



An-Najah National University
Faculty of Graduate Studies

**THE IMPACT S OF ART ACTIVITY USING
DRAWING APPROACH IN IMPROVING
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG
STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES**

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**This Thesis is Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Clinical Psychology, Faculty of Graduate Studies, An-Najah National
University, Nablus - Palestine.**

2024

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Dedication

To the spirit of my precious father.

To my beloved mother.

To my supportive and lovely husband.

To my darling daughter Mila.

Acknowledgements

All appreciation and gratefulness to my supervisor Dr. Adnan Sarhan for his support, guidance and encouragement.


To all my family for their support and trust.

Declaration

I, the undersigned, declare that I submitted the thesis entitled:

THE IMPACT S OF ART ACTIVITY USING DRAWING APPROACH IN IMPROVING ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

I declare that the work provided in this thesis, unless otherwise referenced, is the researcher's own work, and has not been submitted elsewhere for any other degree or qualification.

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Abstract

Background: Art therapy integrates traditional theories of psychotherapy, techniques from the field of psychology; theories involve the processes of creativity and the various characteristic and use of craft materials.

Methodology: To assess the effect of art therapy through drawing on children with learning disabilities, the experimental design as a randomized control trial is used for that purpose. The sample size is 50 students; the research group consists of (25 students) on whom the learning and treatment by drawing is conducted. The sample sits for tests in Arabic and arithmetic (they do tests before and after the treatment and their scores before and after are compared). The control group (25 students) does the tests at the beginning and without doing any treatment, then they do the tests in Arabic and math and the scores are compared.

The sample of study includes second and third grade students with severe learning difficulties who can't read or write. Also, these students can't recognize and are not familiar with both Arabic letters and the numerals from one to ten. The objective behind utilizing drawing in art therapy is to help teaching these children improve their reading, writing and performing basics arithmetic.

To implement the procedures of this research, the following tools are used in order to assess students' knowledge before and after the teaching sessions. This assessment tool is called *MATTIA* (assessment set of exams). All assessment exams and drawing materials used in this research are taken from *MATTIA* - the Ministry of Education in Israel.

The objective of MATIA: Municipal-District Support Center, is to serve as a support system for regular and special education frameworks.

The pre-tests and post-tests are used to show any differences in the participants progress in Mathematics and Arabic. The post intervention score for Math and Arabic shows that there is significant differences between the case group and control group regarding math and Arabic- as the academic achievement is improved when drawing therapy is used.

Keywords: Art Therapy; Drawing Approaches; Jungian Drawing; Studio art therapy.

Chapter One

Introduction

Since the very beginning of documented history, expressions by using visual images have been the basis for all cultures. Art therapy, based on expressions of such visual images, became a recognized practice through the 1930's, and today it is embraced by therapeutic professions. Art therapy allows exploring personal problems, and exposing the potential of the individual either through verbal or non-verbal expressions.

Green and Denov (2019) conducted a study to understand how the child fits within their sociocultural context or social environment- in other words, the relational dynamics integration. The task of visually mapping out and explaining the drawings to researchers which is accompanied by deep qualitative interview proved to be an invaluable source of information; it can solidify the research themes emerged from the interview data and even guide and inform the interview questions.

Art therapy has the potential for both therapist and client to compare visually, especially when it is a component of a systematic therapeutic program, and to pair it with psychiatric observations, psychological tests, personal and group therapy (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020).

The DSM -5 notes that the dropout rates of the population of ADHD children (Attention-Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder) is greater, about 1.5 times of the average (Augustine, 1994). Approximately 5% in US students are diagnosed with LDs (Learning Disabilities).

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a neurodevelopmental disorder that affects millions of children worldwide. It is characterized by symptoms of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, which can significantly impact a child's daily functioning and overall well-being. While medication and behavioral therapy are commonly used treatments, there is growing recognition of the benefits of complementary approaches such as art therapy. Art therapy offers a unique avenue for children with ADHD to express themselves creatively, manage emotions, and develop

essential coping skills. effectiveness and practical applications (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020).

But learning skills are neither the most important nor what is needed for children for healthy development (Garber, Garber, & Spizman, 1997). Building relationships, developing positive social skills and solving problems are all skills that have to be nurtured in children. ADHD children are not exceptional and naturally need more caring for this aim. "They need time to practice the social skills many of their friends seem to have learned by osmosis" (ibid pp128-129). A core premise of expressive therapies holds that writing, drawing and the act of creating represent an important source of self-understanding of conflict resolution, and significant means to achieve emotional stability as well. Creativity brings in a means of structuring and reframing pain. When we talk about art therapy, we are referring to the idea that art is expressive and has healing qualities through its very own nature. Therefore, the purpose of art-therapy is to create a state of well-being through decreasing anxiety. Art-therapy works as a psychotherapeutic method which is proved to be so helpful in self-knowledge and facing daily life difficulties. That is all done through a creative process arises by itself- especially when the SEN student is involved socially and academically.

In this capstone thesis, I review current art therapy research and methods for treating and understanding children with the dual diagnosis of Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). These two diagnoses can be complex and can present similar symptoms and may be hard for counselors to identify the actual issue. Focusing on specific symptoms such as lack of social and communication skills and how utilizing art therapy interventions can potentially help reduce those symptoms will be the main focus of this thesis. The population focus is on children in preschool and grade-schooler settings aged 4 to 12. Then I apply and combine research on children with ADHD with research on art therapy with children with ASD, concluding with what is beyond the scope of this paper and current limitations such as lack of research about children of color, different races, and cultures. Additional recommendations offered are what should always be included in research with this population and possible art therapy interventions that could be integrated into

schools' curriculum. This thesis demonstrates that art therapy can be used as an intervention tool for treatment with this population to promote positive social skill and increase academic achievement and expression of emotions (Lopes, 2021).

For people with learning disabilities, ADHD and autism, art therapy offers an opportunity for self expression. Art can be a way to communicate for people who find it hard to express their thoughts and feelings verbally. Art therapy in schools offers a creative (and enjoyable) way to communicate without restrictions, without worries of being judged as there is no such thing as failing when you create art. This process gives them a sense of accomplishment and builds their self-confidence.

Creative processes require problem-solving — an important skill they can improve on, as they often suffer from symptoms of executive function disorder.

Children with ADHD and types of learning disabilities, learning differences often have intense emotions. Some suffer from poor social skills and/or low self-esteem as well. Art therapy is a tool that provides a non-verbal approach to communication and expressing emotions.

The brain is stimulated by creating art, and produces higher levels of dopamine. This is especially important for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder ADHD as increased dopamine levels improve concentration. Expressing creativity through art also elevates serotonin and reduces stress levels. Used therapeutically, art-making can also improve the symptoms of executive function in children and adults with ADHD, adhd tips and the motor skills of specific children with learning disabilities, dyslexic children (Lopes, 2021).

Children with ADHD are usually hyperactive and have difficulty paying attention. They have active minds and are very brilliant and creative, but they can also be easily distracted or periodically overly concentrated. While traditional treatment modalities like medication and behavioural support are critical for improving outcomes, alternative techniques like art therapy can help manage ADHD.

The techniques of drawing, painting and sculpting are used in art therapy to boost children's confidence and general well-being. Its foundation is the idea that self-expression can be employed to deal with emotional issues, improve interpersonal abilities, control behaviour, lessen stress, and raise self-awareness. Art therapy can be helpful to anyone, regardless of artistic ability (Bat-Or, 2015)

By engaging in physical exercise and sensory integration, art therapy allows children to examine various problems. When we express ourselves creatively, many brain regions are active. Using a brush to sweep a canvas calls for motor skills. Drawing a mental image necessitates analytic and sequential procedures, logic, and abstraction. Working memory and attention abilities are essential to follow the processes required to accomplish an art activity.

A child's mood is lifted and a relaxation response is produced when they create art. Also, serotonin levels in the brain are raised by creative activity. It has been demonstrated that engaging in a calming art activity, such as colouring a mandala can improve decision-making and focus. Art therapy, when included in a holistic treatment plan, can provide patients with a sense of control (Lopes, 2021).

Research has demonstrated that art therapy improves children's attention span by offering something to focus on. Art is a normal and crucial aspect of children's growth, and it is helpful for children with ADHD to choose art projects that fascinate them because these act as an outlet to focus on. Even though the amount of time spent on the task may lengthen across numerous sessions, the procedure helps the tender minds to develop the capacity to focus their energy in a productive way that leads to fulfilment.

Additionally, art therapy positively impacts a child's self-esteem. Children with ADHD are frequently reprimanded for their inability to concentrate. Art therapy teaches them the fundamental skill of focus and attention which can be extended to other settings (Bat-Or, 2015).

Art therapy for ADHD can serve as a basis for a child's exploration of his or her identity. Given that children with the condition are frequently identified by labels and behaviours, this technique can be very effective. Labelling and focusing on problematic

behaviours can make it challenging for children with ADHD to define themselves in a positive light.

Through art, a kid can develop a healthy and healing connection to their inner selves as this can help the child get past a lot of the negativity that permeates much of their daily experience. Even though it could take several sessions for kids to see this result, laying the groundwork for this kind of growth is crucial for helping the kid develop a stronger sense of self (Lopes, 2021).

Benefits of Art Therapy

1. **Improved Focus and Concentration:** ADHD can make it challenging for children to stay focused on a task. Art therapy, however, provides a creative outlet that can hold their interest. The process of creating art requires attention to detail and concentration, which can help children with ADHD improve these skills.
2. **Better Emotional Regulation:** Art therapy allows children to express their feelings and emotions in a safe and non-threatening environment. Through their artwork, they can communicate their thoughts and emotions that might be difficult to express verbally. This can help them process their feelings, leading to better emotional regulation.
3. **Enhanced Self-Esteem:** Children with ADHD often struggle with a low self-esteem due to their difficulties in school and social situations. Art therapy provides an opportunity for success, as there is no right or wrong in art. Seeing their completed artwork can boost their self-esteem and confidence.
4. **Reduction in Anxiety:** Art therapy can have a calming effect on children with ADHD. The act of creating art can put them in a meditative state, helping to reduce anxiety and stress levels.
5. **Development of Social Skills:** Group art therapy sessions can provide an opportunity for social interaction. Children with ADHD can learn to work collaboratively, share materials, and respect others' artwork, which can improve their social skills.

Art therapy is a powerful tool that can help children with ADHD navigate their world with more ease. It provides them with a safe space to express their emotions, improve their focus, and boost their self-esteem. While art therapy may not replace traditional treatments, it can certainly complement them, providing a holistic approach to managing ADHD.

As every child is unique, it's important to remember that what works for one might not work for another. If you're considering art therapy for your child, it's best to consult with a professional art therapist who can guide you through the process. After all, the goal is to enhance the child's well-being and help them flourish in their own unique way.

Art therapy can help provide a unique space for people with ADHD as they gain control over their environment and the creative process in which they work. Often we are forced to adhere to schedules, rules, and timetables which require a degree of compliance to appear successful at an endeavor. This can be a difficult process for people with ADHD as they struggle to adhere to the norms of time and organization. These struggles are a continuous source of discontent as people with ADHD feel an ongoing sense of failure to meet expected norms of compliance.

Art therapy can provide a space in which people with ADHD can express their own rules around creating. Art therapy also provides a space in which an individual can express intense emotions and frustrations. Additionally, art therapy can help establish a place of calm and focus for the client. Given the freedom of expression and lack of 'rules' to conform to, people with ADHD can begin to develop a sense of mastery and consequently a sense of confidence that stems from strengthened self-esteem.

Art therapy can incorporate useful activities that help clients develop an approach to problem-solving through working with art materials. Clients can also be exposed to the tangible outcomes of using different art materials in different ways and learn to adapt to any unexpected or expected results from their choices. This can invariably teach clients valuable lessons about delaying impulsivity and engaging in purposeful decision-making.

Clients can also develop the building blocks of focusing attention over time as they learn to construct art projects that may be multi-layered and developed over stages. This can all be achieved under the supportive environment of self-expression and making individual choices.

Art therapy is especially useful for children with ADHD as they struggle to express the frustrations they may have through verbal talk therapy. Using art therapy helps introduce the child to an environment that may be familiar to them for facilitating freedom from limitations.

Art therapy can also provide insight into the benefits of developing a structure that can help foster desired results. This can be explained through the process of drawing simple shapes that help clients experience the outcomes of connecting shapes together to form overall images. This can be a helpful metaphor for developing the important building blocks that are required to learning a new skill or developing a plan to complete school homework, work projects, or other external expectations that people with ADHD may need to undertake (Lopes, 2021).

The importance of guiding students in increasing their concentration in learning is the task of an educator. Learning can be digested well when students have adequate concentration and absorption in paying attention to the teacher when explaining the material in front of the class. However, this is certainly different from children with disabilities who require a special approach to be able to receive learning material well. This research aims to see the effectiveness of art therapy using doodle art as a medium, which is expected to improve the concentration of children with ADHD. The research method uses qualitative with a case study approach, to see how the implementation of art therapy improves children's learning concentration. The results of the research show that art therapy with doodle art is able to increase concentration in children with ADHD in the memory aspect, attitude aspect and skill aspect. This approach is chosen according to the conditions and needs of the child, freeing the child to express himself in the doodle art media. It is very effective to see the attitude and enthusiasm of the students during the learning process, they really enjoy it and can relate well to the experiences gained during the learning activities (Mahardika & Purnawan Putra, 2023).

Therapy is assistance provided by counselors to children who have problems in learning so that they are able to develop and can participate in learning activities well. The art therapy used uses the doodle art technique which is useful for increasing children's learning concentration. This has proven to be effective. It can be seen that there is an increase in the aspect of children's memory in repeating learning material, they can say it well, in the aspect of attitude, it shows that children are able to listen to material from the teacher and use their time wisely good, while increasing children's concentration on the skills aspect of students being able to create and complete works with various form elements according to the teacher's instructions (Mahardika & Purnawan Putra, 2023).

The research aimed to examine the positive role art therapy could play in improving the attention span of children with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder co-morbid Intellectual Disability in the context of Karachi (Pakistan). The key presumption was that art therapy can help in decreasing inattention among the children with ADHD co-morbid Intellectual Disability. Purposive sampling was used for the selection of cases from schools in Karachi (Pakistan) which are offering educational services to the children with special needs. The sample comprised 14 children, ages 6 to 12 years (mean age= 7.391; SD = 1.315) with ADHD co-morbid Mild ID. Experimental design was adopted for carrying out the investigation, entailing the division of the sample into the treatment group (which received 25 art therapy sessions as a form of intervention) and control group (which was provided with regular classroom activities). The allocation of children to both groups was carried out through the ABBA technique as well as the use of observation. The tools of the Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder test were used to gauge the differences in the level of inattention in both groups. Analysis of data was conducted through SPSS version 17.0, using descriptive statistics to examine the pattern of data as well as identify the level of effectiveness of art therapy through administering the Wilcoxon test. The findings of the study support the assumption that art therapy is useful for curtailing impulsiveness in children with ADHD. Therefore, it can be concluded that art therapy is likely to bring positive changes in the level of attention in children with ADHD co-morbid ID. The study carries implications for individuals practicing in the field of mental health care and

special education (Lambez, Harwood-Gross, & Golumbic, E. Z., & Rassoovsky, Y, 2020).

Children with attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) tend to be noisy and violate rules with their disruptive behaviors, resulting in greater difficulties with off-task behaviors and being at risk for social refusal. The visual activity schedule (VAS) intervention program is a frequently used method to teach multiple skills involving on-task, use of schedules, transition behaviors, social initiation, independent play skills, classroom skills, and academic skills. The current systematic review aimed to examine the efficacy of using VAS intervention in reducing problem behaviors in children with ADHD between 5 and 12 years of age.

Systematic searches were conducted using two electronic databases (PubMed and Scopus) to identify relevant studies published in English between 2010 and 2020. Four studies met the inclusion criteria: two studies examined the effect of schedule-based tasks and the use of an iPad on classroom skills, while the other two examined randomized clinical trials (RCTs) of psychosocial treatment for ADHD inattentive type and a cross-sectional study examined the impact of the group size on task behavior and work productivity in children with ADHD.

The findings indicate that the interventions used in all four studies could lead to increased satisfaction among participants and parents, as well as a reduction in problem behavior. In terms of the research indicators, the RCT had low quality, while the others were of high quality.

A larger number of studies and the ADHD clinical population would help to increase the generalizability of future reviews of treatments in this context (Thomas & Karuppali, 2022).

The present study intended to explore the efficacy of art therapy in the reduction of impulsive behaviors of children with Attention Deficit/ Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) co-morbid Intellectual Disability (ID) in Karachi, Pakistan. The study was based on experimental design for which the data was collected from different special schools located in Karachi –Pakistan. Sample was selected through purposive sampling of 14

children with ADHD (mild) comorbid Mild ID with age ranging between 6 to 12 years (mean age= 7.391; SD = 1.315) during the year 2011 -2013 belonging to middle socioeconomic status. The sample was divided into two groups, treatment and control group. Treatment group received 25 art as therapy sessions while control group received regular class room activities. Children were placed in the treatment and control group by ABBA technique after 8 hours of observation. Followed by the administration of Demographic Information Sheet, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder Test were administered before and after the therapy sessions. Descriptive statistics and Wilcoxon test were calculated through SPSS version 17.0. Findings suggest that art as therapy is effective in the reduction of impulsive behaviors in children with ADHD co-morbid ID ($p < .05$). The findings of this research have its clinical implications in multiple disciplines i.e. for psychologist and special educators. Recommendations for future research have also been suggested (Habib & Ali, 2015).

It is estimated that 9.4% of children ages 2-17 years old struggle with ADHD in the United States based on the diagnostic criteria. Symptoms of ADHD vary and include self-focused behavior and the inability to help or see other people's needs or desires. Other symptoms may include: interrupting, trouble waiting their turn, emotional turmoil, fidgeting, problems playing quietly, unfinished tasks, and lack of focus. ADHD can impact a child's social life as they may experience social rejection and interpersonal relationship problems as a result of their inattention and hyperactivity.

Unfortunately, these symptoms in children not only impact their social life but can play a large detriment to children's education. In the classroom, children may struggle to focus on instructions and may exhibit the need to constantly move. Additionally, due to the lack of focus, children may not be able to finish tasks, they may struggle with filtering thoughts and when to speak out and their thoughts may drift.

Art Therapists and Art Therapy can help. Art Therapy is a discipline of study and a form of therapy which is a process that incorporates art and the creative process to improve a person's physical, mental, and emotional well-being. Art Therapy can aid a child suffering from ADHD by helping them learn to cope with impulsivity, decision-making, sequencing, flexibility, social skills and can help boost a child's self-esteem.

Additionally, it has been noted that Art Therapy helps a child with ADHD center themselves and makes them more “calm.” Interestingly enough, Art Therapy can help by activating different parts of the brain while engaging in creative expression. For example, drawing a picture from memory requires logical thinking and abstraction which can all help a child suffering from ADHD (Ziraki & Hassan , 2017).

