

After spending seven years in Middle School work and being involved in the teaching of Design for a considerable amount of time, I found it a refreshing change to be given the opportunity of being a year co-ordinator. Leading a team of three class teachers and four classes of eleven year olds involved several changes to my usual specialist timetable. Whereas previously I had taught all the Design to ten, eleven and twelve year olds, I now found that my Design classes were confined to my own year (third year) and consisted of four 2½ hour periods; one period per class. For the rest of the time, I was involved in the teaching of Integrated Studies, Language and Mathematics.

As head of Design my aims and objectives had been clearly defined. In my new appointment, I found such close links between Integrated Studies, Creative Writing and Design that I felt the strong motivating force they provided should be utilised fully. There are clearly some who have used 'integration' as a bandwagon instead of the highly structured and well organised approach it has to be. I had every intention of fulfilling my aims and objectives using this approach, as I had done previously, but hopefully with better results.

How it was organised

For each of the 2½ hour sessions, one class was divided between myself and my successor. The whole of the multicraft area was available for the 2½ hour stretch. In addition, a minibus and also various pieces of equipment — slide projectors, overhead projectors etc. — were available.

The Integrated Studies work involved a detailed study of the pupils' own town, namely Redditch — how it began, developed and was then changed into a new town. This study involved a considerable amount of observation work in and around the locality — observation and its development being one of my most important objectives in both Integrated Studies and Design.

To look at what was covered in greater depth, I have attempted to make a visual plan. (Figure 1).

The visual plan is a very basic guideline. Many possibilities as to its development exist, some of which are practical others needing alteration. As far as the grammatical work is concerned, the child is constantly using language, whatever the subject he is dealing with, and correction of grammatical and other errors found in his communication is done continuously, whether the lesson is Integrated Studies, English or Design.

How does the integration of Creative Writing and Design fit into the included study on Redditch? (Figure 2).

Does this integrated approach ensure that children have learnt the basic skills in Design?

As far as the children in our situation are concerned, we are now enriching a very basic design course which they received in their second year. They should be able to make accurate and detailed observations of their environment. In addition, they should be reasonably competent at mixing colours,

An Integrated Approach to the teaching of integrated Studies/ Design and Creative Writing in Middle School

although the latter always needs practice and reinforcement. They still need to develop the simple paper sculpture techniques they learnt at ten years old to more complex and usable shapes in a particular situation. There is also need for the introduction of more sophisticated printing and collage techniques in addition to the introduction of completely new techniques such as fabric printing.

There are many occasions when we may use the same design but various different media to observe the effects. In our situation therefore, we use a variety of different subjects to provide *motivation* to ensure that children learn the basic skills. By being motivated in a 'fuller way' through other subjects the basic skills are more meaningful. (Figures 3, 4 & 5).

From these three examples it is quite obvious that some sections offer considerable scope whilst others have very little. Indeed the sections on schools and shops were very limiting as far as Design

and Creative Writing were concerned. If topics do not lend themselves naturally to development, then it is necessary to take up other themes which may not be related but which will certainly be more stimulating to a child. I consider the motivation of the child of far greater importance than contriving something to 'fit' into a scheme which may then become artificial and rigid. It is important that a teacher recognises the point at which she is having to *think* of developments rather than letting them arise naturally.

Evaluating this approach

Looking at the displays of work which have been included in these three areas of study one is

evaluating firstly the Integrated Studies for the way the child has expressed himself in written communication. One is then looking specifically at grammatical errors – spelling and punctuation mistakes – whilst the creative writing is evaluated on the pupil's expression of feelings, emotions and his personal involvement. Design work is assessed not necessarily on the finished product but more on how it has come about, whether the child has actually involved himself mentally or done what he has been told to do.

By combining these subject areas, I have attempted to give the individual a more meaningful approach to what might have been an isolated topic.

