

Attitudes and motivation

Students' attitudes, interests and liking for a subject have a strong bearing on their achievement. The *Art Survey* sought information from students about their curriculum preferences and their perceptions of their own achievement. The questions were the same for year 4 and year 8 students. The survey was administered to the students in an independent session (four students working individually on tasks supported by a teacher). The questions were read to year 4 students, and also to individual year 8 students who requested this help. Writing help was available if requested.

The survey included one item which asked them to select three preferences from a list, 13 items which asked students to record a rating response by circling their choice, one item which asked them to tick boxes to indicate frequency of activities, and one which asked them to list preferred activities.

Subject preferences

Students were first asked to select their three favourite school subjects from a list of 12 subjects. Among the year 4 students, art was the most popular subject, listed as first, second and third choice by 80 percent of year 4 students. Physical education rated second (50 percent), maths and science third equal (36 percent) and music fifth (27 percent). Among the year 8 students, physical education was first (65 percent), art second (55 percent), technology third (44 percent), mathematics fourth (28 percent) and science fifth (27 percent). These results are generally consistent with previous surveys of subject preferences.

Rating items

Responses to the 13 rating items are presented in separate tables for year 4 and year 8 students. Where questions asked in 1995 and 1999 were identical, the results for 1995 are shown in brackets. The results show that, compared to year 4 students, fewer year 8 students were highly positive about doing art at school, or highly positive about how much they think they learn about art at school. Year 8 students were much less likely to think that their teachers and parents viewed their work favourably. About a quarter of year 4 students and about half of year 8 students indicated that they did not know what their teachers thought of their abilities in art. Overall, there was a downward trend from year 4 to year 8 in the percentages of students who reflected strongly positive views on their art education and achievements. This trend was similar in the 1995 survey. Furthermore, responses to identical survey questions asked in 1995 and 1999 show that fewer students in 1999 were positive about how much they learn and how often they do really good things in art.

YEAR 4 STUDENTS RESPONSES TO ART SURVEY QUESTIONS

1999 (1995)

1. How much do you like doing art at school?


 78 (83)
heaps

 18 (12)
quite a lot

 3 (4)
some

 1 (1)
little

2. How much do you think you learn about art at school?

37 (42)

43 (40)

17 (16)

3 (2)

3. How often does your class do really good things in art?

22

38

39

1

4. Would you like to do more art or less art at school?

*more**about the same**less*

72 (79)

25 (18)

3 (3)

5. How often do you do these things in art at school?

	<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>		<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
drawing	33	24	41	2	making models	9	8	43	40
painting	19	24	50	7	working with clay	7	8	41	44
print making	10	9	41	40	work with fabrics/ weaving	7	14	46	33
collage	9	13	46	32	group activities	35	35	24	6
carving	4	4	14	78					

*heaps**quite a lot**sometimes**never*

6. How often do you look at art and talk about art at school?

12

33

49

6

7. How often do you learn new things in art at school?

29

39

30

2

*don't know*

8. How good do you think you are at art?

49 (38)

40 (54)

7 (6)

2 (2)

2

9. How good does your teacher think you are at art?

46

25

5

1

23

10. How good does your mum or dad think you are at art?

81

7

1

1

10

11. How much do you like doing art things in your own time — when you're not at school?

57 (60)

26 (27)

12 (6)

5 (7)

12. Do you do really good things in art in your own time — when you're not at school?

*heaps**quite a lot**sometimes**never*

32

26

35

7

*yes**maybe**no*

13. Do you want to keep learning about art when you grow up?

56 (65)

38 (28)

6 (7)

14. Do you think you would make a good artist when you grow up?

31 (33)

52 (53)

17 (14)

YEAR 8 STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO ART SURVEY QUESTIONS

1999 (1995)

1. How much do you like doing art at school?

			
55 (65)	37 (26)	5 (7)	3 (2)
<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>some</i>	<i>little</i>

2. How much do you think you learn about art at school?

16 (21)	49 (55)	30 (20)	5 (4)
---------	---------	---------	-------

3. How often does your class do really good things in art?

9 (14)	28 (40)	57 (41)	6 (5)
--------	---------	---------	-------

4. Would you like to do more art or less art at school?

<i>more</i>	<i>about the same</i>	<i>less</i>
60 (63)	35 (33)	5 (4)

5. How often do you do these things in art at school?

	<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>		<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
drawing	26	35	37	2	making models	7	10	45	38
painting	13	30	50	7	working with clay	8	15	40	37
print making	5	11	50	34	work with fabrics/ weaving	6	16	42	36
collage	4	10	53	33	group activities	24	27	33	16
carving	4	5	26	65					

<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
--------------	--------------------	------------------	--------------

6. How often do you look at art and talk about art at school?

7	23	58	12
---	----	----	----

7. How often do you learn new things in art at school?

9	42	45	4
---	----	----	---

				<i>don't know</i>
---	---	---	---	-------------------

8. How good do you think you are at art?

19 (18)	52 (63)	16 (14)	6 (5)	7
---------	---------	---------	-------	---

9. How good does your teacher think you are at art?

17	28	7	3	45
----	----	---	---	----

10. How good does your mum or dad think you are at art?

43	26	4	1	26
----	----	---	---	----

11. How much do you like doing art things in your own time — when you're not at school?

37	37	18	8
----	----	----	---

12. Do you do really good things in art in your own time — when you're not at school?

<i>heaps</i>	<i>quite a lot</i>	<i>sometimes</i>	<i>never</i>
16	27	46	11
<i>yes</i>	<i>maybe</i>	<i>no</i>	

13. Do you want to keep learning about art when you grow up?

39	51	10
----	----	----

14. Do you think you would make a good artist when you grow up?

10	53	37
----	----	----

Art making at school

Students were asked to rate how often they did eight different types of art activities at school, and how often they took part in group activities during art.

Both year 4 and year 8 students rated drawing and painting as the most frequent activities, and carving as the least frequent. Six percent of year 4 students indicated that they never engaged in group activities during art compared to 16 percent of year 8 students.

Art done in students' own time

Students were asked an open question: What do you like doing most in art in your own time? Drawing was the most highly rated activity by both year 4 and year 8 students, followed by painting.

