 4.7: *Before and after the introduction of the artists' sketchbooks showing multiple ideas for the one story*

Fig. 4.8: Student story centred on his grandfather's mischief while in school leading to multiple possibilities of imagery for negotiation.

Fig. 4.9: Student used the story of her grandfather's hunting days.

4.2.2 Examination And Appreciation Of Selected Artists' Work Supported The Development Of Visual Literacy

The artist Nadia Corridan was chosen for her ability to interpret and make meaning of her subject matter into an enticing image full of questions and wonder. It is often true with her imagery, that what is missing from the image tells more of the story than what is present. With the students' using a similar subject matter such as oral stories, the process Corridan uses in her work became an important aspect in deciding on strategies used for the project.

Discussions were held on the artist and the working process for her art. As images were presented to the class, students began to share their initial interpretations of the artists work. These interpretations highlight the students' ability to read an image and to interpret it for their own knowledge.

"She's going somewhere"

"She's leaving"

"It looks like an old image with the suitcase"

-Class Discussion 4.1

Fig. 4.10: *Nadia Corridan, "Waiting for The Conte Verde", Oil on Canvas, 80cm x 55cm*

When the artist's interpretation was revealed, it allowed students to think about their own work and how they can tell a story through an image without the viewer necessarily knowing or understanding its true meaning. The students related to Corridan's working practice and agreed there were similarities in their own work and practice which they saw the value of:

"I think it is good because it is like the same thing as we are doing."
-Focus Group 4.4

"It is like a little secret inside the image like they don't know what happened to the dog. It makes you question what is going on"
-Focus Group 4.5, referring to her own image

The introduction of the artist in week three resulted in a huge transformation in the evidence of their negotiation skills to determine the best representation of their image. While discussing the artist's work, the discussions centered on the features she uses to create and tell a story and in turn, what features and aspects of their own story will best suit their image. Below (example one and two), we can see the visual development from weeks two to week four in regards to their interpretation of their story and the negotiation of figuring out the best solution and composition to tell their story.

The influence of the artist in 'example one' is strong. In figure 4.11, the student interprets her story through creating a visual map of the area where the story took place. Through annotations, she negotiates possibilities and focuses her main point of interest into a snapshot (fig. 4.12). With influence from the artist, she makes meaning of her story through highlighting what she feels best represents the essence of her story (fig. 4.13).

The second example shows the development of a student with seemingly lesser drawing abilities than the first student. However, when comparing the work of these students, the influence of this artist was similar in regards to the refinement of the composition and his ability to negotiate an image, which encourages its viewer to make meaning from it. This can be related directly to the artist whose imagery also has this effect on people.

Example One
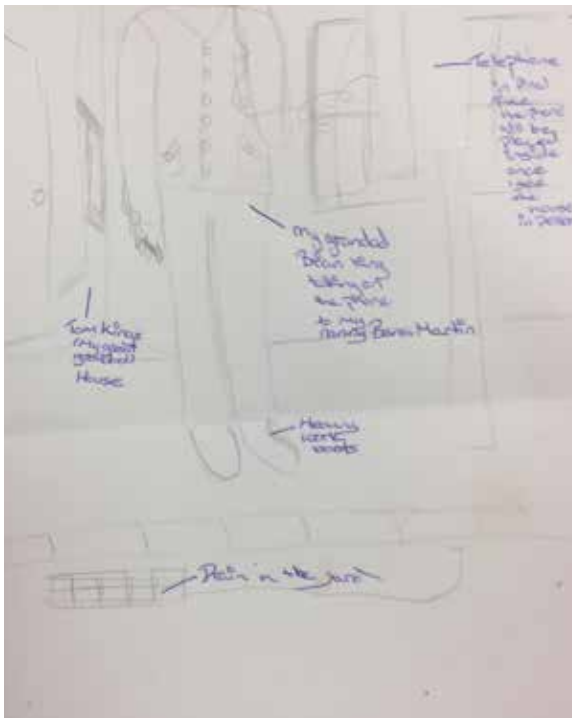
Fig. 4.11: *Week Two - Possible Outcomes*

Fig. 4.12: *Week Three - Initial Development*

Fig. 4.13: *Week Four Final Development*

Example One

Fig. 4.14: *Week one - initial idea*

Fig. 4.14B: *Week one - detail*

Fig. 4.15: *Week two - image development*

Fig. 4.16: *Week three/four - image refinement*

4.2.3 Visual Literacy Skills Were Enhanced And Supported Through Visual Investigation And Making

This segment highlights the ways in which students responded to stimuli to help progress their imagery through visual investigations for their final representation of their story. It explores the strategies put in place to assist students with their development, further assisting in improving their visual literacy skills. I will look at how visual aids such as photography and the viewfinder supported the development of making meaning while capturing the essence of the image. In addition, the strategy used in selecting a colour scheme to enhance the meaning of their image through the use of warm and cool colours will be discussed.

4.2.3.1 Visual Aids Investigation Through Photography

"I don't have a clear visual in my head yet and it is hard to draw some parts"

"It is hard to draw with no visuals"

"It is hard for me to think of a suitable setting for these pictures"
-Questionnaire 4.1
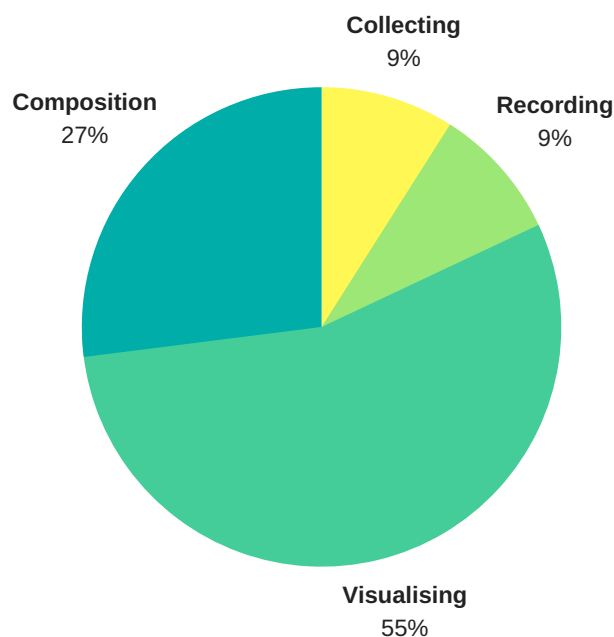
Fig. 4.17: *Info-graphic depicting the most difficult aspect of the project*

This negotiation stage of problem solving proved to be a difficult task for students. Students expressed their difficulty with visualising their ideas, as seen above in quotations and in Figure 4.17. Thus, strategies were implemented to assist students by using photography to capture a similar setting of their story in the classroom. This utilised students' prior knowledge of photography. While each had a camera phone, their outcomes were impractical for the project due to their high angled shots and lack of focus. This is reflected in the following post-class evaluation describing the need for a student to "look at what they were taking". Figure 4.18 shows an example of a high-angled photograph. The student wanted to portray his grandfather skipping school as a young child by hiding in trees. This photograph would be difficult to assist the drawing for the final image. This led to discussions surrounding composition and focus of imagery. In these discussions, students were encouraged to negotiate their viewpoint when photographing to help contribute to the meaning they portray. Reference to the artist Nadia Corridan was included in this strategy. Fig 4.19 demonstrates the development of viewpoint and composition from the previous example in figure 4.18. Figure 4.19 is more relevant to the story that the student wishes to portray. He can now replicate the positioning of the head in his drawing, only this time the head will be appearing behind a tree not a door. Figure 4.20 shows the student's negotiation and selection of image to assist him in making meaning in his final image.

> "Student N was using imagery as assistance to help visualise her story. She needs to learn how to set up the image correctly as some photographs were not really looking at what they were taking or why. They looked almost passive. More detail and consideration is needed."
> *– Evaluation 4.1*

Fig. 4.18: This is an example of a student hiding behind a bin symbolising a tree prior to class discussion. Take note of high angle, which is impractical for drawing a tree.