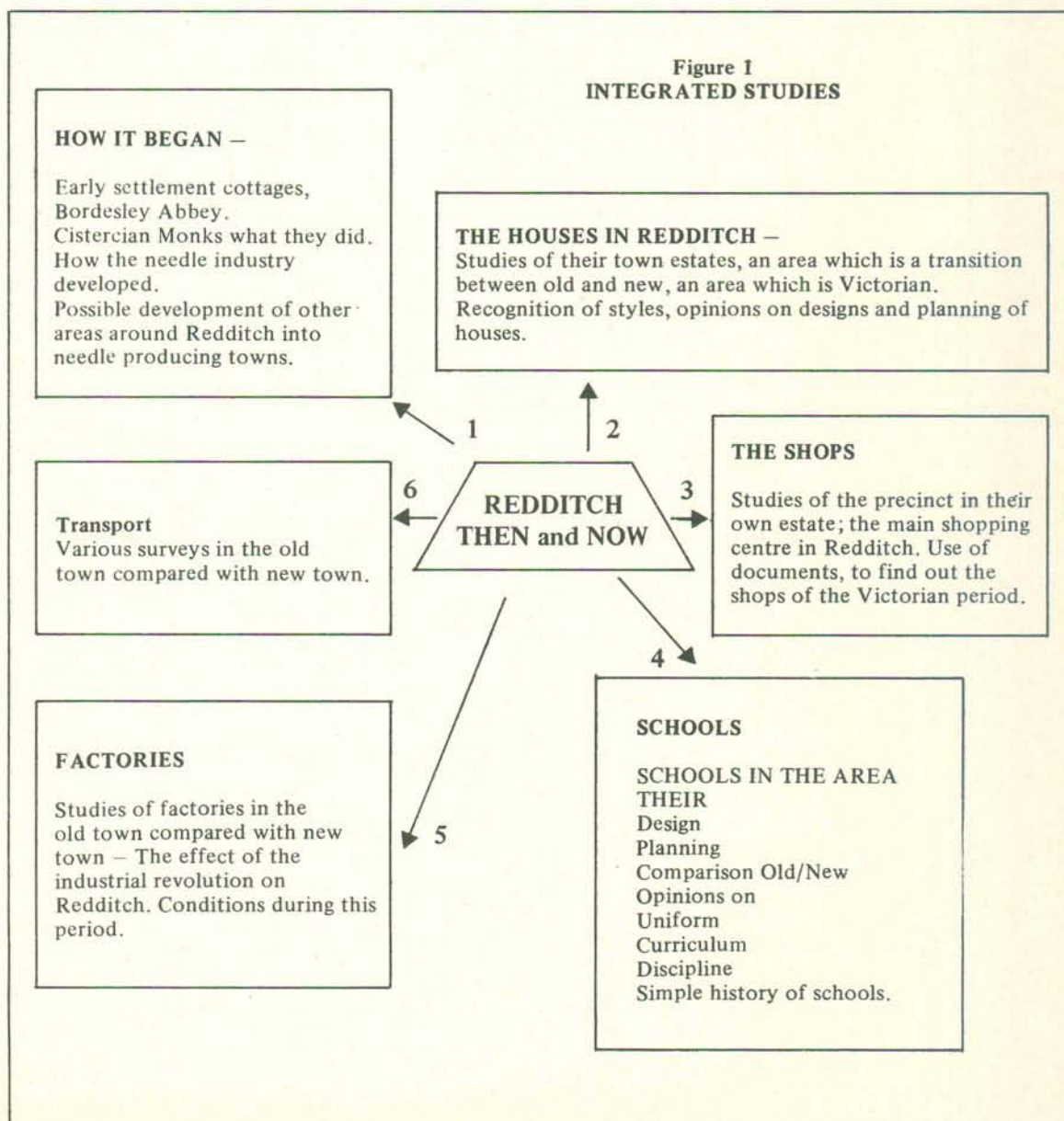


Figure 2
INTEGRATING SECTION OF THE INTEGRATED STUDIES SCHEME

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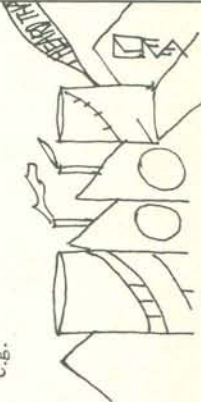
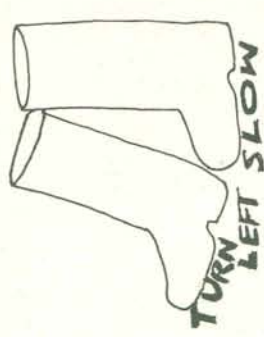
INTEGRATED STUDIES	CREATIVE WRITING	DESIGN	
<p>1. How Redditch began – early settlement</p> <p>2. Existence of an abbey in Redditch-Cistercian monks.</p> <p>3. The town itself – the Victorian areas New estates Industrial parts Residential parts</p>	<p>Most of the work is descriptive of the town itself.</p> <p>a. Colours, greys, blacks, creating atmospheres, shapes</p> <p>b. Noises – cars, lorries, people, noise pollution</p> <p>c. Sights – posters, words, people</p> <p>d. People in towns – expressions attitude to others</p> <p>e. Conversations – what do people talk about?</p> <p>f. Crowds – different attitudes of people in crowds. Different sorts of crowds.</p> <p>The effect of weather on towns and on people. snow, rain, fog, frost</p> <p>Comparison of day/night, loneliness of streets, look of uninviting houses, deserted alleyways, slum areas, demolished areas.</p> <p>Lots of fiction books on towns:</p> <p>Buildings in towns, studies of the effect of different doors, windows and stairways on what we think is behind them, where they lead to, etc.</p>	<p>3. Shapes in towns – silhouettes against skyline differences in industrial landscape.</p> <p>1. Black silhouettes done in sugar paper, background done in oranges with roller.</p> <p>2. Same landscape painted in shades of 1 colour.</p> <p>3. Texture in towns: – concentration on brickwork, slates, tiles, asbestos, glass, corrugated rooftops. Work done using paper sculpture techniques, pen/ink brush work</p> <p>4. Fill landscape with printed pieces.</p> <p>CROWDS This stimulated lots of work with circles, spots, mainly black and white op art work.</p> <p>Conversation in towns We discussed what people talked about and how we often heard pieces of conversation. The town was symbolised by a silhouette shape, filled in with texture (pen/ink), the conversation comes out of the town so that the words fit the shape. e.g.</p> 	<p>Words we tread on – Symbolised by boots, shoes, paving stones, these were done in cards and then places on props made in paper to give a 3 dimensional effect. The words were then printed underneath. e.g.</p>  <p>Words on high – Symbolised by balloons, aeroplanes, clouds, birds; these words were on posters, tops of shops, direction signs.</p> <p>Words on the move – Words on vehicles, lorries, vans, symbolised by wheels, feet.</p> <p>Unfriendly words – Such as keep off the grass, keep out, private; these we symbolised with walls, fists, gates, barriers.</p> <p>Friendly words – Such as enter, welcome, come in, symbolised best we thought by hands.</p> <p>BUILDINGS IN TOWNS Doors – Drawings of different sorts, shapes, design using these possible to develop positive negative work. Windows – Scenery behind, through different sorts, use of spraying techniques/masking gives quite an eerie appearance. Stairs – Spiral staircases, concrete steps, wooden stairways, all give interesting shapes to develop.</p>

