

DEVELOPMENT OF PAINTING PROGRESSIONS LINKED TO NEW ZEALAND CURRICULUM LEVELS

These paintings were produced by a small sample of students in response to a set observational painting task. They are indicative of curriculum levels but due to the sample size and small reference group should not be considered as an official ‘benchmark’ of performance. For more examples produced by Year 4 and 8 students look at previous [National Education Monitoring Progress reports](#) or more current [NMSSA reports](#).

Practical Knowledge strand: It is acknowledged that this is one particular approach to painting, other possible approaches to painting include colourist, pattern-making, expressive and gestural approaches and other approaches with a conceptual basis that may encompass more than this strand.

The students display a wide range of ability from Level 1 through to Level 6 of the New Zealand Curriculum unrelated to their age or duration of schooling. The information about drawing/painting stages has been compiled from a number of different sources / research theories and should be interpreted as INDICATIVE of the curriculum levels students may be at for professional discussion and development - it is not a definitive or prescriptive assessment tool.

The recommended learning strategies have been compiled from various sources and sector feedback with links to relevant learning resources for drawing.

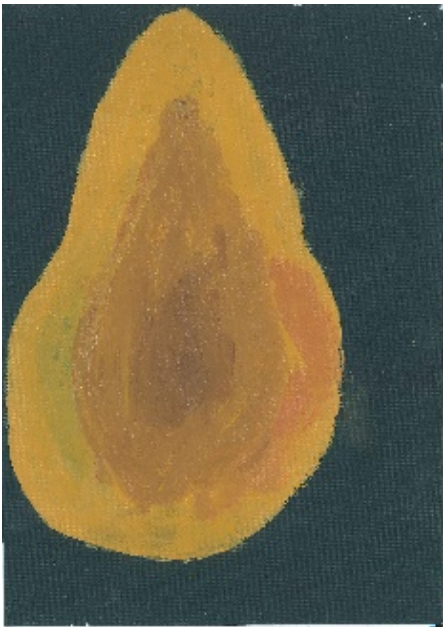



The levels in the New Zealand curriculum diagram show fluid, overlaps between different curriculum levels/ages to acknowledge that students’ development may vary markedly from ‘the norm’. In addition to this contemporary research has found that;

- early stages appear universal but as children grow, developmental rates and differences become more widespread
- stages may overlap, be combined or be ‘skipped’ by learners
- drawings/paintings may contain evidence of multiple stages
- evolving cultural changes/cultural differences impact on the types of images learners create and painting skills


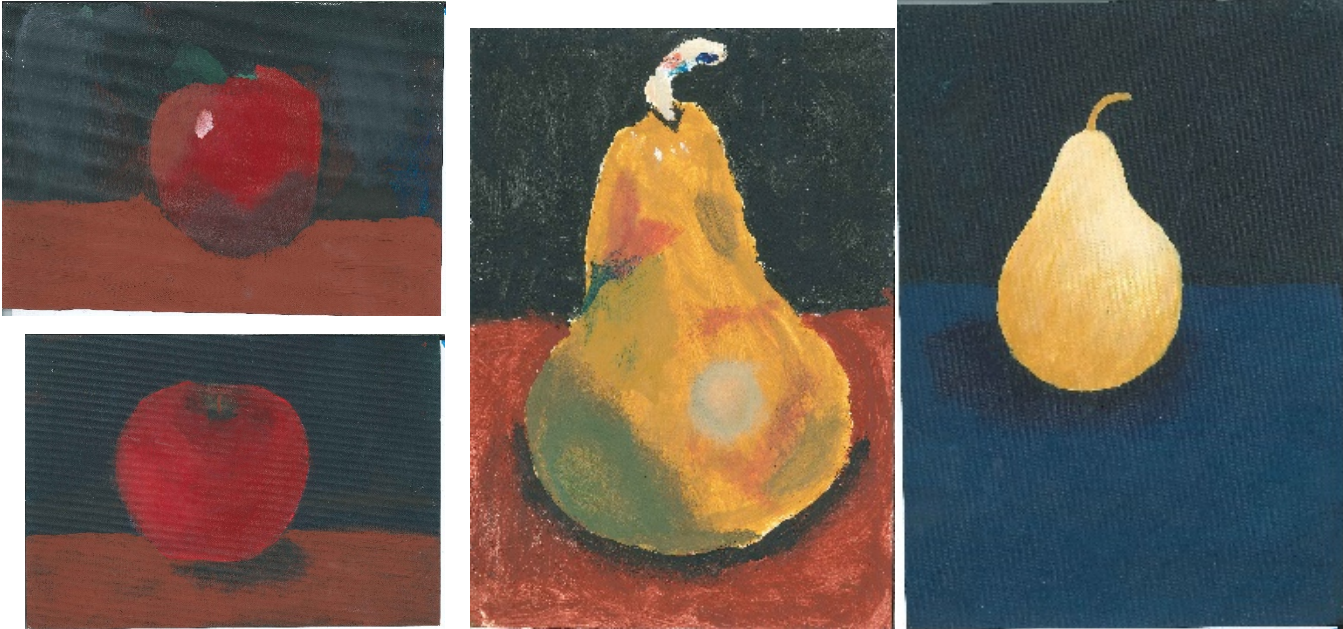


To access lessons, other exemplars, links and ideas for recommended learning strategies related to ‘Painting Progressions’ go to;



