10 CREATING AN AESTHETIC ENVIRONMENT

It is important that students who undertake this course have an opportunity to use what they learn to enhance their daily life. Students may be asked to practically demonstrate how they will create an aesthetic environment at school, home in the, and in the community. They can redesign their classroom with crafts they have studied, they can design a notice board for the school, or decorate the principal's office. Periodically students can display and organise exhibitions to display their work and obtain feedback. Students can learn how their products can be creatively used in their lives as well as in the community.

The purpose of this activity is to *add colour* to your life and that of others. To find a way by which you and your class can bring crafts and art to your school, your home and improve your environment.

Read the following story of Santokben of Gujarat to get some ideas of what you can do to add colour to your life.

How can you create an aesthetic environment in your home, school, and neighbourhood?

- *Keep it clean*
-
-
-
-

Decorating the floor with traditional painting

© NCERT not to be republished

Adding Colour to the World

Santokben lives in a village in North Gujarat. Her husband is a farmer. She works with him on the field when the need arises; at other times, she is busy at home.

Not just cooking and cleaning, she embroiders cloths, quilts and wall-hangings. She teaches the young girls of the neighbourhood her craft and regales them with stories. She paints the walls of her house in the festival season — transforming it from a mud hut to a dream house with the white lace of her lines and tiny insets of colour. If you complimented her for this, she'd say with a shy smile and a mixture of modesty and pride, "a gharna gokul che" *(this is a gokul built of mud), punning on the word gokul which can mean both 'cowherd's hut' and 'God's abode'.*

Do you think the right to creativity belongs to everyone?

Santokben has not learnt to draw but uses geometrical or near-geometrical units to make all kinds of configurations to represent the forms you see. She is in great demand. When she is free, her neighbours call her to their houses to help with their painting. Or rough the layout of their embroideries with a matchstick dipped in washable ink. She does so many of these that it has broken down her reserve; if you put a sheet of paper before her, she draws on that as well, normally the usual forms, but often improvisations.

Santokben and her kind add colour to the villages. Not just by their looks or clothes or handiwork but by their talk, their laughter, their open gaiety, even rough-hewn wisdom. Her daughter, Sharda, went to school, married a mill-hand and shifted to town. Santokben rues her luck. She has been washed white, she says about her daughter, and run through the press. No juice or colour left. Her husband is a good fellow but he looks so ill, she laughs so little!

– *K.G. SUBRAMANYAN*, The Magic of Making: Essays on Art and Culture

Embroidery from Gujarat

ACTIVITY 10.1

WALL MAGAZINE

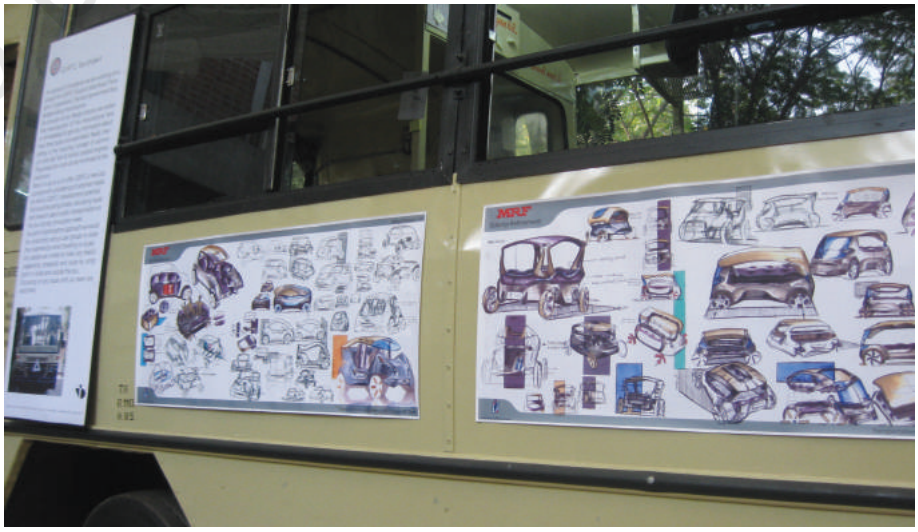
Class : XII
Time : Assignment

A tremendous amount of material can be collected on the history and development of each craft. This will consist of newspaper clippings, magazine articles, pictures, and even craft articles. However, much of this material will be repetitive or redundant.