Figure 3
LOOKING AT ANOTHER SECTION OF THE INTEGRATED STUDIES

INTEGRATED STUDIES	CREATIVE WRITING	DESIGN
<p>Factories:—</p> <p>a. Growth of factories:—</p> <p>b. Because of the industrial revolution, what did it do to the landscape.</p> <p>c. Differences between Victorian and modern factories, planning of position.</p> <p>d. Industrial areas in Great Britain, reason for position.</p> <p>e. Job survey of their families. Division of occupations people who serve us people who make things</p>	<p>A book namely 'Young Jethro' was written about local conditions in the 'Needle Mills' it gives a vivid impression of what conditions were like during the Victorian period.</p> <p>Another book on conditions in Industrial England during the Victorian period is: 'Human Documents of the Industrial Revolution in Britain' by Royston Pike.</p> <p>This gives accurate accounts of what conditions were like in mines, woollen mills etc.</p> <p>This period in history provides ample work to concentrate on atmosphere.</p> <p>The conditions they had to work in</p> <p>The hours they worked</p> <p>The noise, fumes and smoke</p> <p>The pollution created by factories</p> <p>destruction of countryside</p>	<p>1. The shapes made by factories, warehouses, chimneys against the skyline. Used rollers only to create industrial scenes.</p> <p>2. The industrial scene can be an opportunity to develop and practice basic skills such as collage paper sculpture printing</p> <p>3. Some interesting work can be done with nets to create texture/shadows plus simple stitchery.</p> <p>4. This is an ideal design to do some simple batik work.</p>

Figure 4
DEVELOPING THE SECTION ON HOUSES

INTEGRATED STUDIES	CREATIVE WRITING	DESIGN
<p>Different styles of houses in Redditch.</p> <p>Plans of estate where they live the plans of their house.</p> <p>Building a house, materials needed, people involved in building a house.</p> <p>Survey of people's opinions of the estate, its facilities, the houses on the estate.</p>	<p>1. Comparisons of noises and atmosphere outside a typical Victorian Street with a modern street.</p> <p>2. Descriptive work on various streets, the people who live there.</p> <p>3. Demolition of old houses, the tearing of walls, chimneys. The emotion caused by the loss of a home.</p>	<p>1. Using the patterns on the Victorian houses to learn basic stitchery.</p> <p>2. The various sorts of bonding in bricks can produce interesting designs for all sorts of designs.</p> <p>3. The plans of estates can also be ready made designs for all sorts of 3 dimensional work.</p>

Figure 5
In conjunction with the work on factories
The child writes about the Needle Mill—

Sounds of heavy hooves, grinding wheels of the wagons against the cobbled stones,
 Cart wheels on worn roads,
 People crammed, muscles tangled waiting to be stretched, dark rooms, low roofed rooms, smoke filled,
 Men, women and children eyes red, watering,
 Furnaces belching out noxious fumes, people choking thick oil covered machines.
 Clattering of the trundle wheels, slapping of the water against the walls.
 Grindstone spinning non stop
 Steel dust fills the air, tiny minute particles
 Sweating people hard at work.
 Hunched men and women.
 Tapping away with hammers
 Babies swaddled up, scream and bawl
 As in song with the machines
 People die but machines go on.