

The Use and Its Influence of Picture Books in Kindergarten Art Activity

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Abstract—To explore the implementation of picture books being a new kind of educative material in kindergarten activity, to analyze the characteristics of excellent picture books, and then elaborate the feasibility of combination of picture books and kindergarten art activity, put forth suggestions on applying picture books' teaching into kindergarten.

Keywords—Picture Book; Kindergarten Art Activity; Imagination; Ability; Innovation

I. INTRODUCTION

China's famous writer of children's literature once said: "children's books can be divided into two kinds, one for spiritual foundation, and the other for after that." However, the current reading status of Chinese children is awful, instead of reading those books that are benefit for spiritual foundation, they choose to read the other kind of books which should be read after their spiritual foundation is done. In my opinion, children in China skipped an important reading link in their growth; they didn't read picture books at the age of four or five. Such books are collections of great goodness, beauty and wisdom, are written for cultivating spiritual foundation. "In developed countries like U.S and Japan, every child grew up in middle-class family will read hundreds of books in growth." [1] A lot of research and teaching results on creation of picture books have achieved in Taiwan province, while in mainland China, picture book education needs to be further explored for its development space. How to implement picture book education into kindergarten art activities? How to reasonably implement picture books in kindergarten art activities is a question worth thinking about.

II. WHAT ARE PICTURE BOOKS

Picture books, as the name suggests, are books that give priority to pictures, it is usually supplemented by words, or even completely devoid of words and full of pictures. Picture books are the combination of first-class paintings and first-class words, such kind of books especially emphasize the effect of visual communication, so the layout of book is large and exquisite, it has not only the function of assisting words communication, but also can enhance the performance of the theme content.

III. THE HISTORY OF PICTURE BOOKS

The first picture book for children should be *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* written by Czech educator Comenius in 1658, which is generally acknowledged by scholars. Comenius advocates sensory methods for learning that is "what children see by themselves is much better than what they are told", this is also where the theory of reading picture books based on. Since then, picture books have experienced the process from the preaching of children's poetry and nursery rhymes to the edification of humanistic aesthetics. In the East, children in Korea or Japan starts reading picture books early, Taiwan province also starts earlier than mainland China. Sichuan Juvenile and Children's Publishing House introduced the popular science picture book *Magic School Bus* in 2000, and since then the foreign picture books have officially entered the mainland China. In the past two years, the importance of picture books' reading for children's growth has been realized by some children's literature writers and researchers of primary school language in mainland China, and they started to devote themselves to the recommendation and promotion of picture books' reading. As a result, picture books are increasingly introduced into schools and families.

IV. THE NECESSITY OF IMPLEMENTING PICTURE BOOKS IN KINDERGARTEN ART ACTIVITIES

Tadashi Matsui, a Japanese picture book researcher, once has used a simple formula to illustrate the relationship between illustrated books and picture books: paintings plus words equals illustrated books, while paintings multiplies words equals picture books. Being excellent educational resources, picture books combined first-class paintings and first-class words together, and have important utility value in children's growth. Meanwhile it's a great waste of resource to merely take picture books as reading resource, in picture books, pictures takes a dominant position; picture books are also picture story books, pictures are both narrative language and carrier, so naturally picture books is inseparable from art education.

Picture books have various artistic style and rich performance skill. Picture books are created by well-known writers or artist at home and abroad, numerous art knowledge and learning skills that are worthy of reference are contained in their scene design, characters and painting language, and as well as in their outstanding ideas, associations, humorous

techniques of expression and rich humane spirit. To extract art knowledge from these excellent children's picture books for teaching can stimulate students' interest in learning and help them understand artistic styles much better. Picture books are rich in painting skills, in addition to pencil painting, dip pen painting, printmaking, watercolor painting, oil painting, acrylic pigment painting; it also includes collage, computer painting and so on. Paintings are no longer appendage of words, it becomes the life of book, and will help children complete the conversion of "words" and "paintings" effectively. Through the teaching of picture books, children can learn to read "paintings", meanwhile, they can also express their psychological feelings and stories in the form of "painting", which can effectively realize the individual expression of children's painting.