The art-mediated curriculum was designed for children and adolescents whose emotional and behavioral problems wouldn't allow them to benefit from mainstream educative methods to overcome these difficulties (Gliga, 2011).

Naumburg was the first to integrate Freud's ideas on communication with the unconscious and its dynamics with Art's symbols and images. Also, Margaret Naumburg is considered a founder of art therapy in establishing her Walden School in 1915 (Nguyen, 2015). In the following chapters, Naumburg's art therapy as well as other art therapy models will be used.

1.1 The Art-therapy T-Links

Art Therapy is not limited to Amalgam art and therapy – it's greater than the sum of its two parts- therapy and art. In other words, the emotional experience a client may have during a session is central to art therapy. The emotion which art therapy can elicit in a client is a moment of an inclusive assessment of one's life situations. Thus, art therapy doesn't only give the client the information needed to assess their life situation, but also takes the role of creating emotions inside the clients that can be mirrored and provides ways of handling and facing these situations. Therefore; art therapy uses emotions as a path for clients that enables them to express their individualism, to become more aware of the role they have within a certain relationship, and to connect them with an emotion that may contain an interpersonal message (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014).

The basic components of art-therapy interventions in the real world are hard to determine because there are currently no effective strategies for therapeutic, engaging, sensory art-therapy interventions. There is inadequate data to support the effectiveness of art therapy, and hence, more well-powered, high-quality trials with relevant outcome measures are required and more research is needed on the subject. Also, results of an

intervention are not solely dependent on art therapy, as it is used along with pharmacotherapy. This made comparing all of the results difficult. The research comprising a small number of people makes it impossible to know how precise the results are, making it complicated to predict if the results will be the same in larger groups of people. It is vital to raise awareness and mobilize support for mental health. Mental health concerns must be treated as soon as possible. Comprehensive measures for promotion, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation can be implemented through government approaches. Policymakers should be urged to enhance access to cost-effective treatment for prevailing mental illnesses in primary healthcare settings (Sanders, 2013).

Art therapy is a mental health profession that enriches the lives of individuals, families, and communities through active art-making, creative process, applied psychological theory, and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship.

Especially when people are struggling, facing a challenge, or even a health crisis—their own words or language fails them. During these times, an art therapist can help clients express themselves in ways beyond words or language. Art therapists are trained in art and psychological theory and can help clients integrate nonverbal cues and metaphors that are often expressed through the creative process.

Art therapists work with individuals of all ages, including children who are experiencing behavioral challenges or those with Autism Spectrum Disorder. They assist people and caregivers in health crises; victims of violence or other trauma—including our military service members and student survivors of mass shootings; older adults with dementia; and anyone that needs help coping with life's challenges (Witkoski & Chaves, 2007).

The formal practice of art therapy has its origins in the mid-20th century Europe, with the coining of the term being attributed to British artist Adrian Hill in 1942.

At a time where thousands suffered in sanatoriums from tuberculosis, it was observed that drawing and painting was a creative outlet for patients that provided them the freedom their confines did not. The practices in art therapy soon spread to mental

hospitals through the work of Edward Adamson, who observed and further studied the connection between artistic expression and emotional release. The British Association of Art Therapists was founded in 1964 (Zhenhai & Yunhua , 2011).

It's been widely studied and observed how art therapy is effective to treat trauma, abuse, grief, anxiety, and eating disorders. It is a helpful tool to alleviate stress through major life transitions and eases pain and suffering associated with mental, physical and emotional diseases.

By working to bring the conscious, unconscious and subconscious into expressive and tangible forms, the creative processes involved in art therapy have been praised for their ability to encourage personal growth, mindfulness, and self-discovery.

As art therapy education continues to develop within the world's top higher education institutions, new forms of research and practice are being developed that blend art therapy and other methods of psychotherapy. These innovations are being researched, documented and shared across the community of practice worldwide.

It's the belief that through the application of the creative process through art therapy and other methods such as play therapy, mindfulness exercises, and using tools such as sand-tray, people achieve a greater sense of personal well-being.

Before we dive into the history of art therapy, it's important to understand what exactly it entails. Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that involves the use of various art materials and creative techniques to help individuals express themselves, explore emotions, and work through personal challenges. It is a process that integrates art-making and psychology, allowing people to tap into their inner creativity to gain insight and promote healing (Wen & Zhaoming, 2009).

Art therapy provides a safe and supportive space for individuals to engage in the art-making process. Through the use of different art materials such as paints, clay, and collage, individuals can explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in a non-verbal and creative way. This can be particularly beneficial for those who struggle with expressing themselves verbally or find it difficult to articulate their emotions.

By engaging in art activities under the guidance of a trained art therapist, individuals can uncover and explore emotions, thoughts, and experiences that may be difficult to express verbally. Through the artwork created, insights can emerge, and healing can take place. The art therapist acts as a facilitator, providing support and guidance throughout the process, helping individuals make connections between their artwork and their inner experiences (Teglbjaerg , 2011).

Since the beginning of recorded history, expressions through visual images have been the basis of all cultures. Art therapy, which is based on expressions of visual images, became a recognized profession in the 1930s, and belongs to a variety of therapeutic professions. Art therapy makes it possible to explore personal problems and discover personal potential through verbal and non-verbal expressions. This is how emotional and practical abilities can be developed through the therapeutic experience in art (Frenkel). The idea that there is a connection between a person's emotional charge and his artistic expressions is not new. When a person engages in creation, it seems that it expresses hidden worlds that are concealed in his subconscious and basically his inner world. Art therapy recognizes the artistic process, forms, content, and associations - as a reflection of the individual's development, his abilities, his personality, his areas of interest and the set of things that occupy him. The creative process can be a means to express and settle emotional conflicts, develop self-awareness and create a process of personal growth. Art therapy is both a therapeutic tool as well as a diagnostic tool and can be done individually or in a group (Frenkel). The work of art, beyond being aesthetic and pleasing to the eye, embodies different emotional aspects of man (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014).

Art can give a patient a free space to express the problems that bother him, the difficulties he encounters and the experiences he passes through. Moreover, art, in its various forms and patterns, is a world without limits and without restraints based on symbols, images and metaphors. The world of art and reality meet in a partial overlap and create a common area where the magical and the forbidden are found together with the rational; the organized and the permitted. The magical desires are there to erupt and manifest as much as the rational parts. One of the qualities of art is its ability to reveal

the unconscious part of the human soul. Due to the fact that many children with learning disabilities have difficulty expressing their own feelings and emotions, art therapy is there to enable them to overcome that (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014).

Art therapy makes use of art and other visual mediums so patients can express their inner emotions, and thoughts, and unprocessed trauma. Their deepest fears. The parts of themselves they wouldn't otherwise show to anyone.

The goal of art therapy is to maintain and improve the physical, cognitive, psychosocial, and spiritual health of kids and teens. It's a therapeutic way to process difficult emotions and feelings in a safe environment under the guidance of a trained, experienced professional. The therapist or professional can then help interpret the patient's art, assess their mental and emotional state, and help unpack them together with the patient.

Art therapy should be overseen by a qualified therapist who has knowledge of the visual arts and how to use it to help children express themselves. It's not critical that the therapist be a professional artist themselves. It's enough that they have a deep enough understanding of the visual arts to competently guide the patient through a therapy session (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014).

The term expressive arts refers to any combination of dance, writing, visual arts, drama, music or other creative outlets. Expressive arts therapy is taking these modalities and using them to enhance individual development and growth. The right mix can improve overall well-being and contribute to lowering anxiety and stress, improving self-awareness and self-esteem, strengthening relationships, regulating behaviors and advancing social skills.

This type of therapy has also been shown to help children – and adults – deal with negative situations, disabilities and trauma. Through rehabilitation, education and communication, art therapy helps an individual release and express feelings they may not know how to let go of otherwise.

Additionally, expressive arts positively affect function, mood, cognition and behavior. This is particularly evident in children with special needs, such as those with autism, speech impairments, PTSD, developmental disabilities, ADD/ADHD or other mental and behavioral health conditions. Expression through art is a way to help these kids feel a sense of normalcy without judgment, while allowing them to show their individual personality and bring attention to their strengths (Teglbjaerg , 2011).

Children of all ages, both special needs and not, may not have the language skills to express themselves, but they still have a voice. Expressive arts awaken a child's imagination and creativity to help him discover who he is and how to engage his senses. They also bring a sense of calm to the body and positively impact mindset, interpretation of surroundings and emotional state.

Putting their feelings into a poem, song and painting gives children a safe outlet for negative emotions through an enjoyable activity, which accelerates the healing and growth process. But expressive arts aren't just for coping, they also have great effects on a child's normal development (Freilich & Shechtman, 2010).

Treatment through art is one of many treatments known today in the field of child psychotherapy. Due to the fact that treatment through art is a relatively new field, the rationale and goals of other known therapeutic approaches are used after being translated and adapted. Hence, art therapy combines the unique qualities of art with principles, goals and tools derived from traditional treatment approaches. These qualities enrich the therapeutic process and contribute to a more thorough understanding and appropriate treatment of emotional problems (Elbrecht, 2018).

For the child and the adult, the use of creative language meets the need to express feelings without being clear and known in a conscious way. In other words, because of its indirectness and non-intrusiveness, such therapy allows dealing with sensitive and deeply-rooted emotions, exposure of pain, difficulties and weaknesses in a non-threatening way. In contrary to the conventional therapy which is confronted by the patient's hesitation and resistance to reveal his hidden emotional world. Emotions expressed through images allow the patient to be recognized as a special individual,

with special experiences and special powers of self-expression and creativity, since the creative language is mainly experiential and subjective, it allows the patient to develop a unique therapeutic language that suits him (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art is a means, but the emphasis is placed on the interaction between the therapist and the patient. In this approach, the relationship forged between the therapist and the patient is at the center. The therapeutic alliance and transference - are the main thing. Transference here refers to a set of psychological experiences originated in the past, and the patient re-experiences them as if they belong to the present, also they are embodied in the relationship between patient and the therapist. Often the work will be diagrammatic in nature, and it will follow and express processes and changes. This type of treatment is usually offered to patients who come independently to the clinic, given the fact that the process of creating art is not placed in the center, the transfer to the artistic work is interpreted as part of the transfer between patient and therapist. Therefore; this approach is closer to familiar forms of verbal therapy. In this case, art becomes secondary in importance and serves as another way to understand the transference and create communication between the therapist, the patient and their inner world. In this type of treatment, the work has a different role, weight and present in different periods of the treatment; when the patient is in a regressive and less verbal state- art will take up more space (Freilich & Shechtman, 2010).

The use of creative tools serves not only the patient but also the therapist. It helps the therapist to join the patient and explore the places he leads him in, enter his emotional-subjective world and together experience things in an unmediated way and reach a high level of empathic understanding of the patient's world. In the process of therapeutic work through creation lies the application of hope and the possibility of change. Art therapy allows the patient to contact his unconscious forces, to express, clarify, digest and process deep emotional-experiential content. Also, art therapy encourages the process of developing spontaneity and new ways of thinking, new ways of living and dealing with art. Through art, the patient finds his own unique and creative solutions (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art therapy gives the patient and the therapist the ability to visually compare, especially when it's all part of a systemic treatment plan such as psychiatric observations, psychological tests and individual and group therapy. As it is known, the unconscious psychological processes affect people and their personal lives. These hidden and unconscious contents affect the way people think, perceive, feel and behave. The information processing activities that take place in the art therapy sessions involve various aspects of motor, somatosensory, visual, emotional and cognitive information processing (righteous living, art therapy) (Elbrecht, 2018) .

Visual art therapy is used by art therapists to improve physical, mental, and emotional well-being. They work with specific individuals and groups to create meaning through the art process, such as painting, rather than focusing on the end product.

People who cannot express their emotions verbally due to developmental, cognitive, or other conditions may benefit from art therapy (Elbrecht, 2018).

An art therapist is a licensed professional who has received training in therapy and art to conduct these therapy sessions for people of all ages. Art therapy can be incorporated into one-on-one sessions, group therapy, and family or couples counselling.

Art therapy, as a new type of psychotherapy, has attracted much attention in recent years for its application in the field of visual communication. In this paper, the application and effects of art therapy in visual communication are discussed in depth through a comprehensive literature review and case study. It is found that art therapy helps individuals explore emotions and solve psychological barriers through creative artistic expression, and can promote self-knowledge and regulate emotions. Visual communication design provides individuals with a non-verbal way of expression, which makes up for the emotional dimension that is difficult to cover with words. In addition, by presenting actual cases, this research found that art therapy has achieved significant results in problem-solving and psychological rehabilitation. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of art therapy in visual communication practice and provides a theoretical and practical basis for further exploration of the field (Wenxiao, 2024).

The essence of art therapy can be called a tool through which one can penetrate the human soul. Such a tool is needed with children with learning disabilities, in particular, to explore their psyche and face a complex of emotional problems. Such problems which is common among such children can be expressed in a variety of ways such as behavior patterns, relationships with friends, etc... . Therefore, through art and its various forms, it is possible to deal with learning disabilities (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art therapy has been adapted to be instrumentally an artistic visual tool for emotional communication- in a way words could seldom achieve. Art therapy put an emphasis on the process, and therefore no special qualifications and skills are needed for joining such therapy. Being an active emotional therapist, art therapy promotes the process of growth and the increase of one's self-consciousness. Such therapy helps in finding meaning for life, also it helps in conflict solving and enhancing self-image. This may be achieved through applying art materials and the power of creativity- and that by the assistance and guide of a professional and supportive attendance of the therapist (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art therapy does not only emphasize the finished product and the aesthetic appearance, but also the process of creativity and the healing power that it can induce. It is accessible to every person without the need for knowledge, talent or previous experience. All the children have the tendency to draw out with pleasure because they need a way to express themselves and vent emotionally. Moreover, it sheds more light on the patient's strengths and abilities and less on the problems. That makes one believe more in his power to control and create his life story.

The treatment process in art therapy based on the interaction between mind and body. And the physiology of emotion based on attachment theory (attachment and placebo effects (Freilich & Shechtman, 2010). Art therapy therapy allows the person suffering from learning disabilities to reveal their feelings of incompetence and lack of self-worth, difficulties in communicating with the environment and other emotional problems that arise as a result of the learning difficulties.

When it comes to children, sometimes parents are invited to take part in the treatment; a dialogue with them is conducted through the artistic work. In this way parents learn how to communicate with their child, listen and understand him without having any conflict which might drag the whole family into an emotional turmoil. Art is a tool through which anyone can express himself easily and freely. In addition, people with learning disabilities can strengthen important disabilities such as coordination, concentration and various cognitive skills (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art therapy is not only a great way to reduce stress, but it has also been found to improve or restore a patient's functioning and sense of personal well-being. It is a distinct discipline that utilizes visual media, the art-making process, and materials as vehicles for therapeutic purposes.

Art has been a form of communication and self-expression for thousands of years, but only became a form of therapeutic treatment in the 1940's. The benefits of art therapy have been seen in people of all ages, helping to improve communication and concentration, as well as reduce feelings of isolation. Art therapy has also been shown to lead to increased self-esteem, confidence, and self-awareness. Art therapy is unique in that it allows individuals to express their feelings and emotions without ever having to say a word. This can be helpful in treating individuals who feel out of touch with their emotions, or those who went through a traumatic or painful event and are having trouble talking about their experiences.

Through my experience as an Art Therapist, I've found that painting is one of the best forms of Art Therapy because it is typically experienced from a sensory level. As an individual paints, they focus on the fluidity of the paint and motion of the brush or their fingers. Depending on the strengths and needs of the individual, this motion and feel can illicit soothing or meditative responses. Focusing on the movement and touch of the paint can help individuals release negative energy and tension, relax their muscles, and help channel awareness of internal emotions. (Uttley, 2015) Painting can also support an individual in developing coping skills and learning how to self-soothe. Sensory experiences, like the touch, feel and fluidity of paint allows the individual to discover, validate and express their inner sensations. It can also help to increase tolerance for

internal and external sensations. An art therapy session can be structured either individually or in a group setting. Both types of sessions support individuals in exploring their emotions, fostering self-awareness, managing behaviors, developing social skills, reducing anxiety, increasing self-esteem, and improving reality orientation, along with a variety of other responses. The process of art therapy allows individuals to create a space for self-expression, self-exploration, and enhance their capacity for emotional, mental, and physical well-being (Rubin, 2016).

Art therapy provides children with a safe and supportive environment where they can express themselves freely through art-making. It allows them to communicate their emotions and feelings through a non-verbal medium. This can be particularly beneficial for children who struggle with verbal communication, as it provides an alternative way to express themselves.

Art therapy also helps children develop coping skills and improve their self-esteem. The act of creating art provides a sense of accomplishment and can boost a child's confidence. Additionally, the process of making art can help children regulate their emotions, reducing feelings of anxiety and stress.

Studies have shown that art therapy can be effective in reducing symptoms of anxiety and depression in children. It can also help children improve their social skills and develop positive relationships with others. Art therapy can be used as a stand-alone treatment or in combination with other forms of therapy, depending on the child's needs (Tauber, 2018).

Art therapy can be an emotional treatment for everything. The artistic activities- painting, coloring, using material and even music therapy – aim at expressing the inner feelings, unconscious contents, conflicts and hardships. Art therapist observes the creative process and the product itself of the those who have learning difficulties. Also, he tries to understand through them their way of thinking and the difficulties they encounter.

In practice, through art therapy it is possible to express- with the help of art - what is impossible with words. After the contents being processed in an artistic way, verbal therapy can be incorporated. Through art, patients are sometimes able to express themselves faster than verbally. Therefore, this tool can be used when there is a need to solve problems quickly, or when quick intervention is required. The treatment makes it possible to deal with traumas, solve conflicts and problems and enrich everyday life (Elbrecht, 2018).

Art therapy is an effective approach in supporting children to manage their anxiety and enhance their social emotional skills, including empathy and prosocial behavior. Art has long been recognized as a means for emotional expression and its therapeutic benefits dating back to ancient times. While officially acknowledged post World War II, the therapeutic value of art was utilized long before. Numerous experts and professional organizations emphasize art therapy's role in aiding individuals to enhance various social emotional aspects of life. These include reducing anxiety and depression, fostering stronger relationships, working through conflicts, healing from trauma, cultivating a sense of identity, managing emotions, promoting self-reflection and self-awareness, and expanding capacity for growth (European Federation of Art Therapy (European Federation of Art Therapy, 2018).

Different researches have indicated that incorporating art therapy in different environments can enhance positive social behavior in both typical elementary students and others who face emotional and behavioral challenges (McDonald et al., 2019). Art therapy has been shown to be successful in alleviating anxiety in a wide range of individuals, including children, adults, elderly, individuals with terminal illnesses, those with disabilities, and those who have experienced trauma (Tauber, 2018).

Studying more than five hundred research papers on the impact of art therapy on reducing anxiety, we have discovered valuable insights, (Abbing, Ponstein, van Hooren, S., de Sonnevile, L., Swaab, H., & Baars, E, 2018).