Fig. 4.20: *Images demonstrating the visual investigation stage from week two to preparation for colour study in week four. (left and below)*

"You can see his attempt at creating his own visual imagery to assist him in his drawing. He has a few options now to choose from. He needs to consider these in his next steps"
– Evaluation 4.2 referring to fig. 20
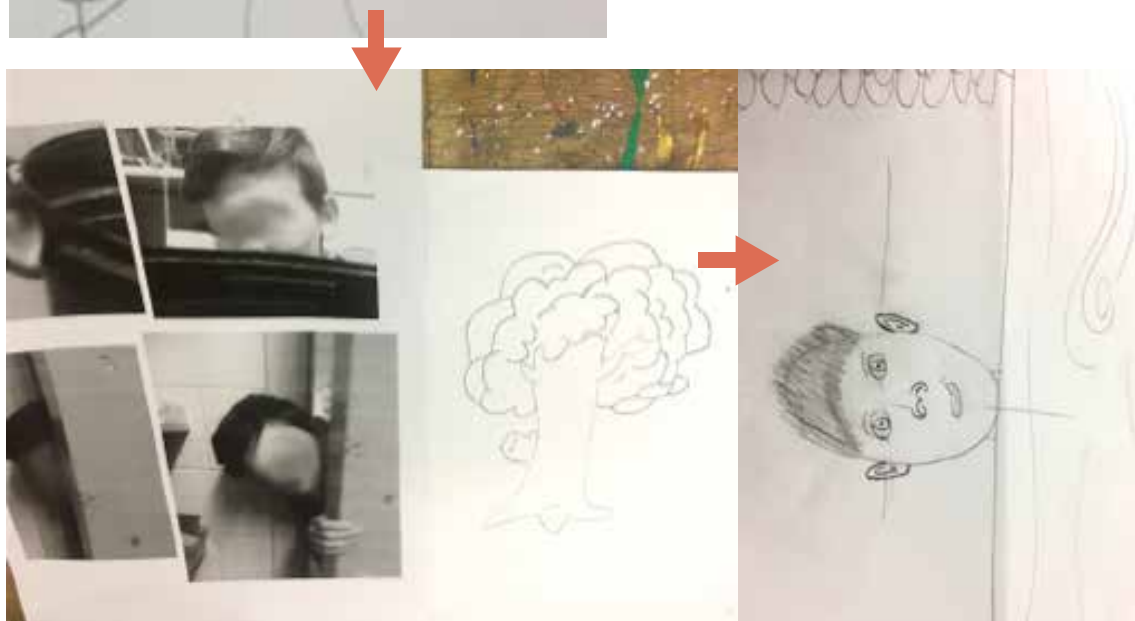
4.2.3.2 Viewfinder – Refinement of Image

Refinement of the image was an important aspect in order to capture the essence of their chosen story. As seen below, students expressed their difficulty in the process. As an aid to combat this challenge, viewfinders were introduced. This allowed the students the freedom to move the refined area from section to section to find the most suitable condensed version of their image to tell their story. The discussion extract below demonstrates the difficult task students faced ensuring the image remained visually appealing.

> "It is hard to simplify the image and to still make it look interesting
> and not boring"
> *– Discussion 4.1*

> "...Concentrating on one part of the image was hard to make sure that
> it was still interesting... I think it was good to make the image smaller.
> It was just hard but in the end it did look better."
> *– Focus Group 4.6*
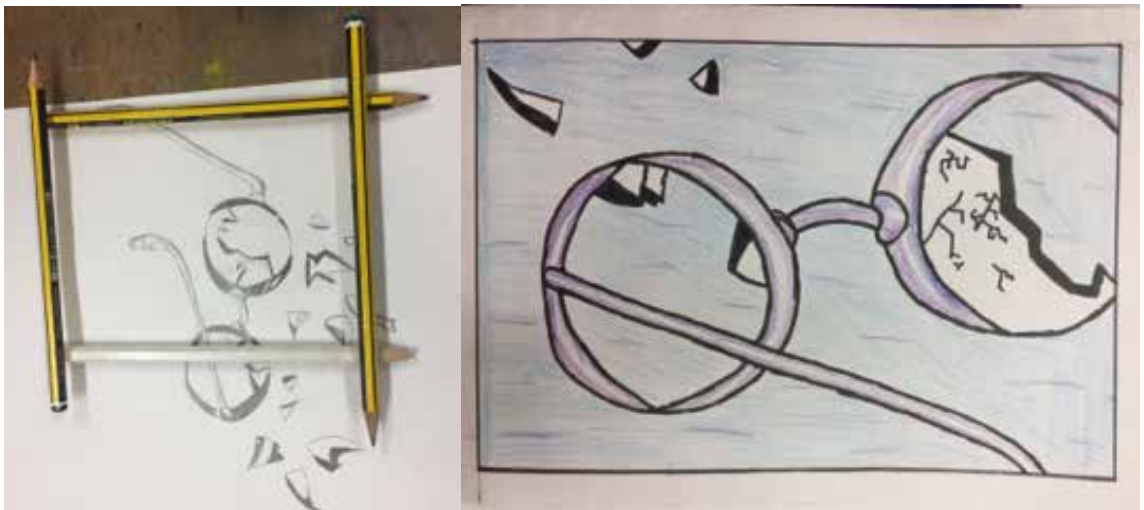
Fig. 4.21 *Handmade viewfinder before image*   **Fig. 4.22** *Result of using viewfinder*

This tool enabled students to negotiate the outcome of their image to portray their desired meaning. Nadia Corridan's influence was evident as similar to her work the meaning of students' images was almost more evident in what was not included rather than what was. In figure 4.21, the student focused on the broken glasses. What is not shown is the bike her mother fell off or the car that hit her.

When discussing the value of the viewfinder, students responded openly. The responses below demonstrate students' awareness of the development of their visual literacy skills in making meaning of a story and the impact composition can have on an image.

"The story must be told within the image but the image must not be too complicated"
-Discussion Questionnaire 4.1

"You don't need to draw the whole picture to tell the story"
-Discussion Questionnaire 4.2

4.2.3.3 Making Meaning Through Colour Selection

Students selected a colour scheme, which would contribute to the meaning the image portrayed to the viewer. Discussion based strategies were used as pedagogy to explore the impact colour can have on an image. Shepard Fairey was presented to the class in relation to his use of both warm and cool colours. This method of breaking down the colours for their final piece was central in depicting the final outcome for the students' images, once again students could directly relate to creative process to their own project. The students held an open class discussion the atmosphere and setting of their images to decide on the colour theme for their print. When asked about her colour choice and her satisfaction with it, this student expressed how 'warm colours gave it a really good effect' (fig. 4.23). This transcribed also into the evaluation of work,

"There is possibly too much colour with timeframe and little attention given to the background. Grass texture needs to be examined. Warm colours are effective."
-Evaluation 4.3 week five; referring to fig. 4.23.

The ability to visually communicate a mood through colour can be a difficult task. However, by the product of their work, these students seemed to grasp its necessity very well through the use of discussion (fig. 4.24).

Fig. 4.23A: Warm colours reflecting the sunset as the characters walk through a field

Fig. 4.23B: Warm colours reflecting the sunset as the characters walk through a field

Fig. 4.24 *Cool colours to reflect the water at the lake*

4.3 Conclusion

The evidence from the findings conclude that interventions throughout the project assisted students in developing and progressing visual literacy skills in an effort to capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. Students demonstrated the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from oral stories they collected into one single image, which would represent the story. The pedagogical strategies implemented during class were successful in introducing the students to the idea of developing their imagery through discussions and influential artists. Visual investigations allowed the students to discover ways to negotiate their ideas and help them to make meaning of their story. While the development of visual literacy skills is evident, an external comparison would be beneficial in identifying biases or omissions in the translation of the oral stories.

5 / Evaluation of Project Outcomes

5.1 Research Question

The hypothesis of this research project was focused on the degree to which printmaking can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. The main findings were associated with strategies implemented that stimulated development in visual literacy skills.

- Heuristic pedagogical strategies enabled interpretation and visualisation of oral stories

- Examination and appreciation of selected artists' work supported the development of visual literacy

- Visual literacy skills were enhanced and supported through visual investigation and making

On reflection, the development of visual literacy skills was critical to the students' abilities to capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. Pedagogy strategies were vital for this development. Each of these pedagogical strategies guided the concept development through visual investigation, which demonstrated their ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning of an oral story in the form of an image. The findings illustrate that each phase of the project contributed to the development of visual literacy among the class.