Form two or three small groups of students to review this material, and carry out the following steps.

- A theme for presentation should be chosen by each group.
- Unnecessary material should be weeded out.
- The best should be chosen from repetitive material.
- A variety of forms of presentation should be chosen, e.g. pictures, tables, maps, charts, descriptive paragraphs, photographs, drawings, actual raw materials, etc.
- Rough placements and attractive arrangements should be made on newspaper or brown paper for the initial dummy.
- Spacing and captions should be decided on.
- Care should be taken to see that there is a sequential flow in the matter.

After this ground work is completed by the students, the teacher should step in and lead a discussion with the group leaders on the effectiveness of the dummies. Final selections and changes should be made at this stage. The best display techniques, the overall design, the colours to be used and the lettering should be decided on, so that all the presentations are standardised to a certain extent. Each group should be allotted *thematic* panels and all these should be put up together to form a composite wall magazine.



© NCERT not to be republished

This method encourages both individual as well as group work. Do remember to photograph the magazine presentation for your records. Keep the wall magazine up for two or three weeks, and then store it away carefully for later use, e.g. an exhibition at the end of the year, or for use in subsequent years when the same theme is explored by a new group.

Topics for Your Wall Magazine

When you have finished studying a chapter from the textbook make an illustrative wall magazine. Two topics are suggested below.

- In India, ornaments are made for different age groups and are designed for each part of the body.
- Make a textile map of India with photographs and cloth samples to illustrate the costumes of India, different ways of wearing the sarees, or the weaving or embroidery styles of each region of this country.

ACTIVITY 10.2

REDECORATING THE CLASSROOM

Class : XI
Time : Class assignment

SUGGESTED IDEAS

- Decorate your classroom with, for example, a traditional paper craft of your region/cloth samples/murals.
- Create posters for each craft of your state for a Crafts Fair highlighting the important qualities.
- Make a wall magazine/newspaper/cartoon

The Principal's room can be decorated with traditional murals

ACTIVITY 10.3

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROOM

Class : XII
Time : Class assignment

The Principal's office is visited by teachers, students, parents and visitors. It is an ideal place for a crafts project, to showcase students' crafts and design skills.

SUGGESTED IDEAS

- Mural painting
- Wall magazine
- Crafts display
- Heritage maps

© NCERT not to be republished

What are the qualities of a good display?

Activity 10.4

Creating a School Museum

Class : XI
Time : Field visit and class assignment

Crafts objects of different regions, styles and communities collected during your field work can be used to create a school museum, located in a corner of your crafts/art room.

Suggested Ideas

- Bring objects from home and display — a collection of pots, sarees, kitchen implements etc.
- Visit a local *haat*, or *mela* and collect different clay/ metal/paper objects. Create a display corner and label the objects to explain the form and function of each handcrafted object.

Collections of different craft objects for a school museum

© NCERT not to be republished

ACTIVITY 10.5

DISPLAYS

Class : XI and XII
Time : Class assignment

The culture of North-east India had been self-sufficient for centuries, including such cottage industries as pottery, basketry, weaving, carpentry, blacksmith, etc. which were carried out within the household at the family level. The artisans and craftsmen were never idle.

Among the number of tribal communities, the Naga have the most spectacular and identity-bestowing woven item — their body cloth or shawl — which consists of three separately woven pieces that are stitched together. The central part is generally more lavishly decorated than the rest.

Every traditional piece of Naga wear is an expression of the Naga philosophy of life, world-view and traditional values. Different Naga people have their own cloth designs. Cloth indicates social position (marital status, wealth, commoner or aristocrat, head or feast-giver) and cultural aspects. Naga shawls range from a very simple white cloth to the elaborately designed shawl for the warrior or the rich man.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

- Make a display of textiles from the North-east using photographs and cuttings from magazines, newspapers, the Internet etc.
- Consider how costumes and jewellery define the social position of different members of your community. Include the language of clothes amongst the youth today. Argue whether in a democracy this should be the case.
- Are school uniforms a good idea? Develop a display for and against the idea.

not to be republished

ACTIVITY 10.6

PERFORMANCES

Class : XI and XII
Time : Class assignment

Make scrolls using elements of traditional story-telling styles to carry important messages on health, safety, environment protection such as saving wildlife, etc. Display the scrolls to the accompaniment of music and dance like the Bhopas of Rajasthan. Try to invent your own musical instruments and songs.