A research has found strong evidence indicating that art therapy can effectively decrease anxiety levels in certain groups like students and prisoners. Also, art therapy is particularly beneficial for children with special educational needs, who may struggle with verbal communication skills and have various deficiencies. By engaging in art, these children are able to express themselves in a more holistic, analogical, and metaphoric way. Art serves as a powerful tool for communication and allows them to tap into their emotions on a deeper level than words can convey (Preda, 2004, p. 72).

While art therapy may not fully cure the illnesses of disabled children, it does empower them to take charge of their actions and provide valuable hands-on experiences. It also serves as a safe outlet for them to release and express their pent-up emotions, whether through physical activities like smearing and pounding, or by symbolically or verbally communicating their fears (Rubin, 2005, p. 283).

Establishing social skills at a young age is incredibly important for regular development. Children who are comfortable in social settings operate much better as adults, as they establish connection, communication and empathy. Expressive art therapy can enhance social development by providing support without judgement from peers, parents and the therapist. It gives children the opportunity to appreciate differences between people and accept each individual's perceptions.

Many of the arts can be practiced in groups, where children have to work together, learn to share and accept responsibility for how their actions affect others. Even in private settings, interactions with the therapist, or even the parents, contribute to the development of social skills, as it encourages relationships and trust (Elbrecht, 2018).

Consequently, engaging in art therapy can support individuals in enhancing different social and emotional facets of their existence. It provides a platform to delve into and address emotional challenges, allowing for the expression of their artistic side. This process adds profound significance to their lives and equips them with the resilience needed to manage academic obstacles independently (Freilich & Shechtman, 2010).

Studies indicate that art therapy can be successful in lowering aggression levels and boosting self-esteem in children with aggressive tendencies (Alavinezhad, Mousavi, & Sohrabi, N., 2014).

Children with autism often struggle with managing emotions such as anxiety, profound sadness, and depression. They also need to learn how to cope with these negative feelings (Moustafa, 2015), etc.

Drawing is a method that claims for the most robust foundation which is part of any educational program in art therapy. This method maintains that rather than reflecting reality as it is, drawing should mirror the reflections of the artistic choices of a client. Through this method one can "analyze" a drawing according to positioning and artistic choices and by a way of reaching the crux of the matter (Elbrecht, 2018).

The research population will be children diagnosed with learning disabilities from Qara city.

1.2 The aim of the study

The aim of the current study is to explore the effect of art therapy through drawing on children with learning disabilities (from the perspective of learning capabilities).

1.3 Problem statement

In our Palestinian community, there are different levels of learning disabilities among school students and the percentage of students with such disabilities are on the rise. This study will offer a great help for such students in coping with these disabilities, and will provide teachers as well with professional tools to efficiently facilitate and improve the learning process.

And also in the field of my professional work during the last five years in the field of teaching students with learning disabilities, who are in the primary school stage, I found that there is difficulty among students with learning disabilities in understanding the materials in the traditional way of education, so I began to integrate art therapy by drawing to teach students the basics of materials and indeed there was a noticeable improvement in their academic performance.

1.4 The Significance of the study

Due to the fact there are a high percentage of students with learning disabilities- in the Arab sector in general and my town in in specific- who have difficulties in learning basic things in Arabic and mathematics; according to the data published on the website of the Ministry of Education in Israel. and the ineffectiveness of the traditional methods of teaching to achieve the desired results, that, unquestionably, has created an urgent need to find new efficient and effective teaching methods to facilitate their learning process.

This study presents art therapy through drawing as a potential and effective method that can be used by teachers and parents as well to achieve effective learning to LD students. This study will provide a professional and practical guide to assist LD students by introducing a new approach – art therapy through drawing.

1.5 The research question

How can art therapy through drawing approach enhance significantly the academic performance of Learning Disabled (LD) children?

1.6 The hypothesis of the study

Using art therapy through drawing approach can enhance significantly the academic performance of LD children.

1.7 Literature Review

1.7.1 Academic Achievement

To explain students' academic achievements at school there can be some variables to put in use like personal attributes, socioeconomic status, and school attributes (Namaziandost, Oyshi, Suhi, Sadia Sharmin, Sultana, Afsana, Jahan, & Nusrat, Hossain, Md. Tanvir, 2021). One of the theories which can support the work of such variables is Coleman's (1988) Social Capital Theory. This theory offers three different but interconnected capitals: human, financial, and social. Interactions between people is what reproduce the "benefits" of humane networks and yields Coman's term of *social*

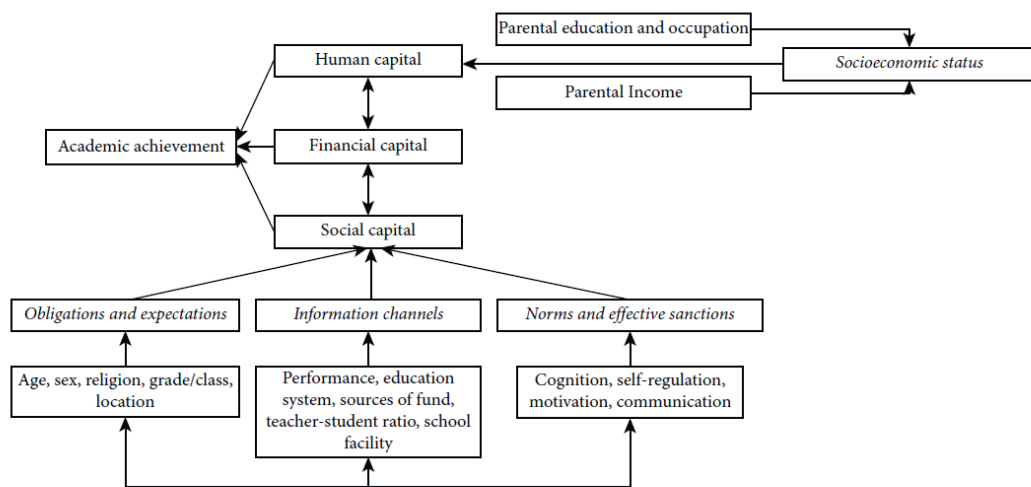
capital. However, interactions between people and the networks, which are created, and affected by two other variables: financial and human capitals (educational attainment).

All three variables supply resources to develop young students intellectually and professionally. The underpinning of Coleman's social capital are the followings: (i) obligations and expectations, (ii) information channels, and (iii) norms and effective sanctions, which potentially contribute to a student's educational and occupational success.

To illustrate this, we can see how parents with a higher social-economical background are expected to send their children to more prestigious schools. Parents seek to make their children higher achievers in a competitive educational environment and to have more interactions with better teachers to enhance their children learning outcomes. Norms and effective sanctions in Colman's theory are what facilitate for achieving standardized behaviors, which in their term, reinforce collective interests and strengthen socially accepted social actions, including academic behavior. To conclude these three elements, social capital, human capital, as well as financial capital, are thought to yield that “accepted” higher educational outcomes and attainments (Figure 1).

Figure 1

Coman's Conceptual Framework



Source: (Oyshi et al., 2021)

1.7.2 Activities in Art Therapy

Art therapy is a branch descended from psychotherapy. It can play a role as a transformative factor because of its unique sensory nature which is created through psychotherapeutic relationship (Elbrecht, 2018). This transformative factor and its impact and role in interventions when trauma is involved may have a better effect than verbal approaches. Using art in therapy evokes expressions from our senses, feelings and nonverbal communication; it may build and attune the practitioner-client relationship to be less dependable on words. In addition, it encourages more specific relational dynamics. The function of the therapist in art therapy is to provide materials, to facilitate the creative process, and to actively participate and help the individual to achieve a visual self-expression. All these activities aim at exchanging experiences in these interactions through the experiential, tactical, and visual, and to rely not only on verbal communication between the client and therapist (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014).

Hannigan, Grima-Farrell and Wardman (2019) describe the two major theories in the field of art therapy. One of them by Junge, “derives from Freudian psychoanalytic ideas and methods” (Junge, 2016, p. 13). One is psychotherapy and employs art “mostly as a method of non-verbal imagistic communication or symbolic speech (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014). The other originates from a notion made by Edith Kramer which is based on psychology and it can be closer to art educators. Kramer believes that “the creative process itself has a healing power” (Malchiodi & Crenshaw, 2014). However, not being mandatory in schools, it is ideally for them to have an educational art therapist, aligned with art teachers, school psychologists, etc. Therefore, either of both forms of creative arts therapy could be integrated into schools. Staff like school psychologist will side by side facilitate and encourage young people to express their feelings and establish their sense of identity so that they can deal with situations like facing trauma, illness, bullying, in addition to personal issues like, depression, family breakdown, stress, and anxiety.

Basically, art therapy is built on the idea that the creative process involved in making art can be a healing process and can enhance life (Nguyen, 2015). Being a way of verbal communication facilitates thoughts and feelings (American Art Therapy Association, 1996). The foundations of art therapy creates the pre-means of knowing and experiencing and developing relationships with a therapist and for nurturing a supportive environment. It has been suggested that preverbal consciousness can be created as a therapist being highly attuned to their clients by joining and mirroring them. Being attuned in an emotional atmosphere, a therapist may adjust processes by reflecting the state of the client, emotionally and relationally (Nguyen, 2015).

In recent years, integrating special studies for people with learning disabilities into the education system has become a privilege for all students, since studies have become compulsory for everyone.

In return, the client is helped to nurture a language which may rely on metaphors and symbols through which his/ her personal narrative is reconstructed (Gerber, 2014; Robbins, 2000).

1.7.3 Art therapy vs. Art education

What is most significant is the context of the therapist-client relationships (Rubin, 1978). In such a therapeutic context, the therapist-client's relationship differs from what it's in any drawing conducted privately by a client or in any regular art class. Aiming in creating a safe atmosphere, the client feels physically and psychologically protected to use art for self-exploration, expanding, and understanding. It is via this safe atmosphere and trustful relationship, a client may allow oneself to be exposed; to look at one's inner self through one's mirror by using creative means. In many times the sharing of client-therapist is almost non-verbal, but their togetherness and sharing of the therapeutic process and product potentially increases the client's sense of protection (Nguyen, 2015). This event receives its validity and even long-lasting (Rubin, Child art therapy, 1978, p. 270).

In other words, it is not the aesthetics of the art work of a client that stands in the focus of a therapeutic session but more what a client needs to express, i.e. his/ her involvement in their artwork (Nguyen, 2015).

1.8 Models of art therapy

1.8.1 Margaret Naumburg's Model

Naumburg was the first to integrate Freud's ideas on communication with the unconscious and its dynamics with Art's symbols and images. Margaret Naumburg is considered a founder of art therapy, in establishing her Walden School in 1915 (Nguyen, 2015).

The root of her art psychotherapy is based on a Freudian term, first the patient-therapist's "transference relation (Nguyen, 2015), and on using free association. Clients in Naumburg's therapy were asked to project their conflicts in a visual manner. She believed that the value of art therapy "is based on the recognition that man's most fundamental thoughts and feelings are derived from the unconscious to be expressed in images rather than words" (Naumburg, 1958, p. 511). However, she differs from Freud by not implying so much stress on translating subjective experiences into words. A client in Naumburg's therapy is expected to be active and use his/ her images for analysis. (Junge & Asawa, 1994, pp. 24-25). To sum up Hamburg's emphasizes mostly on therapy and interpretation rather than art (Nguyen, 2015)

1.8.2 Edith Kramer's Model

"Art as therapy" was a term coined by Kramer (Ulman in Rubin, 1987, p. 281). She based her model rather on the process of art-making than on the therapy itself (Nguyen, 2015). A client through art therapy gets access and regenerates experiences and emotions of primary importance in order to "re-experience, resolve and integrate conflict" (Rubin, 1978, p. 280).

The difference between Kramer and Naumburg (Nguyen, 2015) is that the former looks at art as therapeutic process while the latter sees it as embedded in therapy (Junge & Asawa, 1994, p. 31) For this there is a need of separating the part played by a therapist from that played a psychotherapist.

The art therapist communicates with his students via the students' paintings and this communication has therapeutic value. But he is not psychotherapist, and it is not his function to interpret deep unconscious content to his students. The basic aim of the art therapist is to make it possible to interpret the pleasure and satisfaction that creative work can give" (Kramer, 1958, p. 5).

An art therapist, according to Kramer, should be a skilled artist- exactly as a skilled teacher and therapist: For an art therapist it's more important to "not directly interpret unconscious meaning" instead she suggested to "use his knowledge to help the child produces an art work that contains emotions and to be able to express emotionally loaded material" (Kramer, 1971, p. 34). Her method bypassed the methods that advocate for exposing conflicts and going against defenses (Nguyen, 2015). She mainly focused on art as a method for achieving sublimation, a mechanism which was defined by Freud as the Ego's defense stratagem to prime primitive social effect and transform them to something that is socially viable (Junge & Asawa, 1994, pp. 34-35).

To conclude, this research draws from all models in the previous sections that serve the art therapists in their work.

1.9 Drawing Approaches

Art therapy clamors for inner kind of seeing; it could be either through thinking about the emotive responses, being exposed to their feelings and interpreting it.

The Psychotherapeutic and Counseling Federation of Australia (PACFA, 2012) provided the following definition of therapists in the field of creative arts: "All art forms offer avenues for inquiry into personal life meanings". It is possible for clients to gain new understandings by manipulating any art that can represent their own story. Other forms that were already created in this field might be using drama, poem writing,

painting, writing novels or composing music. Their objective will always be to revive and create a new experience of some aspects of the client's life in order to understand and take a look at them for making sense. In school, there are approaches in art therapy to be exclusively using only one form of art. Still there would be other approaches which are based on some methods of self-expression; Separating the wheat from the chaff is the most crucial one, and afterwards talking about their experience while still unearthing it (Green & Denov, 2019).

Other aims of art therapy, both for clients and therapists, are to help young people to understand what are the relationships in families and groups; to help practitioners and teachers to create arts as well as other therapists to work with clients on leadership styles; to challenge them for finding “a change of direction”- at least by being more open to it, and to present those leadership styles to the students (Rosal, 2016, p.235 in Hannigan, Grima-Farrell & Wardman, 2019).

One of the most prominent strengths of the drawing approach in art therapy emanates from being such a concrete and visual tool for providing children and youth with a way for self- representation, a way for understanding themselves against the settings of their past and present and that of course in light of their social environments. A way for ticking along with those experiences leads clients to face issues, such as identity stigma, belonging, exclusion, integrating, by asking them to draw two maps that can describe different comparative contexts of family realities (Green & Denov, 2019).

Learning Disability (LD) is defined as an impairment in perceiving complex information, challenging in learning new skills or a reduced ability to deal with independence in adulthood (Mencap, 2020a).

There are cases of ‘models’ of disability; the most widely known are the ‘medical’ and ‘social’ models. The medical model views disability as a problem that belong to an individual; the social model is based on the belief that society and environmental setbacks is the cause that individuals have such disability (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020).

The term 'people with learning disabilities' is commonly presents the individual as 'disabled' by society and has been rallied for by the disability movement which exists to combat disability bias and discrimination (Slorach, 2016).

To sum this up, art therapy with doing the link between emotions and teaching help LD students to expose their emotions and to be able to interpret them, and that naturally can enhance their self-awareness.

1.9.1 Inter-sectionality

A notion called inter-sectionality was termed by Chadwick et al. (2013) who discussed the topic of social inequalities that children with LD populations may face, or in other words who labeled of LD may result in creating stigma. Labels can be so powerful to the extent of creating a 'primary identity' which might shadow other identities like ethnicity, sexuality or gender, that might be overlooked. Notwithstanding, their discussion also deals with divisions which are socially biased and the potential oppressions that can be caused by it. To understood that deeply, they have considered many realms of difference; their attitude is called intersectionality (Collins & Bilge, 2016).

The intersectional approach takes identities which are intersecting such as disability, class, gender, sexuality and race (Talwar, 2010).

1.9.2 Self-narrative

Councill (2016) whose theories are based on her experiences with working as an art therapist with young patients and their families in an oncology ward. She found that children have "the full range of human emotions" but "it is in their thinking that they differ from adults" (p.243). She concludes one of the ways in which art therapy can help children that "Art therapy promotes internal locus of control" (p. 246). It may be relevant to high-school students who have feelings of disempowerment or lack of comfortability with the culture of their school environment; as "art therapy (also) assists in creating a personal narrative" and "displacement into art allows emotional safety to process difficult content" (Councill, 2016, p. 246).

1.9.3 Jungian Drawing

Another conceptual framework that underpinning art therapy is Jungian Drawing; according to Jung's belief, the goal of counseling is “to make unconscious content accessible and so to bring it closer to the patient’s understanding”. Jung thought that meaning and wholeness is the main goal for clients to achieve, as well as striving in achieving balance between the unconscious and conscious (Furth, 2002). In Jungian therapy individuals are encouraged to struggle for finding an inner uniqueness.

The purpose of drawing in art therapy according to the Jungian drawing approach is allowing unconscious content to come to surface and to be deciphered; in doing so this kind of unconscious content may allow a path and insights in a valuable therapy within the inner world of a child (Furth, 2002).

1.9.4 Studio art therapy

Another method of integrating drawing in art therapy is the approach of the studio art. Perhaps the therapist would prefer this approach over the ‘clinical’ one (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020) Even though it doesn't mean that a clinical work cannot proved to be effective, therapist that choose to place art at the core piece of their practice, would combine between the two; that of artist in and that of the therapist in them even though they will still be informed and influenced by theoretical perspectives (ibid).

One of the important things in this approach which is advanced by Gill is the importance of clients' social environment; ideally this should be a sphere where a client can choose between either or not making art, and ‘become more at home with oneself in the company of others’ (Gill, 2017).

An innovative model in the art studio approach is allowing for artistic work of clients by developing a therapeutic relationship in place, and by giving a chance to their resulting artwork to be exhibited and sold. That can be as a means for garnering and containing clients' anxiety as Martyn proposed that- the studio can be a 'container for anxiety'. He also recognized the expressive issues as a result of aiming at exhibiting clients' works, and for exchanging their artworks for their works that were made in the context of therapy (2019).

1.10 Art therapy by using drawing approach and its impact on children with learning Disabilities

Inclusion and Wellbeing are part of a student's right to education; inclusion means a commitment to educate entire students in age-appropriate, high-quality classrooms in their own communities (Grima-Farrell, 2018). The philosophy in its background is that schools should care for the needs of all populations of students in their communities without any bias toward their disabilities or abilities. Schools which are inclusive, embrace, cater and celebrate diversity, should ensure that it's entire range of students share equal rights and have an opportunity to achieve their full potential in each area of curriculum (Hannigan, Grima-Farrell, & Wardman, 2019).