Picture books can enrich contents of children's art activities. Currently, the definition of fine arts in existing textbooks is so narrow that it simply define fine arts as unilateral content such as picture composition, color and handwork, and It is relatively separated from children's aesthetics, literature and psychology, and cannot be organically integrated into the actual teaching activities.[2] Good picture books has its irreplaceable education significance, It can provide broad field of vision, vividly descriptions of details, attractive plots, profound implication , children are expected to be fully integrated into the unconscious process of storytelling, to experience a different character, different life, such children's picture books are just what we need now to introduced into kindergarten art education.

V. THE RESEARCH ON FEASIBILITY OF COMBINATION OF PICTURE BOOKS AND KINDERGARTEN ART ACTIVITY

A. Choose the Right Picture Book, Try the Feasible Method.

Through practice, here I have concluded several feasible training methods on how to exert the magic power of picture books.

1) Appreciate the picture book, stimulate children's interest.

It is extremely effective to appreciate master's excellent picture book in kindergarten art activities. Firstly, the purpose of appreciating picture books is to learn the original art forms and try to create new ones. Secondly, children's habit of "reading the painting" should be developed. "Reading the painting" namely to analyze the picture books comprehensively, to find out the artistic elements that can be used for children's appreciation, to analyze it around such questions as theme of picture books, way to express the theme, the structural relationship of pictures, the atmosphere of pictures and various means to achieve the atmosphere. Students can enjoy themselves through reading, listening, and painting in this way, which not only accords with their psychological characteristics, but also satisfies their psychological needs[3].

2) Recreate the picture book, develop children's interest.

It is the creation of different materials on the same subject. Namely to further process the given material through adding imagination or simplifying the contents. For instance, after appreciating the book Rosie's Walk, students of upper class in

kindergarten can rearrange the combination of lines, of line and surface or color blocks, recreate the plots of books through role-playing, such ideas will always bring children exceptional happiness.

3) Supplement the picture book, increase children's interest.

The picture in picture book is extended, active and dynamic, which can lead children into the story situation, and also contains message that cannot be expressed by words, that is the blank space of the picture in the picture book. Such "blank" will reserve room for imaginations for children, and trigger rich association. The "blank" is a method of design, a skill of painting and a common way of expression in children's picture books. It provides readers with space for imagination and has the effect of creating something out of nothing. To guide students to read pictures closely, to use their imagination, to supplement pictures with contents, all above will make kindergarten art activities much more fascinating. Once the valve of children's imagination is opened, vivid pictures will emerge from their pen, and they are o less capable of filling in the blanks than illustrator of the book.

4) Conjecture the picture book, fill up children's interest

One prominent feature of picture book is that they are "unexpected and reasonable". With strong curiosity, children always want to explore the unknown things and find the unknown answers. Samuel Johnson once said, "curiosity is one of the most permanent and certain characteristics of a vigorous intelligent." [4] Certain parts of the story, just like the reason, the process, the key part, the climax, or the end can be hidden deliberately when we lead children to read picture book, to make them guess all possibilities. The colorful pictures that are full of childlike innocence and taste can catch children's attention; arouse their enthusiasm of creating art works.

B. Choose Right Picture Books, Make Them Carrier of Fine Arts Education

1) The Contents conforms to Children's Age and Interest

Since that children are at different age groups, their intellectual development and psychological characteristics vary quite differently from each other, so does their acceptance for reading materials at different levels. Children at the age of three, for instance, are in a critical period of developing important non-intellectual psychological qualities like self-consciousness, independent personality and self-confidence, and memory, imagination, hands-on ability as well. Taking their physical and mental development characteristics into consideration, we can choose picture books with simple plots and vivid images. Like The Hungry Snake, which has vivid pictures, everything that has been eaten will show their shapes in stomach of snake. Interest is the best teacher. Only when children are interested in reading picture books can they be inspired to start reading and get pure happiness and happiness from it.

