NEW MEDIA

ELECTRONIC MEDIA INTEREST GROUP (EMIG)
AN INTEREST GROUP OF THE NATIONAL ART EDUCATION ASSOCIATION (NAEA)

April, 2008

Digi-Color by Crayola

This month's column features a look at new products and methods at Crayola.com and their resources for classroom teachers and arts educators. The site offers numerous lesson plans, craft ideas, and art techniques.

This year Crayola.com introduced Digi-Color, an online product demonstration tool, which allows teachers and students to experience Crayola* products online before purchasing the actual item. Users can create with Crayola crayons, Twistables, Super Tip, Washable and Erasable markers, colored pencils, Slick Stix, Mini-Stampers, and paint—all online.

Classroom Application

Digi-Color helps student practice eye-hand coordination while drawing and coloring using a computer mouse. It gives the user a realistic sense of the product texture, functionality, and a perception of what the end result will look like on paper. The artwork created on Digi-Color can be printed so students and teachers can keep and display their artistic creations.

Coloring pages on Crayola.com can be imported into Digi-Color so users can try the Crayola coloring and drawing tools on a virtual coloring book. Teachers can search to find coloring pages related to specific topics or lesson plans to be colored online. Users can create with several Crayola products on a single coloring page, selecting from the full range of colors available for each product.

More Online Tools

Crayola continually offers new technologies that encourage creative development. Interactive experiences are available for Crayola products such as Color Wonder Soft Sticks, Color Wonder Paint, Color Explosion Back, and White, and the Crayola Color Explosion Glow Board. To take advantage of these virtual product demonstrations, go to the Crayola.com Products page, choose a product and click on "try it online."

While there's nothing like the hands-on learning experience of student's expressing their creativity in the real, rather than virtual world, Digi-Color is a fun, interactive application that lets teachers bring creativity into the classroom in a new engaging way.

First-Hand Experience

I was excited when I saw Digi-Color on Crayola's website, with so many flexible tools and color choices and a variety of textures. I encouraged my students to explore Digi-Color after completing art assignments. Since my discovery, may of my students report that they are working with Digi-Color at home. Although printing is costly, students create one print per month in the classroom. Hopefully, one day Crayola will include other functions in the Digi-Color application, like the ability to save artwork on a disc. I am pleased to see this online drawing tool has the same quality and integrity as the other Crayola products and materials.

Digi-Color is a free application and a great budget stretcher for home or classroom use. It allows my student access to more serious software capabilities. It is specially beneficial for students with learning disabilities, particularly those with special needs for fine motor and eye-hand coordination to assist learners.

There are many that will argue that younger students in their formative years should work with the visual arts in traditional methods by hand. There is much to compete with in today's age of electronics and gadgetry-student's time is filled with electronic video games and educational instruction.

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Inside this issue:

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Electronic Media Interest Group (EMIG)
An Interest Group of the National Art Education Association (NAEA)

A Need for the Integration of Technology into the Art Education Curriculum

The discussion I will give at the EMIG Luncheon is based on my research. The study is predicated on rapid and enormous changes in digital technologies within the last decade. I will provide a brief outline of what has transpired in relation to the workforce and proceed to introduce my research topic.

As a society we have undergone a transition as radical as the change brought about by the Gutenberg press close to 550 years ago. Since the invention of the home computer in the early 1980s and the growing infiltration of small user-friendly digital machines into classrooms, educators have seen a shift from traditional classrooms in every subject area to ones incorporating digital computers. During the time we now call the "*dot-com bubble,*" when digital technologies first emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s graduating students who had digital computer skills were hired in droves. While I was teaching at a high school during the late 1990s, it was not uncommon for high school students trained in technology to easily acquire a job or begin their own *dot.com* business earning large sums of money. In one case a student earning over $100,000.00 per year had not even graduated from grade twelve. Now it is no longer the case students can graduate from their secondary schools and start off making more money than their teachers. In 2002 the so-called "*dot.com bubble"* burst bringing the *"dot.com crash"* upon us swiftly and callously. As a result a shift in paradigms occurred. Masses of digital tech-savvy people lost their jobs and the digital technology job market glutted. Fewer students began enrolling in 'tech' colleges and university computer programs. Unemployed computer experts in all fields were entering any programs but computers and changing careers rapidly. (It became personally relevant for me when my neighbor who was nearing forty years old lost his job in video/animation production and entered an M.B.A. program.) I wanted to know how this phenomenon has affected public school visual art education?