5.2 Evaluation of Project Outcomes

5.2.1 The Heuristic Pedagogical Strategies When Using Oral Stories As A Primary Source For Visual Communication

Preparation for the collection of the stories was a key element at the beginning of the project for students to understand the descriptive stories that were required to enrich their projects. Following this with discussions proved supportive to the developing the interpretation of their story. Opening the dialogue through story telling, as Kim Flottemesch (2013) suggests, benefits the heuristic development of the student. Flottemesch recognised how storytelling "provides meaning to learning through the use of a variety of learning styles, such as auditory, visual and kinaesthetic skills" (Flottemesch, 2013, p. 54). The findings of this study highlight useful pedagogy strategies when using auditory oral stories as a primary source to provide meaning to a project through visual and kinaesthetic skills, such as image development and lino printing.

In support of Flottemesch, Mary Ann Stankiewicz declares, "our students need an art education that goes beyond drawing and painting, beyond technique or formal analysis, toward functional visual literacies" (Stankiewicz, 2003, p. 322). During the study, students expressed their personal connection with the stories they collected from older generations in their lives, generating motivation in their work, reinforcing Stankiewicz's declaration. This also advocates the 8 key skills and 24 statements of learning in the recently published Junior Cycle Framework, where they acknowledge and encourage the communication with others as well as learning about local history:

> The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change
> *– SOL 8*

The findings suggest that the use of local stories as the subject matter for the project enabled students to engage with their families and local community and gain a greater appreciation of the lifestyle and interests of older generations in their community.

Presenting examples of artist sketchbooks was a beneficial strategy as it stimulated the initial visual communication and interpretation of their stories. Until the inclusion of the sketchbooks to the classroom, students seemed reluctant to begin drawing. James and Brookfield emphasise the use of sketchbooks to encourage understandings of concepts "to show connections between different elements of content" (James & Brookfield, 2014, p. 80). This was evident in the findings in relation to students' initial drawings as they began to interpret their stories.
While it was found that the inclusion of sketchbooks was focused on looking at other artists' sketchbooks as a primary direction, the project could have benefitted from more emphasis on the sketchbook in the foreground of the project in relation to the new Visual Art Specification in the Junior Cycle Curriculum Framework. Students' would also have benefited from more emphasis on self-reflections of their progress throughout the project in order to encourage more independent learning, as James and Brookfield (2014) suggest.

5.2.2 The Unique Impact of Artist Influence on the Development of Visual Literacy

The participants of this project followed a similar artistic approach of the artist Nadia Corridan. Through their interpretation of her paintings during discussions, students demonstrated the skills to negotiate how they wished to represent in their own stories. Students were influenced by her ability to capture the essence of a story without revealing too much of what happened in the story. The artist requires her audience to "create their own narrative" from her ambiguous paintings (Corridan, 2014). Corridan visually communicates with subtle representations of elements found in the story of Hilda. This style of visually communicating a story through the use of one single image was key to transforming primary source oral stories through to realisation for the students. Kathleen Ellen O'Neil expresses

students' need of 'an awareness of the visual techniques that artists and designers employ to communicate meaning to their audiences.' (O'Neil, 2011)

The impact of the artist influence can be recognised in the development of their visual literacy skills. By showcasing this artist, students learned to interpret meanings of imagery, which in turn exposed them to ways in which they could interpret their stories to ignite a similar experience for their viewers. Gloria Schultz Eastman identifies visual literacy as 'the ability to read a visual image, using skills that are somewhat similar to those used to read and comprehend a printed text' (Schultz Eastman, 2015). With this in mind, students were influenced by the artist and developed their skills to negotiate the comprehension of their image by selecting and narrowing the viewer's eye to a specific element of their image. O'Neil recognises that 'there is much to be read from a picture, much to be inferred and understood implicitly as well as what is obviously depicted... and how significant yet subtle image can be in presenting information' (O'Neil, 2011). This perfectly embodies the ideology of this project with relation to the final product as students strived to successfully tell their story in one single image, similar to the artist.

5.2.3 The Development of Visual Literacy Through Visual Investigation

Through visual investigation using photography, viewfinders and colour studies, students were able to further negotiate and make meaning of their final image. While students benefitted from using photography to visually investigate their image, more choice in the methods of which students could visually investigate their image would offer more opportunity in negotiating the final image they produced. In a similar study performed by Marva Cappello and Karen E. Lafferty, visual investigation offered curricular support through multiple modalities, and allowed for alternate ways to access concepts and express understanding (Cappello & Lafferty, 2015). Offering multiple choices in their visual investigation would have encouraged the independent learning of students, reflecting two of the eight key skills established by the Junior Cycle Framework: managing myself and managing information and thinking. (NCCA, 2014). As cited in Designing Texts,
"If elements like color and form do indeed contribute to a "grammar of visual

design" (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996 cited by Amare & Manning, 2013), then students should have some understanding of these visual elements, their function, meaning, and possible effects on audiences." (Amare & Manning, 2013)

Students demonstrated the ability to identify colours, which would communicate the atmosphere of the scene to the viewers. Through this, students presented an understanding of the possible effect colour may have on viewers, as suggested by Amare and Manning.

5.3 Research Methods

After the completion of the data analysis, it was evident that the design of the methodologies implemented led to some shortfall in the quality and quantity of data retrieved. The main areas for future research methodology improvements would be:

- Timetabling for data collection

- More open questions on questionnaires

- Digital recordings of class discussions

- Student Reflections on work

Unforeseen circumstances disrupted the collection of data during some classes, however a more natural regime enforced on the timetabling of data collection would have allowed for larger quantity of data to be collected regardless of the disruptions. While the questionnaire revealed both qualitative and quantitative information about the progress of the project, the opportunity for students to share opinions on the project would have been beneficial to the research. The timetabling of class discussions would have benefitted from an on-going digital recording of classes. This would have revealed more direct reactions and responses from the students during class. As mentioned during the evaluation, more emphasis on students' own reflection of their progress would have allowed for a deeper analysis of the impact of strategies implemented during the project.

5.4 Further Limitations

Limitations occurred during the collection of the data for this study. The small sample size restricted the volume of data. Some data appears skewed, possibly due the limited sample size. Some questions distributed were irrelevant to the research question upon analysing the work. This was a missed opportunity for relevant questions, which would have revealed more about students' progress and development of their visual literacy skills. The structure in which data was gathered was not coherent with the initial plan of action. Due to unforeseen circumstances, classes were cancelled and disrupted. This impacted the retrieval of some crucial questionnaires towards the end of the progress. Consistency with discussion recordings would have benefitted the data collected. Post class transcriptions throughout the project would have impacted on the proceeding methods of data collection.

6 / Conclusion

The framework for this research project was to examine the degree to which printmaking can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories. The focus was to investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print, to examine students' process in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story and to explore the influence of introducing an artist as inspiration for the project. Each of these has been explored throughout the research report.

While there were evident limitations to the research methodologies, the development of visual literacy skills among the participating students is evident. The three main findings of the research highlight the methods and procedures of interventions, which contributed to the development of these skills. The three main findings are as follows:

- Heuristic pedagogical strategies enabled interpretation and visualisation of oral stories

- Examination and appreciation of selected artists' work supported the development of visual literacy

- Visual literacy skills were enhanced and supported through visual investigation and making

The evaluations of the findings conclude that heuristic pedagogical strategies are essential for the development of visual literacy skills. It is fair to say that discussions surrounding the progress of an image were a vital aspect of the progression of imagery as well as the introduction to the artist Nadia Corridan. Demonstrating an artists working process allowed the students to follow a line of inquiry with their own work with visual investigations through photography and colour selections, which in turn assisted them in capturing and communicating the essence for their story for print.

6.1 Recommendations For Future Research

While there is evidence of development in visual literacy skills through capturing and communication oral stories for print, more emphasis on sketchbook work would allow for more elaboration on ideas and further extend their skills. I would emphasise a reflective process during the project to encourage more independent learning. With this, I recommend that the visual investigation of creative concepts be a prominent part of the project, whether through photography or installation. This adheres to the new Visual Arts specification being introduced in September 2017.