2) The art expression technique conforms to children's painting skill and level

There are many art expression techniques in picture books, and each picture book has its own painting expression methods, such as oil painting treatment, tearing or pasting, printing and

dyeing, rubbing and so on. As for teachers, firstly, it is necessary to find picture books that conform to children's painting skills and level at the present stage, so as to help children imitate the art expression techniques of picture books and master the painting skills, so as to expand children's imagination. For children in middle or senior class of kindergarten have already began to contact figure painting, in which they often choose to show the dynamics of the characters in the form of tadpoles, so *Belinda The Ballerina* is suitable for them. The author exaggerates the protagonist *Belinda's* black hair bun which looks like musical notes, her rubber like slender hands, long legs and a pair of big feet with caricature techniques, and humorously shows various gestures of stretching and jumping in ballet, filling the picture with dancing lines. Pictures that are close to children's painting style can trigger their inspiration to create, and improve their painting modeling ability in appreciation. While for students in bottom class of kindergarten, they are mentally and physically growing, their mental state is still in the graffiti stage. Instead of describing the shape of an object, they paint for fun. They view art activity more as game, and enjoy themselves in the process of painting.

C. To learn about the author's creating background and intention

The life of picture book is illustration, and the new elements in picture book are endowed by the illustrator. Therefore, the illustrator's creative intention should be one of the key points that teachers need to understand. Some picture books attract people through the skills, pictures and colors of painting; some attract people on the expressions of the characters and the plots of the stories; some are suitable for art appreciation, while the others are only suitable for telling or reading. Take *Little Blue and Little Yellow*, for instance, the author use the way of tearing and pasting, so teachers can guide the children to do tearing and pasting activities, or coloring and color changing activities as well. Picture books belong to children, and many picture book illustrators will design their works according to children's characteristics. Their works are often looks like children's works, which can become an effective resource of our art education for practical teaching.

VI. THE PROBLEMS SHOULD BE PAID ATTENTION TO DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PICTURE BOOKS IN KINDERGARTEN

"Picture books are not only books for children to read, but also books that adults read to their children,"[5] Japanese researcher of picture book *Tadashi Matsui* said so in his book *Seeds Of Happiness*. Based on the experience in practice, here I have summarized several points that should be paid attention to when implementing picture books in kindergarten art activities.

Firstly, Choose picture books that are easy to understand, of which the contents are interesting, the theme is positive and pictures are beautiful. Books that are difficult to understand, or cannot meet children's interest will shrink their desire to learn.

Secondly, the best way to read picture books is to read with children together, and instruct them to read the details in the pictures.

Thirdly, Picture books are often short in length, and some stories end abruptly at the wonderful place, leaving people with more imagination space. Make children imagine the future development of the protagonist when the story is over, can provide them with rich materials which they can express in the way of artistic creation that they are good at. This method allows children to have the joy of participating in the creation of stories, and the joy, in turn, will make children like reading more.

VII. CONCLUSION

Fine arts activity is no longer the traditional "painting" class; it's the kind of activity that applies a variety of teaching methods and integrated ability of various fields into appreciation of arts. To like it is better than to know it, while to enjoy it is better than to like it barely. As teachers, we should not only be good at discovering children's preferences, but also grasp the opportunity to organize teaching in time, transfer children's enthusiasm for reading into the motivation of art learning, and carry out art themed teaching activities with effective picture book reading as the carrier. The combination of children's picture books and art activities in kindergartens can both stimulate children's interest in reading, and give full play to their innovative ability. It can promote the cultivation of children's observation, memory and imagination in reading, listening to and drawing stories, and improve their comprehensive aesthetic ability. The implementation of children's picture books in art activities in kindergartens can enlighten and develop children's intelligence, cultivate their imagination and creativity, help them to learn to process information comprehensively in complex situations, and learn to express creatively.

In conclusion, the combination of children's picture books and kindergarten art activity, can make children not only appreciate the world renowned illustrator's work, which are in different forms like clip art, watercolor, acrylic, or oil painting, but also get emotional edification of beauty, develop artistic aesthetic ability, and get improvement in aesthetic accomplishment subtly in the pleasant emotional experience. Picture books are art, so is the teaching of picture books.

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