

The Creative Teacher

As every one knows, most little children are delightfully responsive people. Confident in their own ideas and abilities, they are involved in all the arts. Even before they are walking, they respond to music and rhythm and their pre-speaking stages are marked by an apparent delight in sounds. With speech, come the beginnings of drama and literature as the young actors play out the roles they see in the adult world and explore the magic of story-telling and rhyme. Young children exhibit a desire to decorate with line and colors, to enclose space, to construct a world of imagination from everyday things — the rudiments of art and architecture.

For many children, this deep involvement in the arts, or learning through play, ceases when they enter the school doors. True, kindergarten programs serve as an intermediate step between play learning and formal classrooms, but what happens to the learning through play in the primary grades? Should we not utilize all the creative energy and ideas involved in the natural method of learning; should we not develop skills in creative drama, dance, the plastic arts, story-telling and music and let the other "skill" subjects of reading and writing take their places as necessary aids to the expression of children's ideas and responses?

Quebec's **Parent Report** recommended creative programs for schools, but where are the creative teachers to be found? Many of the products of our teachers' colleges and our schools have had their natural confidence in their own ideas destroyed in the early grades. We hope at McGill to develop new programs which will involve experience with all the arts — experience in creative acting and production, experience in creative movement and dance, in painting, in sculpture and in creative writing. A new program of integrated studies in these areas is at present being planned.

— Betty Jaques
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