In terms of future research, I would be interested to see the outcome of a similar project through various disciplines, such as paint or clay, to establish whether or not the outcome of capturing and communicating the essence of a story is similar. This report was conducted with a small number of participating students; therefore further research in the study would be beneficial to investigate if visual literacy skills are developed with a larger group, possibly a control group. Through this, strategies could be compared and contrasted to narrow the findings on the impact of pedagogical strategies when using oral stories.

For research methodology purposes, I recommend a more rigid approach to the recording and transcribing of classroom discussions. While post lesson observation and reflections note ad-hoc experiences, the recording allows for a deeper feel of the atmosphere and a more viable source of data. With being a novice researcher, I have learned a lot from my errors especially in terms of preparation and not recognising opportunities as they arise. Using a method such as qualitative action research allowed for flexibility in the possible outcomes of the research. In hindsight, this flexibility was vital as it allowed me the freedom to learn from my mistakes and seek other possibilities. Through analysing the data, certain gaps in the quality and quantity of data were evident, which I know in future researching would not occur.

As well as recognising the development of my research skills, I also gained invaluable insights into my teaching abilities and the impact that my strategies have

on a student's learning. I found it interesting how even the smallest interventions had an impact on the progress of students' projects and the development of their visual literacy skills.

As a result of this research, I recommend for further studies to take place, which follow the progress of students' learning in the classroom. This would allow for more insights into the impact of heuristic pedagogical strategies and highlight the various skills developed through art education. As mentioned in the literature review, there is a shortage in Irish studies with regards to visual communication in post primary schools. Further studies such as this will begin to bridge this gap. This, I believe, would benefit the continual development of practice for art educators in Ireland and abroad.

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Draft Short Course Specification

Ciara Murphy

Visual Storytelling – Archiving and Preserving Histories of Place
Through Printmaking and Digital Media

Limerick School of Art and Design

Draft Short Course Specification

Title of short course
Visual Storytelling - **Archiving And Preserving Histories Of Place Through Printmaking And Digital Media**

1. Introduction to junior cycle

Junior cycle education places students at the centre of the educational experience, enabling them to actively participate in their communities and in society, and to be resourceful and confident learners in all aspects and stages of their lives. Junior cycle is inclusive of all students and contributes to equality of opportunity, participation and outcome for all.

Junior cycle allows students to make a strong connection with learning by focusing on the quality of learning that takes place and by offering experiences that are engaging and enjoyable for them, and relevant to their lives. These experiences are of a high quality, contribute to the physical, mental and social wellbeing of learners, and where possible, provide opportunities for them to develop their abilities and talents in the areas of creativity and enterprise. The student's junior cycle programme builds on their learning in primary school. It supports their further progress in learning. It helps students to develop the learning skills that can assist them in meeting the challenges of life beyond school.

2. Rationale

This short course aims to honour the unheard tales of a community in order to discover a past that may otherwise be lost. Through both digital recordings and printmaking, students will preserve the stories from their elders in the local community based on memories of the town. This intergenerational course supports exchange between young people and older people in the community to provide new insights to ones experience of a place past and present. Life experience is an invaluable asset and sharing stories brings a new appreciation of place and community to the classroom. As the Arts in Education (2012) encourages, this short course will help connect the school to the wider community through art.

Learning about visualising oral stories is enjoyable for students, as it is hands on from the very beginning with sourcing of their own material for their development through these interviews and bringing them on a journey to realisation of the tales. While the gathering of rich descriptive stories may seem challenging, it will be interesting for a student to engage with a project from its very source through to the end, just as artists do.

This short course will stimulate a process of development, which will assist their future learning especially in regards to the new leaving certificate and the emphasis on the use of primary sources for inspiration and sketchbook use. This will help the students to establish a method of finding an avenue into a subject matter for future projects. The students' prior knowledge of social media such as Instagram will assist in the archiving and preservation of their own experience and journey of the short course, a mode of documentation which was inaccessible to the elder generation a their age. Through this aspect of the short course, students will learn the value of archiving and preserving memories for future generations to come.

Using digital media and printmaking as a means of archiving and preserving histories of a place offers numerous opportunities and skills to students. The prospect of breaking away from the classroom and becoming involved in the community for the interest of preserving memories through art is intriguing. This short course will act as a starting point for future learning of local history as well as emphasizing the possibilities of digital media and printmaking.

3. Aim

The short course in Visual Storytelling aims to capture and communicate the essence of local oral stories through the use of digital media and printmaking. Students' communication skills will be enhanced and nurtured by allowing them the responsibility of collecting local stories through interviews, helping to bridge the gap between generations. This short course will encourage students to reflect on their practice as a means to further development of the visualisation of the stories.

4. Links

a) Statements of learning	
Statement	**Examples of relevant learning in the course**
The student creates and presents artistic work and appreciates the process and skills involved – **SOL 4**	Students will learn the process of printmaking through the realisation of a concept inspired by the oral histories of the town. They will learn the process of developing a concept from a story and realising that through drawing in order to portray the essence of the story through an image.
The student values local, national and international heritage, understands the importance of the relationship between past and current events and the forces that drive change – **SOL 8**	Students will learn about the heritage of the town through the local stories of the town from years ago. Students will have the opportunity to inquire about the differences of the locality between the past and present and have their say on what changes have been for the better or worse.
Appreciates and respects how diverse values, beliefs and traditions have contributed to the communities and culture in which he/she lives - **SOL 6**	Students will be encouraged to appreciate and respect the values of different generations by communicating with older generations. Students will gain insight into how the town values and beliefs have changed throughout the years and how it has progressed to the values and beliefs we share as a community today.
The students brings an idea form conception to realisation – **SOL 23**	Students will be introduced to interviewing for a purpose and the skills necessary to acquire the information they will need to develop their image for print. Students will learn to collect oral stories of the town through digital recordings and develop these stories to portray their essence in a lino print.

b) Literacy and Numeracy Skills

Digital – Students will learn how to use recording devices to record their interviews. Recording the interviews will help refine the students' ability to use digital technology as communication tools. The student will re-listen to the story repeatedly to help transcribe the recording to the best of their ability to ensure they are capturing the essence of the story. Students will use a social media platform such as Instagram to include their prior knowledge of both digital media and archiving in the project making it relative to their own digital practices.

Oral Communication– Interview skills and strategies will be established with the help of an experienced guest speaker who is knowledgeable in conducting interviews. Students will pilot their interview questions with peers in class to help with refinement and clarity before using them in their interviews with the community. Collaborating with classmates and the community will improve the students' communication skills as well as confidence with speaking to new people. Students will learn the importance of speaking clearly and listening intently to others.

Written – Throughout the preparation classes for the interviews, students will practice writing draft questions for the interview, which will be topic lead, and writing notes as they listen to people – a skill that is transferable throughout any subject. Students will transcribe their interview recordings and learn to listen for descriptive words in word passages as preparation for their interview to learn how to capture an image, which can be used for their work. Worksheets will be distributed to assist them in searching for descriptive language

Visual – From the beginning of the project, students will be introduced to visual artists, such as Nadia Corridan, who uses oral stories in her art. They will also be shown videos of interviews to entice the kind of work that is possible from the collection of oral stories. The aim of this project is to capture the essence of a story, to do this visual literacy will be key in recognising symbols and key elements of images in art works that represent and capture the essence of certain situations and to apply them to the development of their work. The class will also take part in visually documenting the process of the project through collecting images and sharing them on Instagram.

