



Flip Boom CLASSIC



Simplicity Brings Out The Best of Young Talent

Located in the heart of Montreal, Fine Arts Core Education (F.A.C.E.) offers elementary and secondary programs that combine academic and artistic development. The educational program provides children with many challenges in which they can flourish and develop their full potential. Important values at F.A.C.E. are openness of mind, respect, responsibility, independence, self-discipline, accomplishment, and self-esteem. The program aims to provide varied ways of learning, creating, thinking, and participating.



As part of their emphasis on the fine arts, F.A.C.E. has assigned a unique teacher to the task. Paul Carrière is certainly one of the most inspiring and dedicated teachers we had the chance to ever meet. With over 20 years of teaching experience in primary schools, Paul aims at infusing his passion and his generosity when it comes to expressing one's self artistically. He has included movie making in his classes for the past 15 years and has also taught drama for 10 years. Such a rich and creative background is certainly a great asset in his class room.

As his Arts class is a mandatory one, he wants the children to feel comfortable and at ease to let their inspiration flow. Children work alone, enabling them to create a personal project, led by their courage and naivety. Ages range from 6 to 9 years old. During the first class, Paul introduces the children to Flip Boom Classic, showing them how to create a

bouncing heart and save their work. He makes sure to touch on any technical question children may have so that starting the second class, they are on their own. "I tell my class to create something simple at the beginning and they acquire more confidence, further details can be added to their creation" explained Paul.

Paul leads nine groups over four 50-min classes, from Grade 1 to 4. He does it twice during the year to give an opportunity to all students to participate. His methodology is clear and structured: during the first three classes, children will create their animation and during the fourth one, they will work on Garage Band to add sound to their animation. At the end, their work will be presented to their parents. "Children are very independent. They are focusing on their work and remain very quiet" he continues.



In his Grades 1 and 2 groups, children have 90 minutes to work. Paul does not impose any theme nor imposes any censorship. Children are totally free to come up with the concepts they want. "If you set a theme, children will all do the same thing. I want them to come up with their own idea to truly stimulate their creativity," Paul explains.

"Children are sitting in front of the computer and think about their concept. I show them how to open a session, start, create and close the session. Then they are on their own. The

goal is to start with a simple idea. It is not important to draw well, what matter is the concept. Once they get started, it is impressive to see the children totally fascinated by their creation. This is when the magic happens in the class room," explains Paul.

"Flip Boom Classic is so simple that children go quickly beyond the tool to develop their idea. They find their own tricks and are quickly gratified when they see their drawings move. They can appreciate their development as they progress and this is very motivating for them."

The combination of easy-to-use software, basic information to get started and the magic of cartoons make it an excellent experience in the class room. For Paul, the computer needs to be used a tool and not a toy. He finds keeping the computer in a separate lab is counter-productive, that's why he insisted in setting up his 6 iMacs in his class. "Not only kids are motivated to see what each other is creating, but also, they don't waste any time going back and forth to the lab."

Beyond their creative development, Paul also hopes to stimulate their logical skills and their sense of autonomy. He does not need to check what they do over their shoulders. "I want the children to forget they are in school. By involving them in a project they enjoy a lot, they are taught another form of discipline. They see what they can accomplish and they are proud of it. This approach results in a very strong bond of confidence between the children and the teacher. Children of other groups see what is created and start discussing ideas, some of them envision themselves becoming movie makers, and this is true happiness!"

After each group goes from Flip Boom to Garage Band, they export their clips to iTunes, MPG4 and SWF file formats. Their parents get their creations the same day by email! Paul gathers all the clips saving them under the creator's name and compiles a DVD for parents to buy and keep as a souvenir.

"The goal is not to look for perfection, just to set the conditions to let the children be creative and feel stronger. It is important to leave a creative legacy to these children, hoping their next class will pick up the torch and continue developing them. I see myself as a vitamin and hope to inject it in high density! When I see the kids stay longer or come to my class instead of going to their break or recess, I feel I have done my duty" concluded Paul.

The more interest the children show in this course, the easier it will be to justify further investment to purchase computers

and expand the program. In kindergarten, Paul finds it is important to start stimulating the children's creativity. Forthcoming school years should continue reinforcing their creative skills.

Just observing Paul's young students and seeing the sparkle in their eyes testify to his inspirational role and positive message. One parent can only wish to have his child live such a wonderful experience at school and appreciate the greater impact he has that goes well beyond the arts. •



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