

Pastels, dye and light: Another creative experiment

Ceara, I've watched your great ideas come to life before and it seemed to me today that your creative spirit was in full flight. As your experimentation unfolded, I could see these ideas take shape. In Te Whare Aotūroa you gathered up a spare piece of newsprint and told me you wanted to draw and let the 'light shine through'. I wasn't sure at all what you meant by this but as I listened to you, it became a little clearer as you finished each step.



First you needed a pastel. You found this and then asked for some help to find dye. We have been working with pastel and dye over the last little while, and had been experimenting freely about how these two materials worked together and against each other, on various kinds of paper. So, I thought you were coming to this experiment today with quite a lot of research under your belt already. The idea that you wanted it to have 'light shine through' however still perplexed me.

In my head too, I thought that you might end up disappointed because you had chosen newsprint, which is easily ripped when dye is soaked in. I suggested you put a stronger backing on to avoid this. And you know, you listened, but you went about it in an interesting way because, while you worked with the stronger paper underneath, at the finish you added the newsprint to another sheet with tape and said, "It's strong now". The light idea was still uppermost in your mind, I think, because you held the paper to the sun and said 'See the light shines through'. And it did. Now I understood. There was a definite glimmer of light from the sun, but only a glimmer.

However, this made me think that perhaps you would enjoy seeing what a stronger light could do, and so we both went in search of a lamp. On the way you discovered the fairy lights and wanted to check these out too. We held the drawing up to each kind of light and you estimated how strong the light shining through was for each. In the end you pronounced the lamp had the best effect.



My thoughts on your learning.....

CC, always, always, your ideas work their way out of your head into a physical shape because you connect ideas and dogged determination together. This means that setbacks are not so overwhelming that you can't change tack and give something else a go. Although you listen carefully to other people's ideas, in the end you put your own take on these and make them your own. This kind of learning, as you keep working in this way, has a very powerful affect on your learning in general.



How might we grow this learning further?

Te Whare Aoturoa leaves us a lot of scope for quiet scientific and artistic creation and experimentation. Rarely do scientists get their experiments right the first time and each step is part of a whole, steered by curiosity, love of learning and seeing a way through, even when the going is tricky or hard. At Greerton we free up the day so we can keep focused and take our time, as we explore things that captivate our interest. In this way we hope to strengthen the foundations that lead to learners being creative, persistent, curious and able to talk about ideas, just like you did to day CC. Actually, like you do each and every day!

your friend Lorraine