Numeracy - Students will digitally record an interview using a Dictaphone. They will **n**arrow down the timeframe of when the key points of the story are in the recordings and transcribe them. Students will create multiple compositions showcasing their ideas through the use of thumbnails. Students will follow a sequence of steps in the process of learning how to create a lino reduction print. In order to create texture and depth in their print, students will incorporate various types of cuts to engrave and mark make in their lino.

	c) Other key skills	
Key Skill	**Key skill element**	**Student learning activity**
Being Creative	Contemporising Oral History	Students will use digital recordings to collect stories which they will develop into a composition which portrays and captures the essence of the story for a lino print
Communicating	Interview Skills	A guest speaker will visit the class in order to share experiences of interviewing with the class. Students will use his advice and skills learned in class to interview and gather stories from the local community
Managing information and thinking	Documentation and development through sketchbooks and Instagram	Students will analyse their recordings and document their thinking process through sketchbooks designated to the project. Students will also be digitally documenting through the use of Instagram. This will entail of class excursions, discussions, process of making and development of their project
Managing myself	Using digital media and sketchbooks	Students will report to the teacher before uploading on social media and hand up sketchbooks with reflections at the end of the week for review
Staying well	Being safe and supervised during nursing home visits as well as safely managing the lino cutting tools	Students will be constantly supervised during their visits to the community residents for the interviews. Students will develop safe working habits when working with the lino cutting tools
Working with others	Working within teams and collaborating on a final creative piece	Students will work in pairs when interviewing. They will also collaborate with their pieces for an exhibition and presentation to the participating interviewees.

5. Course overview

The specification for this short course in contemporising oral histories focuses on capturing the essence of the tales through four inter-connected strands: Interview skills, community involvement, digital media and creative practice.

Strand 1 – Interview Skills: In this strand, students will enhance their oral and written literacy skills by preparing and utilising questions for an interview with members of the community. An experienced guest speaker will be invited to give advice on how best to prepare for interviews. Students will also be introduced to the technology side of interviewing with the use of zoom recorders and the editing process of these interviews.

Strand 2 – Community Involvement: This strand focuses on the intergenerational aspect of the course supporting engagement with the local community outside school. This involvement aims to deepen their respect for older generations and to encourage involvement with the community as well as learning more about the town through the years with the use of the residents' oral histories of growing up in the town. Their final projects will be presented back to the participating interviewees, further bridging the gap between the generations.

Strand 3 – Digital Media: This strand aims to allow students to collect primary sources for their project through the use of digital recordings of the oral stories, which they can use to develop concepts for their projects. Students will learn the technical skills of using audio recorders to record a primary source and learn the skills to transcribe areas of interests for their project. It allows the students to gain insights into the working practices of artists on how they use recordings in their work. Students will learn about the effectiveness of social media in the art world and document their process and journey of the project through social media platform Instagram.

Strand 4 – Creative Practice: Bringing a concept through to realisation and execution will be the on-going goal throughout the project. The students will proceed through the development process in order to truly capture the essence of the stories they hear. The students will explore the process of printmaking as a means of bringing their concepts and ideas to realisation. These prints will be exhibited in the community and presented to the participating interviewees.

STRANDS	LEARNING OUTCOMES
Students learn……	*Students should be able to…..*
Strand 1: **The Interview:** *Gathering a Primary* *Source* ▪ Group Work ▪ Constructing a Questionnaire ▪ Interview Skills ▪ Communication Skills ▪ Presenting information ▪ Apply Interview Skills to Situation	**1.1** Identify questions used in interviews through the observation of interview examples **1.2** Detect descriptive words used in the interview examples which helps provide a rich image to their story **1.3** In groups, construct a questionnaire of suitable questions in order to acquire rich and descriptive stories from their interviewees **1.4** Delegate the recording techniques within the group: recording device management, note taking, questioner **1.5** Assess the effectiveness of their questionnaire by testing the outcome of their questionnaire on another group in the class **1.6** Communicate clearly, effectively and with respect when asking questions **1.7** Present information collected from the other group to class in preparation for the community interviews **1.8** Detect problems in questionnaire and amend them before the interviews **1.9** Apply the interview skills learned in class to gather information and stories from the community **1.10** Collect the findings from the interview and create a short timeline of the information gathered to be presented to the class

Strand 2 **Community Involvement** - Collection of Local Oral Histories and Memories from the Community - Intergenerational Skills	**2.1** Discuss prior knowledge of the town from years ago through class and sub-group discussions **2.2** Create a timeline of events that occurred in the town through the years **2.3** Communicate clearly and respectively when talking with the older people in the community by being aware of certain impairments such as hearing problems they may have **2.4** Collaborate with classmates and the community through interviews to create a rich primary source for their creative development process focused on the town **2.5** Present the story of their interviewee to the class noting key points of their life on a timeline **2.6** Review the class timeline of the area in relation to the lives of people they have met
Strand 3 **Digital Media** - Digital Recording - Transcribing, analysing and utilising information - Digital Archiving - Enhancing Exhibitions with Recordings	**3.1** Utilize the audio recorder to record interviews in class as preparation for the interviews **3.1** Digitally record the interviews using recording devices such as Zoom recorders, phone and cameras **3.2** Transcribe the recordings in to their own words of what interested them the most **3.3** Transcribe the descriptive words used to tell the story from the recording **3.4** Be aware of the effect digital archiving has on communicating and highlighting art around the world through research of artists and galleries who utilize social media to promote themselves **3.5** Document the process through, such as ideas, tasks, key moments with the class camera **3.5** Upload images to social media using the class Instagram account and hashtags describing their process

	throughout the project showing highlights of the week
	3.6 Identify the effectiveness of sound recordings may have in an exhibition situation through group discussion and investigation
	3.7 Select the key points in the recording, noting timeframes and descriptions, to be used to enhance the exhibition at the end of the project

Strand 4
Creative Making
    ▪ Concept Development
    ▪ Reflections
    ▪ Printmaking
    ▪ Exhibition Planning and Execution
	4.1 Visualise a story they heard from the community using the descriptive words gathered in recordings
	4.2 Compose possible images representing the story through thumbnail drawings and sketches
	4.3 Develop the initial ideas through key elements and investigating alternative compositions
	4.4 Understand the process of reduction print through the use of Scrafiti
	4.5 Transfer chosen image and composition which captures the essence of the story onto lino
	4.6 Demonstrate an understanding of the cutting techniques involved by using a variety of ways in order to create texture and movement in their image
	4.7 Create multiple editions of the prints which may be presented back to the interviewees
	4.8 Plan and curate an exhibition to showcase the collaboration

6. Expectations for learners

Expectations

The expectation is that the students will gather stories of the town from years ago and visualise them through drawings and gathered photographs if available and develop them in to a print.

Examples of a story gathered from a local in the town about her experience of the cinema opening in Portarlington in the 1960's

Documentation of the progress: Students are expected to document their journey with images similar to these which may be used for the class Instagram page

Note: Bottom left is an example of a final print

7. Assessment and certification

This short course offers a range of assessment opportunities to help support the learning of the student. With both group work and individual work at its core, the course offers a chance to work from a variety of different angles allowing the students to value both their strengths and weaknesses. The inclusion of digital media along with printmaking offers a hands-on approach to creativity. Both peer and self-assessment will be encouraged through out the course of the project. This on-going assessment will assist the student in their learning and development of the key skills aimed for the outcome of this course.

Group tasks will be set such as creating a timeline of the town's history in an effort to acquire their prior knowledge. This will be reviewed after they gather more information from the community so they can marry experiences with the events highlighting their interests and understandings before continuing on to their concept development process. This process is to encourage engagement from the very beginning.

Preparation and practicing their interview with other groups in the class will help to detect strengths and weaknesses, which will help scaffold their learning and practical interview skills. These formative methods of assessment throughout the project will help to keep the students focused and on track.

Students will provide evidence of their learning throughout the course of the project in order to detect their next step of development. An on-going sketchbook reflecting their thought process through both drawings and written pieces will be used to determine the students' understanding and progress. During this development stage, a date will be set for a formative assessment of the sketchbook. Written feedback will be given to students, which will help them to exhaust their ideas further and refine their preparation for the final print.

Classroom Based Assessment: The Final Project

The final project where the student will present their rendition of the oral story through the use of printmaking will be exhibited in the community. Giving this goal to work towards will intensify the necessity of good concept development practices throughout. This project should demonstrate engagement with learning outcomes across all four strands. As part of the Classroom-Based Assessment, students should display confidence in preparing and holding an interview, capture essence of a story in their creative work while displaying an understanding of the process of printmaking.

