

## Construction Lesson with 5<sup>th</sup> to 6th Classes

### ‘Playgrounds’

Gemma Mc Girr

**Curriculum Strand:** Construction (Visual Arts Curriculum p. 74)

**Objective:** *Explore and experiment with the properties and characteristics of materials in making structures (p. 74)*  
*Make imaginative structures (p. 74)*

**Linkage:** **Drawing** > *Express his/her imaginative life and interpret imaginative themes using inventive pattern and detail (p.48)*  
*Draw imaginative themes using inventive pattern and detail (p.66)*

**Integration Possibilities:**

*Science: Identify and explore how objects and materials may be moved (p.87)*

*Oral Language: Discuss ideas and concepts encountered in other areas of the curriculum (p.53)*

*History: Explore aspects of the leisure interests and games of local people in the past (p.63)*

*Physical Education: Create and develop games with a partner or with a small group (p.56)*

### **Developing this Activity in Class:**

**Getting Started:** You will need to discuss the idea/stimulus for this lesson with your class about a week or so in advance to give them time to gather up the waste materials required. They can also decide if they wish to work in pairs or larger groups or if there are some children who prefer to work on their own. You will have card, lollipop/matchsticks, construction straws, PVA, masking tape, sellotape, scissors, paints and brushes in the classroom, but stress to the children it is up to themselves to provide the waste materials. They will be very inventive in what they can scavenge once they know they are working to their own designs!

**Materials Needed:** Waste materials found at home:

- Boxes/containers of different sizes and shapes
- Cartons, plastic bottles, broken toys, wheels etc
- String, old wire, nuts, bolts, empty spools (for thread), etc.

Lollipop/matchsticks

Construction straws

Scissors

PVA

Masking tape/sellotape

Poster paints

Brushes

**Stimulus:** “What games can you play in the local playground? What sort of equipment is there? Can many children use the playground? Are there slides/see-saws/climbing frames/swings/roundabouts, skateboard areas? If you could put more equipment into the playground what would it be? Describe what you could do on/with this equipment. Will it suit all age groups? Can many children use it at the same time? Will it comply with health and safety requirements? Draw a plan of your playground and if you are working in groups, decide who needs to collect the various materials you will need to construct it.”

**Activity:** The children construct their playgrounds. Their ideas will probably change as they work, difficulties will arise and they will find ways to overcome them. Encourage them to discuss what they are doing, to experiment with the materials, to view their constructions from all angles and to consult

each other along the way. Display the children's work in the classroom or other suitable place in the school.

***Evaluation/Looking and Responding:***

This will be happening as the children work. Encourage them to talk about their playground ideas, where they might have had any difficulties with their constructions and how they overcame them. Give them time to show their work to the class and to question each other about what they have done.

**Extension Activities:**

The children could make individual drawings of items for playgrounds adding inventive detail.

**ICT Possibilities:**

Photograph the children's work and scan it into the computer. They could write a description of what they have done, explaining the process from start to finish.

**Using the I Am An Artist DVD:**

The *Construction* programmes on the DVD offer opportunities to see children making constructions using card and other materials.

**Note:**

Allow the children to design and make their own constructions. If they are asked to follow instructions to make something designed by an adult it can lead to frustration for them and for you. They will be very inventive in their ideas and gather up lots of scrap materials themselves.

**Relevant Artists:**

Michael Warren  
Anthony Caro

**Relevant Websites:**

See a range of playground equipment, click on the theme images to see interesting constructions

[http://www.timberform.com/intro\\_sub.cfm](http://www.timberform.com/intro_sub.cfm)

Visit the gallery of Wexford sculptor Michael Warren and see his wonderful constructions

<http://www.michaelwarren.ie/gallery.cfm>

Visit the gallery of Anthony Caro, who played a pivotal role in the development of 20<sup>th</sup> century sculpture

<http://www.anthonycaro.org/frames-related/Gallery.htm>

Scoilnet, which is a portal to lots of sites useful in the classroom

<http://www.scoilnet.ie>