

I interviewed our art teacher Arto about self evaluation in art. Basically the questions were similar to those in the self-evaluation questionnaire.

1. What are the means of self-evaluation that you use in you teaching?
2. When do pupils use self-evaluation?
3. Does self-evaluation support pupil assessment? If it does, how?
4. What are the advantages of self-evaluation in your subject?
5. What are the challenges in pupils' self-evaluation?
6. How should the idea and the means of self-evaluation be developed in the Finnish school system?

Arto answered the questions as follows:

1. Self-evaluation is introduced to 7th graders during the autumn term in the form of pupil-teacher discussions about their finished work and their goals for the spring term. The process would be easier to start if the pupils brought their art portfolios they have made in primary school with them. This, however, hasn't been successful from one reason to another.

When the pupils finish their work, they usually discuss about the results, the techniques they used etc. (co-operative learning).

2. The ideal would be that the pupils evaluate themselves all the time while working and as a result they develop an awareness of their techniques and skills.

When it is time to give feedback, pupils first learn to evaluate each others' works. Since creating pictures is a form of visual communication, it is important to learn how to receive and interpret a work of art.

Because we have only a few lessons in a week, the amount of collecting written feedback from the pupils is very small. However, I consider pupil-teacher/ pupil-pupil discussions and developing conversational skills more important.

3. Self-evaluation does support pupil assessment because it reveals how seriously the pupil works, i.e. how much work he does to develop his skills despite of his weaknesses e.g. deficiencies in the motoric level of skills.
4. In my subject knowledge, skills and emotions are the tools in use. A better understanding of these elements and knowing oneself is the basis of all growth and development.
5. Discussions, in which pupils' voice is heard, and teaching conversational skills should be introduced already in early childhood education and it should be continued systematically through the whole compulsory education and onwards. Unfortunately, the traditional, unidirectional way of teaching in which teachers pour information into pupils' heads is probably still a dominant one?
6. Solving the mystery of learning and supporting the pupil to learn learning strategies, i.e. becoming aware of the whole process, is something that requires continuous development. It is related to recording positive learning experiences which improve motivation. In this context the forms of recording these experiences can be learning journals i.e. in primary school drawing pictures could be used as a means of collecting information about one's surroundings. This is because by drawing pupils become aware of their observations and different phenomena in their circle of living. Drawing equals thinking, it is not only means for expression. Creating pictures is dealing with your own thoughts, beliefs and emotions and therefore it is sort of all-embracing self-evaluation per se.