These are the type of work and expectations for the Classroom-based assessment:

Interview Skills 40%

Distinction

- The student excellently helps constructs a questionnaire in preparation for the interview with other students in the class and shows evidence of correcting weaknesses prior to interviewing locals in the community.
- The student displays an in-depth understanding of the recording and documenting techniques involved in conducting an interview and understands how to use the audio recording devices, how to take notes and listen during the tasks in preparation for the interview.
- The student conducts the interview by clearly asks questions to stimulate a topic and effectively chooses follow up questions to assist the conversation leading to a high quality interview which can be dissected and analysed with ease.
- The student gathers a vast amount of information to begin developing a concept for the project, which is presented to the class with the use of the class timeline.

Merit

- The student responds well within the group preparing questions for their interviews with the community and engages well with finding errors and correcting them prior to visiting locals in the community
- The student displays an understanding of the recording equipment and techniques used to conduct an interview through group tasks set in class in preparation for the interview
- The student contributes to a well conducted interview, displaying confidence and respect in the group while applying the skills learned during the interview with the community
- The student presents sufficient information to the class in a clear and concise manner showing areas for concept development.

Achieved

- The student displays little interest and contributes little to the preparation of the questionnaire for the interview within the group
- The student shows little understanding of the techniques used in recording and documenting an interview through the lack of evidence presented in group tasks
- The student is reluctant to involve themselves in the gathering and collecting of the oral stories while conducting the interview in the community
- The student collects very little information for the concept development process.

Partly Achieved

- The student displays no interest and resists contributing to the preparation of the questionnaire for the interview within the group

- The student does not articulate any understanding of the techniques used in recording and documenting an interview through the lack of evidence presented in group tasks and reflections made

- The student resists in involving themselves in the gathering and collecting of the oral stories while conducting the interview in the community

- The student collects insufficient information for the concept development process and cannot present findings or contribute to the timeline of their locality in class.

Development of the Concept 30%

Distinction

- The student presents an excessive amount research of their interviewee and presents their story with confidence to the class and/or teacher for which is the basis and the beginning point of their concept development.

- The case study should include a timeline of their lives, pinpointing areas in the town and key events that have taken part of the interviewee's life, which should assist the development of their concept.

- The student shows excellent evidence in their sketchbooks of developing their concept from analysing their recording through to mind maps, clear and focused thumbnails, drawings, photographs and other mediums in order to reach a high standard of concept development for their print truly capturing the essence of their chosen story. This development will be assessed during the course of the project and at the final stages.

Merit

- The student presents an adequate amount of research of their interviewee and can clearly identify the key points of the person's life on a timeline.

- The student displays a range of concepts for development for the project in relation to information gathered through the interviews.

- There is evidence of progression from the starting point of an idea in relation to compositions of thumbnails, drawings, photographs and other media to the end product in preparation for the printmaking process showcasing the essence of their chosen story. This development will be assessed during the course of the project and at the final stages.

Achieved

- Lacks sufficient information on the interviewee to identify key areas in their life and therefore lacks a strong starting point for concept development
- Unclear line of inquiry for concept development in sketchbook with ideas lacking evidence of being thought out or developed
- There is minimal amount of development from the initial idea to the preparation for the printmaking process with little or no evidence of thumbnails, drawings, photographs or other media such as colour studies, not capturing any real essence of the story. This development will be assessed during the course of the project and at the final stages.

Partly Achieved

- Insufficient information on the interviewee to identify key areas in their life and therefore shows no evidence of a starting point for concept development
- Sketchbook offers no insight into a thought process and shows no development from the initial idea to the preparation for the printmaking process with little or no evidence of thumbnails, drawings, photographs or other media such as colour studies failing to capture the essence of the story. This development will be assessed during the course of the project and at the final stages.

Application Of The Printing Process 30%

Distinction

- The student shows an excellent clear understanding of the printing process by producing a high quality print with evidence of various methods of cutting embracing achievable textures to the piece
- The student displays excellent understanding how to distinguish which sections to cut first through identifying the separate areas first
- The student produces evidence experimenting with different cutting techniques to get first-hand experience of the possibilities of the cuts
- The student pays close attention to the printing process producing a finely registered print portraying a representation of their chosen story.
- The student abides by all the classroom rules including safe and clean environment throughout the project.

Merit

- The student articulates and displays an understanding for the printing process by showing evidence of each of the steps involved
- The student shows an understanding of how to separate the different layers of colour through identifying the separate areas
- The students shows evidence of a range of different cuts offering texture to the outcome of the print
- The students shows evidence of attention to detail with regards registering each cut to the previous print
- The student is aware and abides of the safety rules during the printing process.

Achieved

- The student displays little understanding of the printmaking process and cannot clearly identify the different steps involved in creating a print.
- The student finds it difficult to distinguish between the different cuts and colours to use through the different steps of the process
- The student has little concern for different methods of cutting and engraving
- The student lacks of attention to detail with regards to the registration of the prints
- The student is careless with the cutting tools and does not abide by the safety rule of the class with regards to print

Partly Achieved

- The student displays very poor understanding of the printmaking process and cannot identify the steps involved in creating a print.
- The student cannot distinguish between the different areas to cut and for which colour
- The student shows no evidence of a variety of different cutting techniques within the print
- The student displays no attention when registration of the prints
- The student does not abide by the safety rule of the class with regards to print

8. Resources

- Interview question plan: Topic guide for the interviews, leading questions

- Printing guide: Printmaking step by step to be handed out to the students as a visual of the process

- Visual guide on how to choose and up the colours for print

- Examples of reduction prints showcasing possible marks that may be achieved to add texture and depth

- Artist sketchbooks highlighting their concept development for a project

- Video examples from established interviewers:

  Ken Wardrop

  www.antidote.ie

  Ken Wardrop uses anecdotes from people in his community to convey their lives. He acquires rich interviews from his interviewees through prompting questions, which would be ideal for the students to grasp in their interviews with the community. While the topic may not suit the subject of student interviews, their conversation in this example is comfortable and flows with ease. This interview is only 3 mintutes, which shows you it does not take that long for a rich primary source to come about.

Michael Fortune:

http://www.michaelfortune.ie/

Michael Fortune grew up in a family immersed in story, superstition, and folk belief in an area known as 'The Macamores', an old Gaelic stronghold stretching along the east coast of County Wexford. Michael's inspiration for his work is based on the collection of these old stories and superstitions.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUHjj0GzxbA -*The Fall of the Leaf, Co. Offaly*

- Artist work:

Nadia Corridan

http://nadiacorridan.weebly.com/

Nadia Corridan used a recording of an old neighbour named Hilda who survived the Holocaust as a young girl. Her work is a great example of capturing the "essence" of a story. Even without knowing the story or even the name of the painting, you instantly feel a sense for what it is about.

Fig. 1: *'Stolen Identity', 2014, Oil on Canvas*

Fig. 2: 'Waiting for the Conte Verde', 2014, Oil on Canvas

Christian Boltanski

https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/artist/christian-boltanski

Christian Boltanski (born 1944) is a French sculptor, photographer, painter, and filmmaker, most well known for his photography installations and contemporary French Conceptual style. His work is inspired by his experience during the war and the archiving of his father's history.

Humans, 1994 link: https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/54

'At once personal and universal in reference, Humans (1994) is one of several large-scale works by Boltanski that serves as a monument to the dead, hinting at the Holocaust without naming it explicitly. Through its size and tone, the work evokes the contemplative atmosphere of a small theater or a space for religious observance.'

Appendix 2

Questionnaire 1

Q1.

What is your understanding of the project? What is it about?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q2.

On a scale of 1 – 10, how engaged are you with the project? *Please circle.*

(1 being not interested in the least; 10 being very enthusiastic about the project)

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Q3.

What section of the project have you found most difficult so far?

