

Morse Code (Keyboard Perforator) and the Art of Paul Emile Bordaus

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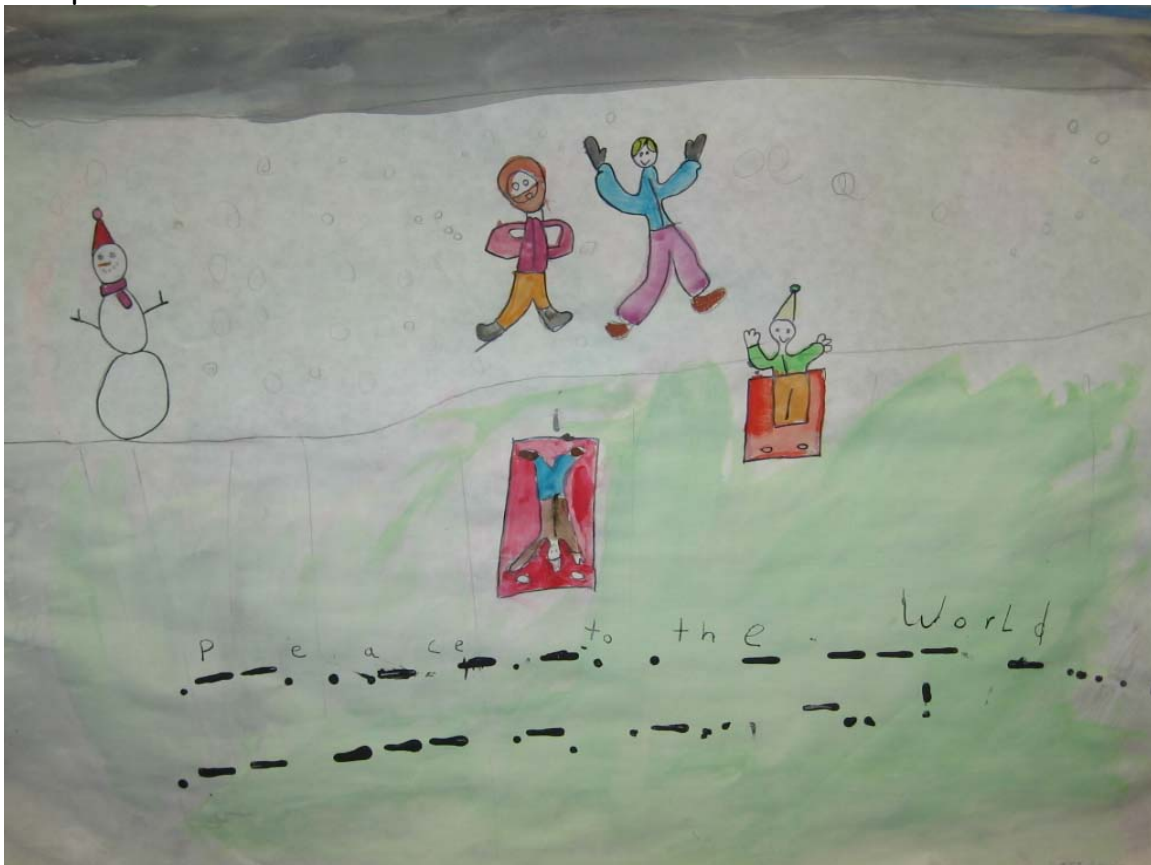


I specifically used Bordaus' black and white works for the lesson linked to Morse code because of the interesting shapes created in his work. Bordaus used large canvas and large tools like plastering knives to apply his paint. He made some errors in the layering of his paint and the paint is slowly beginning to crack and fall off. His pieces are fun for children to view as they often see hidden images in the black spots.

Fredrick Creed was born in Nova Scotia in 1869 and he began his career in communications at 15 as a messenger for a Cable company. It was on the job that he learned Morse Code. Later in South America he used his old typewriter as the building block for a new system. At down with this old typewriter and developed a punching mechanism whereby each letter was punched into the strip of paper rather than the previous method of punching them by hand. In 1908 the machines were being commercially made and a

receiving machine that would transfer the dots and slashes into words was also being created.

The interesting thing about using Morse code for peace messages is that "Communication through print is possible only if both sender and receiver recognize and understand the symbols used." It is the same with peace in the world. The sender and the receiver both need to make an effort towards peace; peace can be started by one but must be received and accepted in order to be effective.



Objectives

The children will be exposed to the art of Bordaus

The children will understand that it is important that artists understand the limitations of their mediums and apply the mediums correctly.

The children will work with Morse code and non-traditional painting tools

The children will know the history behind the invention of the keyboard perforator by Canadian Fredrick Creed

The children will work with Indian ink.

The children will used text (Morse code) and image to send a peace message.

Understand the complexity of codes and that...“Communication through print is possible only if both sender and receiver recognize and understand the symbols used.”

Resources

The Canadian Inventions Book - Janis Nostbakken and Jack Humphrey

Canada Invents - Susan Hughes

Inventors and Inventions - Lorraine Hopping Egan

Canadian Women Invent - Annie Wood

Materials

Indian ink (black tempera paint can be substituted)

Newsprint

Copies of Morse code

Same pieces of mat board

Chopsticks

Very small containers for ink



All images by Grade 2 and 3 students

Procedure

The children brainstorm peace sayings that they think represent peace. Talk about the importance of world peace and brainstorm sayings that could be effective on bumper stickers, banners or buttons.

Some that the grade 3's came up with were:

Peace begins with you.

If we are all peaceful the world is a better place.

Explain the invention of Morse code by William Morse and the keyboard perforator 1908 by Frederick Creed, of Mill Village, Nova Scotia. Explain how Morse code was the method used to send messages long ago. The invention of the Keyboard perforator made sending Morse code messages so much easier and more efficient.

We practiced writing Morse code sentences using chopsticks and small chunks of mat board (thin cardboard).

Use small chunks of cardboard for the dashes and the end of a chopstick for the dots. The children dip the cardboard into a small dish of ink. I used small pill containers from the hospital to hold the ink. I had the children use one finger space between each letter and two finger spaces between words so that they could keep the code organized.

I had the children practice writing peace sentences on newsprint using the sentences that they had brainstormed previously. They must be very careful to use only small amounts of ink. As well, they also had to be careful to place the chopstick on the paper straight up and down. When the chopstick is placed at an angle it makes a shape that is not a dot but more of a raindrop type of shape. If the students take too much ink it can drip off of the tools before reaching its destination. If you want you can use black tempera paint instead of ink it is easier to use and less expensive. However, using ink is likely to be a new medium for the children and it is good to expose children to many different mediums to create art with.

The second day of the unit the children begin to draw and paint images that mean peace to them. I had them draw the images on scrap paper first. The

images were varying and interesting. The image had to include a plan as to where the lettering on the piece would go.

Using block paints they painted the images.

When the pictures are dry they write their peace sentences using Morse code overtop of the painting they have made. Some of the children decided to repeat the same sentence over and over until the page was filled. Others only wrote it once. Writing the phrase many times creates a type of curtain over the painting they created and this can be very interesting.