



Easy Art Pro Creativity Breaks

Richard Allport interviews Zara Burroughs.

I'm sitting here surrounded by a myriad of guitars, amplifiers and mixing board desks, to have a quick creativity break chat with Zara Burroughs, senior music teacher at Q3 Academy and to get her take on creativity and the way music can help bring the best out of pupils.

Q: Richard Allport:

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“Hi and thank you for taking time out to talk with me. Question one is a biggie, do you think creative lessons like Music are as important as Maths and English?”

A: Zara Burroughs:

“Absolutely, because every pupil is different and each one reacts in their own way to different stimuli. For example one student may struggle to understand the straightforward, linear method of learning a subject like Maths but they may find it easier to access the material contained within a Music lesson.”

Q: Richard Allport:

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“So in terms of importance why do you think creative lessons like music are on a parallel with traditional academic ones? Creativity and academic lessons are a bit of a hot topic currently within the education system as well as with pupils and their parents too.”

A: Zara Burroughs:

“Because to be a fully rounded individual a student needs to understand the building blocks of life, Maths, English the Sciences etc, but none of these, with maybe the exception of creative writing, allows a student to fully express themselves in a *true* way. They can write they way they want to and draw diagrams in their own style, but this isn't really an expression of who they are *themselves*.

Colours, sounds and senses aren't really what those sort of lessons are based on, and rightly so, but a student needs an outlet to show who they are, what they think and what they feel.

Everyone is different and students need the room to learn in the way they need to, dependent on the factors they need in order to take information in.

I mean look at me below, I needed to dress up and wear a party hat to find the right tune on my violin when I was young!"



Q: Richard Allport:

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“(Laughs) I see what you mean! But for others why is that is the case, what factors make pupils learn differently?”

A: Zara Burroughs:

“All people, not just students, learn in different ways, and this is something that has only been truly become fully understood over the past few years.

Research has shown that people and pupils learn in 3 main ways. They learn visually, auditorilly and kinaesthetically.

That is to say visually through their eyes and the experiences that come through looking, auditorilly which is the experience of sound, music, everyday noises and soundscapes on the ear, and kinaesthetically, this means by movement.

This movement may be something as simple as just, moving around or feeling a material they are working on like clay or plasticine move through their hands, or a more complex situation where that child responds brilliantly to things like dance and drama.

Q: Richard Allport:

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“So how do you apply this in the classroom?”

A: Zara Burroughs:

“I allow students the freedom to musically express themselves, obviously within the confines of a school classroom environment, but as much as possible I let them create, explore and experiment.

I allow them to move round, listen to other sources of music and encourage them to watch film, television and music video clips that stimulate their

imaginations. Mixing different forms of research media is a great way to begin the exploration process.

Creative lessons like Music should be about finding new things out, discovery, looking inwards and getting in touch with your feelings and the feelings that music and sounds can evoke, the worst thing I can imagine is just going into a room week after week and just learning to play the same few notes in a tune. That's not teaching music to me."

Q: Richard Allport:

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"So how do you measure creativity in your lessons?"

A: Zara Burroughs:

"Well apart from exam result grades, which this year were excellent in my department, you can easily see an inspired pupil from one who needs help and motivating.

You can chart the course of a pupil's creative development over a period of time by watching their reactions to their own achievements. You can also clearly see how others in the class react to their own ideas becoming realised as part of a collaborative effort.

A band or group, by definition, is more than one person, so when a student sees their own efforts appreciated within a greater whole, they have an immediate payback and the creativity just blossoms from that point. If you lay good creative foundations your chances of better results are far greater!"

Many thanks to Zara Burroughs for taking a moment to contribute to this Creativity Break.

Richard Allport 2010

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