Bhopa (narrator), Rajasthan

Display of a scroll by students

© NCERT not to be republished

ACTIVITY 10.7

DESIGN EXPERIMENTS

Class : XI and XII
Time : Three periods and home assignment

There are many aspects of design to be considered when developing a poster/chart/brochure/wall magazine. Let us experiment with three aspects:

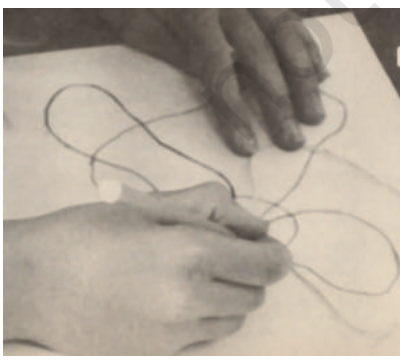
- line
- colour
- shape/form.

Students experimenting with different design aspects

Line

Lines can express.

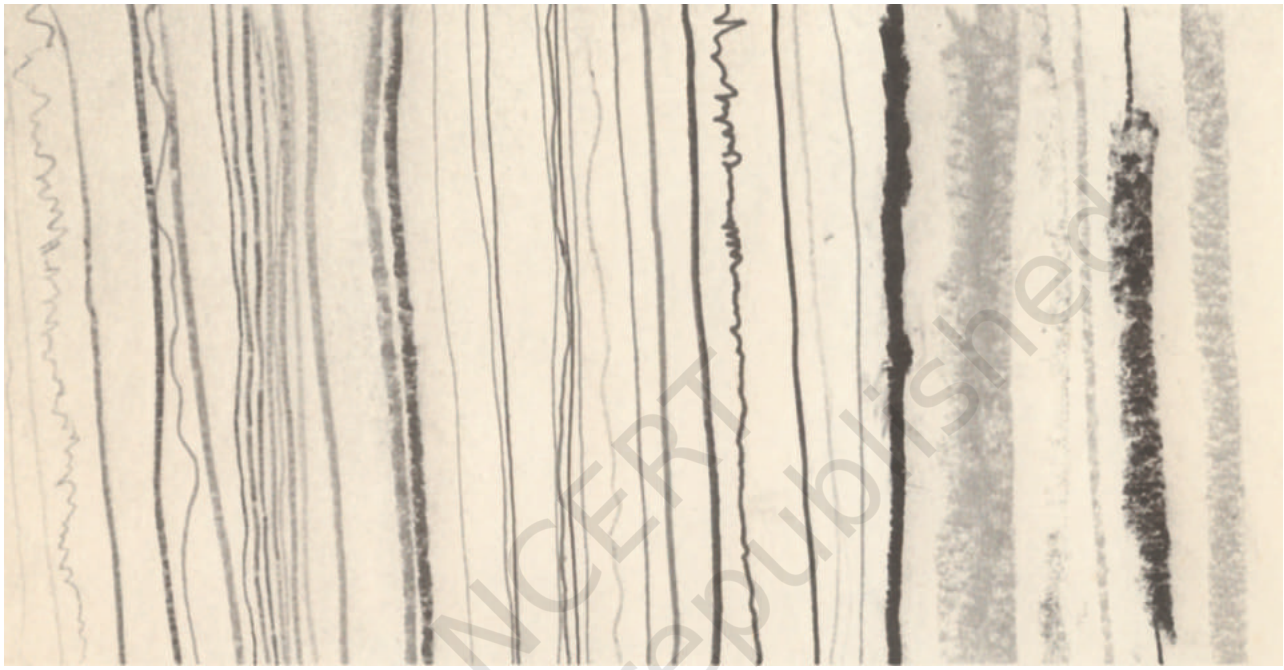
Create expressive lines with a variety of pencils — HB, 2B, 4B, 8B, pens, brushes, etc.