The wellbeing of students, their arts and individuality in the system of the school, call for providing additional arts in education that may integrate inclusive creative types of art therapy as a method for addressing or preventing problems of mental health (ibid). As they have always been, arts are essential and powerful ways for humans to engage in and also for wellbeing and health (The Foundation for Art and Healing, 2011). The arts promote positive wellbeing and mental health (Secker, et al., 2018; Karkou 2010). Pointing to the fact that in Britain, the educators of arts had shifted their attention from valuing the psychological well-being of children (and what was termed as the "emotional curriculum") to be primarily concerned with developing outcomes in artistic fashion. This curriculum in art is more emotional so that it could be a supportive place for students to deal with their mental health (Hannigan, Grima-Farrell, & Wardman, 2019).

Bullying stands as the second largest threat to the wellbeing of students in Australia (NAB Group Economics , 2017). Also, it functions as a risk factor for issues of mental health that result in suicide (Bhat, 2008). This risk can target young people who do not conform to norms such as gender (Reynolds, 2011; Ross et al., 2017). Therefore, there is much to be done if we want to create a safer place for all students, especially males, so that they can feel safe enough to enhance LD populations to express themselves. According to Linesch (2016), here are some practices for encouraging those populations with LD through art therapy curriculum:

- To engage them at very tender spaces of their developmental challenges.
- To provide and empower them with activities that support their progress.
- To assist them to find answers to the types of identity questions that the Australian culture makes more complex and sometimes irresolvable (Linesch, 2016 p. 252).

An advice by Councill (2016) is that art therapists, that work in hospital settings, will locate children who have “the full range of human emotions” but “ it is in their thinking they differ from adults” (p.243). This is one of the many ways in which art therapy can genuinely help children - “Art therapy promotes internal locus of control” (Councill, 2016, p. 246).

Another finding listed by Poorsoltan (2012) enumerates many traits of artists, according to which one trait is “tolerance for ambiguity” (p.80). Another perspective one takes into account eight categories of ambiguity that psychologists use:

1. Many meanings.
2. To keep being vague, incomplete, or fragmented.
3. To be based on likelihood.
4. Paucity of structure.
5. Vague of information.
6. Some uncertainty.

7. To be inconsistent and contradictory.
8. To provide for little clarity (Poorsoltan, 2017).

The artistic practice claims for many contradictory qualities and art offer people a method to understand, express, facilitate, and change. Sometimes sessions in art therapy can be confidential; even though some members are periodically invited to exhibit artworks. (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020)in creating collaborative efforts with local galleries. Exhibitions can be organized with the clients' consent, aiming at empowering members in order to establish an identity which is artistic and visible to the public. Occasionally, means are not available, then parents or caregivers may provide more consent. Likewise, all artworks should get a consent given by the respective clients, parents and caregivers, and keep all this anonymous (Datlen & Pandolfi , 2020)

1.11 Advantages of Art Therapy for Children with ADHD

Art therapy is portrayed as having the potential to help any children to learn behavioral and emotional problems (Councill, 2016). IA special emphasis was on opening up a non-verbal form of communication for those who have times of hardship for communicating their feelings and thoughts (e.g., shy and withdrawn young children, children with limited vocabulary, and children with traumas). We can portray it as a potential for helping all young people to know themselves better, to know their emotions, and to cope with setbacks in the pivotal period of developmental stages of life.

There are other studies that reported findings about those children who asked to draw while they are speaking about their experiences; they actually exposed more information than children who just talked about their experiences without drawing. These findings can be interpreted that drawing decreases children's anger, fear, and anxiety. In addition, it allows them to have a stronger connection with the interviewer, helps them organize their communications, and increase their memory retrieval (Councill, 2016).

1.11.1 The therapeutic Process of creative art

Few examples of therapy in creative art for young people and or schools (Hannigan, Grima-Farrell, & Wardman, 2019) are listed below:

To implement creative art approaches and to put an emphasis on art therapy, or at least the therapeutic practices of art in schools. This effort might enable students-clients to address and explore the conflicting gaps of self and school, or use other social media of our cultural systems – which could prevent developing issues of mental health. Art education in schools' programs of art therapy – as opposed to art- merely being for the talented that leads for inclusivity (Chapman, 2015); particularly, when students are reassured in a way that validates their own expressions and creativity. Therapy in art that maintains this approach offers ways to let students express their individual unique cultural, socio-psychological, aesthetic and environmental viewpoints. Especially, integrating music in the community can benefit from the talents of all students involved. Such approach which is 'resource-oriented' toward teaching encourages the *strengths* of those students (McFerran & Rickson, 2014, p. 11).

After 30 years of experience as an art practitioner and with an increased realization of her need to be inclusive, Linesch (2016) pointed to art therapy with youth as valuable for engaging them merely in challenges rendered by the tender places of their development; for providing them with activities which can be empowering to their progress; for assisting them to find answers for all types of identity questions that our culture makes more difficult and sometimes incapable of solving (McFerran & Rickson, 2014, p. 252).

When teenagers express themselves through art, some new imagery, metaphor and language can emerge. The approaches of art therapy lay up ways of inquiring into the language to make sense of it. Therefore, one of the main conclusions is that both artists and psychologists may take for granted that the images of children are like their own adult ones; they will continually emerge and when they are formed they would be ready and full. However, in a matter of fact we just need to inquire them and learn them deeply since psychology is not a science of the image (Hannigan, Grima-Farrell, & Wardman, 2019).

Chapter Two

Methods

2.1 Study design

Experimental design as a randomized control trial (RCT) was used for the purpose of assessing the effect of art therapy through drawing on children with learning disability (LD).

2.2 Sample and sampling

Sample selection: I obtained a list with all students of learning difficulties from the school secretary. Then I chose students from that list according to the order of (take one skip the next)- so the sample of the study was chosen randomly. The sample included (25 students) as a case-group and a (25 students) as a control group.

The case group students were tested and graded at the beginning of the treatment and retested and regraded again on the last day of the experiment. The number of students who participated in the case group was 25 (13 boys and 12 girls). All the students participated in the study were from the second and third grades. The researcher divided them into five groups; each group consisted of five including boys and girls.

The researcher took permission from the school for include 50 students with learning disabilities. Then the sample was randomly chosen (25 students from this list) – by orderly choosing one and skipping the next. The children were tested and graded both before and after they started treatment. The results of these tests are attached at the end of the current study.

2.3 Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Both case and the control group included LD participants. The case and control group excluded participants who were mentally retarded or unable to pick a pencil or speak.

2.4 Data collection process

First, the researcher had set the first meeting with the participants who had been tested to assess their educational level and academic capabilities (tests were adjusted to the age of the participants). It is worth mentioning that participants (who are second and third

graders) were chosen randomly from the list. After the researcher had inspected their test results, she wrote down their tests' scores. Then the researcher started the therapeutic sessions of the case group (at least one meeting per week for a few months). The sessions relied on the approach of art therapy through drawing. At the end the therapeutic sessions, the researcher had appointed a second test, almost identical to the first one and the scores of the two tests (the test which was done by the participants on the first day and the one which was at the end of the art therapy sessions) were compared. The participants had two sessions per a week during a two-month period and each session lasted for an hour and a half. The total time of teaching was 24 hours.

2.5 Pilot study

Five LD students participated in the pilot study who were taught privately by drawing-art therapy. The results showed a significant academic progress.

2.6 Study Instrument

The materials used in this study were taken from the website of the Ministry of Education under the name (Rama for Tests and Assessment) for Tamilds. It is based on drawings; students are asked to draw letters, color requested letter only and at the end of the coloring they will see the shape of an animal that begins with the letter they have colored. Also, the same method is applied on arithmetic; they draw and color a certain shape and they get a number and the amount of the number (attached in the appendix). This assessment tool is called MATTIA assessment set of exams. All assessment exams and drawing materials used in this research were taken from MATTIA and the Ministry of Education in Israel. The objective of MATIA, Municipal-District Support Center, is to serve as a support system for regular and special education frameworks.

The study instrument used in this research was a curriculum of art therapy through drawing (see at the attached appendix at the end of this study). In this study, the researcher experimented this instrument with children and found out that it really helped children with learning difficulties. Then the researcher corrected the test questions and added appropriate sections for students' thinking. (Learning capabilities rating test).

2.7 Intervention

The case group consisted of LD students who were tested in Arabic and mathematics, then they experienced a series of art therapy sessions combined with learning.

The control group also consisted of LD students and did not experience any intervention- no art therapy through drawing sessions- they continued with their regular learning methods.

At the end of the sessions, both groups (case and control) passed another Arabic and mathematic test and their scores were compared with their scores in the first test.

2.7.1 School information:

Type: elementary school; Classes: second to third grades; type of education: normal education; Ethnicity; Arab.

2.8 Statistical analysis

Statistical analyses were performed starting with exploring the frequencies of demographic characteristics. Then the variables were examined against normality test. The kolmogrove siminov test revealed that the data were not normally distributed. Analyses of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the differences of study means for the pre and post-test variables. The main advantage of using ANCOVA over using ANOVA is that by adding covariates into the study/model, we are minimizing the effect of the covariates on the dependent variable.

2.9 Ethical consideration

The researcher was given a permission by the school principal to keep the anonymity and confidentiality of the participants of this research and to use the entire research responses exclusively for the purpose of this current research. In addition, the researcher was given a permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB MASS.FEB. 2022\1).

Chapter Three

Results

Table 1 illustrates the main study independent variables. 60% of the participants in both control and case groups were aged 7-8 years old. Regarding gender, about half of participants in both groups were male. Also, about half of the mothers of the participants were not working mothers. In addition, most mothers and fathers aged above 20 years old. The majority of fathers were working fathers compared to mothers. Furthermore, about half of the parents in the sample gain >1500\$ as a monthly salary. When viewing the number of children in the family, we noticed that the majority of the families had >4 children. Regarding the order of the participants in the family, the results revealed that one third of them were the youngest and the other two thirds divided as one third were in the middle and one third were the eldest. Also, there were significant psychological problems among the participants' mothers in both case and control groups during their targeted pregnancy. Also, about one third of the participants' mothers in both groups labored by cesarean section.

Table 1*Demographic characteristics of the study variables*

Case Group		Frequency (100%)	Control group - Frequency (100%)
Age	7-8	15 (60)	14 (56)
	>8	10(40)	11 (44)
Gender	Male	13 (52)	15 (60)
	female	12 (48)	10 (40)
Mother working	No	14 (56)	14 (56)
	yes	11 (44)	11 (44)
Mother's age	>30	10 (40)	11 (44)
	<20	2 (8)	1 (4)
	20-30	13 (52)	13 (52)
Father's age	20-30	10 (40)	11 (44)
	>30	15 (60)	14 (56)
Father work	No	4 (16)	6 (24)
	yes	21 (84)	19 (76)
Average monthly income	<1500\$	14 (56)	12 (48)
	>1500\$	11 (44)	13 (52)
Marital status	Married	14 (56)	19 (76)
	Separated	7 (28)	4 (16)
	other	4 (16)	2 (8)
Number of children in the family	1-3	9 (36)	10 (40)
	>3	16 (64)	15 (60)
Order the child in the family	The eldest	7 (28)	7 (28)
	Middle	8 (32)	9 (36)
	youngest	10 (40)	9 (36)
Mother suffer from physical\ psychological illnesses during pregnancy	No	13 (52)	6 (24)
	Yes	12 (48)	19 (76)
Baby birth way	Natural	16 (64)	17 (68)
	Cs	9 (36)	8 (32)
the child suffer from physical or psychological problems	yes	25 (100)	25 (100)
Child learning difficulties	ADHD	5 (20)	7 (28)
	Dyscalculia	10 (40)	10 (40)
	Dysgraphia	10 (40)	8 (32)
	and dyslexic		
Child recognize letters	No	14 (56)	11 (44)
	Yes	11(44)	14 (56)
Child read	No	15 (60)	15 (60)
	yes	10 (40)	10 (40)
Child write	No	17 (68)	14 (56)
	Yes	8 (32)	11 (44)
Child distinguish the first ten number	No	10 (40)	16 (64)
	Yes	15 (60)	9 (36)
The child is currently being treated	Psychothera py	6 (24)	4 (16)
	CPT	4 (16)	6 (24)
	Not treated	15 (60)	15 (60)

Tables 2 and 3 illustrate the ANCOVA results regarding the pre-test and post-test differences in relation to mathematics and Arabic subjects. The post intervention score for Math is considered as a dependent variable which compared to the pre-math scores as independent variable. Table two shows that there was a significant difference between the case group and control group regarding mathematics' score as the academic achievement was improved when drawing therapy was used (p. 0.001).

Table 2

Dependent Variable: Math test score after the treatment compared with the independent pre-math test score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F	P.value
Corrected model	14105.580 ^a	3	4701.860	49.522	.000
Intercept	3358.185	1	3358.185	67.510	.000
Groups	3272.219	1	3272.219	65.782	.000
Pre-math	3429.667	1	3429.667	68.947	.000
Groups * pre-math	963.227	1	963.227	19.364	.000
Error	2288.200	46	49.743		
Total	217245.000	50			
Corrected Total	16393.780	49			

Regarding Arabic, the results revealed that there are significant differences between the case and the control groups when compared against pre-test and post-test when using drawing therapy (p.001) Table 4.

Table 3

Dependent Variable: Arabic test score after the treatment compared with the independent pre-Arabic test score

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P.value
Corrected Model	12259.222 ^a	2	6129.611	99.556	.000
Intercept	2811.901	1	2811.901	45.670	.000
Group	10631.422	1	10631.422	172.674	.000
Pre-arabic	2375.042	1	2375.042	38.575	0.001
Error	2893.758	47	61.569		
Total	213477.000	50			
Corrected total	15152.980	49			

Chapter Four

Discussions and Conclusions

Children with learning disabilities often face social impairments, struggle with both written and verbal communication, and have challenge in direct conversation. Art offers another preferable way of self- expression different from the rigid traditional patterns and without being judged with right or wrong (Power, Millard, & Carr, C, 2022).

Art therapy allows individuals with learning disabilities to externalize feelings of inadequacy and low self-worth, communication difficulties, and other emotional issues arising from learning challenges. Artistic activities—such as painting, coloring, using materials, or music therapy— are tools for expressing internal emotions, unconscious content, conflicts, and distress. The art therapist observes both the creative process and the final product to understand the individual's thought patterns and challenges (Power, Millard, & Carr, C, 2022).

In our research, we found that participants in the case group improved significantly their Arabic and math scores compared to the participants in the control group whose scores either did not improve or even declined.

The findings show that the group learned by art therapy succeeded in bridging the internal and external worlds and allowing students to express themselves without constraints or rules. This therapeutic freedom enabled them to achieve control, stability, and self-confidence. They believed more in their abilities by understanding that if they could effectively express themselves through art, they could learn letters and numbers.

After analyzing the findings of this study, it has become clear that there are many other studies align with the findings of this study. These studies suggest that implementing art therapy through drawing techniques has a positive impact on the academic and cognitive development of children with learning disabilities.

In his study about the effectiveness of drawing therapy among students with special needs - specifically those with learning disabilities, Greenboim-Zimchoni (2024) found that the drawing therapy improved academic performance, particularly in reading and writing skills, and also supported their emotional and cognitive development. When these children's' perspectives about their relationships and self-concept are being

highlighted, this can be so helpful in understanding the experiences they passed through. The interaction of teachers, parents, and clinicians with these children make them aware of their emotions so they can efficiently support them where is it needed.

Also, Pawson et al (2023) found in his study that the focus of art therapy is on the process of creating art rather than the finished product. Therefore, therapists offer encouragement and guidance throughout the process, helping children with developmental disabilities to explore their emotions and thoughts as they create their art works.

In addition, Rointan et al (2021) in his study about drawing therapy and its role in reducing anxiety among children with learning disabilities, found that anxiety disorders are among the most common mental health issues that children with learning disabilities suffer from. These children may experience various forms of anxiety that make verbal tasks challenging. This study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of drawing therapy in reducing anxiety among children with learning disabilities. The findings suggest that drawing therapy can reduce anxiety and improve the learning skills of these children.

In a research study conducted by Lavric, M, & Soponaru, C. (2023), the focus was on exploring the impact of Art Therapy on the Social Emotional Development of Students with Special Educational Needs. The study revealed that the group participating in art therapy experienced a notable reduction in anxiety levels, as well as a significant increase in empathy and prosocial behavior. These results indicate that incorporating art therapy into educational settings could be so beneficial; it alleviates anxiety and promotes the development of social emotional skills- such as empathy and prosocial behavior- in children with special educational needs who have neuro psycho-motor deficiencies.

Moreover, Sturm, J. M. & Erickson, J. L. (2002) in her research about the impact of two different types of concept mapping, hand-drawn and computer-generated, on the descriptive writing skills of students with learning challenges, finds that the descriptive essays produced by students who used hand-drawn or computer-generated maps showed noticeable improvements in the number of words, text units, and overall writing quality compared to their previous writing samples. Interestingly, students in the

group without any map support also displayed improved writing skills, suggesting that they may have developed a better grasp of writing techniques that carried over into their essays even without the aid of maps. Furthermore, the results indicated that students who used concept mapping had more positive attitudes towards writing compared to those who did not.

Furthermore, Amir, M. F. (2022) in his research about Learner-generated drawings by students with mathematical learning difficulties in finishing open number sentences, found that MLD students' drawings included discrete objects, transitions to number lines, partitioning of number lines, number sentences, and verbal reasoning. Changes in the drawings over time indicated an improvement in the students' ability to interpret symbolic representations visually, (Amir, 2022).

In the same line, Alhassan, B. & Osei, M (2022) in his research about the Effectiveness of Integrating Drawing in Teaching English Language in Intellectual Disability Classroom, found that the results of the post-test showed that the experimental group outperformed the control group, demonstrating that incorporating drawing into English Language instruction is a successful teaching strategy.

Bawa, A & Mavi, O. (2020) in his research about Integrating Drawing in Teaching English Language at Yumba Special School for Children with Intellectual Disabilities, found that Academics have noted that incorporating drawing into English Language instruction not only enhances the learning experience by making it fun and engaging, but it also captures and maintains students' interest as they actively participate in the learning journey.

Haley, B. (2018) in his research about Expressive Arts to Promote Regulation and Empathy in the Expressive Arts to Promote Regulation and Empathy in the Classroom, found that through careful observation, it was noted that students exhibited a deeper comprehension of social skills, self-regulation, and empathy. Also, they were in the early stages of fostering a connection of attunement. These observations offered valuable insights into the frameworks in which students were engaging and highlighted the potential benefits of incorporating storytelling and mindfulness practices to enhance overall executive functioning within the group.

4.1 Conclusions

Through the research, we concluded that art therapy (by using drawing) is an expressive work alternative to language and a form of non-verbal communication. Children reflected their true feelings towards themselves and others through drawings. Also, free drawing gave children an excellent way to understand the psychological factors behind the problem behavior.

Students with learning disabilities need such intervention more than others because they are usually deprived of activity classes and art classes; in classrooms they do not find enough opportunity to express their feelings and emotions during the school day. Consequently, art therapy benefits them therapeutically, educationally, recreationally and educationally.

Therefore, schools teaching plans must include special programs for students with learning disabilities in order to be treated with art by drawing so that they can improve their performance and academic achievement.