For graduating high school students being visually skilled and visually literate is becoming increasingly important. Visual culture has arisen from our 21st century digital world. In the last five years it is no longer enough for students to have digital technical knowledge and skills. Now professors working at colleges and universities, and industry professionals hiring in new media are looking for students who are more than computer literate and tech savvy. Art educators are being told it is crucial for these tech-literate students to have a solid visual arts background. Therefore, students need to have a combination of both technology and visual arts skills and knowledge. It is often said students experienced and knowledgeable with technology together with the visual arts handle new media better, develop a higher level of expertise in this emerging field, and are better prepared for the new media workforce. In short, those graduating techno-literate students who have a sound foundation in visual arts are more desirable in the new media work force: they are needed and sought after in the digital professional world. As a result, we need to train our students well for this new world since the *dot.com crash.* Increasingly, there is a need for a new breed of high school student who are what I call, *"digi/visual art savvy*".

How are art educators preparing high students well for the new digital age? In terms of my research I wanted to find out ways to help prepare students to become digitally savvy and visually literate. Consequently, I asked a key question, simply stated: "What works in new media high school visual art programs? "I wanted to answer this question in order to address the critical need to improve our understanding and practice of ways technology can have a positive, creative and transformative impact upon art educational practice.

I examined programs in which visual arts educators collaborate with each other to deliver quality virtual visual art and computer integrated programs. An art program using new media is one in which a minimum of two educators work together to form an art education department which incorporates technology. I will outline ways educators successfully work within digital arts based programs integrating new technologies with visual arts in their curriculum. The mandate of schools and their specialized programs will be outlined. I will discuss the perspectives of the program directors and educators and delineate what technological approaches make these specific high school art education programs successful. To do this, three high school exemplary art programs in Canada will be discussed: one in the eastern province of Canada and two located in central Canada. I will show examples of students' digital visual art works from these three schools and talk about the key issues involved in these model art programs. ■

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Technology Creates New Ways of Going to School in North Carolina

Students today are proficient in the use of all sorts of technical hardware and software that were not even dreamed about twenty or thirty years ago. Poll any group of high school students and you will find that they know about podcasts, xml, vrml, Java, Flash, mpegs, mp3 files, wifi. They own iPods, digital cameras, digital phones, portable DVD players and more. Modes of delivery of instruction are changing, as well. Politicians, state school boards, parents, and students are realizing that bricks and mortar classrooms no longer meet the needs of every student, if they ever did. Distance education delivered online is being used to accommodate students who are home-bound for medical reasons, suspended students, students who live in isolated areas, and other students whose needs are not being met in the traditional classroom.

The National Education Association's Guide to Online High School Courses states, "The appeal of online courses is evident: they can increase the range of course offerings available to all students as well as provide educational access to special students (for example, homebound, incarcerated, and atypical students for whom regular classrooms are not effective). In addition, they provide an alternative method of instruction, one that adults are increasingly using for both professional and personal development. The number of students participating in online courses is large and growing dramatically. One estimate is that 30,000 high school students have taken an online course and that another 25,000 students are enrolled in teacher-led online courses this academic year alone. When all kinds of online courses or online options are considered, the number enrolled may be closer to 50,000 or even 100,000. It is estimated that by 2006, a majority of high school students will have had an online course before graduating."

North Carolina's Department of Public Instruction is joining this new wave by introducing the North Carolina Virtual Public School. According to Howard Lee, Chairman of the NC State Board of Education, "A child in the far reaches of our state who does not have access to rigorous course work is at a significant disadvantage; a virtual school can help to rectify this."

All courses in the NCVPS will be taught by a certified teacher in the subject who is certified to teach in NC or has a master's degree in the subject area. Courses are free and are currently open to only high school students, but plans are in the works to add courses for middle and elementary students later. In addition to being certified, each instructor must undergo a five-week online training course that can be supplemented by further training later. All courses offered undergo an evaluation process by an independent organization to insure that the courses meet the NC Standard Course of Study.

Registration is currently underway for summer and fall courses and teachers are being hired to meet the numbers of students registering for this option. Amidst all of the general course offerings, the arts have not been left out. This inaugural program includes AP Art History, Music Appreciation, and Art I Drawing and Design.

This same scenario is being played out in school systems across the country. South Carolina just began an online school this summer, although no courses in the arts are currently offered. Florida currently is operating the Florida Virtual School, which offers AP Art History, Intro to AP Art History and a middle school course called Orientation to Art 2-D. Keystone National High School offers art and music appreciation courses. Virtual High School, Inc. offers fourteen courses including such courses as Art and the Internet: Creating a Virtual Museum Exhibit; Caribbean Art History; and History of Photography. In addition, community colleges and universities are also joining the trend. Oregon State University offers a high school graphic arts course intended to cover "art elements and design principles, historical, cultural and social perspectives, symbols, typography, design analysis and critiquing, career paths and portfolio development. Students will learn to use graphic design software and will complete a variety of interesting projects tailored to their specific goals and interests."

