

Response to Maulfry Worthington's article on *Reflecting on creativity and cognitive challenge: visual representations and mathematics in early childhood - some evidence from research (2005)*

I have recently read this article and, although I have not done much research, I was interested in what the article expressed as it verified some of my experiences out in the field as a practitioner in early years education in Norway (where we were very much 'in the field'). Giving the children the freedom to engage with each other and proposing challenges often seemed to bring out some remarkable abilities which one would not have suspected such young children could master.

I remember being quite surprised myself by a group of 5-year-olds who managed between them, with a few purposeful questions from me, to construct a grid of 9 squares with branches with which to play a memory game (Kim's Game). The level of engagement was intense and this was reflected later in the day when making representational maps of what they had done and where they had been. It is good to know that one's practice is supported by scholars and their research.

The article itself supports some of my findings as to how some early years teachers in Kent tend to interpret the *Early Years Foundation Stage* (mainly, I think, because of the scare of OfSTED and the Outcomes).

I liked the link between mathematics and art – I feel that art is a subject that is very underrated but has wonderful applications within the early years in relation both to play and learning. If more people developed this side of their personality at an early age, they would be more creative learners as teenagers. This might be a sweeping statement but is something in which I firmly believe.

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