4.2 Recommendations for Further Research

As a continuation of this research, it is recommended that a study be conducted examining the cognitive functions of children with learning disabilities as potential predictors of success or failure across all educational domains. The focus should be on a specific learning disability, its various characteristics, and implications, and to what degree art therapy through drawing can be effective on dealing with it.

4.3 Recommendations

In light of the findings of the current study, we draw some recommendations:

1. using art education in schools for both regular students and those with learning difficulties.
2. providing art therapy teaching programs at schools to prepare teachers to use artistic and therapeutic activities; this can be more effective and less expensive than receiving art therapists from specialized centers.

3. making more effort to improve job performance of children with learning difficulties; such improvement must be comprehensive and not limited to the academic aspects only.
4. conducting training programs for parents on how to develop functional aspects of their children with learning disabilities,
5. increasing parents' role and participation in school to improve children's self-concept and motivation for academic achievement whether within the family or school- that would improve children's interactions with society in general.
6. To raise awareness in schools of the importance of art in the educational process.
7. It is recommended to conduct a study of the effect of art therapy through drawing on students who are of different age ranges.

4.4 Limitations of the study

Firstly, relying on a small sample size in this study makes it difficult to generalize the findings of this research, but since the research is experimental, this would enhance its reliability. Moreover, the research did not examine the cognitive functions of children with learning disabilities, which could indicate functional failures in academic and behavioral aspects. Also, the study did not focus on the specific nature of the learning disability and its implications, which can significantly affect academic performance and specific disorders resulting from the particular learning disability, its characteristics, and its consequences.

4.5 Personal Reflection

The researcher believes that art therapy through painting is effective and helpful for children with learning disabilities in developing and overcoming their cognitive and emotional challenges related to learning and academic performance. The researcher recommends expanding art therapy through painting to include students with additional difficulties such as attention and concentration issues, various anxieties, emotional problems, etc.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Demographic characteristics of the parents

Dear Parents, This questionnaire deals with the characteristics of your child:

Child's age:

- 7-8 years >8 to 9 years of age

Child's gender:

- male female

Does the mother work?

- yes no

Mother's age:

- less than 20 years 20-30 years more than 30 years

Father's age:

- less than 20 years 20-30 years more than 30 years

Does the Father work?

- yes no

The average monthly income of the parents:

- less than 1500\$ more than 1500\$

Parents' marital status:

- married separated other

Residence:

- city village

Number of children in the family:

- 1-3 more than 3

The order of the child in the family:

- the eldest child the middle child the youngest child

Did the mother suffer from physical / psychological illnesses during pregnancy?

yes no

Baby birth type:

natural birth caesarean section

Does the child suffer from physical or psychological problems?

yes no

school type	Ordinary school	A special education school	Integration into formal education
Child learning difficulties	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	dyscalculia	Dysgraphia/reading
Does the child recognize letters?	Yes	No	Else
Can the child read?	Yes	No	Else
Can the child write?	Yes	No	Else
Does the child distinguish the first ten numbers (1-10)? (number and quantity)	Yes	No	Else
The child is currently being treated in	emotional therapy \ Psychotherapy	Cognitive therapy \ Occupational Therapy \ occupational therapy	Not treated at all

استبيان ديموغرافي لأولياء الأمور

أعزائي أولياء الأمور، الاستبيان الموجود أمامك يتناول خصائص طفلك:

عمر الطفل:

- 7-8 سنوات 8 أكثر من سنوات

جنس الطفل:

- ذكر أنثى

هل الام تعمل؟

- نعم لا

عمر الام:

- اقل من 20 عام 20-30 عام ما فوق ال 30 عام

هل الاب يعمل؟

- نعم لا

معدل الدخل الشهري للاب والام معا:

- ما يقل عن 5200 شافل اكثر من 5200 شافل

الحالة الاجتماعية للوالدين:

- متزوجون منفصلون اخر

السكن:

- مدينة قرية

عدد افراد الأطفال في العائلة:

- 1-3 اطفال اكثر من 3 اطفال

ترتيب الطفل في العائلة:

الاكبر وسط الاصغر

هل عانت الام من امراض جسدية \ نفسية اثناء الحمل؟

نعم لا

نوع ولادة الطفل:

ولادة طبيعية عملية قيصرية

هل الطفل يعاني من مشاكل جسدية او نفسية؟

لا يعالج على الاطلاق	العلاج المعرفي \ العلاج الوظيفي \ العلاج المهني	العلاج العاطفي \ العلاج النفسي	يعالج الطفل حالياً في
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نعم لا

نوع المدرسة	مدرسة عادية	مدرسة تربية خاصة	دمج في التعليم النظامي
صعوبات التعلم لدى الطفل	اضطراب فرط الحركة ونقص الانتباه	عسر الحساب	عسر الكتابة \ القراءة
هل يتعرف الطفل على الحروف؟	نعم	لا	اخر
هل يتمكن الطفل من القراءة؟	نعم	لا	اخر
هل يتمكن الطفل من الكتابة؟	نعم	لا	اخر
هل يميز الطفل الأعداد العشرة الأولى (1-10)؟ (العدد والكمية)	نعم	لا	اخر

Appendix B

Color and discover

All assessment exams and drawing materials used in this research were taken from Mattia and the Ministry of Education in Israel.

Exams and teaching materials by drawing, attached in another file.

Method of intervention

The objective of the Municipal-District Support Center (MATIA) is to serve as a support system for regular and special education frameworks in the application of the Special Education Law, in areas that require preparation at the local or regional level, and to provide educational frameworks with tools to deal with the tasks assigned to them.

Mattia is the executive arm for overseeing special education in the following areas:

Integration program within the framework of regular education

Special Education Services Program - "Shaham"

Vacation programs in special education frameworks

Personal Tutorial

Appointment of assistants

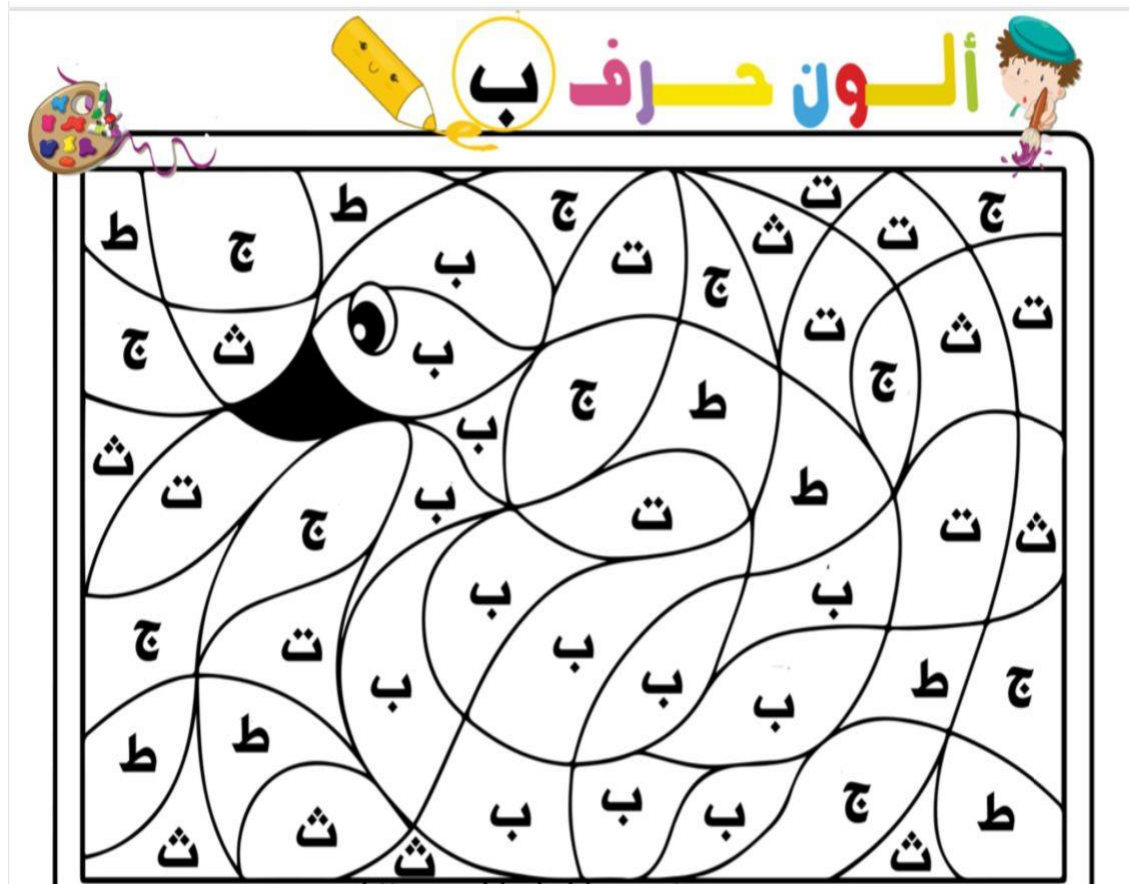
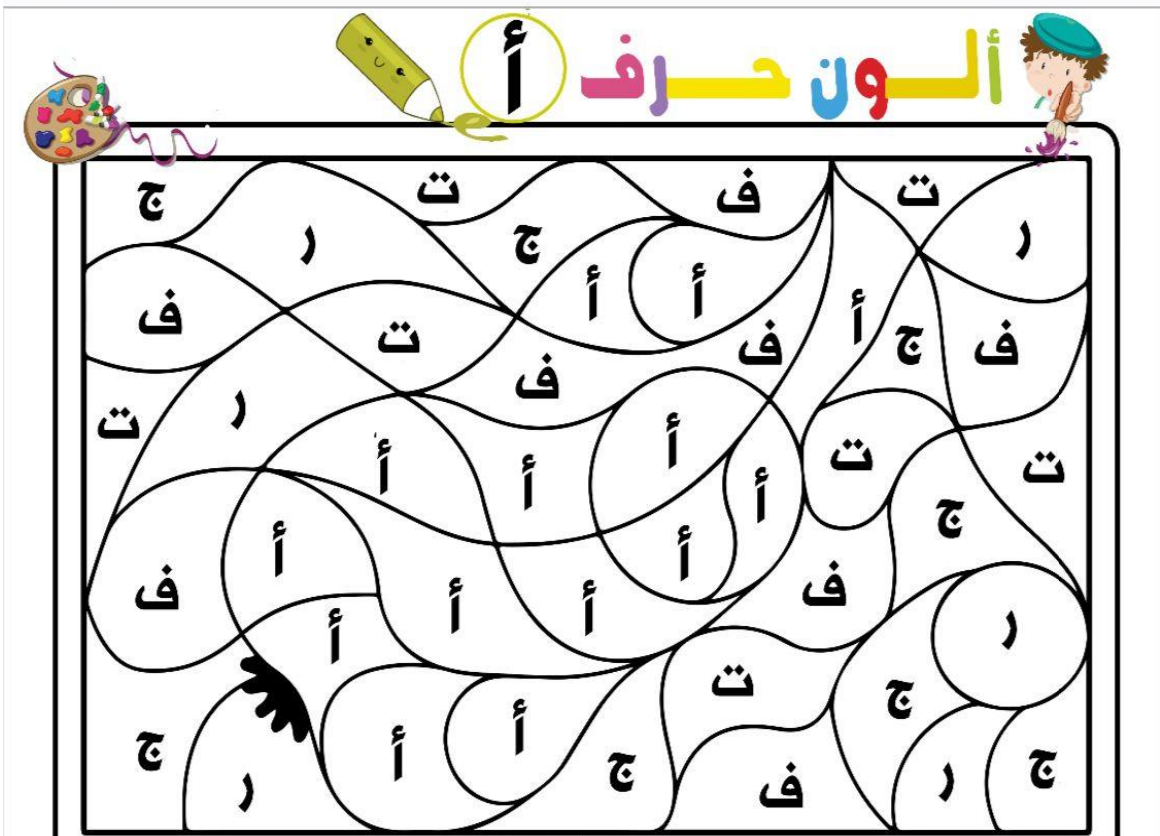
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Additional subjects required under the Special Education Law - as needed

Ministry of Education

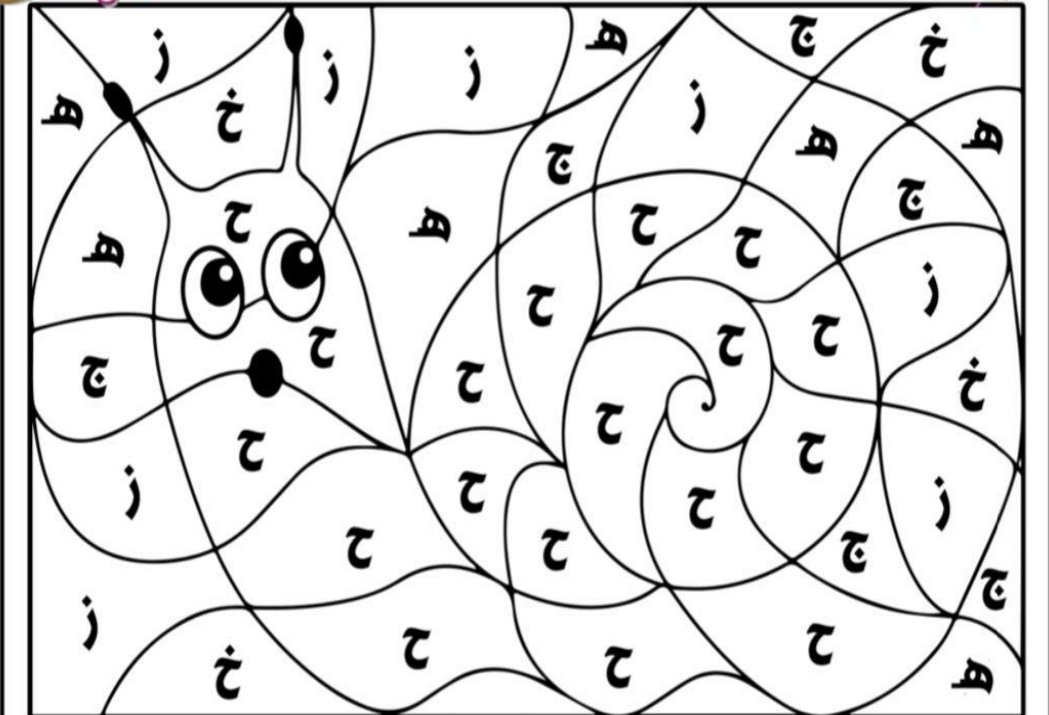
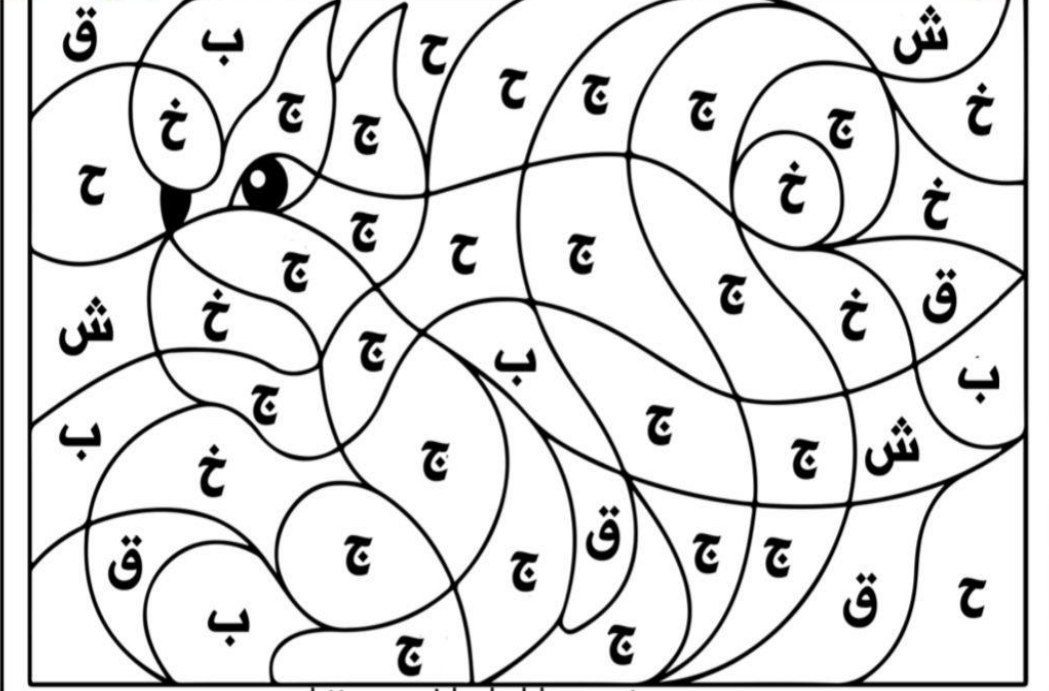
The Ministry of Education is one of the government ministries in Israel that is responsible for the educational system, including kindergartens, schools, higher education, and non-formal education. The current Minister of Education is Rafi Peretz.