☐   Collecting the story

☐   Recording

☐   Drawing / Visualising parts of the story

☐   Finding an interesting composition / layout

Can you explain why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Appendix 3

Questionnaire 2

Q1.How did you find the process of getting where you are today with your project? *Please tick the box.*

☐ I found the process extremely slow

☐ I found the process slow, I did not need as much time that was given

☐ The time used was needed to get to the image I have today

☐ The process was quick but enough time was given to get my image

☐ The process was too quick and I needed more time

☐ The process was way too fast and I would like more time to develop my image

Q2.
What does your image focus on? *Write a brief description of your image.*

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q3.
How did you choose your final image? *Please tick the box.*

☐ I chose it by myself with no help

☐ With the help of discussing it with the teacher one and one

☐ With the help of discussing it with the teacher and the class

☐ I chose my first idea

Q4.
How do you feel your image represents and tells your chosen story? *Please Circle.*

Extremely Well   Very Well   Well   Poor   Very Poor   Extremely Poor

QUESTIONNAIRE 02

Each questionnaire will be kept anonymous so please answer each question as honestly as possible. Remember, there **3** *no wrong answers.*

Q.1 What is the story behind your lino print?

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.2 Do you think lino printing was a good way to portray your story? *Please tick.*

Yes ☐   No ☐

If you chose yes, please explain why you think so in the space below.

If you chose no, please explain why not and give an example of another art medium that may have suited better for example painting, clay etc.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.3 What has been the most difficult part of this project?
Please describe the part of the project you found most difficult in the space below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.3 What have you enjoyed the most about this project?
Please describe the part of the project you enjoyed the most in the space below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

Q.4 On a scale of 1 – 10, how have you enjoyed the project?

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Appendix 5

Image 1:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Image 2:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Image 3:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Image 1:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Image 2:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Image 3:

What do you think the story is behind this image?

_____

_____

_____

On a scale of 1 – 5, how do you think this lino has captured a story?

1   2   3   4   5

Appendix 6

Information Sheet for

Parents / Guardians

Invitation to take part in an Art and Design Education Study.

Dear Parent/Guardian,

The following outlines the details of an art and design education project that I will be conducting with the second years in Colaiste Iosagain. The project will focus on capturing the essence of a story through print. I will be conducting an educational study in conjunction with this project that aims to examine the impact digital media and printmaking has on developing and capturing the essence of an oral story. I am inviting you to participate in the educational study. The details of what will be involved in this project and study are outlined below.

Title of the Project:

A study into the impact digital media and printmaking has on capturing the essence of oral stories

Title of the education study:

The degree to which printmaking and digital media can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories

Background to the project:

I am a student teacher currently undertaking my School Placement at Colaiste Iosagain. I will be introducing a project to your son/daughter that will focus on gathering oral histories of Portarlington from Oakdale Nursing Home and honouring them by capturing their essence through concept development using digital media in an effort to create a print based on their stories.

The study – What am I trying to discover?

I am undertaking this study in order to

- To investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print using digital media
- To examine the process of assisting students in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story
- To examine the effects of encouraging student self reflection as a means of developing concepts

What will happen during the study?

Your son/daughter's participation in this study will involve a visit to Oakdale Nursing Home where they will interview selected residents of sound minds in an effort to gather their stories about growing up in the town. These stories will then be used to develop imagery as a basis to learn printmaking skills. I will document project work as it develops through photography and recordings. Throughout the ten weeks, your son/daughter will be asked to reflect on the progression of the project. This will occur through group discussions and questionnaires and allow your son/daughter to give feedback on the project. The development of ideas through sketchbook work will assist the core findings of the research.

The material collected during this study will be kept confidential. The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all participants will remain anonymous. All information relating to this study will be protected in accordance with data protection and privacy policies and procedures for researchers in Limerick Institute of Technology.

Are there any risks to doing this study?

There are no perceived risks associated with your son/daughter's participation in this study. The study will be conducted during the project as outlined above, we will be working together as a group to create art and design work during our schedules class periods.

What if I change my mind about my son/daughter being in the study?

If you decide that you do not want your son/daughter to participate in the study there will be no consequences to them. They will continue to participate in all of the classroom activities associated with this project but will not be asked to respond to focus group responses or questionnaires or have their work documented as part of the study.

Are there any benefits to doing the study?

The project at the centre of the study is designed to enhance your son/daughter's concept development skills and printmaking skills as well as encouraging involvement in the community and encouraging them to learn about local heritage through oral stories. I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand the impact digital media and printmaking can have on capturing the essence of a oral history which could help encourage more involvement with the art room and the community and prepare them for alternative methods of acquiring primary sources for an art project.

How do I find out what was learned in this study?

I expect to have the study report completed by June 2017 and I will send a brief summary of the key findings of the study to the school.

Student Teacher / Researcher:

Title of award: Professional Master of Education Art and Design with Digital Media

Department and Institution: Art and Design Teacher Education, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology

This research study has received ethical approval from the Post Graduate Research Ethics Committee at Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Student Teacher

Informed Consent

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Before reading this consent form you should have read the attached information sheet. Please ensure that you retain the information sheet for your records. If you give permission for your son/daughter to participate in this project, please sign this consent form and return it to the school on or before 14/10/2016.

If you have any concerns relating to your son/daughter 's participation in the project, please contact either the school or myself and we will be happy to address your concerns.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Student Teacher

I wish to acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the attached Parent / Guardian Information Sheet.
- I understand what the project is about.
- I know that participation is voluntary and that participants can withdraw from the project at any stafe without giving any reason.

I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in the project that is being done in Colaiste Iosagain in conjunction with Limerick School of Art and Design.

By signing this consent form I am acknowledging that I have read the above bullet points and am fully aware of what each one means

Signature of Parent / Guardian / Responsible Other: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Student Information Sheet

Invitation to take part in an Art and Design Education Study.

Dear Student,

The following outlines the details of an art and design education project that I will be conducting with the second years in Colaiste Iosagain. The project will focus on capturing the essence of a story through print. I will be conducting an educational study in conjunction with this project that aims to examine the impact digital media and printmaking has on developing and capturing the essence of an oral story. I am inviting you to participate in the educational study. The details of what will be involved in this project and study are outlined below.

Title of the Project:

A study into the impact digital media and printmaking has on capturing the essence of oral stories

Title of the education study:

The degree to which printmaking and digital media can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories

Background to the project:

I am a student teacher currently undertaking my School Placement at Colaiste Iosagain. I will be introducing a project to you that will focus on gathering oral histories of Portarlington from Oakdale Nursing Home and honouring them by capturing their essence through concept development using digital media in an effort to create a print based on their stories.

The study – What am I trying to discover?

I am undertaking this study in order to

- To investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print using digital media
- To examine the process of assisting students in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story
- To examine the effects of encouraging student self reflection as a means of developing concepts

What will happen during the study?

Your participation in this study will involve a visit to Oakdale Nursing Home where you will interview selected residents of sound minds in an effort to gather their stories about growing up in the town. These stories will then be used to develop imagery as a basis to learn printmaking skills. I will document project work as it develops through photography and recordings. Throughout the ten weeks, you will be asked to reflect on the progression of the project. This will occur through group discussions and questionnaires and allow you to give feedback on the project. The development of ideas through sketchbook work will assist the core findings of the research.

The material collected during this study will be kept confidential. The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all participants will remain anonymous. All information relating to this study will be protected in accordance with data protection and privacy policies and procedures for researchers in Limerick Institute of Technology.

Are there any risks to doing this study?

There are no perceived risks associated with your participation in this study. The study will be conducted during the project as outlined above, we will be working together as a group to create art and design work during our schedules class periods.

What if I change my mind about being in the study?

If you decide that you do not want to participate in the study there will be no consequences to you. You will continue to participate in all of the classroom activities associated with this project but will not be asked to respond to focus group responses or questionnaires or have your work documented as part of the study.

Are there any benefits to doing the study?

The project at the centre of the study is designed to enhance your concept development skills and printmaking skills as well as to encourage involved in the community and to learn more about local heritage through oral stories. I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand the impact digital media and printmaking can have on capturing the essence of a oral history which could help encourage more involvement with the art room and the community and prepare you for alternative methods of acquiring primary sources for an art project.

How do I find out what was learned in this study?

I expect to have the study report completed by June 2017 and I will send a brief summary of the key findings of the study to the school.