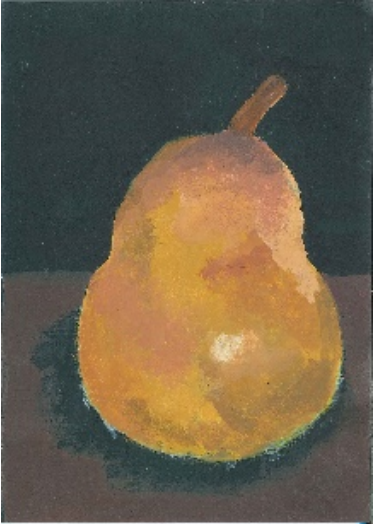

- the Arts Online [Teacher Resource Exchange](#).
- the [Arts Online Visartsnet community Pinterest](#) page.

Visual Arts Drawing Progressions – Fruit Still Life Paintings		
New Zealand Curriculum Levels	Painting Stages and Examples generated by Year 4 - 9 students ranging across curriculum levels	Recommended learning strategies
Pre-school	<b>SCRIBBLING; Random, Controlled and Named Mark-making</b> (18mths to 4 years approx.) At this age children; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explore materials and gross motor skills</li><li>• Develop motor skills that enable repetitive marks to be made.</li><li>• Begin to name the objects they create – they may be unrecognizable but the act of naming is significant. For children, the objects they have drawn are easily identifiable.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Provide ample opportunities to make marks with wet materials and a variety of easily-grasped tools such as string paintings, stamping with objects, finger painting etc.</li><li>•Use colourful materials and a range of textures from water colour to foam paint and foamy soap mixtures.</li><li>•Ask children to explain their paintings and tell the stories that spring from their work.</li><li>•Name colours and talk about feelings and objects in relation to colour</li><li>•Avoid guessing what symbols might represent - ask and listen.</li></ul>
Pre school  Early NZC Level 1  NZC Level 1	<b>SYMBOLS AND STORIES</b> (3 to 6 years approx.) This stage is typically indicated by; <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Circular images with lines that suggest more recognisable human/animal figures.</li><li>• Paintings that show what the child perceives as most important about the subject with little understanding of space, haphazard placement of objects and emotional use of colour</li><li>• A growing awareness of realistic colour, placement (e.g. on table top) and shapes.</li><li>• Students’ skills at this stage rely on ample time to experiment and messy play with wet media.</li></ul> <p>Images from left to right as observed and reported by children; a blueberry in the wind and rain (marks around blue circle ‘berry’ represent wind and rain, an apple on a table with a stalk and a leaf (background beyond table indicated by white area) a bowl of lemons (including one cut in half), and a brown pear</p> <div></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Continue to explore a range of wet media with fingers and tools like brushes, rollers, sponges, spatula and stamps</li><li>•Discuss placement overlapping and scale to enhance an understanding of spatial relationships.</li><li>•Practice writing, drawing and other fine-motor activities such as threading and placing.</li><li>•Simple shape paintings increases awareness of different parts of an object such as the stalk of an apple.</li><li>•Continue to invite children to tell stories and talk about their work.</li><li>•Encourage careful looking and description of shapes and colours of objects</li><li>•Provide ready access to a range of painting materials and tools</li><li>•Allow ample time as students’ skills at this stage rely on experimentation and messy play with guidance.</li></ul>