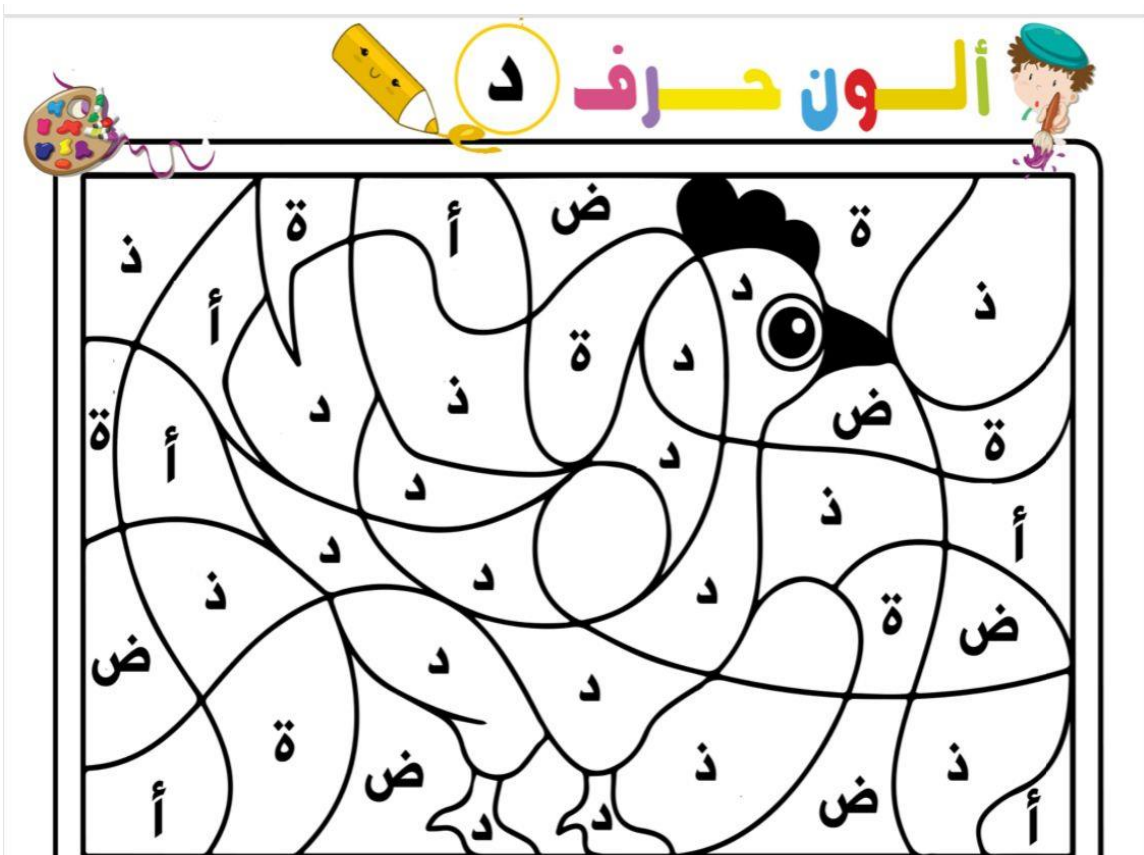
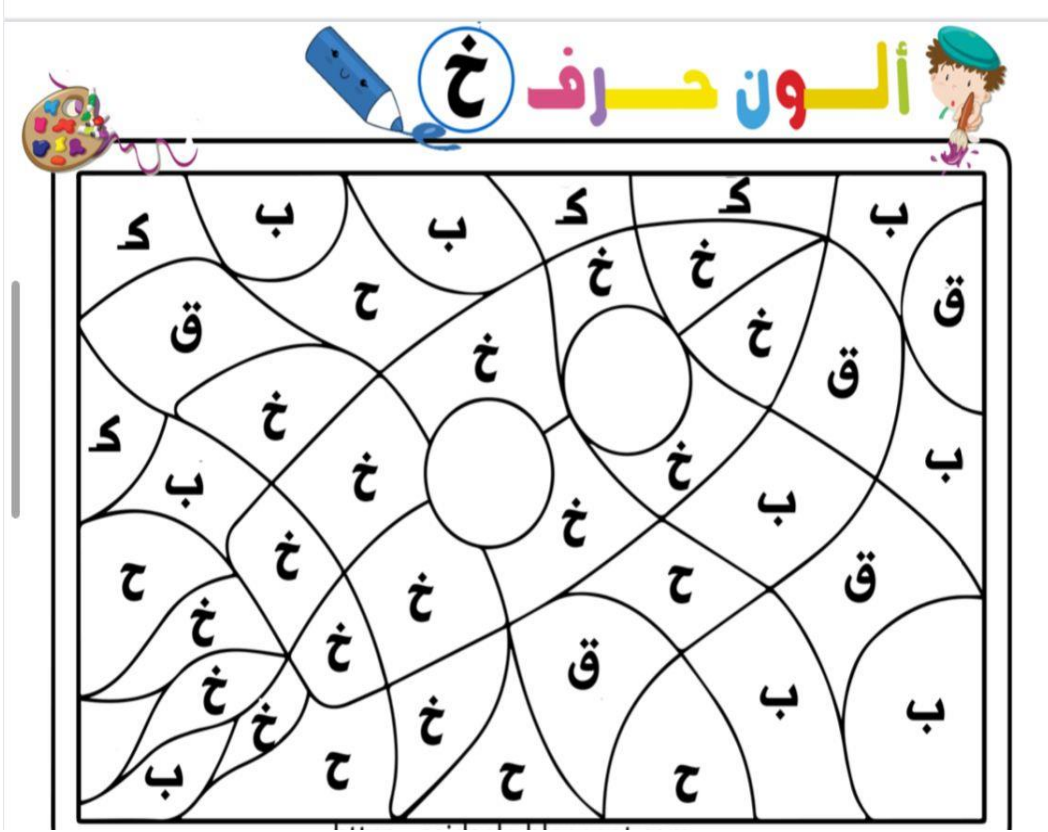
The attached tools

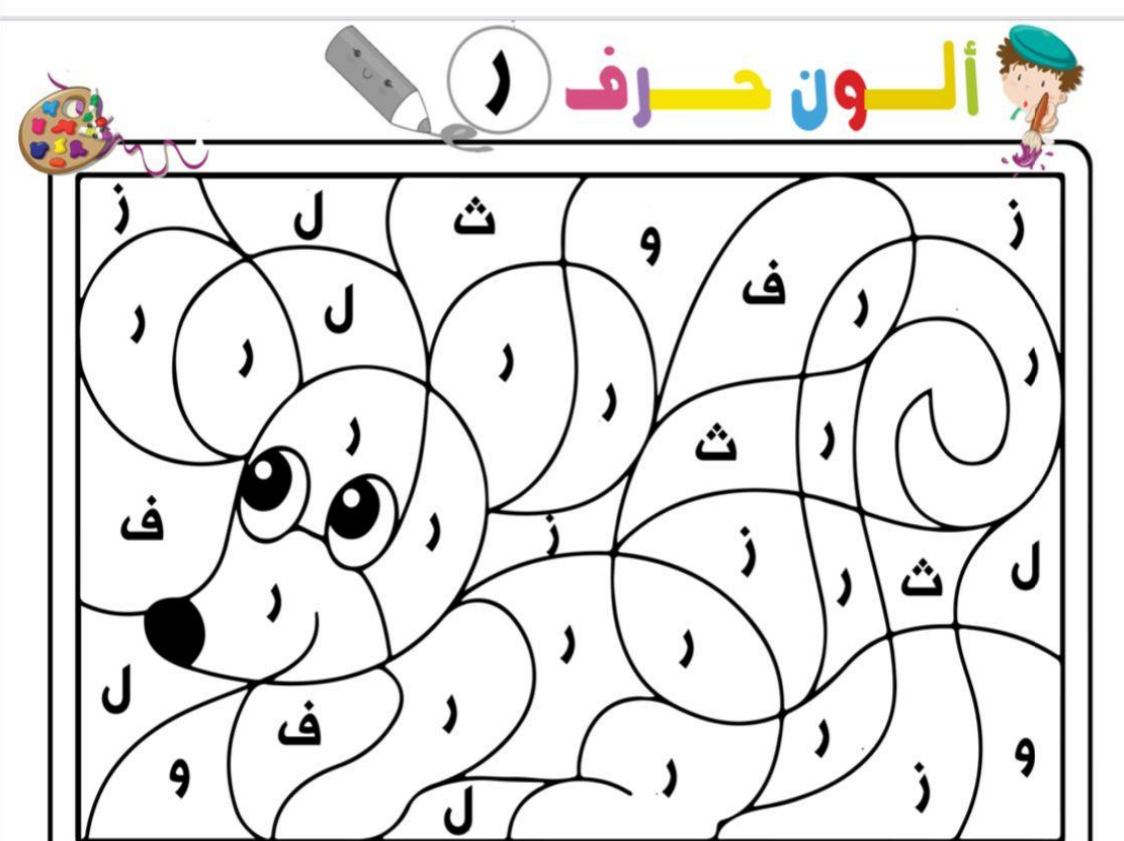
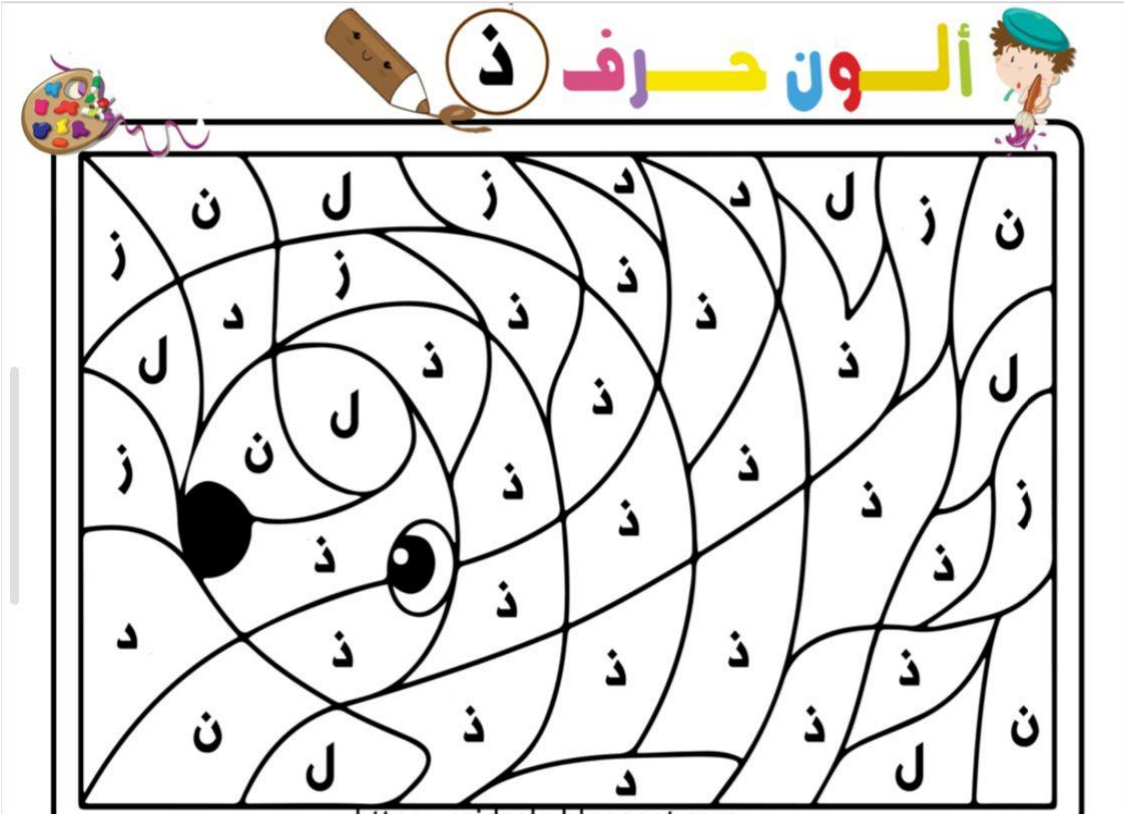


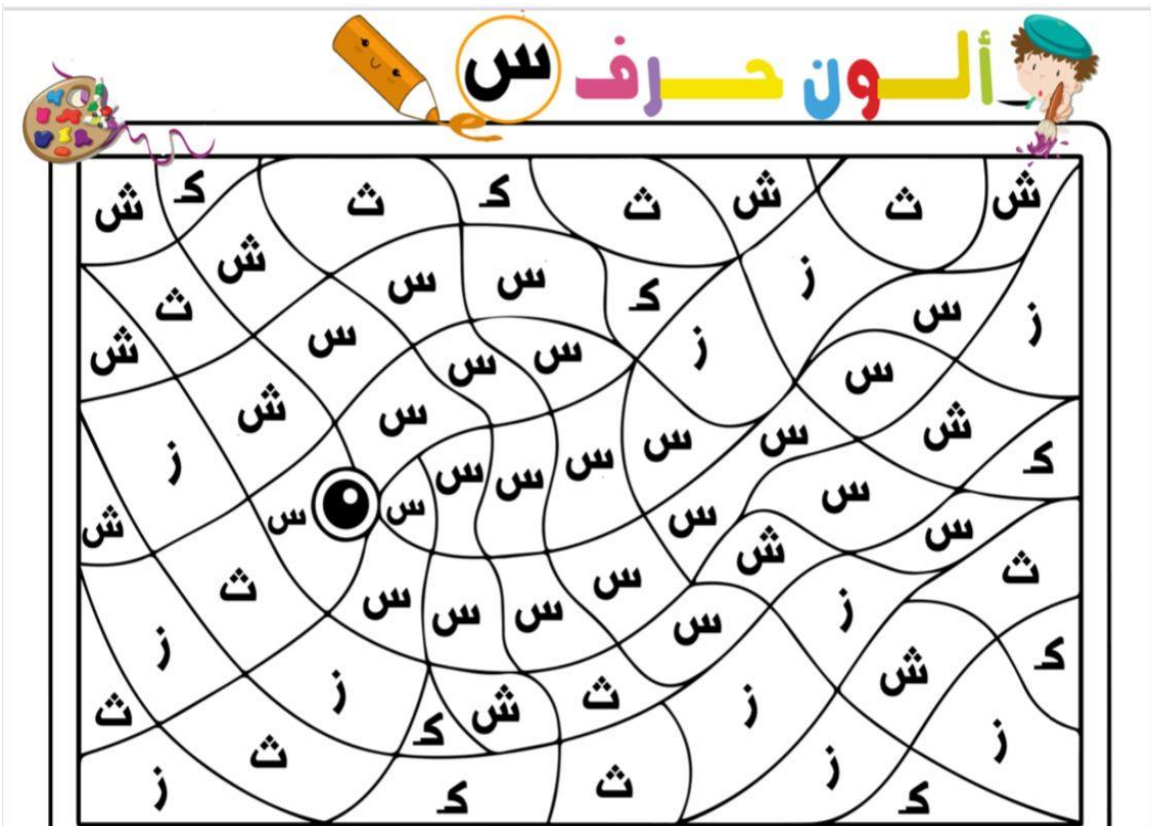
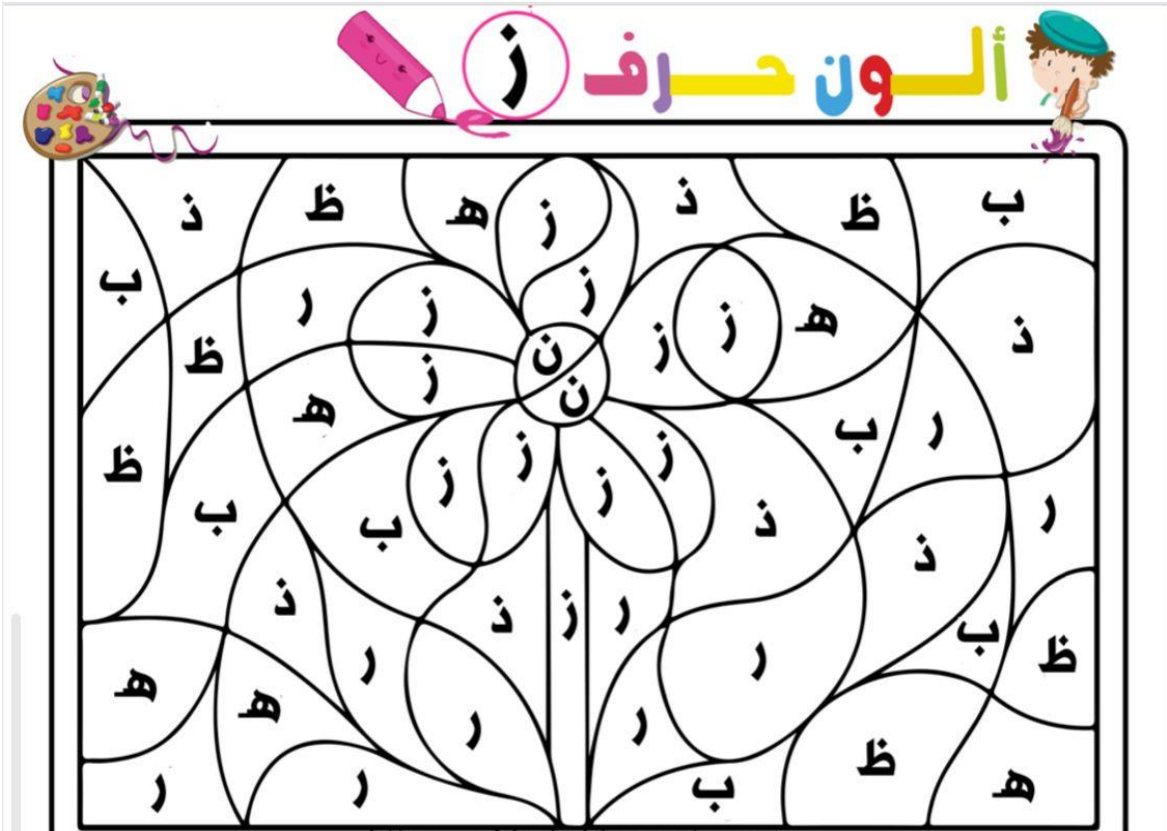
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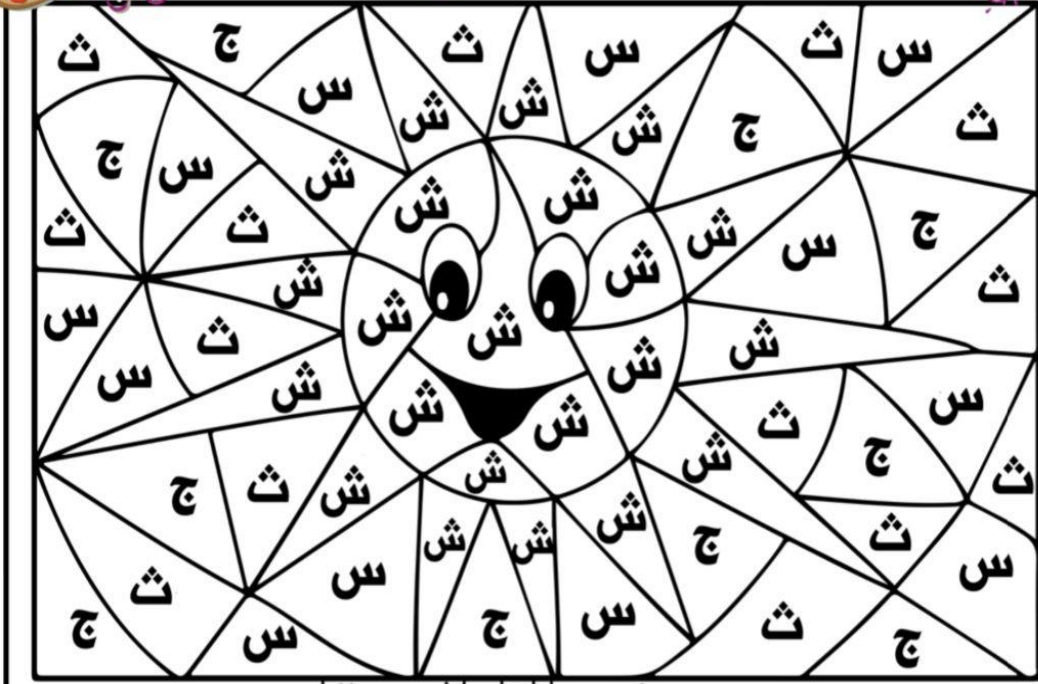
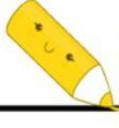