Student Teacher / Researcher:

Title of award: Professional Master of Education Art and Design with Digital Media

Department and Institution: Art and Design Teacher Education, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology

This research study has received ethical approval from the Post Graduate Research Ethics Committee at Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Student Teacher

Informed Assent

Dear Student,

Before reading this consent form you should have read the attached information sheet. Please ensure that you retain the information sheet for your records. If you wish to participate in this project, please sign this consent form and return it to the school on or before 14/10/2016.

If you have any concerns relating to your participation in the project, please contact either the school or myself and we will be happy to address your concerns.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Student Teacher

I wish to acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the attached Information Sheet.
- I understand what the project is about.
- I know that participation is voluntat and that participants can withdraw from the project at any stafe without giving any reason.

I wish to participate in the project that is being done in Colaiste Iosagain in conjunction with Limerick School of Art and Design.

By signing this consent form I am acknowledging that I have read the above bullet points and am fully aware of what each one means

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

LIT

ACTIVE LEADERSHIP IN
EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE
AND ENGAGEMENT

Information Sheet for

Gatekeeper

Invitation to take part in an Art and Design Education Study.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The following outlines the details of an art and design education project that I will be conducting with the second years in Colaiste Iosagain. The project will focus on capturing the essence of a story through print. I will be conducting an educational study in conjunction with this project that aims to examine the impact digital media and printmaking has on developing and capturing the essence of an oral story. I am inviting you to participate in the educational study. The details of what will be involved in this project and study are outlined below.

Title of the Project:

A study into the impact digital media and printmaking has on capturing the essence of oral stories

Title of the education study:

The degree to which printmaking and digital media can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories

Background to the project:

I am a student teacher currently undertaking my School Placement at Colaiste Iosagain. I will be introducing a project with second year students that will focus on gathering oral histories of Portarlington from Oakdale Nursing Home and honouring them by capturing their essence through concept development using digital media in an effort to create a print based on their stories.

The study – What am I trying to discover?

I am undertaking this study in order to

- To investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print using digital media
- To examine the process of assisting students in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story
- To examine the effects of encouraging student self reflection as a means of developing concepts

What will happen during the study?

Your participation in this study will involve allowing a select number of residents to share their experiences and stories of events that may have occurred while growing up in Portarlington. These interviews will be documented through audio recordings, which will be used to develop imagery as a basis to learn printmaking skills back in the art room. The recordings may be used alongside the art created inspired by the stories during an exhibition at the end of the project.

The material collected during this study will be kept confidential. The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all participants will remain anonymous. All information relating to this study will be protected in accordance with data protection and privacy policies and procedures for researchers in Limerick Institute of Technology.

Are there any risks to doing this study?

There are no perceived risks associated with your participation in this study. Your involvement will be conducted during a morning visit on the 18th of October 2016.

What if I change my mind about participation in the study?

If you decide that you do not want your residents to participate in the study there will be no consequences.

Are there any benefits to doing the study?

The project at the centre of the study is designed to enhance the students' concept development skills and printmaking skills as well as involving them in the community and encouraging learning about local heritage through oral stories.

I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand the impact digital media and printmaking can have on capturing the essence of a oral history which could help encourage more involvement with the art room and the community and prepare them for alternative methods of acquiring primary sources for an art project.

How do I find out what was learned in this study?

I expect to have the study report completed by June 2017 and I will send a brief summary of the key findings of the study to the school.

Student Teacher / Researcher:

Title of award: Professional Master of Education Art and Design with Digital Media

Department and Institution: Art and Design Teacher Education, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology

This research study has received ethical approval from the Post Graduate Research Ethics Committee at Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Student Teacher

Informed Consent

Dear Sir/Madam,

Before reading this consent form you should have read the attached information sheet. Please ensure that you retain the information sheet for your records. If you give permission for your son/daughter to participate in this project, please sign this consent form and return it to the school on or before 14/10/2016.

If you have any concerns relating to your son/daughter 's participation in the project, please contact either the school or myself and we will be happy to address your concerns.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Student Teacher

I wish to acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the attached Information Sheet.
- I understand what the project is about.
- I know that participation is voluntary and that participants can withdraw from the project at any stafe without giving any reason.

I give permission for the residents to participate in the project that is being done in Colaiste Iosagain in conjunction with Limerick School of Art and Design.

By signing this consent form I am acknowledging that I have read the above bullet points and am fully aware of what each one means

Signature of Gatekeeper: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____

LIT
ACTIVE LEADERSHIP IN
EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE
AND ENGAGEMENT

Information Sheet for

Oakdale Participants

Invitation to take part in an Art and Design Education Study.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The following outlines the details of an art and design education project that I will be conducting with the second years in Colaiste Iosagain. The project will focus on capturing the essence of a story through print. I will be conducting an educational study in conjunction with this project that aims to examine the impact digital media and printmaking has on developing and capturing the essence of an oral story. I am inviting you to participate in the educational study. The details of what will be involved in this project and study are outlined below.

Title of the Project:

A study into the impact digital media and printmaking has on capturing the essence of oral stories

Title of the education study:

The degree to which printmaking and digital media can capture and communicate the essence of oral stories

Background to the project:

I am a student teacher currently undertaking my School Placement at Colaiste Iosagain. I will be introducing a project with second year students that will focus on gathering oral histories of Portarlington from Oakdale Nursing Home and honouring them by capturing their essence through concept development using digital media in an effort to create a print based on their stories.

The study – What am I trying to discover?

I am undertaking this study in order to

- To investigate the ways in which collecting primary source oral stories can assist in developing a concept for print using digital media
- To examine the process of assisting students in developing a concept to portray the essence of a story
- To examine the effects of encouraging student self reflection as a means of developing concepts

What will happen during the study?

Your participation in this study will involve sharing your experiences and stories of events that may have occurred while growing up in Portarlington. These interviews will be documented through audio recordings, which will be used to develop imagery as a basis to learn printmaking skills back in the art room. The recordings may be used alongside the art created inspired by the stories during an exhibition at the end of the project.

The material collected during this study will be kept confidential. The results of this study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but the identities of all participants will remain anonymous. All information relating to this study will be protected in accordance with data protection and privacy policies and procedures for researchers in Limerick Institute of Technology.

Are there any risks to doing this study?

There are no perceived risks associated with your participation in this study. Your involvement will be conducted during a morning visit on the 18th of October 2016.

What if I change my mind about participation in the study?

If you decide that you do not want to participate in the study there will be no consequences.

Are there any benefits to doing the study?

The project at the centre of the study is designed to enhance the students' concept development skills and printmaking skills as well as involving them in the community and encouraging learning about local heritage through oral stories.

I hope that what is learned as a result of this study will help us to better understand the impact digital media and printmaking can have on capturing the essence of a oral history which could help encourage more involvement with the art room and the community and prepare them for alternative methods of acquiring primary sources for an art project.

How do I find out what was learned in this study?

I expect to have the study report completed by June 2017 and I will send a brief summary of the key findings of the study to the school.

Student Teacher / Researcher:

Title of award: Professional Master of Education Art and Design with Digital Media

Department and Institution: Art and Design Teacher Education, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology

This research study has received ethical approval from the Post Graduate Research Ethics Committee at Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick Institute of Technology.

Yours Sincerely,

_____

Student Teacher

LIT
ACTIVE LEADERSHIP IN
EDUCATION, ENTERPRISE
AND ENGAGEMENT

Informed Consent

Dear Sir/Madam,

Before reading this consent form you should have read the attached information sheet. Please ensure that you retain the information sheet for your records. If you give permission for your son/daughter to participate in this project, please sign this consent form and return it to the school on or before 14/10/2016.

If you have any concerns relating to your son/daughter 's participation in the project, please contact either the school or myself and we will be happy to address your concerns.

Thank you for your cooperation on this matter.

Kind Regards,

Student Teacher

I wish to acknowledge that:

- I have read and understood the attached Information Sheet.
- I understand what the project is about.
- I know that participation is voluntary and that participants can withdraw from the project at any stafe without giving any reason.

I give permission for my son/daughter to participate in the project that is being done in Colaiste Iosagain in conjunction with Limerick School of Art and Design.

By signing this consent form I am acknowledging that I have read the above bullet points and am fully aware of what each one means

Signature of Participant / Responsible Other: _____

Date: _____ / _____ / _____