

Using art as a tool to cultivate the cooperative concept

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The quality of teaching is a key factor for social and economic cohesion, as well as for job creation, competitiveness and economic growth. The use of modern teaching methods, such as the use of art in education, contributes not only to the internal reform of the school, but also to skill acquisition by students, including critical ability, imagination, communication, cooperation and teamwork. At the same time, findings from relevant research have established the contribution of the aesthetic experience to the holistic development of the students, as well as to the activation of different symbolic systems, such as multiple intelligence, critical thinking and reflection.

Critical thinking and its educational function, in relation to their implications for contemporary culture, are a key area of interest in both formal and adult education (Fragkoulis, 2014; Kokkos, 2009). In the context of formal education, modern teaching approaches are promoted for the development of critical and creative thinking as complementary forms of reflection (Kokkos, 2011). In formal and non-formal education, art can be a drastic tool for the development of reflection, as it activates in recipients an “understanding adventure” not only for what the author might wish to express but also for the ideas, feelings, values awakened in the recipients themselves (Kokkos, 2011; Mega, 2014).

In this paper, we attempt to use Van Gogh’s art piece “The Red Vineyards”, to cultivate the idea of cooperative education in both high school and adult students. In particular, through the exploitation of the proposed visual artwork we understand *how* teachers of all types and levels of education can utilise art as an interactive stochastic tool, based on the “model” of observation – analysis of works of art developed by Perkins (1994). More specifically, the use of art in education contributes to the holistic approach to knowledge, to the understanding of ourselves, as well as of the reality that surrounds us.

Students, following the artwork observation stages as suggested by Perkins, will have the opportunity to approach the artwork holistically and develop a variety of skills, such as social, emotional, cognitive, metacognitive skills, etc. Indeed, to the extent that skills are a key goal for 21st century education, our aim should be to cultivate and develop those skills required by promoting the idea of cooperative education in the context of sustainable economic development.

The work concludes with the formulation of conclusions and proposals regarding the effective use of various forms of artworks with the aim of transforming the original assumptions of students into contemporary labour and social issues.

Key words: art and education, cooperative concept, critical thinking, creativity

Year	1888
Features	Oil on canvas 75 cm. x 93 cm
Source	https://el.wikipedia.org/wiki/%CE%9A%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%AC%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%BF%CF%82_%CE%AD%CF%81%CE%B3%CF%89%CE%BD_%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85_%CE%92%CE%AF%CE%BD%CF%83%CE%B5%CE%BD%CF%84_%CE%B2%CE%B1%CE%BD_%CE%93%CE%BA%CE%BF%CE%B3%CE%BA
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