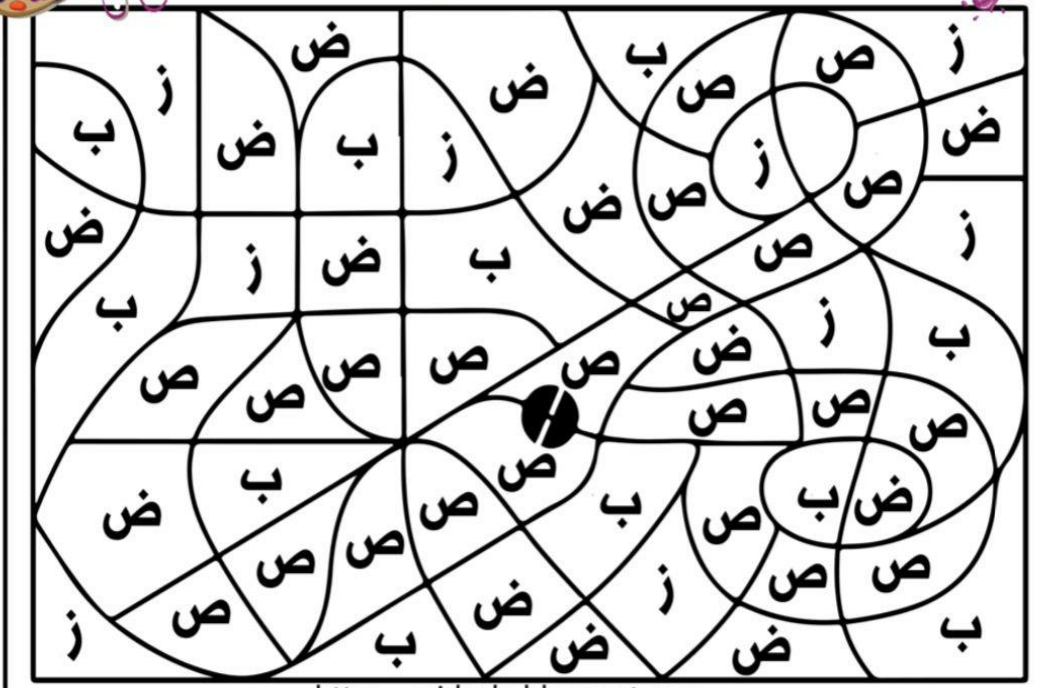
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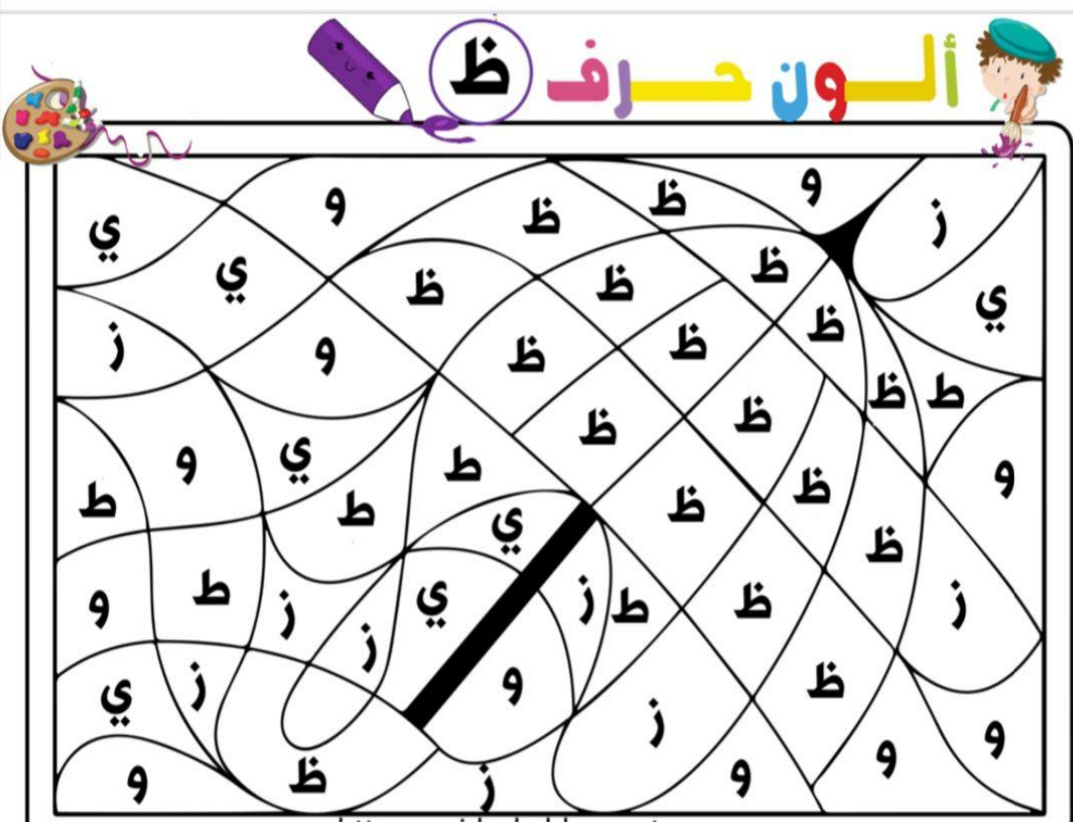
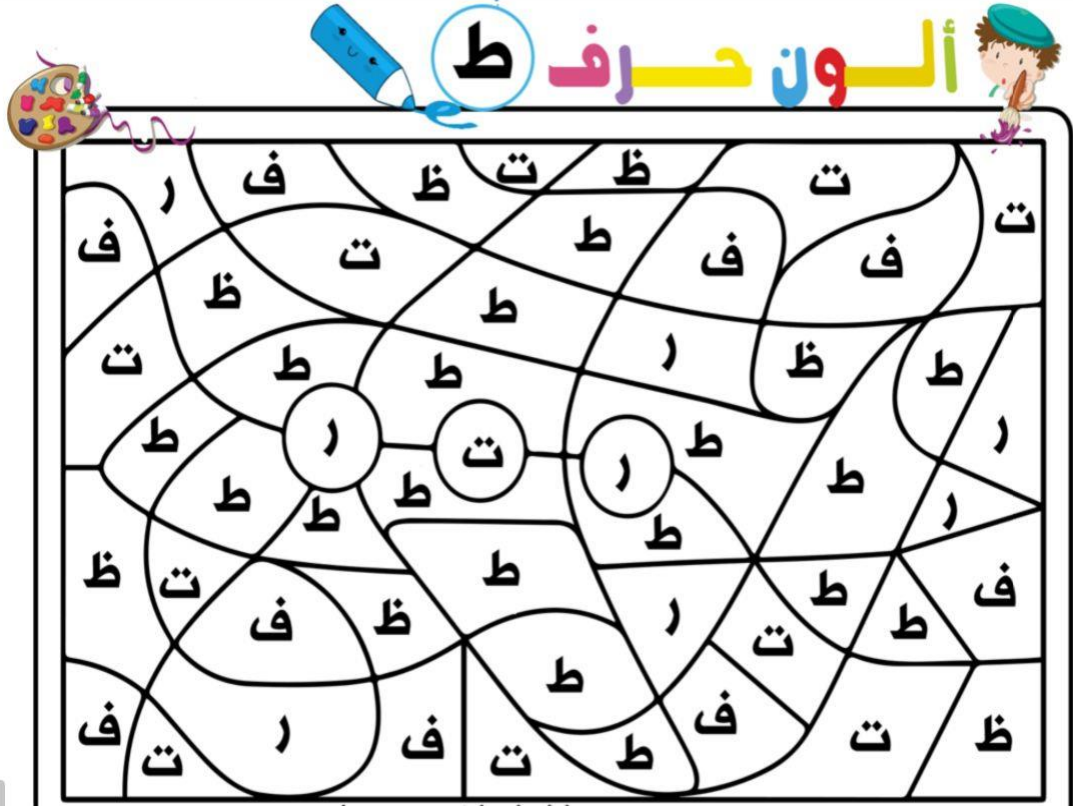
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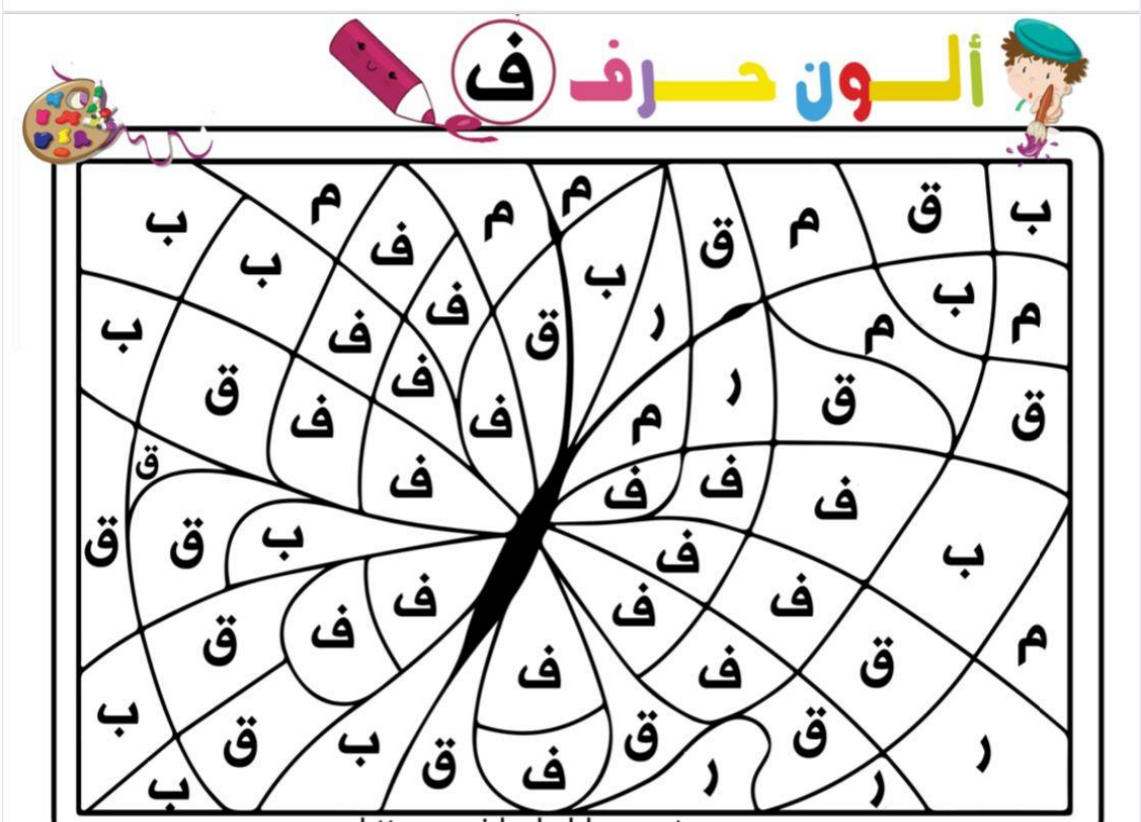
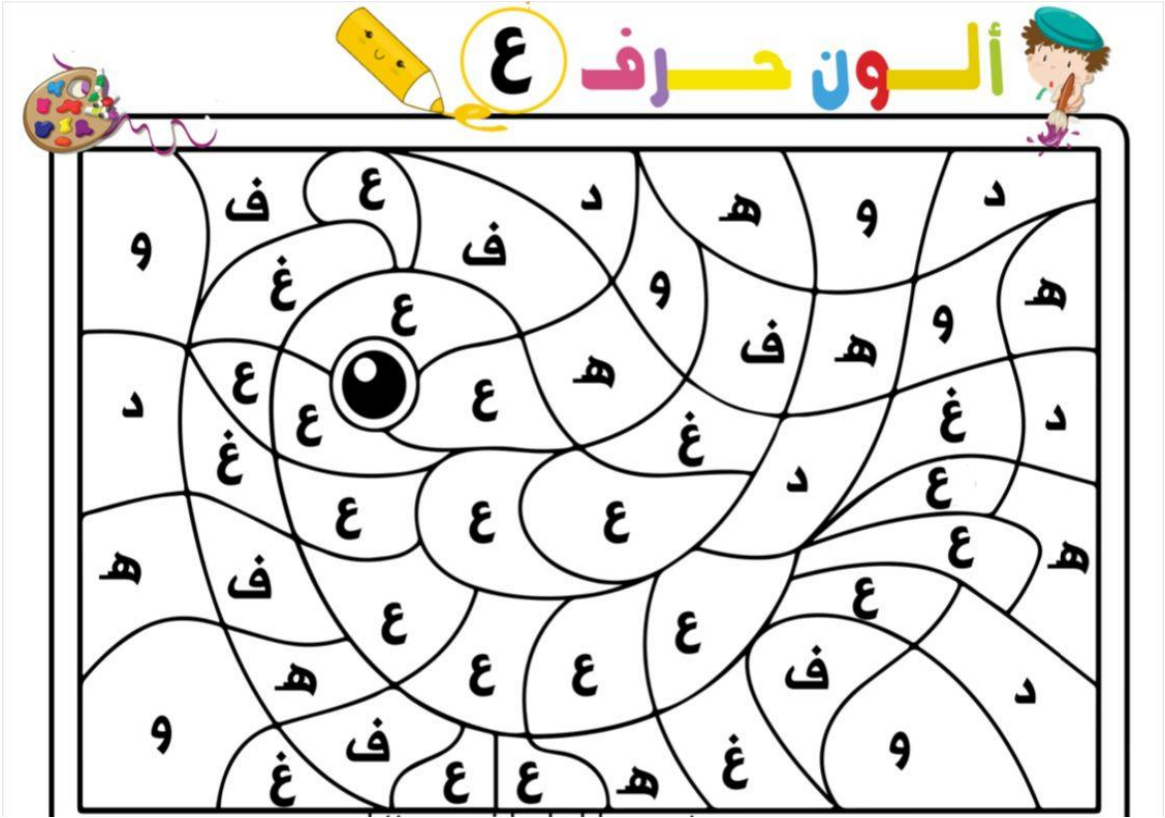


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אלון הרפ

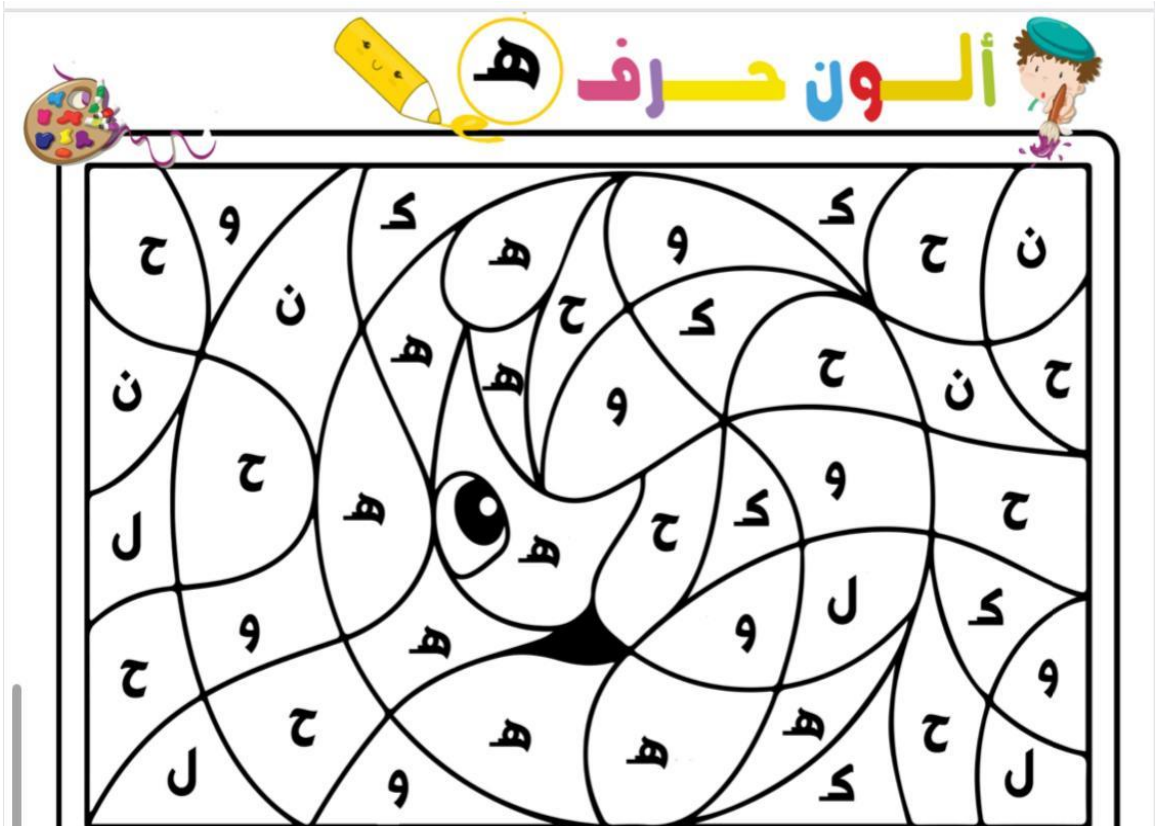
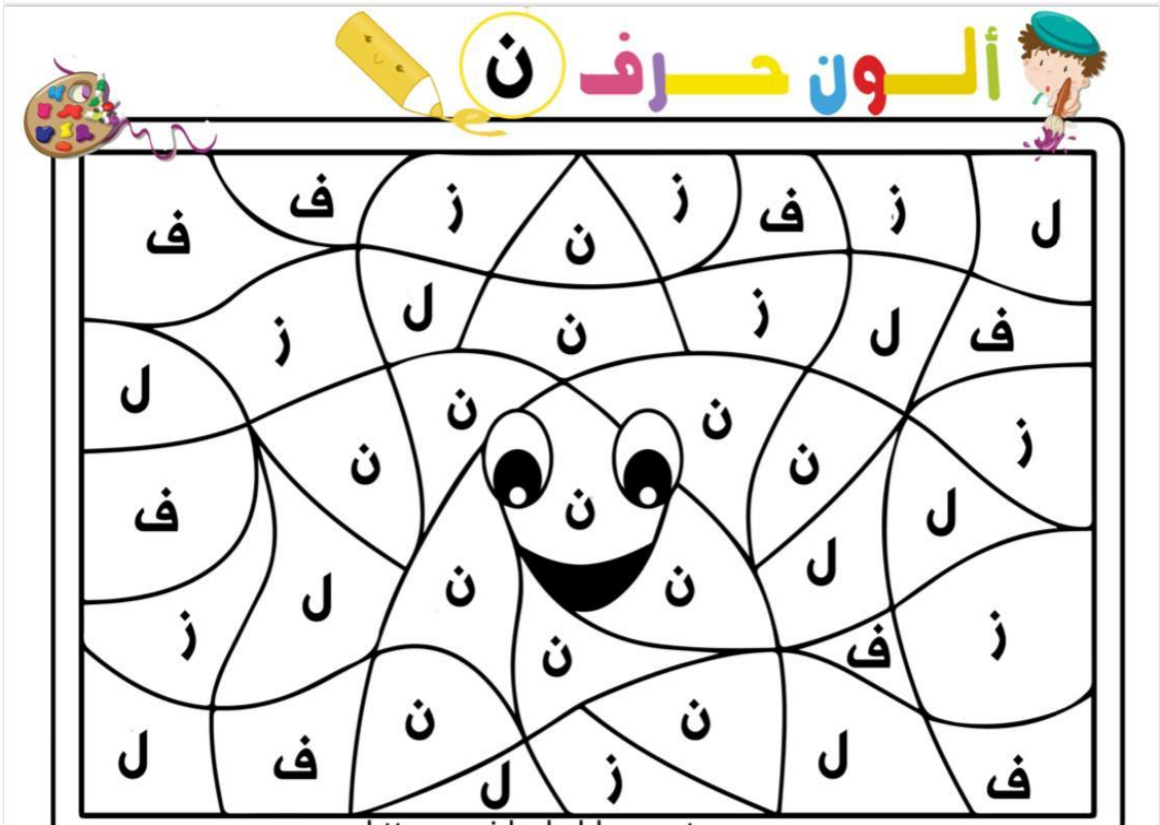