<p>NZC Level 2</p>	<p><b>PICTORIAL/SCHEMATIC (5 to 9 years approx. but can vary widely.)</b> Students' skills at this stage reflect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing gross/fine motor skills allow colour blending with more ease</li> <li>• A growing attention-span that allows for careful looking.</li> <li>• Awareness of the concept of space. Objects are often placed in relationship to 'up and down' or a ground or horizon-line may be apparent. (the exemplar task included a horizon line instruction)</li> <li>• Shapes and objects may be more spatially related and easily defined often with naturalistic colours.</li> <li>• Objects may be enlarged, distorted and changed according to how important they may be.</li> <li>• Sometimes objects are drawn perpendicular to the base line, upside down or seen from the inside and outside (X-Ray).</li> </ul> <div>  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduce painting techniques for making objects look real</b> by using a range of different tones and learning to blend with a brush</li> <li>• <b>Simplify complex forms</b> e.g. painting basic geometric shapes or simple objects first.</li> <li>• <b>Explore;</b> overlapping, foreground / background, relationships of objects to horizon line to continue growth with spatial relationships.</li> <li>• <b>Learn a basic colour wheel</b> and simple composition.</li> <li>• <b>Encourage abstract experimentation</b> (non-objective) painting to increase the scope of art awareness.</li> <li>• <b>Discuss artworks</b> and book illustrations where the colour creates an emotional and expressive story-telling quality</li> </ul> <p>Exposure to wet media experimentation and instruction in how to use brushes and paints are pivotal to development past this stage.</p>
<p>NZC Level 3</p>	<p><b>DAWNING REALISM (7 to 11 years approx.)</b> Students' skills at this stage reflect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing self-awareness resulting in extremely self-critical views about their ability to depict objects as they appear.</li> <li>• Less 'spontaneous' paintings as students strive for representation - clearly defined with details often resulting in a "stiffness" in representation.</li> <li>• A growing awareness of perspective through overlapping of objects, and scale differences in objects is evident.</li> <li>• Three dimensional effects are achieved along with shading and use of subtle or naturalistic colour combinations.</li> <li>• Increasing control over some aspects of shape, colour and form.</li> <li>• Often the student is pre-occupied by the end-product sticking to formulaic blending and 'safe' application of paint resulting in a wooden, less natural appearance.</li> </ul> <div>  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduce a range of skills and techniques</b> to support student development of their painting skills to build self-confidence.</li> <li>• <b>Use short exercises /tasks</b> where students can see an immediate improvement in skill level –growth mind-set - painting as a learned skill</li> <li>• <b>Allow time for practice</b> with new tools and techniques &amp; basic skills; brush control, blending tones, composition and colour theory so that increased mastery can be experienced.</li> <li>• <b>Balance</b> realistic painting activities with paintings based in symbolism/emotion to increase awareness beyond the bounds of realism.</li> <li>• <b>Learn about paintings</b> where the outward appearance is secondary to the emotional response or message communicated to the viewer.</li> </ul> <p>Students need a lot of positive encouragement at this stage. They also need reassurance and proof that they can learn the necessary skills thorough carefully scaffolded tasks to</p>



		build dexterity and control over wet media.
<div>NZC Level 4</div> <div>NCEA L1 (possible achievement)</div>	<p><b>PSEUDOREALISM REALISM (9 to 16 years approx.)</b> Students' skills at this stage reflect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Often the product becomes most important to the child. Sometimes referred to as the 'crisis' period it can mark the end of artistic development due to the frustration of not 'getting things right'.</li><li>• Two distinct psychological differences: visually minded art work inspired by visual stimuli and non-visual artwork based on subjective experiences where individuals feel involved in their work as it relates to them in a personal way.</li><li>• Students with a 'growth mind-set' towards learning in painting demonstrate risk-taking to master new skills such as; experimentation with colour, application techniques and deepening awareness of how to create the illusion of three-dimensionality.</li></ul> <div></div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Balance observational</b> activities with art based in meaning.</li><li>• <b>Explore techniques and processes</b> that are expressive and strengthen the eye/hand/mind connection</li><li>• <b>Focus on the process</b> of art-making in addition to outcome.</li><li>• <b>Discuss artwork</b> where the outward appearance is secondary to the emotional response or message.</li><li>• <b>Emphasise painting</b> as a learned skill and only one of many art skills they might be good at.</li><li>• <b>Show students where to access online tutorials / resources</b> to develop individual skills (e.g. Pinterest for portrait drawing tutorials)</li><li>• <b>Encourage meta-cognitive thinking</b> about art-making and viewing</li></ul>
<div>NZC Level 5</div> <div>NZC Level 6 and</div> <div>NCEA L1 (all grades)</div>	<p><b>ARTISTIC THINKING (14 -16 years approx.)</b> Students' skills at this stage reflect;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increased ability to respond to and act on positive, constructive feedback to improve work</li><li>• Mastery of basic painting techniques (colour mixing, mark-making and blending) allowing them to focus on accurate depiction, even extending into depicting a range of textures.</li><li>• realistic paintings show careful looking and attention to shape, tone and colour</li><li>• Students who have decided art-making is one of their interests usually make a conscious decision to further develop their skills, others may cease to progress from lack of interest or encouragement.</li><li>• Students are still easily discouraged especially if painting is not a skill valued by those around them OR CONVERSELY if the narrow realm of realism is the only type of art-making valued.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Use a range of artist exemplars</b> that are inspired by emotions and expressive styles in addition to observational / realism.</li><li>• <b>Prioritise meta-cognitive thinking</b> about art-making and viewing – what is the artist's intention and effect?</li><li>• <b>Study work of master artists</b> and encourage students to emulate skills and techniques to add to their 'kete'.</li><li>• <b>Provide positive encouragement</b> and future pathways advice</li><li>• <b>Broaden students' knowledge</b> of art to</li></ul>



include non-representational art and wider art occupations such as architecture to support students to 'find their place'.