Will these programs meet the needs of all students? Certainly not. However, these programs all imply a need for today's instructors, including those in the arts, to explore the possibilities for learning outside the bricks and mortar box. ■

Florida Virtual School; http://www.flvs.net/
Keystone National High School; http://www.keystonehighschool.com/courses/catalog.php
National Education Association Guide to Online High School Courses; http://www.nea.org/technologyonlinecoursguide.html

North Carolina Virtual Public School; http://www.ncvps.org/
Oregon State University; http://www.elearners.com/college/osu/
South Carolina Virtual School; https://blackboard.ed.sc.gov/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp?tab_id=_61_1
Virtual High School; http://www.govhs.org/

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EMIG Treasurer & Membership

School Arts Magazine
Special Issue on Design Education

Martin Rayla and Paul Sproll have been invited by Davis Publishing to co-edit the October 2008 issue of School Arts magazine on Design Education. Articles and content editing must be completed by May 2008 so potential articles with photos will need to be identified within the next couple of months. If you, or someone you know, are interested in submitting an article please send a brief description of the proposed topic and grade level to Rayala@Kutztown.edu to let us know what you are planning. Please let us know of others we should contact as well.

We will need at least one article for pre-school, and at least three each for elementary, middle, high school and lessons for all levels. School Arts Articles are usually about 800 words (2 pages) with high quality photos showing a lesson idea (process and product) Articles should be directed at PK-12 practitioners and avoid too much of an academic style of writing. Additional information that won't fit in the article can be included in the website. You can see a sample issue and writer guidelines at http://www.davisart.com/Portal/SchoolArts/SAdefault.aspx.

We want to include articles about exemplary teaching in four design area—images, objects, places, and experiences.

1.Images include 2D graphic design, typography, web design, illustration, animation, school yearbooks, newspapers, TV shows, etc.

2. Objects include 3D product design, industrial design, autos, robotics, fashion, furniture, appliances, etc.

3. Spaces and places include architecture, urban planning, exhibits, school set design, interior design, landscape design, etc.

4. Experience design includes games, toys, video games, theme parks, interactive exhibits, children's museums, festivals, etc. where people physically interact with the design.

We would also like to include anything of a design history nature such as information/lessons/resources about Paul Rand, Raymond Loewy, Frank Lloyd Wright, Fredrick Law Olmsted, Walt Disney, Will Wright, etc.

We are also seeking new advertisers who provide resources (books, tools, supplies, video, software, etc.) appropriate for PK-12 media and design education to be part of this special issue. This is the issue that Davis features at the fall state art education conferences. Please let us know of any products, suppliers, videos, etc. that you find helpful.

This is an excellent opportunity to provide teachers with ideas and examples of design education possibilities in schools, museums, etc. across the country. Please send us any ideas or suggestions to make this one of the best issues ever.

Thank you,

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Digi-Color by Crayola

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It is my experience that students do look for the opportunity to work creatively. It is natural for all students to work in free and exploratory modes of creativity. The age of electronics and gadgetry feeds our creative nature.

As professional educators, we are challenged with training the next generation of students to become well-educated and well versed electronically in the visual arts.

In addition to Digi-Color, Crayola created excellent televised learning video workshops for crafts, products, and DreamMakers programs. These professionally produced video workshops meet the National Standards for the Visual Arts, giving wonderful insights into creative methods and processes.

Navigating Crayola.com

You need Flash 8 plug-in to use Digi-Color. Adobe Flash Player Download Center http://www.adobe.com/shockwave/download/download. cgi?P1_Prod_Version=ShockwaveFlash

Digi-Color

http://www.crayola.com/coloring_application/index.cfm?referrer=/index.cfm&mt=digicolor

Crayola Color Pages for Online Coloring

http://www.crayola.com/free-coloring-pages/color

Crayola Video Workshops

http://www.crayola.com/tv/index.cfm

How Technology is Changing Kids and Learning

http://digitallearning.macfound.org/site/c.enJLKQNIFiG/b.2029199/k.BFC9/Home.htm ■

EMIG Membership Form

It's time to renew!

EMIG dues for one year:
Regular membership: $15.00
Institutional Membership: $25.00

Application Form (*Please Print Clearly)*

Name: _____

Address: _____

Electronic Mailing Address: _____

Primary Telephone Number: _____

Secondary Telephone Number: _____

Are you interested in serving on an EMIG committee or helping in some other capacity?

Circle all that apply: Conference Publications Website Newsletter

Complete this order form and return it along with your check to:

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EMIG Business

EMIG (Electronic Media Interest Group) invites you to join us at the National Arts Educators Association convention in New Orleans for a luncheon and to go to exemplary workshops given by the EMIG membership. See our information on the website of the National Arts Association in the Arts Organizations listing of NAEA Special Interest Groups.

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