© NCERT not to be republished

Draw:

- thick lines
- thin lines
- wavy lines
- hard/soft lines
- zig-zag lines
- messy lines
- fading lines



Different types of lines

Calligraphy/Typography

Each region in India has its own beautiful languages and scripts that have developed over the centuries. Choose a script and your favourite book or poem title and create two different calligraphic designs for it.

Calligraphy is the art of decorative handwriting.

- Plan the size and style of letters using an instrument of your choice.
- Use different sizes for different purposes.
- Carefully space the letters.
- The calligraphy should be easy and interesting to read.

Colour

Colours around us are classified as follows.

Primary Colours: Those that cannot be prepared by mixing colours. They are red, yellow and blue.

© NCERT not to be republished

Secondary Colours: Those formed by mixing two primary colours in equal quantities.

Warm colours to .....Cool colours

Neutral colours

Acromatic: black and white only

Monocromatic: gradation of the same colour

Play between warm and dark colours

A pattern is the repitition of motifs.

Shape/Form

Spaces enclosed by lines are called shapes.

Design is the symmetrical or asymmetrical placement of motifs.

Motifs and Patterns

In a design symmetrical, asymmetrical and repetition of motifs take place. Repetition of motifs creates patterns.

Symmetrical motif

Asymmetrical motif

Natural shapes — flowers, leaves, animals

Geometrical shapes — round, square, triangle

© NCERT not to be republished

ACTIVITY 10.8

POSTER-MAKING

Class : XII
Time : Two periods

Design a poster a chart or a wall magazine keeping the following suggestions in mind.

- Keep a clear margin
- Write title clearly
- Write text in a readable style and size
- Balance text with interesting pictures
- Introduce colours, textures, shapes.

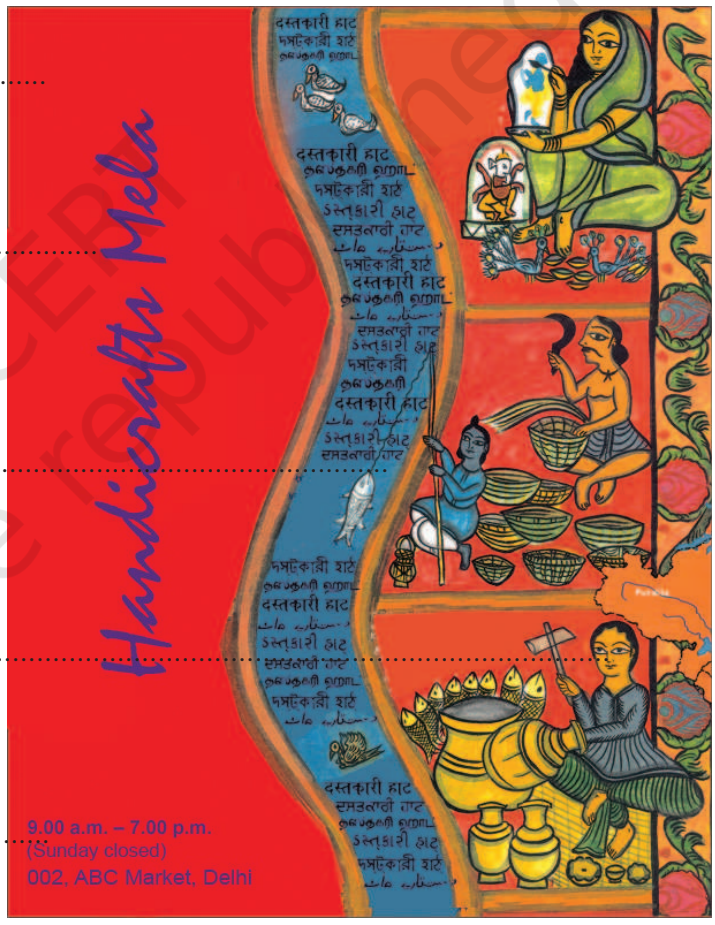
Use bright colours .....

Use clear and interesting calligraphy .....

An unusual shape can attract attention.....

Select visuals appropriate to the subject .....

Clearly indicate address, time and duration .....



© NCERT not to be republished

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Make posters for any two of the following events.

- Crafts *mela* in your school
- School annual function
- Music recital/dance performance/play
- Exhibition of photographs/paintings

NOTES

© NCERT not to be republished

© NCERT not to be republished

© NCERT not to be republished