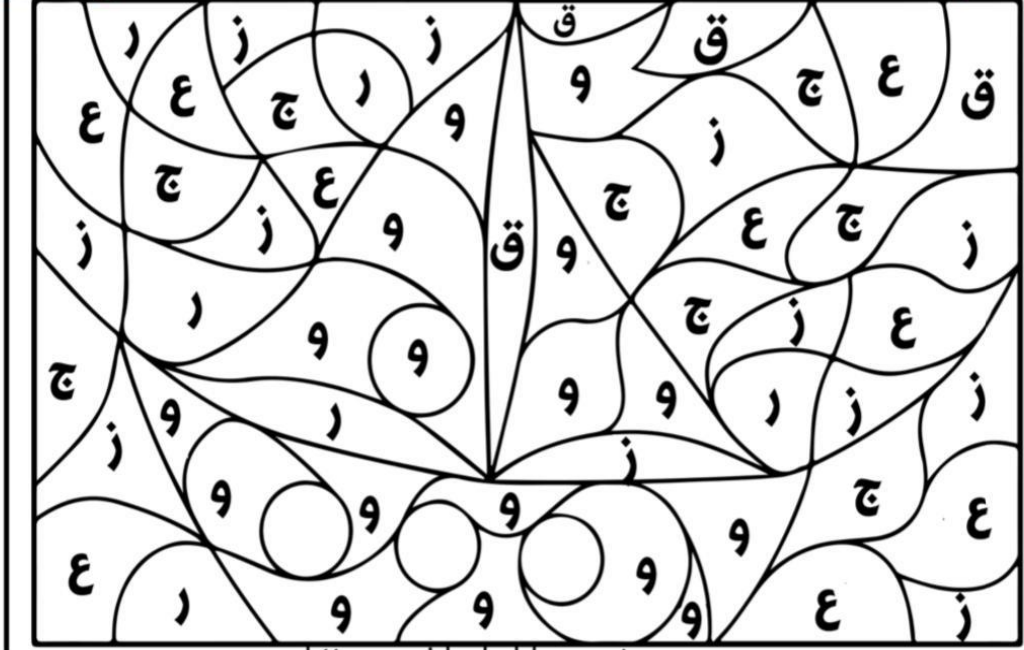


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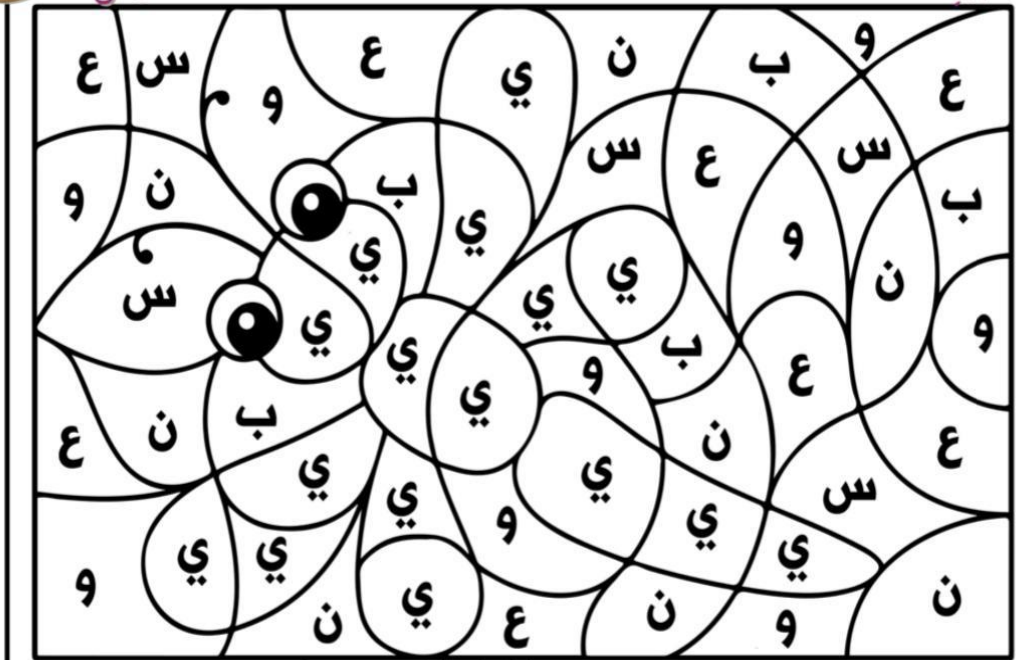
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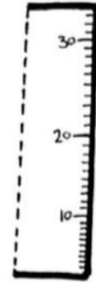


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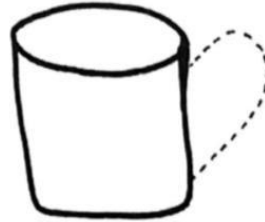
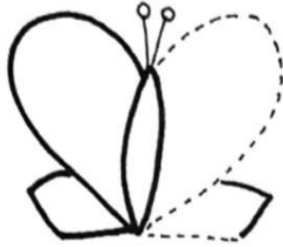


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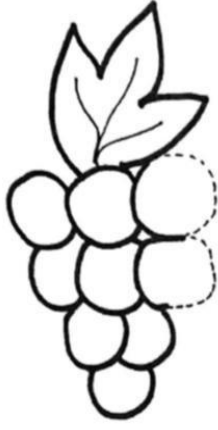


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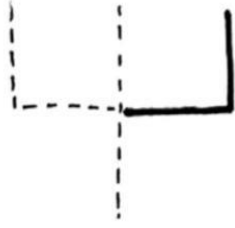
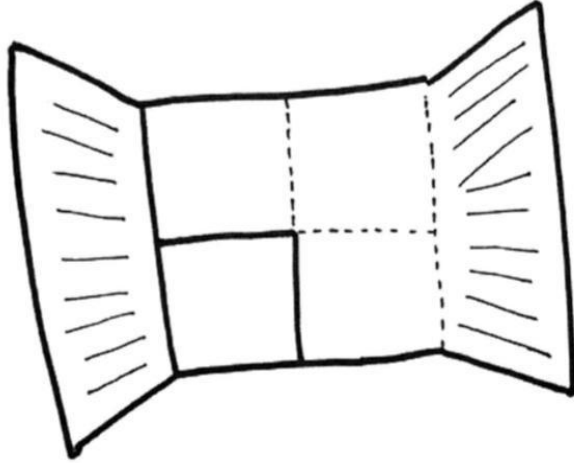


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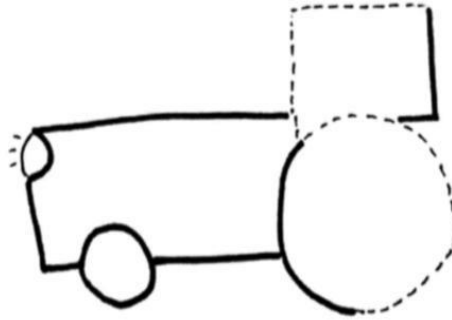
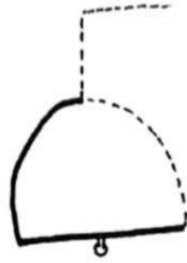


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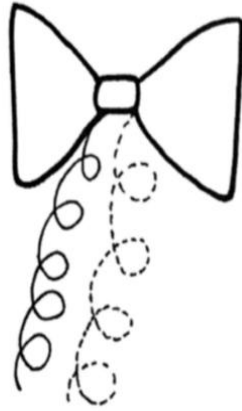


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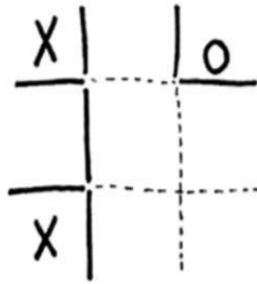
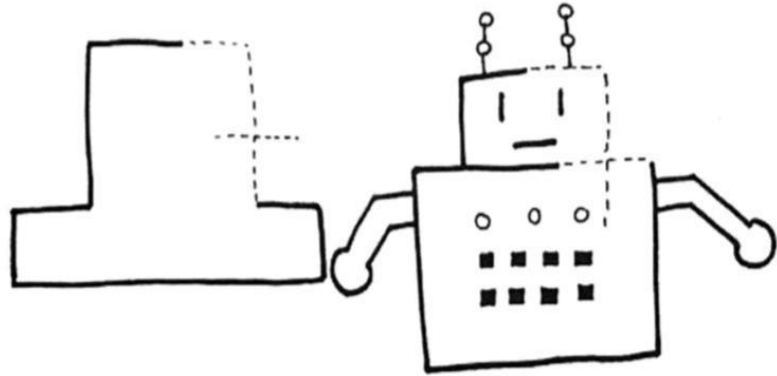


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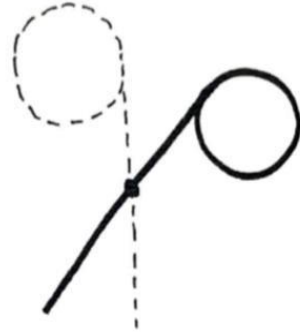


أكمل رسم الأشكال التي تحتوي على شكل الرقم 8 :





أكمل رسم الأشكال التي تحتوي على شكل الرقم 9 :



Appendix C

Tables of Study

Table C1

Schedule of implementing drawing therapy

Week	Meeting	Aim of meeting	Techniques and tools for activities
1 st	1 st & 2 nd	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Getting to know the experiment member group; 2. Establishing good researcher-student relationships; 3. Explaining the general framework of the curriculum (aims, span of learning time; scheduled hours; program rules); 4. Getting informed with expectations and benefits of the curriculum. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher asked each student to introduce themselves (name, age, class); - The experiment explained for the students about their curriculum and the meaning of participating in the research; - The researcher request students to join in an introducing game (drawing animals: each student choosing an animal to draw about which they feel some characteristics in common and explained the others their choice of this particular image and what both share in common. For example, if someone chose a lion image he/she may say they feel strong and having control over the others, which is similar to a characteristic of a lion). - Keeping with playing introducing games while holding and keeping mutual respect both in the realm of student-student and student-guide (researcher)relation. - Researcher explained students the benefits of participating in the designed curriculum
2 nd	3 rd	Testing students' academic level.	A test for the students that used to assess their knowledge and skills in identifying Arabic letters, orthography and letter shapes at the beginning, middle and end of a letter, as well as their numeral skills in 1 to 10 and of matching numerals to quantity.
2 nd	4 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introducing the used tools for the students and how to practice them along the entire set of meetings; - Each group chose a name; - focusing on students' attention to details of things while encouraging them to perform what they would be asked to do. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher introduced students to a stationeries to be used (pencil, pen, sheets, gouache paints, knitting threads, eraser, hole punch, glue, crayons...) - The researcher wrote the name of each stationery on a fold, attach it to the corresponding stationary, and exhibit it out on a table so it be visible for students' eyes. - (Interactive drawing) The researcher asked the students to paint the same animal that he/she have chosen in the first meeting and to choose a media for it (most importantly to pay attention to all the details of the animal shape and repeat it exactly).

3 rd	5 th	Embarking with letter teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher embarked for teaching the Arabic letters of this current lesson - Letters to be learnt during this session are (أ،ب،ت،ث) - At the beginning, the teaching of letters was done through drawing of images, that contain letter appeared at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student will perceive this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme). <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They were allowed to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>
3 rd	6 th	letters Teaching	<p>For this current lesson letters to be learnt are (ج،ح،خ،د،ذ)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the beginning the teaching of the letters was done through drawing images contains the letter that appeared at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student perceived this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme). <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They were allowing to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>
4 th	7 th	Numeral teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - From 1 to 5 numbers taught for the; - The students asked to use gouache colors for shaping a numeral and to add next to it a corresponding quantity (e.g. the numeral 3 and next to it 3 apples). - The researcher handing students a working sheet with incomplete paintings (with a missing part in them) and they were to complete the missing part; after painting the missing part students realized it as the same numeral the have been studied (annexed as Appendix 2).
	8 th	Letter learning	<p>For this current lesson letters to be given are (ر،ز،س،ش)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the beginning, teaching of the letters done through drawing of images containing the letter that appeared at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student will perceive this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme). <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They are allowed to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>

5 th	9 th	Letter teaching	<p>For this current lesson letters to be learnt are (ص،ض،ط،ظ)</p> <p>- At the beginning, teaching of the letter done through drawing of images, which contains the letter that results at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student will perceive this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme).</p> <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They are be allowed to used each color for their painting (free choice).</p>
	10 th	Teaching of numeral	<p>- The researcher teaching students the numerals 6 to 10;</p> <p>- The researcher asking students to use gouache colors for shaping a numeral and to add next to it a corresponding quantity (e.g. the numeral 6 and next to it 6 apples);</p> <p>Each student chose what to paint;</p> <p>- The researcher handing students a work sheet with incomplete paintings (a missing part in it) and they are have to complete the missing part; after painting the missing part students realized it as the same numeral they have been studied (annexed as Appendix 2).</p>
5 th	11 th	Letter teaching	<p>For this current lesson the letters to be learnt (ك،ع،غ،ف،ق،)</p> <p>- At the beginning, teaching of the letters done through drawing of images, which contains the letter that results at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student perceived this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme).</p> <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They allowed to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>
6 th	12 th	Letter teaching	<p>For this current lesson the letters to be learnt (ل،م،ن)</p> <p>- At the beginning the teaching of the letters done through drawing of images, which contains the letter that results at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student perceived this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme).</p> <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They allowed to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>

7 th	12 th	Letter teaching	<p>For this current lesson letters to be learnt (ا،و،ي)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - At the beginning, teaching of the letters done through drawing of images, which contains the letter that results at the end with a painting of something with the same letter that was acquired. This way, each time a student perceived this letter he/she may try to recall the created painting, as well as its heading phoneme). <p>Following in the next page annexed an appendix to the sheets the researcher is going to hand the children (Appendix 1); They allowed to use each color for their painting (free choice).</p>
7 th	14 th	Arithmetic teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher teaching arithmetical operations (+ / -) by using painting (for example: there are two boxes – one of them contains 3 balls and the other two. They required to use manually gouache colors (rather than using a brush). They are questioned about the total sum of balls. This way they will be counting the number of colored balls and realize that $3+2=5$.
8 th	15 th	Summary of the entire learning material	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher performed a new-letter reading competition for the children (+/ -); - A competition of arithmetic operations (- / +). - The researcher gave children a summing up homework assignment – preparing for an exam next week.
9 th	16 th	A knowledge level test for students in order to compare the beginning and end of program.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The researcher passed a concluding test of all the learnt letters as well as the 1 to 10 arithmetic; - The researcher expressed her thankfulness to the participating students of this research; - award the students a card of credit and appreciation for complying with laws and for their preservation.



جامعة النجاح الوطنية
كلية الدراسات العليا

فاعلية تأثير النشاط الفني باستخدام أسلوب الرسم في تحسين
مستوى التحصيل الأكاديمي لدى الطلبة من ذوي عصر تعلم

إعداد
سماح مصاروة

إشراف
د. عدنان سرحان

قدمت هذه الرسالة استكمالاً لمتطلبات الحصول على درجة الماجستير في علم النفس الإكلينيكي، من كلية الدراسات العليا، في جامعة النجاح الوطنية، نابلس - فلسطين.

2024

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الملخص

خلفية معرفية: من خلال المعالجة بالفن يتم دمج النظريات التقليدية في العلاج النفسي وتقنيات مستخدمة في مجال علم النفس ونظريات تتضمن عمليات إبداعية واستخدام اشكال متعددة من المواد الحرفية.

أسلوب البحث: لقياس مدى تأثير العلاج بالفن من خلال الرسم على الأطفال من ذوي عصر تعلم تم استخدام الأسلوب التجريبي ومنهجية a randomized controlled trial (عشوائية منظمة) والتي تقوم على أساس تقسيم المشتركين في الدراسة وعددهم 50 مشتركاً الى قسمين: مجموعة تجريبية مكونة من 25 مشترك ممن يتعلمون بطريقة العلاج بالفن من خلال الرسم. وتخضع المجموعة هذه المجموعة لامتحان قبلي وبعدي باللغة العربية والرياضيات - أي امتحان في بداية العملية التعليمية وامتحان آخر في نهايتها ومن ثم تقارن النتائج. وهناك أيضا المجموعة الضابطة مكونة من 25 مشترك والتي تتعلم وفق الطريقة التقليدية بعيدا عن العلاج بالفن وتخضع أيضا لاختبار قبلي وآخر بعدي في اللغة العربية والرياضيات ومن ثم يتم مقارنة النتائج.

العينة المستخدمة في الدراسة هي من طلاب الثاني والثالث الابتدائي ممن لديهم عصر تعلم بدرجة شديدة: فهم لا يستطيعون القراءة والكتابة ولا حتى التمييز بين الأحرف العربية ولا حتى العد من واحد إلى عشرة.

والهدف من استخدام العلاج بالفن من خلال الرسم هو تحسين القراء والكتابة والقيام بالعمليات الحسابية الأساسية لدى هؤلاء الأطفال.

لتطبيق إجراءات هذا البحث تم استخدام الأدوات التالية لقياس معرفة الطلاب قبل وبعد الجلسات التعليمية عن طريق أداة قياس تسمى (MATTIA (assessment set of exams). حيث أن كل اختبارات القياس والمواد التعليمية المستخدمة في البحث مأخوذة من موقع MATTIA- الخاص بوزارة المعارف في إسرائيل.

والهدف من MATIA: (مركز دعم منطقة البلدية) هو خدمة ودعم أطر تعليمية خاصة واعتيادية) الامتحان القبلي والبعدي يُستخدم لبيان مدى تحسن مستوى المشاركين في الدراسة في اللغة العربية والرياضيات. وتظهر نتائج الاختبارات البعدية باللغة العربية والرياضيات ان هناك اختلافات ذات دلالة بين المجموعة التجريبية والمجموعة الضابطة فيما يتعلق بالرياضيات واللغة العربية - إذ أن المستوى الأكاديمي تحسن مع استخدام العلاج بالرسم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: العلاج بالفن، طرق الرسم، رسومات يونجين والعلاج بالفن استوديو.